



City of Ashtabula

Ashtabula City Council Regular Meeting
Monday, January 6, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Council Chambers
4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of Regular Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Council President John Roskovics. Council Vice President Russell Simeone offered the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

Members Present: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Absent: None.

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper, Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg

Sunshine Law Certification

A quorum was established as defined by the Ashtabula City Council Rules of Order. The meeting met the requirements of the Ohio Sunshine Laws Open Meetings Act.

Presentations/Announcements

Approval of Minutes

Regular Council Meeting Minutes, December 16, 2024

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to waive the reading of the minutes in their entirety; Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo seconded.

Discussion:

VOICE VOTE

Hearing no corrections to the minutes, they were approved as presented.

Special Council Meeting Minutes (2025 Budget), December 19, 2024

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to waive the reading of the minutes in their entirety; Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman seconded.

Discussion:

VOICE VOTE

Hearing no corrections to the minutes, they were approved as presented.

Special Council Meeting Minutes, December 19, 2024

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero moved to waive the reading of the minutes in their entirety; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion:

VOICE VOTE

Hearing no corrections to the minutes, they were approved as presented.

Administrative Reports

Council President John Roskovics stated the next Regular Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 due to the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

City Manager

The following legislation was requested:

An ordinance to enter into a contract with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office for administration of programs using HUD allocated funds.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo seconded.

Discussion: The City is required to renew the contract every four to five years to receive assistance with guidelines for accessing State and Federal funds including the grant for the Main Avenue project and Ferry Drive.

Motion passed.

The final bill from the private contractors that assisted with snow removal during the November snowstorm was received. The final costs are being calculated and will be sent to the State for possible reimbursement. City Manager James Timonere stated he learned from the Ashtabula County Emergency Management Agency that Ashtabula County has met the threshold for assistance. City Manager James Timonere anticipates the City will receive some funding. Costs from the storm are approximately \$200,000.

City residents can dispose of live Christmas trees on the tree lawns. Crews will be picking them up over the next two weeks. All lights and decorations must be removed from the trees.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero visited the temporary building for Lakeside High School 9th grade students at the former Mother of Sorrows School and requested that APD officers provide extra patrol in the area. City Manager James Timonere stated the City will provide any assistance that is needed. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills stated parking was an issue at the elementary campus now that the rest of the high school is relocated in the Huron building. Council President John Roskovics stated portions of the roof of the Lakeside High School building are being removed and stored for evidence for insurance purposes.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked for an update on the Coast Guard Station. City Manager James Timonere stated he has not received an update as to what the season will look like this year. The City Manager has not been told it will be any different than last year with the station being manned on the weekends. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills also asked for an update on the former Municipal Building. City Manager James Timonere stated the City is moving toward demolition as soon as funds become available.

Council President John Roskovics reminded council members to submit their 2025 paving requests to the City Manager by January 13, 2025.

Council Vice President Russell Simeone asked if damaged curbs will be addressed separately or during the paving process. City Manager James Timonere stated curb repairs are typically done during paving. When the streets that will be paved are identified, it will be determined, during the pre-construction process, if any curbs are damaged and need repaired. Areas that were damaged during snow removal in November are currently being identified and will be addressed in the spring.

City Manager James Timonere thanked Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo for scheduling the work session to discuss the homeless situation in the City. It provided an opportunity to discuss everything the City is doing to address the issue. City Manager James Timonere stated it is very easy for people to take to social media and lodge personal attacks on city officials indicating they are not doing anything to address the problem.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked if the Collins Boulevard project was being completed this year. City Manager James Timonere stated design is taking place; however, construction will not begin this year. The City Manager anticipates construction to begin in the spring of 2026. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked if West 45th Street can be added as it is in need of repair. City Manager James Timonere stated if the City can afford to include it in the project it will, but it will be at the City's expense to repair it.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked if it is possible to install speed bumps on Main Avenue to address the speeding issue. City Manager James Timonere stated speed bumps have been discussed in the past; however, they will be an issue when plowing. The City Manager is hoping to have the police provide foot patrol on Main Avenue longer, and with that, increase speed patrol. It will be difficult with the number of officers retiring this year. Temporary speed bumps may be an option as well.

City Solicitor

City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper provided an update on the staffing in her office. Valerie Brockway retired on January, 3, 2025 after 10 years of service with the City. Prior to that, she worked for Juvenile Court. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated she is pleased to welcome Arlene Serrano, formerly with the Municipal Court Clerk's Office.

Finance Director

Finance Director Marie Yvrose Augustin was absent from the meeting; however, Council President John Roskovics acknowledged two ordinances requested by the Finance Director:

An ordinance repealing Ordinance 2024-160 to enact replacement legislation for providing compensation, salaries, and wages to employees of the City of Ashtabula and the Ashtabula City Health District.

An ordinance authorizing compensation, salaries, and wages to employees of the City of Ashtabula and the Ashtabula City Health District.

Clerk of Council

No report.

City Council Committee Reports

Community Development/Economic Development/Parks & Recreation (1st Wednesday @ 5:30 p.m.)

Members: Chair DiGiacomo/Council Liaison to Parks and Recreation Board; Vice Chair Mills; Holman

February 5

March 5

April 2

Committee Chair Jane DiGiacomo provided the report. Mary Church, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development, and Catherine Colgan, Assistant City Solicitor, discussed food truck legislation. The committee still has a lot of work to do and will continue the discussion at the February meeting.

The City Manager was informed that the Ashtabula Food Truck Network no longer exists; however, he has a contact to reach out to for information.

Finance & Personnel

(3rd Friday @ 8:30 a.m.)

Members: Chair Foglio, Vice Chair DiGiacomo, Roskovics

January 17

February 21

March 21

Public Works/Public Utilities/Cable/Schools

(4th Tuesday @ 8:30 a.m.)

Members: Chair Mills, Vice Chair Guerriero, Roskovics

January 28

February 25

March 25

Committee Chair Jodi Mills reminded residents to check their most recent sewer bills for information on the sewer rate increase and a reminder to file their City income taxes.

City Manager James Timonere stated the bill is through November 1. The bills are always in arrears because the City sewer bills are calculated after it receive meter reads from Aqua Ohio. Residents will see one month at the old rate and one month at the new rate on the next bill, which will include December and January. The February/March bill will be based on the new rates, and that bill will not be due until late April or early May.

Safety Forces

(2nd Monday @ 8:30 a.m.)

Members: Chair Guerriero, Vice Chair Foglio, Roskovics

January 13

February 10

March 10

Planning Commission and Ashtabula Historic Preservation Commission

Presentation of Legislation

Council President John Roskovics previewed the legislation.

Additional Formal Requests

Public Communications on Legislation

Overview / Discussion

Reading of Legislation

Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg presented the following legislation for the council's consideration.

Legislation - Enactment, Passage or Adoption

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 01

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO CHANGE ORDER #1 WITH ROCKY ROAD PAVING FOR AN ADDITIONAL \$10,750.00 TO COMPLETE ROAD RESTORATIONS FROM VARIOUS PROJECTS

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 02

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO STATE PRESERVATION OFFICE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMS

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 03

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2024-160 TO ENACT REPLACEMENT LEGISLATION FOR PROVIDING COMPENSATION, SALARIES, AND WAGES TO EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA AND THE ASHTABULA CITY HEALTH DISTRICT

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 – 04

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING COMPENSATION, SALARIES, AND WAGES TO EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA AND THE ASHTABULA CITY HEALTH DISTRICT

Council President Roskovics asked for a motion to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor DiGiacomo, moved to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda; Ward 3 Councilor Holman, seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President Roskovics, Vice President Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Mills, Ward 5 Councilor DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Foglio, moved to waive the reading of the legislation; Ward 4 Councilor Mills seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President Roskovics, Vice President Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Mills, Ward 5 Councilor DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Foglio moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of the legislation; Ward 3 Councilor Holman seconded.

Discussion: None.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President Roskovics, Vice President Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Mills, Ward 5 Councilor DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Adoption of legislation

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President Roskovics, Vice President Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Mills, Ward 5 Councilor DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Legislation passed.

Motion: None

Unfinished Business

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked for an update on the status of the RAM clinic. City Manager James Timonere will be meeting with Ashtabula County Commissioner JP Ducro later in the week and will ask if the committee has made any determinations on the location.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero stated he purchased a house in March or April of 2024 with the intention of fixing it but has not begun the project. He received a letter from the City Income Tax Department stating he has to claim the rental income on his taxes; however, the house has not been rented. The previous owner of the property also received a letter from the City outlining various things that need to be repaired before the house can be rented. Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero questioned why the previous owner received the letter and asked about the City's process. City Manager James Timonere stated the City's coding system is only updated once a year. The owner

of the property likely had not been updated in the system when the letter was sent.

Council Vice President Russell Simeone asked if it would be beneficial to eliminate tax abatement eligibility for more popular areas that don't have a problem attracting people and offer those incentives to less popular areas to encourage individuals to build there. City Manager James Timonere stated he does not want to prioritize one area over another. Tax abatements are available to everyone including persons that want to remodel their homes. There is only so much available land in the City for new construction. There are a lot of homes in the City that need work put into them.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked about a project on McKinley Avenue. City Manager James Timonere explained that an individual requested a variance on the frontage of a large lot that was divided up so he can build five or six houses on it. The price point of those houses is unknown. Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo stated she also received some emails stating that people are building tiny houses on their properties in the Cleveland area. City Manager James Timonere stated the City has frontage requirements as well as specific square footage requirements to build in the City. The City is seeing a lot more exterior structures or additions being built to accommodate other family members on the same property.

City Manager James Timonere stated it is important to get the rezoning process started this year. All of the issues being discussed play into the new zoning.

New Business

Dublin Down Pub & Eatery LLC Liquor License request

The business is located in Ward 4. The current license is under Kork and Kettle and is being transferred to Dublin Down.

No concerns.

Tell Us Something We Don't Know

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills stated SOS (Saving Our Strays) Cat Rescue has a low-cost spay and neuter program available. Anyone interested in using their services can contact them at 440-536-1926 to schedule an appointment.

Public Communications on General Matters

Susan Smith of Jefferson Avenue asked for an update on a dilapidated house on Madison Avenue. City Manager James Timonere stated he would follow up on the status. Ms. Smith also stated she is excited about the upcoming project on Main Avenue but expressed some safety concerns about West 46th Street. City Manager James Timonere stated City officials have had discussions with the building owners on the street about possibly vacating it and making it a sitting area so it would stop just past the alley by the former Warren and Young building where the daycare is. The parking garage would still be accessible, but the area going out to Main Avenue would become a courtyard.

Executive Session (if needed)

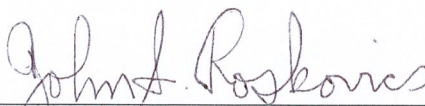
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. by Council President John Roskovics. Ashtabula City Council will meet again on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 in Council Chambers. The Pre-Council meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Regular Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

DATE APPROVED:

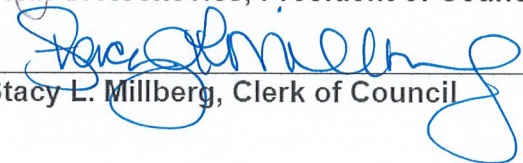
January 21, 2025

ATTESTED BY:



John S. Roskovics, President of Council

ATTESTED BY:



Stacy L. Millberg, Clerk of Council