



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council Regular Meeting
Monday, July 20, 2026 at 7:00 PM
Council Chambers
4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President John Roskovics.

Prayer

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero offered the opening prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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:

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

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.

Reading of Legislation

Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg read the legislation titles to be considered at the meeting.

Motion to Approve the Order of the Agenda

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero moved to approve the order of the agenda; Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman seconded.

Discussion: None

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.

Special Items

Communications

Citizen Comment and Community Announcements

Tyler Diaz, a former Ashtabula resident currently living in Geneva, asked about the state of homelessness in the City. President John Roskovics noted that the Police Department had reported to Council approximately three months prior, at which time they indicated a decrease in the number of homeless individuals encountered, though activity remained ongoing. Mr. Diaz also asked whether the City's use of loans indicated financial difficulty. City Manager James Timonere explained that Ordinance No. 2026-132 involves a \$23 million loan for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, structured over 15 to 30 years with a repayment schedule, and that enterprise fund projects of

this nature are typically financed through loans rather than cash reserves. He noted that the City carried over approximately \$6 million in carryover funds into the current year. President John Roskovics added that virtually all governing bodies, cities, villages, and school districts, carry some form of debt as a matter of standard financial practice. Mr. Diaz further asked what the City does to improve the quality of life for residents. President John Roskovics highlighted the roles of the police and fire departments, and the public works department. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills added to the response by noting the significant network of human service organizations operating in Ashtabula, including Catholic Charities, Community Action, Community Counseling, various food pantries, and ARMC, which collectively support residents from school age onward in ways many comparable municipalities lack.

John Keene, of E. 23rd Street, addressed Council regarding the property at 1013 E. 23rd Street, which he stated has been vacant for approximately 25 to 30 years. He indicated the property had previously appeared on a demolition list roughly three years ago, but was removed after the owner made minimal cosmetic repairs. Mr. Keene expressed concern about the structural integrity of the property, the existence of an unpermitted addition at the rear, and an ongoing rodent problem he attributed to the vacant structure. City Manager James Timonere confirmed that inspectors had been dispatched following a mention of the property at the prior Council meeting, and that the City would follow up with the owner. President John Roskovics acknowledged that the process for addressing such properties can be slow, as owner responses can extend timelines, but affirmed the matter is now on the City's list. City Manager James Timonere also provided an update on a separate long-standing problem property on E. 23rd Street, advising that bids had been received to clean out the backyard at a cost of approximately \$6,700 to \$7,000, that dates were being coordinated with the contractor, and that formal notice would be delivered to the occupant prior to work commencing. He noted that if the bill goes unpaid, it would be assessed to the property taxes.

Bobby Keene, of W. 15th Street, raised a similar concern regarding a vacant property behind his daughter's home on the corner of Pennsylvania and 14th Street, describing the backyard as overgrown and inaccessible. City Manager James Timonere indicated the address had been reported and he would follow up on its status.

Councilor Comments, Liaison Reports and Meeting Announcements

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Pre-Council Meeting Minutes, July 6, 2026

Motion: Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills moved to waive the reading of the minutes in their entirety; President John Roskovics seconded.

Discussion: None

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

Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

Regular Council Meeting Minutes, July 6, 2026

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero moved to waive the reading of the minutes in their entirety; Vice President Russell Simeone seconded.

Discussion: None

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

Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

Resolutions

New Business

For Passage

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 131

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH BROBST TREE & STUMP SERVICE FOR THE REMOVAL OF TREES IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 132

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER POLLUTION CONTROL LOAN FUND (WPCLF) AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA FOR PLANNING, DESIGNING, AND/OR CONSTRUCTION OF WASTEWATER FACILITIES; AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 133

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO DISPOSE OF OBSOLETE AND UNNEEDED VEHICLES ROUND 3

President John Roskovics asked for a motion to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to dispose of the Regular Business Legislation by consent agenda; Vice President Russell Simeone seconded.

Discussion: Regarding Ordinance No. 2026-132, Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero noted that the discussions about the pipes beneath the river have been ongoing for approximately 30 years. City Manager Jamest Timonere clarified that Ordinance No. 2026-132 pertains specifically to work at the Wastewater Treatment Plant itself, and that a subsequent ordinance addressing the river siphons would be forthcoming, a project he indicated would represent an even more significant financial undertaking than the current \$23 million loan.

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 passed.

Motion: President John Roskovics moved to waive the reading of the legislation; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: None

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 passed.

Motion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman moved to waive the Charter Requirements of two readings of the legislation; Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo seconded.

Discussion: None

ROLL CALL 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 passed.

Adoption of legislation

ROLL CALL 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

Legislation passed.

First Reading(s)

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 134

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING, IN ITS ENTIRETY, EXISTING CODIFIED ORDINANCE CHAPTER

761.99, ENTITLED SALE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS TO PERSONS UNDER 21 YEARS OLDS – PENALTY, TO IMPOSE NEW FINES AND CRITERIA FOR LICENSE SUSPENSION

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 135

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING NEW CODIFIED ORDINANCE CHAPTER 761.99, ENTITLED SALE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS TO PERSONS UNDER 21 YEARS OLDS – PENALTY

Motion: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero moved to waive the reading of the legislation; Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills seconded.

Discussion: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked for clarification on how the changes will impact individuals under the age of 21. City Manager James Timonere clarified that the ordinances primarily concern retail establishments rather than individual purchasers. Stores are required to verify the age of customers prior to selling tobacco or vaping products, and those found to be selling to persons under 21 face escalating penalties. The updated fine schedule increases fines from \$200 to \$500 on a first offense, from \$400 to \$750 on a second offense, and from \$600 to \$1,000 on a third offense. On a fourth offense, the establishment's license to sell tobacco products may be suspended for up to one year, during which all tobacco products must be removed from areas accessible to the public. City Manager James Timonere noted that vaping products are included in the legislation. It was also noted that Ohio state law has set the minimum age to purchase tobacco and vaping products at 21 since October 17, 2019. These ordinances establish the local penalty framework applicable when establishments are found to be in violation. City Manager James Timonere indicated that the Ohio Department of Health, in collaboration with local health departments, has been actively pushing to strengthen such penalties in response to a high rate of underage sales statewide. Compliance checks will be conducted by means of unannounced audits of retail establishments. The Ashtabula City Board of Health recommended Council adopt the ordinances. If passed on second reading, the ordinances are set to take effect September 1, 2026.

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 passed.

Continuing Business/Public Hearings

Second Reading(s)

Administrative Approval Votes

Tell Us Something We Don't Know

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills announced the GOCDC Back-to-School event, scheduled for Saturday, August 1, from 10 a.m. to noon at 3703 Station Avenue. Registration closes on July 26. The event will provide shoes, socks, backpacks, school supplies, hygiene items, food, and clothing to children in the community. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills also provided information on curbside recycling to prepare residents for the upcoming expansion of the project. She noted that residents can access detailed recycling guidelines on the City's website under the Sanitation Department section. She highlighted that most rigid plastic containers labeled with recycling symbols numbered 1 through 7 are now accepted, while plastic bags, shrink-wrap, styrofoam, and certain containers such as those for motor oil or antifreeze are not. Residents were reminded to place recyclable items loose in their containers rather than bagged. City Manager James Timonere provided an update on the recycling otter rollout, explaining that ward assignments had been added to over 6,000 addresses to ensure accurate otter counts, and that from the time of order, delivery is expected to take approximately four weeks, followed by a county-coordinated contractor delivery process.

Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero announced the Wine and Walleye Festival taking place July 24, 25, and 26, with fireworks scheduled for Saturday night at dark.

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills reported attending the Welcome Home Ohio program open house at 3835 Station Avenue, noting the project is progressing with framing complete and remaining utility work underway. A ribbon cutting is anticipated for late August or September, with two additional new-build sites to follow.

Executive Session (if needed)

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 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, 2024

ATTESTED BY:

John S. Roskovics

John S. Roskovics, President of Council

ATTESTED BY:

Stacy L. Millberg

Stacy L. Millberg, Clerk of Council