



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council Pre-Council Agenda
Monday, June 15, 2026 at 6:00 PM
Council Chambers
4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of a Pre-Council Meeting

Call to Order

The Pre-Council meeting of the Ashtabula City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President John Roskovics.

Roll Call

Members Present: President John Roskovics, 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: Vice President Russell Simeone, Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg
Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper, Finance Director Vladimir Kan

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors

President's Report and Regular Meeting Review

President John Roskovics noted that the next Regular Council meeting would be held on Monday, July 6, at 6 p.m. He reminded members that a budget hearing had taken place earlier that evening at 5:30 p.m., and that the July 6th meeting will include a vote to send the budget to the county.

Administrative Reports

City Manager

City Manager James Timonere presented the following ordinances for consideration:

- An ordinance authorizing change order no. 1 with Lake County Landscape and Supply for the West Avenue Sidewalk Project. City Manager James Timonere explained that there is no modification to the contract cost. The purpose of the change order is to correct the wage language in the contract from "prevailing wage" to "Davis-Bacon wage" as required by the applicable funding source.
- An ordinance authorizing the purchase of a used garbage truck from Refuse Equipment and Truck Services for an amount not to exceed \$63,500.
- An ordinance authorizing an addendum to the existing agreement with Concierge Nurse Navigator to authorize a rate increase for the service, from \$15 to \$18, as part of the City's ongoing healthcare renewals.
- An ordinance authorizing a contract with the YMCA for lifeguard services at Walnut Beach in an amount not to exceed \$41,215.20, to be funded from the park levy fund. City Manager James Timonere noted this is a significant increase over last year's actual expenditure of approximately \$15,000 to \$18,000, attributing the increase to a policy change by the YMCA requiring a manager or supervisor onsite in addition to lifeguards, bringing staffing from two to three personnel, plus an administrative fee. He emphasized that the contract amount represents the maximum if the beach is guarded every day, and that actual costs will be lower given weather variability.
- An ordinance authorizing the City to partner with the county in filing an Ohio Department of Development CHIP (Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program) application.

- An ordinance authorizing change order no. 1 with Catts Construction for the Main Avenue Streetscape Project for a deduction of \$3,276. City Manager James Timonere explained that the reduction resulted from substituting concrete fill in place of a lower asphalt base layer within a trench, which proved cheaper and more efficient given concrete trucks were already onsite. The project is now proceeding to the final asphalt top coat.
- An ordinance repealing ordinance 2026-54, a Memorandum of Understanding with Eastgate Regional Council of Governments for the Appalachian Community Grant Facade Program. City Manager James Timonere explained that the City's current procurement policy is incompatible with the requirements of the grant program, and that routing the funds through Eastgate, whose procurement policy is compliant, provides a workable solution. Under the MOU, the City will continue to play an active administrative role, assisting businesses with bids and contracts, while Eastgate manages procurement.

The following ordinance will be presented at a future meeting:

- An ordinance authorizing a contract with Waste Equipped LLC, a SourceWell contract vendor, for the purchase of recycling and rubbish containers in an amount not to exceed \$296,030, to be funded from Fund 412.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked how many businesses submitted applications to participate in the facade program. City Manager James Timonere stated that, originally, 24 businesses had applied to participate and there are still between 22 and 24 participating businesses. He reported that over half of them have contracts out with some work already underway. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked what criteria may have prevented the continual participation. City Manager James Timonere explained that there was a deadline because of the time frame that the money had to be spent. The only criteria that somebody could not participate was if they owed back taxes such as property tax. He also noted that there have been discussions with people who had vacant buildings who wanted to be part of the program; however, they had no plans for what they were going to do with the funds or what they would do with the building if they received the funds. He stated that there were approximately three that were denied for that reason. He stated that there are 24 roofing projects, and a lot of awnings, doors, and windows. Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked if there have been any issues getting contractors. City Manager James Timonere stated that so far it has not been an issue. There are pre-bid meetings where contractors show up and learn about the scope of the entire project, and decide whether to bid on it.

President John Roskovics asked for clarification on which fund the garbage truck purchase would be taken out of. City Manager James Timonere confirmed it would be taken out of Fund 412, which was the permanent improvement fund which contains a line item for sanitation equipment. President John Roskovics also asked if the \$296,000 for the recycling bins was coming out of that fund as well. City Manager James Timonere confirmed that it would be funded from Fund 412 as well. President John Roskovics stated that he could not support the expenditure at this time, citing budget concerns and the need to preserve reserve funds. He acknowledged the City's improved financial position but emphasized the purchase does not constitute an emergency and that residents would prioritize other needs such as road paving and addressing dilapidated buildings. City Manager James Timonere acknowledged President John Roskovics' position, noting his own fiscal conservatism, and highlighted the value of the city's investment strategy and carryover balances.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked what would happen to the old garbage truck that was being replaced. City Manager James Timonere stated that the old truck was not roadworthy and would be placed for auction. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills also asked for clarification on some of the budget items in the CHIP grant application. City Manager James Timonere explained that the ordinance was simply authorization to partner with the county to apply. The City administers CHIP funds distributed through the City. The county serves as the lead applicant, which results in greater funding than applying independently. He noted that the City did not receive this grant the prior year and expressed hope for success this year. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked about the ending date for the Appalachian grant. City Manager James Timonere confirmed the deadline to spend the grant funds remains October 31, 2026. He also reported that the light poles for Main Avenue remain on schedule for July delivery.

Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio asked about the status of the old Municipal Building on Main Avenue. City Manager James Timonere reported that City officials are meeting with someone in the next few weeks to discuss a potential project there.

City Manager James Timonere also reminded residents that curbside leaf bag pickup has ended and residents can drop off leaf bags at Public Works.

Finance Director

Finance Director Vladimir Kan presented the following ordinances for consideration:

- An ordinance to adopt the City of Ashtabula Unclaimed Funds Policy, as recommended by state auditors. The policy established standardized procedures for identifying, administering, and returning unclaimed funds.
- An ordinance authorizing the Finance Director to determine salary allocations among various city funds, which is also a recommendation of the state auditors.
- An ordinance to adopt an amended Capital Improvement Policy reducing the capitalization threshold from \$25,000 to \$2,500. Finance Director Vladimir Kan explained that the change will not affect the GAAP conversion process, but it will allow greater flexibility in accessing the Permanent Improvement Fund (Fund 412). The change was requested by City Manager James Timonere to address operational needs.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked for clarification on Ordinance 2026-114 and whether it was simply for audit compliance. City Manager James Timonere explained that the practice of allocating portions of management salaries across funds such as sanitation and water pollution, has been ongoing but now requires a formal written policy. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked if the City was able to collect interest on unclaimed funds. Finance Director Vladimir Kan explained that unclaimed funds that are held in trust (Fund 166) for five years and remain unclaimed are returned to the originating fund, not the general fund. The City retains interest earned on unclaimed funds via a sweep account arrangement; interest is not returned to the lawful owners. He noted that owners may claim funds at any time through a strict verification process, regardless of where the funds are held.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked how the City's investments help when there is a deficit. City Manager James Timonere explained that the City maintains funds in two accounts, a STAR Ohio account and a longer-term managed account. These reserves represent carryover balances invested for cash flow purposes. Even in a period of deficit spending, existing invested funds will be drawn down rather than new monies added. He noted that when he began, the City had a carryover of just over \$100,000.

City Solicitor

City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper reported that she was contacted by the Geauga County Prosecutor's Office, which handles all municipal cases in the Chardon Municipal Court, to serve as a special prosecutor for a conflict case. She noted this arrangement also creates a professional reciprocal relationship through which Geauga County may review a conflict case from the City. She stated she has a similar arrangement with Conneaut.

Council unanimously supported the arrangement.

City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper also reported that the City is now in a legal position to proceed with cleanup of the nuisance property on E. 23rd Street. Earlier confusion regarding whether the homeowner had been properly served has been resolved by the passage of time. Thirty days had elapsed since service was believed to have occurred, and no appeal was filed. City Manager James Timonere noted that the City will contact scrappers to obtain cost estimates, after which the matter will proceed to bid and appropriation.

City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper raised a concern, on behalf of law enforcement and first responders, regarding access through parade route barricades during the 2026 Memorial Day Parade. She requested that going forward, whoever provides instructions to volunteers manning blocked streets make clear that first responders and law enforcement must be permitted to pass through, particularly when accessing the police department or fire station. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman responded to the concern, regarding her traffic control assignment during the parade. She detailed her actions, asserting that she managed her post with full impartiality and that an unmarked vehicle, without active emergency signaling, had attempted to bypass traffic cones, which, if allowed, would have compromised the integrity of the area being protected. She expressed that providing an access list to volunteers in advance would prevent future misunderstandings. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper clarified that the specific concern also involved a marked police vehicle and an officer in uniform being prevented from passing. Both City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper and Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman agreed that clear protocols for first responder vehicle access should be established for all future events.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked for a status update on properties associated with a deceased landlord. City Solicitor Cecilila Cooper stated that those cases have been referred to a court-appointed guardian and tax foreclosure filings on several of those properties are beginning to come through. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills also asked for a status update on Harbor Ridge. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper reported that a dispute exists between the property owner and the City regarding whether work has been completed. The City's Planning Office is contacting contractors directly to verify the scope of the completed work. Until City inspectors confirm units are habitable, those units are to remain vacated. Approximately eight units in one building remain vacated. A judgment entry is in place, and failure to demonstrate adequate progress could result in a contempt of court citation.

Clerk of Council

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

July 1

August 5

September 2

October 7

Committee Chair Jane DiGiacomo provided the report.

Finance & Personnel

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

Members: Chair Foglio, Vice Chair DiGiacomo, Roskovics

June 19 — CANCELLED

July 17

August 21

September 18

Public Works/Public Utilities/Cable/Schools

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

Members: Chair Mills, Vice Chair Guerriero, Roskovics

June 23

July 28

August 25

September 22

Safety Forces

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

Members: Chair Guerriero, Vice Chair Foglio, Roskovics

July 9

August 13

September 10

October 8

Committee Chair Terence Guerriero provided the report.

Planning Commission and Ashtabula Historic Preservation Commission

Discussion of New Business/Proposed Legislation

Discussion of Old Business/Legislation on for 2nd Reading

Status Update on Proposed Thriving Communities Commission Ordinance

Discussion for the Good of the Order

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. by Council President Roskovics.
Ashtabula City Council will meet again on Monday, July 6, 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:

July 6, 2026

ATTESTED BY:

John S. Roskovics

John S. Roskovics, President of Council

ATTESTED BY:

Stacy L. Millberg

Stacy L. Millberg, Clerk of Council