



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 18, 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 President John Roskovics offered the opening prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

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

Absent: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper, Finance Director Marie Yvrose Augustin, Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to excuse Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio; Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

The motion to excuse the absences was adopted.

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, February 3, 2025

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to waive the reading of the minutes in their entirety; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

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

Administrative Reports

Council President John Roskovics stated the resolution opposing Senate Bill 43 is on the agenda.

City Manager

The following legislation was requested:

An ordinance to enter into an agreement with GPD group to provide design and plan preparation and project construction administration for the 2025 City paving program not to exceed \$80,000.

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo seconded.

Discussion: None.

Motion passed.

An ordinance authorizing a contract for lease of property along the west side of West Avenue with the Lamar Companies for a billboard sign.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: None.

Motion passed.

An ordinance accepting the Planning Commission's recommendation for the approval of relocation of a billboard sign on West Avenue.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero seconded.

Discussion: None.

Motion passed.

Garbage is running on schedule despite the Presidents' Day holiday on Monday.

The final reports have been submitted to the state for reimbursement for the November snowstorm. The storm cost the City a total of \$290,000. The Ohio Emergency Management Agency allowed officials to submit the most expensive three days, which totaled approximately \$154,000 in expenses. Officials expect to receive a 75 percent reimbursement.

Council President John Roskovics noted that the City has several job openings posted on its website and was pleased to see that the City remains an Equal Opportunity Employer and has that statement displayed on the website.

City Manager James Timonere stated the City advertised the zoning plan update and comprehensive plan update last week. Officials will be requesting moratoriums on various things until the rezoning and comprehensive plan are complete. Once a firm is hired, community meetings will be held on the matter.

City Solicitor

No report.

Finance Director

The following legislation was requested:

An ordinance repealing ordinance 2025-10 to enact replacement legislation.

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

Discussion: None.

Motion passed.

An ordinance authorizing a contract with CPA firm Charles E. Harris & Associates for the preparation of the ACFR and the GAAP conversion for the City of Ashtabula for the year ending December 31,

2024, as well as the preparation of the report for the Board of Health.

Motion: Council President John Roskovics moved to approve the Finance Director's request; Council Vice President Russell Simeone seconded.

Discussion: None.

Motion passed.

An ordinance to make supplemental increases and decreases to appropriations in various funds for the period January 1 through December 31, 2025.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to approve the Finance Director's request; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: None.

Motion passed.

Clerk of Council

No report.

City Council Committee Reports

The Ad Hoc Committee Racism as a Public Health Crisis will meet Thursday, February 20, 2025, at 6 p.m. and the next Racial Wealth Gap Simulation will be held on February 27, 2025.

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

March 5

April 2

May 7

June 4

Committee Chair Jane DiGiacomo provided the report. The committee discussed food truck legislation and will continue its discussion at the March 5, 2025 meeting.

Finance & Personnel

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

Members: Chair Foglio, Vice Chair DiGiacomo, Roskovics

March 21

April 18

May 16

June 20

Public Works/Public Utilities/Cable/Schools

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

Members: Chair Mills, Vice Chair Guerriero, Roskovics

February 25

March 25

April 22

May 27

The committee will discuss the Fair Schools Funding Plan at its February 25, 2025 meeting.

Safety Forces

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

Members: Chair Guerriero, Vice Chair Foglio, Roskovics

March 10

April 14

May 12

June 9

Committee Chair Terence Guerriero provided the report.

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 - 17

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH GPD GROUP FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING DESIGN AND PLAN PREPARATION AND PROJECT CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION FOR THE 2025 CITY PAVING PROGRAM IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$80,000.00

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 18

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA TAX INCENTIVE AGREEMENT WITH CHAD & JILL HEISER, FOR TAX ABATEMENT AT 100% FOR 7 YEARS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS LOCATED AT 1042 BUNKER HILL ROAD, ASHTABULA, OH 44004

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 19

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA TAX INCENTIVE AGREEMENT WITH ROMERO D. SILER, FOR TAX ABATEMENT AT 100% FOR 7 YEARS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS LOCATED AT 1219 SCOTT AVENUE, ASHTABULA, OH 44004

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA TAX INCENTIVE AGREEMENT WITH DSTRANS INC., FOR TAX ABATEMENT AT 100% FOR 7 YEARS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS LOCATED AT 1447 BRIDGE ST. AND 1449 BRIDGE ST., ASHTABULA, OH 44004

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 21

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2025-10 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENACTING REPLACEMENT LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 22

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH CPA FIRM CHARLES E. HARRIS & ASSOCIATES ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA, OHIO, FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE ACFR AND THE GAAP CONVERSION FOR THE CITY OF ASHTABULA IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024, AS WELL AS THE PREPARATION OF THE REPORT FOR THE BOARD OF HEALTH.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 23

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR THE LEASE OF PROPERTY ALONG THE WEST SIDE OF WEST AVENUE WITH THE LAMAR COMPANIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF A BILLBOARD SIGN

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 24

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF RELOCATION OF A BILLBOARD ON WEST AVENUE IN THE CITY OF ASHTABULA

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 25

AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL DECREASES TO APPROPRIATIONS IN THE GENERAL FUND, UNCLAIMED MONIES FUND, LOCAL OPIOD SETTLEMENT FUND, FIRE GRANT FUND, PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT FUND AND ALL OTHER FUNDS LISTED ON EXHIBIT A FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA, STATE OF OHIO, FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 26

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING SENATE BILL 43

After the reading of the legislation titles, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman stated she would like to separate ordinances 2025-18, 2025-19 and 2025-20 to be voted on separately if council decides to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda.

Council President Roskovics asked for a motion to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda for ordinances: 2025-17, 2025-21, 2025-22, 2025-23, 2024-24, 2025-25 and Resolution Number 2025-26.

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, moved to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda; Council Vice President Russell Simeone, seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, moved to waive the reading of the legislation; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of the legislation; Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman seconded.

Discussion: None.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Adoption of legislation 2025-17, 2025-21, 2025-22, 2025-23, 2025-24, 2025-25, 2025-26

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Legislation passed.

Motion: None

Council President Roskovics asked for a motion to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda for ordinances: 2025-18, 2025-19, 2025-20.

Motion: Council President John Roskovics, moved to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda; Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Motion: Council President John Roskovics, moved to waive the reading of the legislation; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of the legislation; Council President John Roskovics seconded.

Discussion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked if an abated property is not well-kept, does the abatement go away? City Manager James Timonere stated the Tax Incentive Review Council reviews residential and commercial properties annually. If property owners are not acting in accordance with their tax abatement applications, the abatement can be revoked. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked how often that happens. City Manager James Timonere stated it depends on the circumstances. It is the Tax Incentive Review Council's duty to evaluate those properties every year and make recommendations to City Council.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked if any other documentation is required when an abatement application is submitted. City Manager James Timonere stated additional documentation is not required. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked if follow-up is conducted to obtain any missing information from an application. City Manager James Timonere stated the applications are not submitted for Council's approval until they are complete. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked if DSTRANS, Inc. was a nonprofit or for-profit business. City Manager James Timonere stated it is for-profit. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked why officials continue to approve a 100% tax abatement for seven years for businesses who are going to turn a profit from tenants. City Manager James Timonere stated that businesses are still investing in the City, and the tax incentive weighs in their decisions to build here. Council President John Roskovics stated that property values are

increasing, so when the City can collect property taxes on the properties that were abated, it will make up the money. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman stated she feels that the abatement program needs to be reworked. City Manager James Timonere stated tax abatement is available to anyone in Ashtabula City that wants to build or remodel their homes.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Adoption of legislation 2025-18, 2025-19, 2025-20

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman

Legislation passed.

Motion: None

Unfinished Business

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero stated the Safety Forces Committee is still working on golf cart legislation. City Manager James Timonere stated he is working with his staff on mapping areas in the City where golf carts will be allowed.

New Business

Tell Us Something We Don't Know

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero stated the Civil Service Entrance Exam for police and fire is March 23, 2025.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills stated she toured the Buckeye Senior Care facility in the former Rite Aid building. The facility will offer all-inclusive care for seniors and will bring a number of jobs to the City. The Youngstown Business Incubator will host a "Show Me the Money" event to discuss funding opportunities for businesses on March 27 at the Ashtabula District Library from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Public Communications on General Matters

Rebecca Quirke, 1846 Walnut Blvd., discussed the importance of establishing vacancy penalties. She does not believe there is a housing shortage in the City, but rather, people are holding vacant properties and waiting for the value to go up. She encouraged officials to follow organizations such as the Guild in Atlanta, which focuses on incremental development and making sure the development serves the population. Ms. Quirke is the director of a tenant's organization in Washington state, called Tenants Revolt, which she is now running from Ashtabula. Ms. Quirke stated that inflation in property values is rooted in illegal price-setting algorithms.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked if Ms. Quirke was working to correct vacancy issues surrounding individuals who have moved into nursing homes and the home is vacant, as an example. Ms. Quirke stated that it is an example of why establishing vacancy penalties is important.

City Manager James Timonere stated the City has a vacant property registration and ordinance with penalties. The penalties increase each year a property is vacant.

Executive Session (if needed)

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m. by Council President John Roskovics.
Ashtabula City Council will meet again on Monday, March 3, 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:

March 3, 2025

ATTESTED BY:

John S. Roskovics
John S. Roskovics, President of Council

ATTESTED BY:

Stacy L. Millberg
Stacy L. Millberg, Clerk of Council