



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council Regular Meeting
Monday, January 5, 2026 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 7:00 p.m. by President John Roskovics. President John Roskovics offered the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A moment of silence, led by Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, was observed for Michael Charney, who passed away on January 2, 2026.

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: Finance Director Vladimir Kan, Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg

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

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, December 15, 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: 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

Hearing no corrections to the minutes, they were approved as presented.

Administrative Reports

President John Roskovics stated that the next Regular Council Meeting would be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 due to Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The Pre-Council Meeting will begin at 6 p.m. and the Regular Council Meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

Council voted to adopt a new agenda format that would take effect at the next meeting.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to adopt the new agenda format; 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.

City Manager

The following legislation was formally requested:

An ordinance to repeal payroll ordinance 2025-145 and replace it with a new payroll ordinance 2026-02 for changes to the compensation, salaries, and wages for employees of the Ashtabula City Municipal Court and Probation divisions.

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero 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.

An ordinance to repeal payroll ordinance 2025-164 and replace it with new payroll ordinance 2026-04 for changes to compensation, salaries, and wages for all City employees and the Ashtabula City Health District.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio 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 amending the amount the City will pick up of the statutorily required contribution to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund for the Police Division.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio 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 amending the amount the City will pick up of the statutorily required contribution to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund for the Fire Division.

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 to repeal 2013-71 for the purpose of enacting replacement legislation for pension pickup in the Fire Division.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to approve the City Manager's request; Vice President Russell Simeone 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 to repeal 2013-69 for the purpose of enacting replacement legislation for pension pickup for the Police Division.

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio 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 to amend the amount the City will pick up of the statutorily required contribution to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System.

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

Discussion: City Manager James Timonere explained that these ordinances were necessary to formalize the removal of the 5% pension pickup due to negotiations, and to properly document the statutorily required contributions that the City makes to the pension funds.

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 amendment was needed for Ordinance 2026-10 to add "except for elected officials" after mentioning City employees in Section 2.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to amend Ordinance 2026-10 to include the change; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

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 an agreement with GPD for design and plan preparation for sidewalk replacement along West Avenue between West 55th Street and West 51st Street, at a cost of \$28,000 to be paid from Fund 290.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to approve the City Manager's request; Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo 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 James Timonere also requested approval for appointments to the Administrative Review Board:

- Chrissy Speelman (term to expire 5/11/2030)
- Scott Lester (term to expire 4/1/2030)
- Reappointment of Roxene Trebuchon (term to expire 3/31/2030)
- Reappointment of Darren Capetina (term to expire 5/1/2030)

City Manager James Timonere explained that he seeks people with relevant expertise for board appointments, noting that these appointees include business owners and those with construction and real estate experience. He also mentioned that there would still be one vacancy on the board after these appointments.

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

Appointments approved.

City Manager James Timonere informed residents that Christmas trees could be placed on tree lawns for pickup until January 16, and that the City's night shift would be collecting them between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills reminded residents about the City ordinance prohibiting street parking when snow exceeds three inches. City Manager James Timonere confirmed that this is being enforced and that several tickets had been issued over the holiday.

City Solicitor

City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper requested an amendment to Rule 18 of the Rules of Council to clarify how legislation is prepared and presented to Council. She noted that she added language in Section 4 regarding "if necessary" when sending legislation to the appropriate standing committee, and added a Section 9 stating that new ordinances may also be requested directly by the City Manager, Finance Director, or City Solicitor without first presenting them to the board.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to adopt the Rule 18 amendment with the addition of "if necessary" to Section 4; Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero seconded.

Discussion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked for clarification regarding the procedures for ad hoc committees versus standing committees. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper stated that the procedure would be the same. If the ad hoc committee had legislation they wanted to pass, they would have it drafted and present it to Council. Council would then either vote to add it to the agenda or not. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman expressed concern about the recent situation where legislation to disband the ad hoc committee was placed on the agenda without the committee chair's knowledge. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper maintained that the situations were different due to the nature of ad hoc committees being created at Council's discretion rather than as a matter of right like standing committees.

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.

Finance Director

No report.

Clerk of Council

No report.

City Council Committee Reports

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

January 7

February 4

March 4

April 1

Finance & Personnel

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

Members: Chair Foglio, Vice Chair DiGiacomo, Roskovics

January 16

February 20

March 20

April 17

Public Works/Public Utilities/Cable/Schools

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

Members: Chair Mills, Vice Chair Guerriero, Roskovics

January 27

February 24

March 24

April 28

Safety Forces

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

Members: Chair Guerriero, Vice Chair Foglio, Roskovics

January 8

February 12

March 12

April 9

Planning Commission and Ashtabula Historic Preservation Commission

President John Roskovics reported that the Planning Commission approved the vacation of two alleys, one on Main Avenue and one on Lake Road. City Manager James Timonere clarified that these would be forwarded to Council for approval at a future meeting, noting that the owners on both sides were in favor of the vacations, so public hearings would not be needed. The Planning Commission also referred a zoning request for a property on West 41st Street to the City housing department.

Presentation of Legislation

President John Roskovics previewed the legislation.

Additional Formal Requests

Public Communications on Legislation

Overview / Discussion

Reading of Legislation

President John Roskovics presented the following legislation for Council's consideration.

Legislation - Enactment, Passage or Adoption

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 01

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2025-145 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENACTING REPLACEMENT LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 02

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING COMPENSATION, SALARIES AND WAGES TO EMPLOYEES OF THE ASHTABULA CITY MUNICIPAL COURT AND PROBATION DIVISIONS

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 03

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2025-164 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENACTING REPLACEMENT LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 – 04

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING COMPENSATION, SALARIES AND WAGES TO EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA AND THE ASHTABULA CITY HEALTH DISTRICT

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 05

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE AMOUNT THAT THE CITY OF ASHTABULA, OHIO WILL PICK UP OF THE STATUTORILY REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION TO THE OHIO POLICE AND FIRE PENSION FUND FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA, OHIO, POLICE DIVISION

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 06

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE AMOUNT THAT THE CITY OF ASHTABULA, OHIO WILL PICK UP OF THE STATUTORILY REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION TO THE OHIO POLICE AND FIRE PENSION FUND FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA, OHIO, FIRE DIVISION

RESOLUTION 2026 - 07

A RESOLUTION DISSOLVING THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO STUDY RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND DECLARING THEIR WORK COMPLETE

PULLED FROM THE AGENDA

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 08

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2013-71 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENACTING REPLACEMENT LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 09

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2013-69 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENACTING REPLACEMENT LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 10

ORDINANCE PROVIDING THAT THE CITY OF ASHTABULA WILL PICK UP THE STATUTORILY REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION TO THE OHIO PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA PURSUANT TO INTERNAL REVENUE CODE SECTION 414(h)(2)

President John Roskovics asked for a motion to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda for Ordinance No. 2026-01 through 2026-06 and Ordinance No. 2026-08 through 2026-10. Resolution No. 2026-07 was removed from the agenda.

Motion: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo moved to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda; Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio 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 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of the legislation; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills 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.

Unfinished Business

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked about the status of the Main Avenue project. City Manager James Timonere stated that the streetscape project was out for bid with bids due January 23 at 10 a.m. He also noted that they were collecting responses from contractors interested in doing work on individual buildings in both Ashtabula and Geneva. The project would not start until spring, allowing time to notify affected businesses.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo also inquired about the 2026 paving project. City Manager James Timonere explained that they were working on finalizing the list of streets to be paved this year, noting there had been changes to the amount the City would need to pay toward the Collins Boulevard project, which would allow for more streets to be paved. He hoped to have the list ready by early February.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked about the steering committee surveys. City Manager James Timonere reported that over 500 surveys had been turned in with a deadline of January 19 for submission, and that they were planning more social media posts to encourage participation.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman stated that she would like to request an executive session at the next meeting to share the results of exit interviews she conducted for two former employees. The purpose of the executive session would be for personnel purposes.

New Business

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero suggested that the City should consider having a fireworks display on July 4, 2026, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States. City Manager James Timonere stated that a county committee was planning events, including fireworks, though not in the City. He mentioned that fireworks on July 4 typically cost two to three times more than at other time of year due to high demand.

Liquor Permit - Family Dollar, 2036 E. Prospect Road

The business is located outside the City limits. No action was needed.

Tell Us Something We Don't Know

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo stated that a chili cook-off fundraiser for Relay for Life would be held on Saturday, January 10, from noon to 3 p.m. at the Jefferson Community Center.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman stated that the Ashtabula County Public Library would be hosting a Black History Community Art Project on Saturday, January 17, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., welcoming all ages to participate

in exploring and celebrating black history and culture.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills stated that Home Safe would be presenting a community education night on human trafficking at the Ashtabula County Library on January 22 from 5:30 to 7 p.m., focusing on local trends, protecting children, and internet safety.

Public Communications on General Matters

Jameka Hanna, of Carlson Lane, expressed concern about City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper's comment about audience members being present to support Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, which she stated was rude. She stated that City Solicitor Cooper assumed that a group of minority members who belong to the community were here to support one individual rather than thinking that citizens came to the meeting to be aware of what's happening in the City they live in.

Timothy Fleming, of Ohio Avenue, requested public records of all council members' email and text messages from September 1, 2025 to the present.

Haroldine Scruggs, of Cleveland Avenue, encouraged more minority citizens to regularly attend council meetings and speak for themselves individually rather than coming as a group only occasionally.

Liz Penna, of Lake Avenue and President of the Ashtabula NAACP Unit 351, emphasized the importance of diversity in board representation and encouraged minorities to be more visible and involved in City governance.

Rebecca Quirke, of Ward 2, addressed concerns about the handling of the ad hoc committee, stating that it's not enough to simply deny being racist, but rather important to look at one's own biases and learn from the data collected. She stated that the City's first action shouldn't have been to dismantle the committee. Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio stated that it was her understanding that the ad hoc committee was done and wished to transition to an advisory committee. In order for that to happen, the ad hoc committee has to be dissolved first. She stated that if it can be done all at once at the next meeting, then that's what will be done.

Louis Murphy, a member of the Ad Hoc Committee: Exploring Racism as a Public Health Crisis, stated that the committee had gathered significant data showing inequities in the City and expressed frustration that they were being "stonewalled" despite volunteering their time to help the City. He stated that by permitting the committee to become an advisory committee, they would have been eligible and far more competitive for additional grant funding, which would have helped alleviate many of the challenges they brought forth. He stated that the committee continues to make progress and the work is not complete.

Cameron Hartley, of New Lyme Township, spoke in support of the ad hoc committee, emphasizing that its purpose was to gather facts and propose practical solutions to address measurable health disparities. He stated that dissolving the committee would send a message that the work is finished or that the work is not worth doing. He stated that the committee has been doing what exactly what good governance requires: bringing residents, experts, and City leaders together to study the problem before policy decisions are made. Mr. Hartley stated that keeping the committee is not about politics. It is about data, compassion, and the health of every family in the City.

Jessica Leveto, a member of the committee, stressed the importance of trust, transparency, and process in governance, noting that the committee had made adjustments based on feedback. She stated that there was a lot of pushback and they met that pushback with adjustments. She stated that the request is to make the committee a committee for thriving communities so that people can value the trust they have in their elected officials and to ensure that all wards are being treated equal when they don't have data to really know. She pleaded with Council not to dissolve the ad hoc committee until a sustainable committee has been voted on.

Blake Hinkle, of Ward 1, stated that good governance is getting people involved, people speaking their truths, and listening. He stated that he feels as though Council doesn't do enough listening and there is very little deliberation.

Steve Chase, of Arlington Avenue, commented on the CRA tax abatements, noting that the 2008 ordinance already approved them and questioned why Council was voting on them again. He also suggested updating the CRA limits since they were based on 20-year-old information.

Haroldine Scruggs stated that she wanted to leave on a positive note and commented on how well the City public works staff plowed the roads. She also thanked Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills for helping her sister with a tree issue.

City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper clarified that her earlier comment about the audience supporting Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman was intended to refer to the entire diverse room, not specific individuals. She stated that she had been supportive of the ad hoc committee and worked closely with Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman to come up with a plan to move the committee forward.

Patrick Haywood, of Columbus Avenue, emphasized the importance of community members expressing themselves through committees and speaking out, even when they sometimes come across the wrong way. He stated that this town is more than buildings and bridges and it's important for everyone to stick together.

Evangelina Fleming, of Stark Avenue, expressed concern about the atmosphere at council meetings, which she described as hostile. She encouraged council members to walk through the neighborhoods in their wards and get to know the residents.

Executive Session (if needed)

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 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