



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council
Safety Forces Committee
Monday, October 25, 2021 at 8:45 AM
Council Chambers
4717 Main Avenue

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

Committee Chair Speelman called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: Committee Chair Vice President Michael Speelman, Committee Vice-Chair Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Member Ward 3 Councilor Laydean Young **Absent:** None

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, Clerk of Council Stacy Senskey **Absent:** None

Department Heads Present: Ashtabula Police Department Chief Robert Stell, Ashtabula Fire Department Chief Shawn Gruber

Sunshine Law Certification

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

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors

Police Department – Chief’s Report

September 2021

Chief Stell indicated there was nothing out of the ordinary for the month of September. Calls for service were slightly higher than usual, likely due to the nice weather.

Fire Department – Chief’s Report

September 2021

Chief Gruber announced that 2021 statistics are back on track with calls close to the normalcy of 2019. Calls for service due to COVID have not been a prevalent issue for the Fire Department. The Fire Department is fully staffed, but the Civil Service Exam culminated in only three candidates. No pending retirements are expected.

City Manager’s Report

City Manager Timonere and Chief Gruber explained that six people signed up for the written Civil Service Exam, four people took and passed the written exam, and three passed the agility test. For the past few years, a lack of candidates has been a problem for the police and fire departments. There is one person enrolled in the Police Academy, and staffing levels for the police department are sufficient. The department is developing a contract with Ashtabula Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA) to provide an officer similar to the resource officer program at the

Ashtabula Area City Schools. AMHA would be responsible for a portion of the officer's salary. The cruisers and equipment were ordered for the APD with anticipated completion by the second quarter of 2022.

City Manager Timonere referred to a code enforcement report which will be presented at a later time. Starting in June, a special weekend detail including staff from the Planning and Community Development Department, and APD Officers teamed up to focus on the code enforcement project for four hours during the weekends, strictly concentrating on junk vehicles. They have been able to make contact while residents are home, and educate the residents about the city codes. The team is also working on housing code violations. The number of cases from June to September was roughly 2,000 compared to 1,400 in 2019. The project is projected to be even more successful in the remaining months. This extra work is not in conflict with the staff member's normal work schedules.

The agencies dealing with the city's homeless population have been in regular communication with the City Manager Timonere and the APD. Frequent interactions with the individuals involved are helping to build trust within the homeless community and will be a benefit once the weather starts to get cold.

Committee Vice-Chair mentioned how nice it is to travel on Lake Avenue. City Manager Timonere said the paving is nearing completion. A stretch from West Avenue and Carpenter Road to West 14th Street still needs an "intermediate course". The "finish course" or top layer is planned for the end of the week, weather permitting.

Committee Chair Speelman thanked the APD, AFD, and Clerk of Council for engaging with the community during Saturday's Trunk or Treat at Fat Sally's. The event was well attended and their presence was appreciated.

New Business

Next Meeting

November 22, 2021, 8:45 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 a.m.. by Committee Chair Speelman. The meetings scheduled for November and December may be canceled due to the holidays.

Submitted by: Stacy H. Senskey, Clerk of Council