



City of Ashtabula

Ashtabula City Council

Community Development/Economic Development/Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Council Chambers

4717 Main Avenue

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council Community Development/ Economic Development/ Parks & Recreation Committee was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Committee Chair Haines.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair: Ward 5 Councilor Jane Haines, Vice Chair: Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Member: President John Roskovics

Absent: none

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, City Solicitor Cecilia Cooper, Clerk of Council Stacy Senskey

Staff Present: Assistant Director of Planning & Community Development Department, Mary Church

Parks & Recreation Board Member Present: Chair: Mary Graves

Sunshine Law Certification

A quorum was established as defined by 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

Mary Gonia-Glauser, Executive Director, Ashtabula County Animal Protective League

Mary Gonia-Glauser told the committee the ACAPL has been through many changes in the past two years. ACAPL is a unique animal welfare organization because it provides shelter for community animals, and also maintains contracts with Ashtabula County and the City of Ashtabula. Most communities have multiple shelters. Mary joined the ACAPL in August of 2020 during COVID. Fundraising was hampered because of the pandemic, but other funding opportunities arose. ACAPL changed to a "Fear Free" model of sheltering. All staff and volunteers were trained to reduce stress and create an enriching environment before rehoming. In 2021, the ACAPL was able to reduce an animal's length of stay by 30%, and in 2022, some of the dogs' and cats' stays are under 30 days. Five to ten years ago, the shelter was housing 100 dogs and 200 cats at any given time. The current dog population is between 35 to 40 and the cat population is between 25 and 30, which is healthier for the animals and more economical for the shelter. Those numbers are temporarily influenced by hoarding and seizure cases. The live release rate has gone up to 95% and the ACAPL only euthanizes in cases of severe aggression. They collaborate with other local community

organizations and out-of-county shelters on the transfer of animals and TNR (Trap, Neuter, Release) programs. In 2021, they added an in-house veterinary team so they can do spay and neuter surgeries on-site. Using COVID relief funds, the ACAPL consolidated and updated the laundry facilities, which increased sanitation, and added an external "meet & greet" space that is less stressful for the animal. They now have quarantine spaces, added a temperature-controlled food room, and renovated the kennels. They added protocols for holistic health nutrition enrichment. All the changes helped to lower costs.

In 2022, ACAPL added a part-time volunteer coordinator, expanded grant requests, and community partnerships. Ashtabula County is very large and the ACAPL encounters rural issues such as backyard breeding or puppy mills and urban issues like too many animals in homes. Education, outreach, and providing low-cost services help with these issues. They had their first low-cost spay and neuter event and fixed over 70 animals in two days. Also, they've received grants to provide low-cost or no-cost rabies and vaccination clinics and micro-chipping. The ACAPL now has a small animal program because there was a need to take in animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, ferrets, and chinchillas. They are partnering with the schools to bring "Ambassador" animals to the classrooms.

The sustainability of the organization includes expanding the volunteer program and finding board members. An upcoming program is called Garden of Eden and helps support dog nutrition and small animals. Volunteering is always encouraged and there are opportunities to serve on their Board. Anyone who is interested can contact ACAPL. Every animal that leaves the shelter is fixed, either spayed or neutered, fully vaccinated, and micro-chipped. The City and County Animal Control Departments and local veterinarians have scanning devices, making it easier to return animals to their owners. Return to owner rates increased year after year.

Upcoming ACAPL events:

Kitten shower - now through the end of April. Kitten season is approaching and ACAPL is looking for donations.

Furry 5k - May 22

Catchella - a music festival benefiting cats in June

The annual Boo-Wow event - October. This year ACAPL is hoping to hold it in the City.

ACAPL is also coordinating partnership events with area businesses.

The [ACAPL](https://acapl.org) website (acapl.org) was redone in 2021. Volunteers administrate the ACAPL Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages.

City Manager's Report

The City Manager is negotiating with the YMCA for lifeguards at Walnut Beach. He is also looking for part-time summer help (29 hours per week for 150 days) at a wage of \$14 per hour. He has only received three applications and wants to hire six people. The applications are found on the City's website by choosing "Employment Opportunities" under the "Government" tab or at JobSource 2247 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004. Part-time employees may find full-time employment with the City, often receiving the first option for those positions once they become available.

Mary Church, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development (PCD)

Mrs. Church requested the Committee to consider adding language to the City's Codified Ordinances that would expedite the procedure for failure to clean up garbage and other materials on private property after the property owner receives the proper notification. There will be a fee charged to the homeowner, similar to the lawn clean-up fee where the City charges a \$250 administration fee and a \$150/per hour labor charge. The homeowner has a period of time in order to pay the fees and charges or they will be added to the property taxes. If the property is a rental, the tenants are notified as well as the property owner. There may be issues in the case of zombie properties. Currently, a court order is needed to set foot on private property. Then the property owner receives a public nuisance citation and the case goes to Ashtabula Municipal Court. The

property owner can plead guilty and pay a fine or serve jail time, but the owner can choose not to clean up the property and the City is left with no real recourse without measures such as this change.

Motion: Committee Member Roskovics moved to approve Mrs. Church's request; Vice Chair Mills seconded.

Discussion:

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Chair Haines, Vice Chair Mills, Committee Member Roskovics

Nays: None

Motion Passed.

Mrs. Church requested the Committee consider revising [Codified Ordinance Chapter 977.11](#) to add a fee of \$750 for the review of construction site conservation plans. Any residential project disturbing over an acre of land, or any commercial project disturbing dirt would submit a plan for review by the City's engineers at GPD. The review must be conducted and approved by an Ohio-registered professional engineer. The Ohio EPA requires this type of review because the City has an MS4 Storm Water Permit as part of the construction site conservation plan.

Motion: Committee member Roskovics moved to modify the existing fee schedule to include the construction site conservation plan review; Vice Chair Mills seconded.

Discussion:

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Chair Haines, Vice Chair Mills, Committee Member Roskovics

Nays: None

Motion Passed.

Wednesday, April 13 is the next Ashtabula Historic Preservation Commission meeting. They plan to review the latest Ashtabula Riverbend Hotel renderings. Parking in the Historic Harbor district remains a challenge. The Carlisle project should start soon and the City Manager is reaching out to other Downtown building owners for upcoming plans. The burned-out building was demolished and the intention is to keep the spot as green space. Plans for the "Marble" building are not yet definitive.

A medical marijuana license was granted in Ashtabula County, but there may be an attempt to modify the location to be in the City.

The City of Ashtabula is still included as a stop for Amtrak, but the funding remains uncertain.

The City Manager reported that the recently demolished buildings, Mount Carmel and the church in the Lake Avenue/West 3rd and 4th Street area hold dear memories for many residents. The properties were available for sale for many years. A resident who sees a dilapidated building has hopes for its potential and has the funds for a rehabilitation project should contact the City Manager, as he will assist in making contact with the people who can help.

Parks & Recreation Committee Report

April Agenda/Minutes

The Board reviewed the 2018 Park Survey and found it to be incomplete because only 3% of citizens participated in the survey. The Board would like to see a new assessment completed with a focus on children's needs.

Plans to update Smith Field would need \$80,000.00. For an additional \$20,000, perhaps exercise equipment around the track could be tacked on to the project. Funding for the Smith Field project will be through the CDBG allocation grant funding. There must be two public hearings about the allocation of the CDBG grants. If the Smith Field Project is chosen, most work would start next spring and must be completed in two years. \$120,000 from the grant and \$80,000 from the Park Board are needed for the project.

Aqua donated \$1000 to clean up Walnut Beach on Wednesday, April 13. The Board would like to use the remaining donation to beautify the Walnut Beach concession stand area. Every year, a pile of rocks sits by the break wall and entrance to the beach. The Board would like to see the rocks put around the concession stand.

Larry Fargo is still working on the Cornelius Park fountain project. There is a total of 15 fence sections. Eleven sections are ready to be painted and four sections need to be welded together. Once painted, it can be installed. Spray pipes have been installed but will need weekly maintenance and will need to be removed after the summer season.

The Board agreed participation in the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association was not needed.

Three Board appointment terms expire May 21, 2022; Earl Tucker, Trevor Sprague, and Mary Kiehl.

The next meeting will be on May 3, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. starting at the Walnut Beach concession stand. The group will then travel to the Topky tennis/pickleball court and then on to Point Park.

Unfinished Business

Plan for homeless situation in Downtown Ashtabula

Chair Haines would like to see more enforcement of the laws but understands there must be barriers hampering enforcement. City Manager Timonere indicated when someone is seen breaking the law, it is enforced. City Solicitor Cooper agreed that when law enforcement finds someone on private property, they are charged with criminal trespass, a misdemeanor punishable by less than 90 days in jail, and a small fine that the homeless person can probably not pay. An officer must witness littering in action in order to charge the offender, which is punishable by a fine. A barrier to enforcing the law is manpower. APD is busy enforcing the law, dealing with crime, and issuing traffic citations and there is a limited number of officers on a shift.

The 2021 statistics from the Samaritan House, with 9 beds available, served 101 new residents. 56 males and 33 females, all between the ages of 25 and 61 years old and 12 were children. The length of stay ranged from eight to 60 days. Upon their exit, 83 people left with an income, all 101 left having insurance, 62 found housing, 31 left with temporary housing, and eight returned to their previous situation. These people are the ones wanting the help. The City Manager posed the question, "How do we make it so people know they can't do the things that they're doing that are disturbing most of us, and get them to a situation where we can help them to not be homeless?" "That is the plan that we're all looking for and trying to achieve by the outreach we are doing to the people we encounter every day." The City Solicitor added the people being arrested for drug abuse and alcohol use, and actions as a result of mental health issues are being required to get mental health and drug and alcohol assessments by the Ashtabula Municipal Court. They are further required to follow the Court's recommendations. If they aren't ready to get help, they can't be forced to comply.

The Chestnut Facility and the Carlisle project will be helpful for the housing situation. The City Manager is assisting the Samaritan House with an application for State of Ohio funding to have

money earmarked for an expansion at the Samaritan House. If awarded, it would double the capacity.

Clean Up Ashtabula Day

Clean Up Ashtabula Day is April 30th from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Interested people contact Chair Haines or Vice Chair Mills. The City Manager is making an event page on Facebook. Community members need not be a part of the formal group and are called upon to clean up yards and surrounding neighborhoods. Chair Haines said, "We want our town to look beautiful." The plan is to meet behind the Keybank building in the parking lot at 8:30 a.m. Supplies will be provided.

Kadon Park trash can situation

Kadon Park has no trash issues yet, but no cans are out in any of the parks yet.

Revision of Codified Ordinance Chapter 759 Temporary Stores to include food truck language

Revision is ongoing and proving to be more complicated than originally thought. The City Manager will share what has been written to this point. Currently, a temporary stores permit is \$250 per month.

New Business

Next Meeting

May 10, 2022, 4:00 p.m. Council Chambers

Special Guest: Sarah Bogardus, 503 Corporation Executive Director

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 05:08 PM by Chair Haines.

Attested By:

Clerk of Council, Stacy H. Senskey

1323.14 EXPEDITED PROCEDURE FOR FAILURE TO CLEAN UP GARBAGE, LITTER, RUBBISH AND REFUSE, AND FURNITURE AND/OR OTHER MATERIALS; WORK BY CITY; COLLECTION OF EXPENSES WITHOUT LIEN.

(a) The owner, occupant or person having the charge or management of any lot or parcel of land situated within the City, whether the same be improved or unimproved, vacant or occupied, shall properly dispose any and all garbage, litter, rubbish and refuse, or furniture and/or other material located on such lot or parcel of land in violation of the provisions of this Chapter 1323. Upon being notified in writing by the Planning and Zoning Manager to do so, such owner, occupant or person in charge or having the management of any such lot or parcel of land shall properly dispose any and all garbage, litter, rubbish and refuse, or furniture and/or other materials located on such lot or parcel of land in violation of the provisions of this Chapter 1323 within five (5) days of the date of service of such notice. Such notice shall conform to the provisions of subdivision (b) of this Section 1323.16.

(b) The notice specified in subdivision (a) of this Section 1323.16 shall:

- (1) Be put in writing on an appropriate form;
- (2) Include a list of violations, refer to the section or sections of this chapter violated and order remedial action which, if taken, will effect compliance with the provisions of this chapter;
- (3) Specify a reasonable time of five (5) days or more for performance;
- (4) Be served on the owner, occupant or agent in person. However, this notice and order shall be deemed to be properly served upon the owner, occupant or agent if a copy thereof is sent by ordinary mail to his last known mailing address, residence, or place of business, and a copy is posted in a conspicuous place in or on the land affected. The mailing shall be evidenced by a certificate of mailing, and service shall be deemed complete on the date of mailing.

(c) If the owner, occupant or agent having the charge or management of any lot or parcel of land situated within the City fails to comply with the notice provided for in subdivision (a) of this Section 1323.16 within five (5) days from the time of service thereof, the Planning and Zoning Manager shall cause such garbage, litter, rubbish and refuse, furniture and/or other materials located on such lot or parcel of land to be removed and disposed of. He shall, with the assistance of the Director of Law, cause the cost of such removal and disposal to be collected through such legal processes as are available to the City for the collection of such debts. All expenses so incurred, including charges for all services and service of notice, the use of machinery, equipment, landfill fees and labor necessary for removal of such garbage, litter, rubbish and refuse, or furniture and/or other material from such lot or parcel of land and disposed of, may be charged to such owner, occupant or agent having the charge or management of any lot or parcel of land on which the City caused such garbage, litter, rubbish and refuse, or furniture and/or other materials to be removed and disposed of and upon whom the notice specified in subdivision (a) of this Section 1323.16 was served in accordance with subdivision (b) of this Section 1323.16.

(Ord. 99-15. Passed 11-23-15.)