



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council Pre-Council Agenda
Monday, July 20, 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, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo
Absent: None

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

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors

President's Report and Regular Meeting Review

President John Roskovics reported several matters arising from the recent resignation of Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, which necessitated committee reassignments. He reported the following changes: Vice President Russell Simeone agreed to serve on the Community Development / Economic Development / Parks & Recreation Committee, which meets in the afternoon to accommodate his work schedule. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills moved to the Finance and Personnel Committee, which meets in the morning. President John Roskovics assumed the role of Chair of the Finance & Personnel Committee. Council was advised that these changes would be reflected in the committee roster by the Clerk of Council.

President John Roskovics asked for a voice vote to approve the committee reassignments.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman

Motion carried.

President John Roskovics also reported that the deadline for applications through the Democratic Party for the Ward 1 vacancy has been extended to July 31, 2026, to satisfy a need to publish a public notice in the newspaper. Party leadership indicated that candidate interviews are expected to take place during the first week of August.

Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman raised a question, recurring from prior meetings, regarding the process by which councilors are assigned to serve on committees. President John Roskovics explained that appointments have historically been made at the President's discretion, taking into account councilor availability, and that the practice has been in place for many years. Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero noted that his own assignments were made by direct inquiry from the President. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman recommended a consistent, standard procedure by which councilors are either given the opportunity to serve or are assigned and that is based on some criteria, whether it's experience, background, availability, education, etc., making the process fair

as opposed to the discretion of one person. City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper cited Rule 16, Part 1(a) of the Rules of Council, which stated that standing committees shall be appointed with input from each member of council and a simple majority approval of Council.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills requested a resolution to honor former Assistant Finance Director Carolyn Sheldon on her retirement; President John Roskovics seconded.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: President John Roskovics, Vice President Russell Simeone, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman, Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Administrative Reports

City Manager

City Manager James Timonere presented the following ordinances for consideration:

- An ordinance authorizing the City to apply for, accept, and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) agreement for the planning, design, and/or construction of wastewater facilities, with Fund 504 designated as the dedicated repayment source. The application must be submitted to meet an August deadline. Failure to apply would require the City to wait until December to reapply. The estimated loan amount is \$23 million, with a projected project completion date of 2029 and a first repayment date of 2030. Planned improvements include the installation of a redundant centrifuge, removal of the existing belt press, new centrifuge controls, replacement of all digester lids with cleaning, administrative building repairs, and various other infrastructure upgrades. Items not included in this scope are aeration tank work, grit removal improvements, a plant notification/alert system, chemical feed improvements, and fleet vehicle acquisitions. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked about the repayment period. City Manager James Timonere indicated that both 15-year and 30-year terms had been discussed, and that the final terms and interest rate would be presented to Council prior to final approval. She also asked how long these repairs have gone unattended. City Manager James Timonere noted that significant projects had been completed in prior years, including the transition from chlorine gas to UV treatment and the rebuilding of both final settling tanks, but acknowledged that a project of this magnitude had not been undertaken in some time. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked if the City had received results from the recent mixing zone study. City Manager James Timonere reported that the spring study results were favorable and were reviewed in a Teams call with the EPA earlier that day. Some adjustments to methodology may be required for the summer study. The summer study involves significant logistical coordination, including a 10-day window free of vessel traffic in the slip, coordination with Kinder Morgan, and access to specialized equipment that is scarce nationwide.
- An ordinance requesting disposal of obsolete vehicles. City Manager James Timonere explained that the vehicles would be offered for sale through a sealed bid process, with listings to be published in the newspaper and on the City website. Proceeds would be returned to the originating fund. In the event no bids are received, the vehicles would be offered to a scrapyard for their scrap value.

The following ordinance will be presented at a future meeting:

- An ordinance authorizing a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) residential tax abatement for River to Rail Development Inc. at 725 East 15th Street. The project involves residential construction intended for long-term rental use. The applicant is requesting 100% abatement for seven years. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman inquired about the status of the City's broader CRA policy review. City Manager James Timonere indicated that work on this had paused due to competing priorities and offered to present an update at the Community Development / Economic Development / Parks & Recreation Committee meeting, likely in September. President John Roskovics noted the importance of the tax abatement program, citing a developer at a recent Historic Commission meeting who credited the CRA abatement with enabling over \$1 million in residential development in the Historic Harbor district.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked if the new sidewalks on Main Avenue would be sealed. City Manager James Timonere indicates this was likely included in the bid specifications and agreed to confirm. He also noted

that upon completion, Main Avenue merchants will be advised to use appropriate ice melt product rather than salt to protect new concrete.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo raised a constituent concern regarding a blind resident on Samuel Avenue who faces hazardous walking conditions due to broken sidewalks and encounters with loose dogs that threaten his guide dog. City Manager James Timonere acknowledged that sidewalk enforcement has been limited but noted the existence of the City's sidewalk replacement program, which covers a portion of replacement costs for property owners.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked about the progress of the new railroad bridge being constructed over the Gulf. City Manager James Timonere confirmed the project is underway and that the new bridge is being built beneath the existing structure, with the old bridge removed once the new span reaches the appropriate stage. The rail line disruption is expected to be minimal. The City has been in discussions with Norfolk Southern about potentially retaining the temporary construction bridge as a river crossing for future trail connectivity in the Gulf area. Completion is anticipated in late 2028.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills raised a question about the status of compliance with previously adopted requirements for homes accessible via alleyways to display their addresses from the rear. City Manager James Timonere indicated he would follow up on the timeline and current compliance status.

Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo noted that she has received complaints about the appearance of Cornelius Park and suggested Council work to a solution to improve the area.

Finance Director

No report.

City Solicitor

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; Holman; Vacant

August 5

September 2

October 7

November 4

December 2

Committee Chair Jane DiGiacomo reported that the new skate park at Walnut Beach has been well received by the community. A recent cleanup at South Park was conducted as a joint effort between City workers and community volunteers, generating additional interest in future cleanup events. She agreed to announce upcoming cleanup opportunities at Council meetings.

Finance & Personnel

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

Members: Chair Roskovics, Vice Chair DiGiacomo, Mills

August 21

September 18

October 16

November 20

December 18

Committee Chair John Rosckovics provided the report.

Public Works/Public Utilities/Cable/Schools

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

Members: Chair Mills, Vice Chair Guerriero, Roskovics

July 28

August 25

September 22

October 27

November 24

December 22

Safety Forces

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

Members: Chair Guerriero, Vice Chair Roskovics, Vacant

August 13

September 10

October 8

November 12

December 10

Committee Chair Terence Guerriero provided the report.

Planning Commission and Ashtabula Historic Preservation Commission

President John Roskovics reported that the Planning Commission recently approved an electronic sign application for a church on Route 20.

The Historic Preservation Commission met and approved a new entrance door for a building in the Harbor district, paint colors for a building on Bridge Street, and reviewed preliminary plans for new town homes and side-by-side residential units in the Historic Harbor neighborhood. The total investment represented by these projects exceeds \$1.2 million in the historic district alone. President John Roskovics further noted that a recently completed building at the corner of Franklin and 4th Street had two tenants secured from out of town prior to construction completion, reflecting positive demand for the newly developed housing.

Discussion of New Business/Proposed Legislation

Discussion of Old Business/Legislation on for 2nd Reading

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills inquired about the status of the Hulbert Avenue paving project. City Manager James Timonere confirmed that the project is planned for next year, with bid documents to be assembled over the winter.

Discussion for the Good of the Order

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero offered a public apology for remarks made off the record during a break at the previous Council meeting, which were inadvertently captured by the open microphones. He acknowledged that the comments were inappropriate and had nothing to do with City business. He stated that he was in the wrong and offered his sincere apology.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. by Council President Roskovics.

Ashtabula City Council will meet again on Monday, August 3, 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:

August 3, 2026

ATTESTED BY:

John S. Roskovics
John S. Roskovics, President of Council

ATTESTED BY:

Stacy L. Millberg
Stacy L. Millberg, Clerk of Council