



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council Regular Meeting
Monday, November 17, 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 7:01 p.m. by Council President John Roskovics. Vice President Russell Simeone offered the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A moment of silence was observed for former City employee Richard "Rick" Cole.

Roll Call

Members Present: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Absent: None.

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

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, November 3, 2025

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to waive the reading of the minutes in their entirety; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman requested a correction regarding a statement attributed to her in the previous minutes about the racial wealth gap simulation. She clarified that the simulation with Ashtabula Regional Medical Center's management team was a closed event. She explained that she had intended to thank participants who attended the Quality Week event, which was open to the public.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

The minutes were approved as presented, pending review of the recording from the November 3, 2025 meeting.

Administrative Reports

President John Roskovics reminded everyone that on December 1 there will be a budget hearing at 5:30 p.m., followed by Pre-Council at 6 p.m., the Organizational Meeting at 6:30 p.m. and the Regular Council Meeting at 7 p.m. The swearing-in ceremony for the three newly elected councilors will be held on November 28 at 6 p.m.

City Manager

The following legislation was formally requested:

An ordinance to repeal Codified Ordinance Section 113.16 titled Revitalization District in order to enact a new Codified Ordinance Section 113.16 expanding the district.

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to approve the City Manager's request; President John Roskovics seconded.

Discussion: None.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

An ordinance enacting new Codified Ordinance Section 113.16 titled Revitalization District.

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: City Manager James Timonere explained that the expansion would extend the district from Fire Chicken on Lake Avenue to one parcel deep on both sides of Lake Avenue all the way to West 9th Street, and then back north on the east side of Lake Avenue to Fire Chicken.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

An ordinance to enter into a contract with Rocky Road Paving for the purpose of various street cut road restorations in an amount not to exceed \$14,000, to be funded from Fund 503.

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman seconded.

Discussion: None

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

City Manager Jame Timonere stated that the December Council meetings will include the budget presentation, approval of five union contracts, the non-union benefits package, and other important items.

The Arrowhead Time Capsule opening was successful, with items being cataloged and made available on the City website under Community > History and Time Capsule. Some items are being returned to families, while others may be displayed in storefronts on Main Avenue.

Curbside leaf bag pickup is currently in the Harbor area and will move to the wards next week, which will conclude curbside pickup for the season. Residents may still drop off leaf bags at Public Works.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked about the comprehensive plan community event recently held at the library. City Manager James Timonere stated that it was well-attended, with more than 50 people. He encouraged residents to complete the community survey, noting that over 200 submissions had already been received. The next community event is scheduled for March 26, 2026. City Manager James Timonere also stated the City's Port Authority and the County Port Authority are working on a Coastal Resiliency Plan. A community survey is also available for that project. Information on both surveys will be available on the City's social media accounts. The community survey is also available on the City's website. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked if the public could attend the steering committee meetings for the Master Plan. City Manager James Timonere stated that typically steering committee meetings are not open to the public, but the community meetings provide opportunities for public input based on information compiled from the committees.

City Solicitor

City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper addressed the public regarding zoning, housing and fire codes, emphasizing that those regulations exist for residents' protection. She explained that her office's job is to ensure compliance with the ordinances and to file for injunctive relief when necessary. She urged citizens who have concerns about ordinances to contact their Council representatives rather than taking frustrations out on her staff.

Finance Director

The following legislation was formally requested:

An ordinance authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Office of the Auditor of the State of Ohio for the City of Ashtabula's annual audit for Fiscal Year 2025.

Motion: President John Roskovics moved to approve the Finance Director's request; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio seconded.

Discussion:

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

An ordinance authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with CPA firm Ciuni and Panichi CPAs and Business Advisors 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 years ended December 31, 2025, December 31, 2026, and December 31, 2027, as well as the preparation of the report for the Board of Health.

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to approve the Finance Director's request; Vice President Russell Simeone seconded.

Discussion: Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked about the decrease in hours from 305 the first year to 272 in subsequent years. Finance Director Vladimir Kan explained that the first year is typically more expensive due to onboarding costs. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills also asked about the optional assistance for JEDD reporting at \$1,000 per JEDD and \$500 for review. Finance Director Vladimir Kan stated that those options were not included in the cost.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

An ordinance to make supplemental increases and decreases to appropriations in various funds for the current expenses and expenditures of the City of Ashtabula for the period January 1 through December 31, 2025, in the amount of \$77,500.

Motion: President John Roskovics moved to approve the Finance Director's request; Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero seconded.

Discussion: Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked about the \$34,000 for tree removal and the \$35,000 for fire escrow. Finance Director Vladimir Kan explained that the tree removal was an additional amount requested by Public Works, and the fire scow was for a type of security deposit bond for building improvements or demolitions that is returned once a project is completed.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion passed.

Clerk of Council

No report.

City Council Committee Reports

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman reported that the Ad Hoc Committee: Exploring Racism as a Public Health Crisis held a work session with Council at 5: 30 p.m. The committee is requesting that Council approve a more permanent entity to advise on inequities across wards and offer suggestions to remedy those issues and improve quality of life for all residents.

**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

NO DECEMBER MEETING

Committee Chair Jane DiGiacomo provided the report. In addition to her report, Committee Chair Jane DiGiacomo announced the Ashtabula Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 27, a free bird-seeking treasure hunt open to all. The count is a program of the National Audubon Society, an early winter bird census where volunteers across the U.S. count birds over a 24-hour period.

Finance & Personnel

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

Members: Chair Foglio, Vice Chair DiGiacomo, Roskovics

November 21

December 19

Public Works/Public Utilities/Cable/Schools

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

Members: Chair Mills, Vice Chair Guerriero, Roskovics

November 25

NO DECEMBER MEETING

Safety Forces

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

Members: Chair Guerriero, Vice Chair Foglio, Roskovics

December 11

Committee Chair Terence Guerriero provided the report.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked if cyclists riding on the wrong side of the road, particularly e-bikes, was discussed at the meeting. Committee Chair Terence Guerriero stated that it was not discussed. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman requested that it be added to next month's agenda.

Planning Commission and Ashtabula Historic Preservation Commission

President John Roskovics reported that the Planning Commission is not meeting this month as there are no agenda items. The Historic Preservation Committee met the previous week and approved a house for construction in the historical district. The owner may be building two houses and may request a special meeting to approve the second house.

Presentation of Legislation

President John Roskovics previewed the legislation.

Additional Formal Requests

Public Communications on Legislation

Blake Hinkle, of Union Avenue and W. 16th Street, spoke about the proposed tax abatement for Venice Elite Properties. He asked if Council would ever deny any abatement, expressing concern about out-of-town owners extracting wealth from the community while not contributing much in return. He noted that the property would be used as a short-term rental rather than housing for a local family.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero spoke in favor of the abatement as the property is in Ward 2. He noted that vacant lots generate very little in property taxes. He stated that incentivizing development would increase property values and eventually lead to higher tax revenues after the abatement period, while immediately generating revenue from other services like sewer, trash, and bed taxes.

President John Roskovics stated that short-term rentals bring visitors to the area who spend money at local businesses. He stated that it would be a rare occasion where he would vote against a tax abatement.

City Manager James Timonere stated that one of the reasons the tax abatement was not included in his report is because he requested it back in September. He stated that he also looked at the fact that it was an Airbnb on a property where all the homes are owner occupied. He went back to the owner and suggested a lower abatement percentage. The owner explained that he chose to invest in Ashtabula because of the tax incentive. City Manager James Timonere also stated that the Master Plan and zoning code update will provide an opportunity for infill housing that will stretch throughout the entire community. He stated that in some areas it will take tax abatement to create interest in development. Additionally, the Land Bank secured the loan needed to build the Welcome Home Ohio homes that had previously been discussed. He stated that a big component of that is going to be tax abatement.

Rebecca Quirk, of Ward 2, also spoke against the tax abatement. She stated that the property is already built and listed on Airbnb for over \$300 per night. She questioned why out-of-town owners should receive tax breaks while residents pay their fair share.

Abby Kovacs, of Jefferson, spoke about the impact of a 2021 bill introduced by State Representative Sarah Fowler Arthur that eliminated home rule for local municipalities regarding Airbnbs. She expressed concern about the growth of short-term rentals and the resulting decrease in affordable housing options.

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 - 190

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA TAX INCENTIVE AGREEMENT WITH VENICE ELITE PROPERTIES, LLC. FOR TAX ABATEMENT AT 100% FOR 7 YEARS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS LOCATED AT 231 LAKE AVENUE, ASHTABULA, OH 44004

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 191

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR OF THE STATE OF OHIO FOR THE CITY OF ASHTABULA'S ANNUAL AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 192

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CPA FIRM CIUNI AND PANICHI CPAS AND BUSINESS ADVISORS 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 YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025, DECEMBER 31, 2026 AND DECEMBER 31, 2027 AS WELL AS THE PREPARATION OF THE REPORT FOR THE BOARD OF HEALTH

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 193

AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL INCREASES AND DECREASES TO APPROPRIATIONS IN THE S.C.M.R. PUBLIC WORKS, AMC PROBATION, COURT SPECIAL PROJECT FUND, FIRE ESCROW 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

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-194

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT TO AMEND THE EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT WITH STACY MILLBERG, CLERK OF COUNCIL, TO CREDIT 10 YEARS OF PRIOR PUBLIC SERVICE FOR VACATION ACCRUAL PURPOSES

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 195
AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2024-151**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025 – 196
AN ORDINANCE REPEALING CODIFIED ORDINANCE SECTION 113.16 TITLED
REVITALIZATION DISTRICT IN ORDER TO ENACT NEW CODIFIED ORDINANCE SECTION
113.16 EXPANDING THE DISTRICT**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025 – 197
AN ORDINANCE ENACTING NEW CODIFIED ORDINANCE SECTION 113.16, TITLED
REVITALIZATION DISTRICT**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 198
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH
ROCKY ROAD PAVING FOR VARIOUS STREET CUT ROAD RESTORATIONS**

After the reading of the legislation titles, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked that Ordinance No. 2025-190, Ordinance No. 2025-196, and Ordinance No. 2025-197 be separated if Council decides to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda.

Motion: President John Roskovics moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of Ordinance No. 2025-190; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio seconded.

Discussion: None

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills

Nays: Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo
Motion failed.

Motion: President John Roskovics moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of Ordinance No. 2025-196; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio seconded.

Discussion: None

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills

Nays: Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo
Motion failed.

Motion: President John Roskovics moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of Ordinance No. 2025-197; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio seconded.

Discussion: None

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills

Nays: Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo
Motion failed.

President John Roskovics asked for a motion to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda for the remaining ordinances (2025-191, 2025-192, 2025-193, 2025-194, 2025-195, and 2025-198).

Motion: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: None

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, 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 1 Councilor Kym Foglio moved to waive the reading of the legislation; Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman seconded.

Discussion: None

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, 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 1 Councilor Kym Foglio 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 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, 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

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Legislation passed.

Ordinance No. 2025-190, Ordinance No. 2025-196, and Ordinance No. 2025-197 will be presented for a second reading at the December 1, 2025 Regular Council Meeting.

Unfinished Business

New Business

Liquor Permit - Main Avenue Performing Arts and Community Center Shea's Downtown

The business is located in Ward 4. No objections were raised to the permit application.

Tell Us Something We Don't Know

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills stated that Zonta will hold a lighting ceremony at the Lift Bridge on Tuesday, November 25th at 5:30 p.m. for domestic violence awareness. The event will include a prayer, hanging of a banner, lighting the bridge orange, and speakers.

The Ashtabula Downtown Development Association will host the annual Christmas Parade on November 21st at 7 p.m. with pre-parade events in Cornelius Park beginning at 6 p.m.

Public Communications on General Matters

Blake Hinkle thanked the councilors that voted to hold two readings on the tax abatement.

Cindy Payjac, of McNutt Avenue in Saybrook Township, asked about the status of the Carlisle building and other properties on Main Avenue. She expressed concerns about property maintenance issues throughout the City. City Manager James Timonere explained that the Carlisle project has faced several delays, including changes to state funding rules that affected the project's financial model. He noted that the City recently hired another code enforcement officer.

Heroldine Scruggs, of Cleveland Avenue, expressed frustrations about rental property owners who collect rent but do not maintain their properties. She urged City officials to hold the landlords accountable. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper explained the enforcement process, noting that the City files complaints and obtains court orders, but property owners often do just enough to comply temporarily. She explained that for companies that do not appear in court, the judge cannot issue arrest warrants, making enforcement challenging. City Manager James Timonere

added that approximately 80 percent of the City's code enforcement time is spent on rental properties, though he noted that problems are caused by both negligent landlords and problematic tenants.

Anthony Oquendo, of Ward 1, raised concerns about code enforcement issues in various areas in the City. He also asked about homeless encampments in the Gulf area, particularly one with a "private property" sign on a tent on City property. He questioned the ownership of certain parcels in the area. City Manager James Timonere explained that the City has been working with the Ashtabula Township Park Commission to address encampments in the Gulf, regardless of property ownership. He stated that camping is not permitted in the park. He added that there is a task force that identifies camps, notifies occupants they cannot stay, provides resources, and arranges cleanup.

Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio encouraged residents to contact their ward representatives directly with code enforcement concerns, noting that councilors can help expedite the process by taking pictures and forwarding issues to the City Manager.

Executive Session (if needed)

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m. by President John Roskovics.

Ashtabula City Council will meet again on Monday, December 1, 2025, in Council Chambers. A Public Hearing will be held at 5:30 p.m. The Pre-Council meeting will begin at 6 p.m., the Organizational Meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by the Regular Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

DATE APPROVED:

December 1, 2025

ATTESTED BY:

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

ATTESTED BY:

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