



**City of Ashtabula**  
Ashtabula City Council  
Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting  
Friday, February 20, 2026 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, Member: President John Roskovichs

**Absent:** Vice Chair: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo, City Manager James Timonere

**Officers Present:** Finance Director Vladimir Kan, Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg, Assistant Finance Director Carolyn Sheldon, Water Pollution Control Superintendent Mark Verzella, Lt. Geoff Cannon, Chief Shawn Gruber, Chief Rob Stell

**Visitors:** Jessica Hampton, Gwendolyn Rebera, Jennifer Misel

**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**

**Finance Director's Report**

Finance Director Vladimir Kan introduced two new income tax specialists joining the department. Gwendolyn Rebera, an Ashtabula resident, holds a degree in business integrated services and brings extensive work experience from H&R Block and local CPA firms. Jennifer Misel, who joined the team two weeks ago, holds bachelor's and master's degrees in criminal justice and has extensive experience working in the court system for the City of Warren. Finance Director Vladimir Kan noted that the department is now fully staffed and does not anticipate any interruptions in providing income tax services. He also announced that the department would be adding two weekend dates to the filing season — April 4th and April 11th — and that the City Manager would post a flyer with dates and extended hours on the City's Facebook page.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan presented statistics on income tax collections and operations. Year-to-date collections, including interest and account collections, totaled almost \$900,000. Collections through the Ohio Attorney General's Office reached nearly \$570,000. Regarding account assessments for balance due assessments, Finance Director Vladimir Kan explained that the department had resumed the assessment process for both filers and non-filers. To date, the balance of assessed accounts is \$41,000, with 41 accounts currently in the assessment process. The balance of assessed accounts for non-filers is zero because the department is still in the implementation process, working to obtain guidelines from their financial software support team.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan detailed a significant backlog of non-filers that the department has identified. Approximately 3,000 non-filers since around 2019 have received failure-to-file letters but were not yet close to the assessment procedure. Mrs. Rebera has identified approximately 7,000 additional non-filers who were individual

taxpayers partially in the process but not fully there yet. In total, 8,500 non-filers — both individual taxpayers and businesses — were partially in the process.

The department plans to start a robust assessment process for non-filers once the income tax filing season concludes. Finance Director Vladimir Kan cautioned that Council members might start hearing complaints because of the large numbers involved. Due to capacity constraints, the department decided to process approximately 100 to 150 accounts per month in addition to normal income tax operations. At this pace, it would take approximately three to four years to complete the project. Finance Director Vladimir Kan estimated hundreds of thousands of dollars in missed revenues from these non-filers.

For 2025 tax filing data, the number of returns processed to date included both individual and net profit returns. The outstanding balance due on returns exceeded \$10,000. For 2024 tax filing data, the number of accounts currently on payment plans was 108, with a balance due of approximately \$150,000.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan informed the committee that he will be requesting \$8,000 in supplemental appropriations at the March 2 Regular Council meeting for upgrading the income tax software. Mrs. Rebera explained that through training with the program, she had discovered a module that would significantly increase the department's productivity. Currently, the process requires importing images, finding them, printing them, attaching them to individual tax returns, and ensuring all appropriate data is present to file returns. The new module would add images directly to the program, eliminating the need to print documents or search through files to ensure nothing was misfiled. Everything would be attached properly, allowing staff to focus on other important tasks.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan discussed the financial reports for the month of January. There were no concerns. He noted that the negative balance reflected in the Sanitation fund was because the City had not yet started receiving fees from the rate increase. In March, the balance would improve with the first fee collection. There was also a negative balance of \$37,000 in the Special Improvement Fund, due to the City not receiving property taxes yet. The first property tax collections are expected soon. Finance Director Vladimir Kan also reported no concerns with revenue and expenses.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan presented the December investment report, noting that interest rates across the yield curve were lower for 2025 except for the 30-year treasury bonds. He stated that this is typically the sign of a very strong economy ahead. The futures market was projecting the Federal funds rate to bottom out around 3% in 2026-2027. Inflation rates remained sticky and above the Federal Reserve's 2% target rate. Finance Director Vladimir Kan reported that interest earned in December was substantial. When asked about the current interest rate, Finance Director Vladimir Kan explained that looking at the portfolio itself, the weighted average yield to maturity was 3.94 percent. This meant that if the City held the same set of investments until maturity, the yield should be 3.94 percent. He noted that interest rates might decrease during the year based on market projections.

## **Income Tax Report**

## **Statement of Cash Position**

## **Statement of Cash Position with MTD Totals**

## **Revenue Report**

## **Expense Report**

## **Expense Report with Encumbrance Detail**

## **Investment Report**

## **City Manager's Report**

Committee Chair Kym Foglio discussed notes from City Manager Jim Timonere, in his absence. Movement is occurring in the Public Works Department due to a retirement. The department would also be posting two positions for the combo jet vac truck soon, which would lead to more hiring.

## **New Business**

## **Cell phones for councilors**

Committee Chair Kym Foglio reported on research she conducted regarding cell phones for councilors. She stated that she reached out to several other communities, including Conneaut, Geneva, Ashtabula Township, and the

County Commissioners, and only the County Commissioners have county-issued cell phones. None of the other jurisdictions provide cell phones to their elected officials.

The estimated cost would be approximately \$4,000 per year, with a rate of \$37.99 per month per councilor. The phones themselves would cost approximately 99 cents each. Committee Chair Kym Foglio stated that she did not want a second cell phone, as constituents could call her personal phone. President John Roskovics agreed, stating he still uses a landline and does not have an issue with constituents contacting him on his personal phone. However, the issue had been raised by one councilor who was not present at the meeting.

Assistant Finance Director Carolyn Sheldon suggested providing phones only to councilors who want them.

President John Roskovics stated that the concern about legal considerations was raised, specifically that personal cell phones could be subject to public records requests or subpoenas if used for City business. Committee Chair Kym Foglio stated that there are free options, including an app that can be downloaded.

Chief Shawn Gruber suggested an app called Ring Central, which is installed on a personal phone but designates a separate phone number. The app would keep City business separate on the same physical phone, with different ringtones and complete separation of communications. He stated that when a councilor is finished with City service, the app could simply be removed. This option would provide councilors with a separate line while maintaining just one phone.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **Next Meeting**

**March 20, 2026**

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m. by Committee Chair Kym Foglio.