



City of Ashtabula

Ashtabula City Council

Public Works / Public Utilities / Cable / Schools Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 8:30 AM

Council Chambers

4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council Public Works/ Public Utilities/ Cable/ Schools Committee was called to order at 8:31 a.m. by Committee Chair Jodi Mills.

Roll Call

Members Present: **Chair:** Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Vice Chair: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Member: Council President John Roskovichs

Absent: None

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

Ashtabula Department Heads Present: Water Pollution Control Superintendent Mark Verzella, Public Services Superintendent John Melnik

Visitors: James Bradley, William Bradley, Rich Holman

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.

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors

City Manager's Report

City Manager James Timonere met with the Parks and Recreation Board to discuss various items they would like for the upcoming season. Negotiations are underway with the YMCA for the lifeguard contract for Walnut Beach. The parks staff are requesting additional equipment for the season, including a zero-turn lawn mower and a tractor. The cost of the tractor is approximately \$19,000 and the cost of the zero turn is approximately \$14,000. The equipment will be purchased with funds from the Parks Fund.

The Outfall Relocation Project at the Wastewater Treatment Plant is moving closer to going out for bids. All permits have been approved and a PTI (Permit to Install) has been filed with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. Modifications to the PTI were requested and have been submitted and officials are hopeful of putting the project up for bid soon.

Committee Chair Jodi Mills asked if the City still planned on purchasing life rings for Walnut Beach. City Manager James Timonere stated the City was going to try.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked where the lawn mower and tractor were going to be

purchased from. City Manager James Timonere stated the zero-turn lawn mower would be purchased from Best Truck Equipment, Inc. in Painesville and the tractor would be purchased from Bortnick Tractor Sales in Conneaut.

Council President John Roskovics stated the potholes are very bad. City Manager James Timonere stated the Public Works staff work daily to fill potholes.

William Bradley, who owns an Air B&B at 1136 W. 6th Street in the Harbor, expressed concerns about the condition of the roads and sidewalks near his property. William Bradley stated there is debris on the sidewalk in front of his home. He stated he believes the damage to the road occurred during construction of the Riverbend Hotel.

James Bradley, who also owns property on West 6th Street, questioned whether an impact study was conducted before the hotel was constructed.

City Manager James Timonere stated the debris on the sidewalks is from the November snowstorm when private contractors were moving snow to clear the roads. He stated there is still work being done in that area, including a parking lot behind Goodwill between West 6th Street and West 8th Street. The road cannot be paved until the construction is complete. He stated the staff can temporarily fix the potholes until the road can be paved. He hopes to pave the road next year. City Manager James Timonere stated the estimated cost to pave West 6th Street, from Lake Avenue to Goodwill Drive, was \$191,977.00. The other option he looked at was Joseph Avenue to Goodwill Drive. That estimate was \$111,843.00. Due to ongoing construction, those areas were not included in this year's paving program.

The 2025 paving program went out for bid on March 24, 2025. All paving has to be completed by August 30, 2025, per the contract.

Committee Chair Jodi Mills asked if there was any salt leftover for next year. Public Services Superintendent John Melnik stated there is approximately 400 to 500 tons in the dome.

The City is still waiting for reimbursement from the State for expenses during the November snowstorm. The City expects to receive \$290,000.

Water Pollution Control Report

WPC Report

Water Pollution Control Superintendent Mark Verzella provided the report. The overhead door in maintenance was replaced on March 4, 2025. Toxicity testing was completed between March 3, 2025 and March 7, 2025. The speed pod dial for return sludge was replaced on pump #3 and a replacement module was ordered for grit blower #2. An atmospheric monitoring system was installed in the Digester building on March 12, 2025, to make the building safer. The UV system has to be online by May 1, 2025 at the latest, but should be up and running in the next few weeks.

Thermometer and scale calibrations were completed in the lab on March 19, 2025. The rotameter for the polymer mixing system was replaced, and a system flush was completed on March 15, 2025.

Water Pollution Control Superintendent Mark Verzella stated preparing the UV system to go online will be the department's main focus for the next month.

Council President John Roskovics asked if the Outfall Relocation Project would start this summer. Water Pollution Control Superintendent Mark Verzella stated that the project would definitely start this summer. City Manager James Timonere stated the new system will be a temporary discharge.

The EPA is requiring mixing zone studies to be conducted. Once those are completed and approved by the EPA, the old outfall will be permanently shut down. Committee Chair Jodi Mills stated she has heard safety concerns from residents regarding contamination of the water. Water Pollution Control Superintendent Mark Verzella stated the water being discharged into the lake is cleaner than the actual lake water.

Public Works Report

Public Services Superintendent John Melnik provided the report. The staff have resumed their normal operations with 10 employees working during the day. The staff was split during the winter months to cover nighttime plowing. The winter took a toll on the roads. Crews are out patching. Public Works staff are making repairs to sanitary laterals, curb drains and catch basins. Crews ran the broom and noticed some issues, so it is currently down for repairs. Cleanup is also underway around the property in preparation for spring.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked where residents could dispose of large items such as appliances. City residents can contact the Public Works Department to make arrangements to pick up those items. Residents are asked not to put large items out for pick-up without contacting Public Works first. For items such as refrigerators, residents must drain any Freon prior to disposing.

The City will look at increasing trash pick-up rates soon. Rates have not increased since 2018, when they increased by 25 cents. The current trash pick-up rate is \$15.50 per month.

Committee Chair Jodi Mills asked if the City was any closer to providing curbside recycling for the whole City. City Manager James Timonere stated the cost of providing curbside recycling for the rest of the City would be upwards of \$1 million. City staff are working on determining the routes so trash and recycling can be picked up every day rather than every other week. The City may also explore grant funding to help with the cost.

New Business

Next Meeting

April 22, 2025

Adjournment