



**City of Ashtabula**  
Ashtabula City Council  
Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting  
Friday, May 15, 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:**

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

**Visitors:** Assistant Finance Director Carolyn Sheldon, Chief Geoff Cannon, Water Pollution Control Superintendent Mark Verzella

**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**

**Special Guest Presentation**

**Finance Director's Report**

Finance Director Vladimir Kan reported that income tax collections have been consistent with previous years and are trending higher in 2026. Approximately 200 letters were recently sent to non-filing accounts, and the City has already begun receiving responses from residents inquiring about filing for missed years. Processing of these accounts is expected to begin shortly, with the goal of generating additional revenue by year-end.

Finance Director Kan presented the quarterly investment report with macroeconomic data for the first quarter of 2026. Key highlights included: interest rates were generally higher in March due to rising energy prices; the Fed futures market projected no rate moves in 2026; and economic growth for the fourth quarter of 2025 was revised downward to 0.7%, from a prior estimate of 1.4%. The labor market showed limited hiring activity, and while the rate of change of inflation is slowing, inflation remains above average. Interest received for the first three months of 2026 totaled \$83,599.83.

Regarding the monthly cash basis investment report, Finance Director Vladimir Kan noted that interest rates were generally higher in April 2026 due to inflationary pressures, and the Fed was expected to hold rates steady through the year. Economic growth for the first quarter of 2026 improved to 2.0%, compared to 0.5% in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan noted that he will introduce several supplemental appropriations during the upcoming Council meeting Monday, including approximately \$270,000 for the City paving project. City Manager James Timonere clarified that this represents rebalancing of funds, money carried over from last year for West 19th Street and a required payment to the state for Collins Boulevard that needs to be incorporated into the current year's budget.

Finance Director Vladimir Kan and City Manager James Timonere agree that the sanitation fund is an area requiring monitoring. City Manager James Timonere noted that the current billing cycle timing means recent rate increases are only now beginning to be reflected in revenue. He also reported that the Solid Waste District contract for the Saturday recycling drop-off was renegotiated, with the county contribution increasing from approximately \$240 to \$420 per Saturday, which will help offset operational costs.

Looking ahead, City Manager James Timonere identified significant capital needs for the sanitation fund, including replacement of sanitation trucks (approximately \$275,000 to \$300,000 each), roof repair at the sanitation facility, and completing citywide curbside recycling at an estimated cost of \$300,000. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper suggested her staff would research possible avenues to fund the recycling program.

City Manager James Timonere also provided an update on infrastructure coordination with Aqua Ohio and Dominion Energy, noting ongoing utility cuts throughout the City. He advised that Lake Avenue waterline replacement is planned in two phases, to the underpass this year, and from the underpass to Route 20 the following years, with the goal of paving Lake Avenue in 2027. GPD Group is being engaged for planning, and Aqua Ohio is expected to contribute significantly toward repaving costs.

## **May 2026 Income Tax Report**

### **Statement of Cash Position**

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

### **Revenue Report**

### **Expense Report**

### **Expense Report with Encumbrance Detail**

### **Quarterly Cash Basis Investment Report**

### **Monthly Cash Basis Investment Report**

## **City Manager's Report**

City Manager James Timonere provided updates on several personnel and operational matters. One new police officer, from the academy, has been hired. The department is still down approximately one officer, with lateral hiring postings currently active. The entrance examination for firefighter candidates has been scheduled for June 7 and has been advertised. Significant turnover has occurred in the Sanitation Department due to retirements and new positions added for the sewer jet operation. One additional hire is underway, with at least one more position expected to open following the retirement of Jack Fortune later this month. Part-time seasonal staffing remains a challenge. The City has received only two applications for part-time seasonal positions. The hourly rate has been increased to \$15 to \$17 per hour.

City Manager James Timonere also provided an update on securing lifeguards for the season. He explained that the YMCA is also struggling to staff their own pool. A new insurance requirement now mandates that a supervisor, who cannot simultaneously serve as a lifeguard, be physically present whenever lifeguards are on duty, effectively requiring three staff members to provide two lifeguards. As a result, the hourly cost of the beach guard contract is expected to increase significantly. City Manager James Timonere restructured the contract to request focus on a total cost-per-hour model rather than a per-lifeguard rate. The start date for beach guarding will be pushed back approximately one week from the previous June 22 start date. It was noted that Ashtabula is the only municipality in the county maintaining lifeguards at a public beach.

City Manager James Timonere noted that the new fire truck had begun assembly.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **Court Credit Card**

Discussion took place regarding the Municipal Court's use of the City credit card. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper reported that a journal entry had been submitted by the court identifying certain expense categories, including recovery court advisory meetings, leadership meetings, staff events, and employee trainings, as permitted charges on the City card, to be paid from Court Special Projects funds.

Committee Chair Kym Foglio expressed concern that allowing food and staff event purchases on the City credit card violates the City credit card policy, which explicitly prohibits such expenditures. She emphasized that the issue is one of consistency: the same rules should apply to all City employees and departments. City Manager James Timonere agreed, stating that he does not authorize such purchases for his own staff, and that he does not believe the policy should be changed.

Two possible paths forward were discussed: requesting additional documentation (such as meeting agendas, attendee lists, and minutes) for flagged charges as a condition of approval, or rescinding the Court's access to the City credit card. It was acknowledged that rescinding the credit card would likely push the Court to obtain its own credit card and ultimately create additional work for the Finance Department. Committee Chair Kym Foglio also raised the matter of court-issued gift cards and recommended that for accountability and protection for all parties, the Court should record each gift card number, the date issued, and obtain the recipient's signature.

The committee directed Finance Director Kan to send a memo to the Court requesting additional documentation for the disputed charges, and continue monitoring the account. It was acknowledged that the Court retains the authority to direct payment from Court Special Projects funds but committee members stressed the importance of maintaining equitable standards across City operations.

## **New Business**

### **Next Meeting**

#### **Reschedule June meeting due to Juneteenth holiday**

The June 19, 2026, meeting is canceled. The next meeting will be July 17, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m. by Committee Chair Kym Foglio.