



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council
Safety Forces Committee
Thursday, October 9, 2025 at 8:30 AM
Council Chambers
4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

The Ashtabula City Council Safety Forces Committee meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Committee Chair Guerriero.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Member: Council President John Roskovic

Absent: Vice Chair: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio

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

Ashtabula Department Heads Present: Fire Chief Shawn Gruber, Lt. Geoff Cannon

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

Police Department – Chief’s Report

Chief Rob Stell was not present due to illness.

APD September 2025 Stats

Fire Department – Chief’s Report

Chief Shawn Gruber provided the report. The statistics are in line with previous years, with mutual aid calls slightly higher. Chief Gruber addressed equipment concerns, highlighting two significant issues. First, the backup ambulance is in poor condition with extensive rust on the rocker panels. He stated that they were exploring options to either purchase a used replacement vehicle or finding another solution. He stated that new ambulances are expensive and have long procurement times. The second equipment issue involved the department's rescue boat, which was experiencing computer-related problems requiring the engine to be shut off and restarted multiple times during use. Chief Shawn Gruber stated that during a recent rescue, the boat had to be restarted three times. He stated that there are plans to repair the boat over the winter, at an estimated cost of \$40,000. The boat work will be done in Roaming Shores.

Chief Shawn Gruber stated that repairs were made to the roof at the fire station that should last through the winter, but it needs to be properly addressed once the weather improves.

Committee Chair Terence Guerriero asked for information on the recent water rescue. Chief Shawn Gruber stated the rescue was a pretty big deal. The department successfully rescued a father and his three-year-old daughter who had fallen overboard while fishing. The boat was approximately 2.5 to 3 miles from shore. The father had jumped in after his daughter, while the mother remained on the boat but had difficulty operating it. Chief Shawn Gruber stated that the family would be visiting the fire station on Saturday to thank the crew and celebrate the little girl's fourth birthday. Chief Shawn Gruber stated that in his 33-year career, this rescue was one of his most meaningful days.

AFD September 2025 Stats

City Manager's Report

City Manager James Timonere reported that the police department's three Durango vehicles were still being upfitted with necessary equipment. Two of the vehicles would become K-9 units and were awaiting special cages for the back. Hudson Communication was handling the installation of lights, sirens, and other equipment. The Ford vehicle for the fire department was reported to be up and running.

City Manager James Timonere stated that the promotional test for the fire department would be in January, and the entrance test for police was scheduled for November, with applications currently being accepted.

City Solicitor's Report

Unfinished Business

Chief Shawn Gruber brought up an issue regarding homeless individuals underneath the Spring Street Bridge on the west side. The City had been repeatedly cleaning up after encampments in this area, and there were concerns about people lighting fires under the bridge. Fire Marshal Antonio Feralo had suggested installing a fence, approximately 12 to 15 feet long, to limit access to the area.

New Business

The committee discussed a request to move the "No Parking" restriction from the west side of Washington Avenue to the east side where fire hydrants are now located following a recent waterline project. City Manager James Timonere noted that when no-parking zones are established, they are typically placed on the side with fire hydrants, and that some residents had apparently removed previous signs which had to be replaced.

City Manager James Timonre stated he would have the Police Department conduct a study and send surveys to residents in the area. After receiving feedback, a recommendation will be brought back to the committee.

Committee Chair Terence Guerriero stated that he received complaints about people playing pickleball after the posted hours at courts near the library. There was some discussion about whether there were specific posted hours or if the courts operated under general park hours (dawn to dusk). City Manager James Timonere stated that there are lights at the courts which are on timers. The committee discussed having police patrol the area to observe activity and clarifying what hours are actually posted on signs at the location.

"No Parking" sign request - Washington Avenue between Bunker Hill and W. 58th Street (same side as fire hydrant)

"Slow - Children at Play" sign request - W. 58th Street from West Avenue to Nathan Avenue

Next Meeting

November 13, 2025

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 a.m. by Committee Chair Terence Guerriero.