



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council
Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting
Friday, August 15, 2025 at 8:30 AM
Council Chambers
4230 Lake Avenue

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council Finance and Personnel Committee was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Committee Chair Kym Foglio.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Vice Chair: Ward 5 Councilor Jane Haines, Member: President John Roskovics

Absent: None

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, Finance Director Vladimir Kan, Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg

Visitors:

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

Special Guest Presentation

Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Vladimir Kan provided the report. The streetlight assessment has a negative balance. The ordinance expires at the end of the year and will need to be renewed. City Manager James Timonere clarified that the second half of property taxes have not been received yet, which is where that assessment is collected. Once the City receives those funds, the balance will increase. Supplemental increases will be requested at the August 18, 2025 Regular Council meeting for Funds 205 and 209 (fuel accounts) for \$17,000. The revenue is on target. The Ohio Attorney General's Office has collected \$856,578.10 to date, including interest, on income tax accounts. The outstanding balance in collections with the Attorney General's Office is \$566,106.09. The City has collected approximately \$1.2 million in income tax for fiscal year 2024. There are 1,756 accounts still needing to be reconciled. Approximately \$4 million has been received so far for fiscal year 2025. There is an outstanding balance of \$20,329.13 due on 2024 tax returns and \$128,030.23 is due on payment plan accounts.

Statement of Cash Position

Expense Report

Revenue Report

Income Tax Report

City Manager's Report

City Manager James Timonere provided the report. The police department is doing well with staffing. Several of the individuals that were hired are close to being released from training and are receiving good reports from supervisors. The fire department is looking at hiring another person due to upcoming retirements and some injuries in the department. There will be three retirements next year in the police department and some in the fire department as well. City Manager James Timonere and Ashtabula County Planning and Development Director Jake Brand met with officials from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to discuss grant options for curbside recycling for the rest of the City. The city will need to purchase approximately 6,000 carts - 3,000 trash and 3,000 recycling. The cost is currently \$48 per cart, which will total approximately \$260,000. Adjustments will be made for inflation as the price will likely increase by the time the City is ready to order them. There will also be a cost of \$15,000 to \$20,000 for delivery. The total cost of the project will be \$300,000 to \$350,000. The EPA grant is available for up to \$200,000; however, it will only cover costs associated with recycling. There is also a 25 percent match. Ultimately, the City would be responsible for the cost of the trash carts and 25 percent of the cost of the recycling carts. If the City is successful in receiving the grant and is able to come up with the match funds, City Manager James Timonere stated that he believes the City should be able to implement the program by the end of 2026. The City will need to increase its trash rates to cover the cost of the 25 percent match for the grant and the purchase of the trash carts. The current rate of \$15.50 per month does not sustain the department. Contract negotiations will be coming up at the end of the year and garbage trucks will need to be replaced in the future. City Manager James Timonere stated he does not want to raise the rates until curbside recycling is available to the whole City.

The code enforcement officer position has been posted and will be filled soon. It was an internal posting with three to four applicants. If the position cannot be filled internally, it will then be posted externally. Interviews have begun for corrections officers. There were nine applicants, with seven of them returning calls for interviews for the two available part-time positions.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked if the police department was back to being fully staffed. City Manager James Timonere stated there are still a few more positions to fill.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked how much money the City has in investments currently. City Manager James Timonere stated there is more than \$10 million invested with Meeder and another \$2 to \$3 million invested with Star Ohio. She asked if the Finance Director was happy with the City's investment strategy. Finance Director Vladimir Kan stated that he is satisfied with the current investment strategy and the City's interest income will be maximized even more with the opening of a sweep account. Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked what the City's annual net return on investment is. City Manager James Timonere stated that, to date, the City has collected \$256,000.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked if the City could begin spotlighting on social media how the tax dollars are spent. She is concerned about the parks levy and would like the public to know all the improvements and work that goes into maintaining the parks. City Manager James Timonere stated he would schedule some social media posts to highlight things.

Unfinished Business

AMC Misuse of Credit Card

Finance Director Vladimir Kan stated that the Finance Department did some research and discovered two minor infractions, primarily due to a poor Purchasing Card Policy. The first infraction

is that the court signed the current purchasing card policy, but did not follow it. The second infraction is that the purchases should have been tax-exempt, but they were not. He stated the court was not aware of this as it is not in the current policy. He stated he would like to work with the court on the matter and keep the dialogue open. He stated his department will review the purchasing card policy and make revisions. He stated that the purchases were in compliance with the use of government funds. He feels they should just provide some additional information.

New Business

Assistant Finance Director Salary Range

Finance Director Vladimir Kan stated that he has been experiencing difficulties finding a suitable replacement for Assistant Finance Director Carolyn Sheldon as she will be retiring at the end of October. He attributes the difficulties to the salary range. He asked the committee to increase the salary range for the position to \$65,000 to \$85,000. City Manager James Timonere stated that his concern is that the human resources responsibilities have been removed from the assistant finance director position so a part-time human resources position could be created. An increase in the assistant finance director salary will impact what the City can afford for the human resources position. Finance Director Vladimir Kan stated that he also needs additional help in his department. President John Roskovics stated that he is supportive of the increased pay range. Committee Chair Kym Foglio agreed.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked about the possibility of working with the local Kent State University branch and hiring interns for the Finance Department. City Manager James Timonere stated he believes that would conflict with the union contract unless the internships are unpaid.

Purchase of Cubicles

City Manager James Timonere stated that when the City offices were moved to the new building, all the old furniture was moved as well. The cubicles will offer a more modern look for the Finance Department and provide additional space and more privacy for the employees. There are funds set aside in the Permanent Improvement Fund to pay for it. Eventually, cubicles will be added to the other end of the building where Planning and Community Development is and other City staff are situated. Committee members were all in agreement with the project.

Next Meeting

September 19, 2025

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m. by Committee Chair Kym Foglio.