



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council
Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting
Friday, April 17, 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, Vice Chair: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo, Member: President John Roskovics

Absent: Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, Finance Director Vladimir Kan, Assistant Finance Director Carolyn Sheldon, Chief Geoff Cannon

Visitors: Jessica Hampton, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman

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 provided the report. The first quarter of 2026 showed unprecedented income tax collection results, with the City collecting more than in any previous year's first quarter combined. The Income Tax Division successfully completed the tax season with extended hours and Saturday operations, collecting over \$200,000 in the reporting week alone. He emphasized that constituents were very satisfied with the outstanding customer service provided this year. Finance Director Vladimir Kan noted that filings received through email, mail, and drop-offs that were received and processed before April 15 would not incur late filing penalties. The department is planning to mail the first 200 letters to non-filing accounts to reduce direct interaction volume due to current capacity constraints. Finance Director Vladimir Kan distributed a frequently asked questions list that will be posted on the City website, used in email responses from the Income Tax Division, and recorded on voice messages for the department's telephone lines. He assured that the department would help all non-filing accounts become compliant again, with residents needing to visit the office during normal hours, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Finance Director Vladimir Kan expressed confidence that all goals will be met by the end of the fiscal year, noting that charts and statistics show only positive developments and that the Income Tax Division is in excellent shape.

Regarding JEDD (Joint Economic Development District) income tax revenue, Finance Director Vladimir Kan acknowledged some instability in the revenue curves that will be addressed after completing processing of all outstanding income tax filings. The department is researching the status of all businesses subject to income tax, having consulted with the City Solicitor's Office about resolutions that may grandfather businesses established before JEDD development as exempt from income tax requirements.

Vice Chair Jane DiGiacomo asked what year the JEDD started. Finance Director Vladimir Kan stated that the JEDD was established in 2013 with Route 20 updates in 2015. City Manager James Timonere noted that there have been eight or nine different additions since. He explained that businesses like Family Dollar, Dunkin' Donuts, and new plaza developments by Walmart are part of the JEDD, while Walmart itself predates the JEDD and is not included. City Manager James Timonere detailed the process for determining JEDD inclusion, explaining that the county must notify the City when there's a change of use or when a new sewer tap is assessed. Once a parcel is included in the JEDD, all future business in that location remain subject to JEDD requirements.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan provided a sanitation update for Ward 1 and Ward 2. The Finance Department is in the process of updating its database of trash and recycling totes and has found inaccurate records in the billing system. The City spent approximately \$250,000 to purchase the totes. The department identified 350 accounts with missing information that will receive mail requesting updated information to ensure accurate billing.

The statement of cash position report reflects negative balances in some funds, which Finance Director Vladimir Kan attributed to delayed revenue receipt and indicated this is not unusual for this time of year and does not raise serious concerns. He explained that in the coming months, he will prepare supplemental appropriations for the Health Department due to increased overtime costs. The Health Commissioner is investigating what factors are driving the increased overtime volume compared to the previous year. For Public Works, the department is operating in long-term savings mode for motor maintenance since they now service police department vehicles in-house. This includes testing all vehicle electronics internally, which has generated significant overtime costs requiring approximately \$15,000 in additional funding to last through the fiscal year. City Manager James Timonere explained that new staff capabilities and the recent purchase of diagnostic equipment allows the City to avoid \$80-\$100 per diagnostic previously paid to outside vendors, providing cost savings even with overtime expenses.

Statement of Cash Position

Statement of Cash Position with MTD Totals

Revenue Report

Expense Report

Expense Report with Encumbrance Detail

City Manager's Report

City Manager James Timonere provided updates on personnel movements, ongoing projects and upcoming council items. He reported significant staffing changes in sanitation and public works due to two additional positions hired for sewer jet operations. Park staff has also started, bringing several new people into sanitation. After all rotations are complete, the department will only be down one position, with hiring continuing. Entrance testing is scheduled for the fire department, and lateral hires are being pursued for the police department.

City Manager James Timonere detailed the Collins Boulevard bid situation, noting it came in almost 34 percent higher than estimated. Through negotiations with small cities funding, additional funding was secured to cover the majority of the extra \$500,000 cost, leaving the City responsible for just under \$49,000 additional. With the previously committed \$76,000, the City's total out-of-pocket cost will be slightly over \$100,000 for the \$1.9 million project. The funding ordinance will come to Council on Monday and requires quick turnaround since a conditional award meeting was held and approval is needed to move forward.

Several other projects coming before Council on Monday include the Hulburt South GPD engineering contract funded by a Critical Infrastructure Grant, the West Avenue sidewalk program contract from an allocation grant, and the time-sensitive Michigan Avenue OPWC project. City Manager James Timonere explained that the Michigan Avenue project required re-engineering due to utility conflicts preventing installation of an additional line. The intersection has been redesigned similar to the W. 14th St. and Lake Avenue intersection, using a sweep configuration instead of straight-in water flow to reduce stress on manholes and improve flow to the EQ Basin. This redesign should also help alleviate flooding issues on W. 13th Street and Union Avenue.

Regarding the West Avenue sidewalk project, City Manager James Timonere clarified that it involves point repairs from south of the Route 20 overpass through West 38th Street, with a total contract cost of \$168,000 partially funded by a \$120,000 allocation grant. The project includes pedestrian crossing upgrades at the West 38th Street and West Avenue intersection due to bike trail connectivity. Vice Chair Jane DiGiacomo asked about tree damage

and sidewalk repair responsibility. City Manager James Timonere clarified that while the City removes problem trees, property owners remain responsible for sidewalk repairs caused by tree root damage. The City maintains a reimbursement program providing approximately \$2 per square foot for concrete costs, spending around \$20,000 annually in reimbursements for sidewalk repairs.

City Manager James Timonere announced ODOT notification requirements for salt quantity submissions for the upcoming winter season, expecting higher prices than the previous year.

City Manager James Timonere provided updates on Water Pollution Control projects, noting that plans are progressing for major infrastructure work that may require property acquisition to relocate the Harbor pump station. Point work bidding is targeted for year-end, while pump station reconfiguration involving new lines under the river will require over a year of permitting and will be a substantial financial investment.

New Business

Next Meeting

May 15, 2026

Adjournment