



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council Work Session Agenda
Monday, January 5, 2026 at 5:30 PM
4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of Work Session

Call to Order

The Work Session of the Ashtabula City Council was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Council President Roskovics.

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

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper

Absent: 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.

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors

Discussion

President John Roskovics began the discussion on the council rules, noting they had been previously approved but required some updates.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo raised the issue of Pre-Council meeting times, pointing out that according to the rules, Pre-Council should start at 6 p.m. She suggested returning to the 6 p.m. start time to allow more time for discussion before Regular Council meetings. City Solicitor Cecilia Copper clarified that the council rules state that Pre-Council starts at 6 p.m. unless another time is designated by the president. President John Roskovics stated that, often times, Council did not need an hour during Pre-Council, so it was moved to 6:30 p.m. He suggested waiting until the discussion on the proposed agenda changes to make the decision.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked for clarification regarding the building and room locations listed in Rule 11. City Manager James Timonere confirmed that the City now has two separate buildings with different addresses, with the current meeting taking place in the Council Chambers building and the other room being historically called the "Pre-Council Chambers" or the August Pugliese Conference Room.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman stated that the way the rules read, the normal start time for Pre-Council is 6 p.m. and if there is a need, then the Council President, Council Vice President, or majority vote of Council members can decide at a Regular meeting, to begin the next meeting at a time other than 6 p.m. She stated that Council has a pattern of starting at 6:30 p.m. City Manager James Timonere clarified that there was a vote at a meeting when Council decided to move the meeting from 6 p.m. to a standing 6:30 p.m. start time. It's never changed since that time.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero stated that he is in favor of starting at 6 p.m. as it would possibly allow time for a break in between meetings.

City Manager James Timonere stated that with the proposed agenda changes, it makes sense to begin Pre-Council at 6 p.m. so there is time for more discussion and then the Regular meeting will run more efficiently and quickly.

Discussion took place on the structure of Pre-Council meetings. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked if Council would be going through all the legislation during Pre-Council. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper explained the proposed agenda change where committee reports, administrative reports, discussions, and reviews of legislation would occur during Pre-Council, allowing for Regular Council meetings to move more efficiently. She stated that if Council decides to adopt the new agenda formats, it would make sense to start Pre-Council at 6 p.m. She also clarified that the Pre-Council meetings would be televised in addition to the Regular meetings. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated that it is also an open-ended agenda time wise because if Council does not finish their discussion by 7 p.m., it can be continued during the Regular meeting.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked if minutes would be taken during Pre-Council. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated that if Council wanted the Clerk of Council to take minutes and publish them for Pre-Council, they could direct her to do so, if she wasn't doing this already.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked for clarification on what would be considered "Special Items" as listed on the proposed new agenda. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated that special items could be resolutions or presentations. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked about the "Communications" section. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated that in the past, businesses or organizations would send letters to City Council. Those would be read during that time.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked about the proposed change to move the citizens' comment portion earlier in the meeting. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated this would give the public an opportunity to speak on legislation and nonlegislative items at the same time. It will also give Councilors and City officials an opportunity to research citizen concerns so they can provide more comprehensive answers at a future meeting.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills suggested reducing the maximum speaking time for citizens from five to three minutes. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman emphasized the importance of giving citizens adequate time to express their concerns. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper clarified that the five-minute limit is a maximum, not a requirement. Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked for clarification on whether citizens can speak more than once. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated that once a citizen has reached five minutes, they should not come up a second time.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo suggested having something in writing available for citizens so they know the rules for speaking at a meeting. Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero suggested having a slide with the information displayed on the screens. Vice President Russell Simeone also suggested having a timer displayed on the screens as well.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman suggested City Officials provide more in-depth reports about what their offices are working on to keep residents more informed. City Manager James Timonere stated that with the earlier start time for Pre-Council he will have more time to go into detail about things his staff is working on. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper agreed that more in-depth reports could be provided. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman also noted that on several occasions throughout the Council Rules document where it referred to reports, the Clerk of Council was left out.

Council agreed to direct the Clerk of Council to update the Council Rules document to reflect the correct building names and addresses throughout, as well as to correct a reference to Section A that should read Section D.

Council discussed the new agenda structure and supported trying the new format for approximately six months and then reassessing.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman distributed a document, with data she requested from the Clerk of Council, showing committee participation by Council members. She expressed concern about the criteria used for selecting committee members and suggested implementing a more structured, objective approach to ensure fair representation and inclusion. Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio stated that she has served on six committees and if she is asked to serve on another committee, she would. She stated that she had worked for the City for 34 years and is familiar with everyone's job. She stated that no one else

volunteered to be on the committee, so she volunteered her time to do it. President John Roskovics stated that the document does not reflect how many councilors volunteered to be on each committee, only the councilors that were on the committee. For example, on the hiring committee for Clerk of Council Burgan, there were only three people who volunteered, so those three people served on the committee. He stated that the document was not an accurate representation of what occurred. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman clarified that her concern was about establishing clear criteria for committee selections.

Council Rules

Proposed Agenda Changes

Public Comment (at Council's discretion)

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. by President John Roskovics.
Ashtabula City Council will meet again on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 in Council Chambers. The Pre-Council meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Regular Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

DATE APPROVED:

January 20, 2026

ATTESTED BY:

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

ATTESTED BY:

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