



City of Ashtabula

Ashtabula City Council

Community Development/Economic Development/Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 5:00 PM

4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

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 5:00 p.m. by Committee Chair DiGiacomo

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair: Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo, Vice Chair: Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills, Member: Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman

Absent: none

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, Clerk of Council Ashley Bell

Parks & Recreation Board Members Present: None

Visitors: Patti Baldwin Andersen of the United Way

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

Patti Baldwin Andersen of the United Way

Patti Baldwin Andersen stated that she had recently taken the position of Executive Director of The United Way for Ashtabula County. She stated she has been a part of The United Way for six years. Patti Baldwin Andersen also expressed that The United Way has been in Ashtabula County for over 100 years. She proceeds to explain that the organization started with a few civic-minded individuals. The inaugural committee agreed that a "collective give" of people pooling their resources has a larger impact than a person giving back to the community on their own. Ms. Baldwin Andersen explained that Ashtabula County represents 21 partner agencies. The United Way of Ashtabula County has an office of two people. The money the organization raises comes from an Employee Giving Campaign from different businesses throughout Ashtabula County. Most employees donate to The United Way of Ashtabula County via a payroll deduction. Sixty percent of the organization's budget comes from people giving \$2-\$5 per pay period. The organization also receives a pay setting grant from The Ashtabula Foundation. The organization also receives money from The Morrison Foundation. However, most of the money comes from the community. Last year, The United Way gave back to the community a little over \$364,000. Patti Baldwin Andersen presented the organization's pledge card titled "The Game of Life". The pledge card displays the community sponsors and corporate donors of The United Way. Some of the community partners include The

Samaritan House and Grand River Rubber. The pledge card also features a client the organization assisted out of homelessness. The organization also assists with referrals to help people who need various resources. The United Way of Ashtabula does not fund agencies, but their organization funds programs of agencies. Patti Baldwin Andersen spoke about their Community Investment program titled "Decide the Dollars". The program uses volunteers to evaluate grant applications submitted by various charities. The volunteers evaluate the applications based on a rubric system, the volunteers also visit the charities to learn why grant funding is needed. After the evaluations, the volunteers submit the information they obtain to The United Way Board. The Board begins dispersing the grant funds in July. Ms. Baldwin Andersen invited everyone to volunteer. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked how many volunteers are needed. Ms. Baldwin Andersen said on average they receive about 40 volunteers. Everyone who applies to become a volunteer is accepted. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills also asked if the organization follows up with donors from the Employee Giving Campaign who retire. Ms. Baldwin Andersen responded "yes and they are added to the organization's mailing list." Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo asked what additional fundraisers the organization hosts. Ms. Baldwin Andersen responded and said "Our biggest fundraiser is our annual meeting luncheon that takes place in August." They also host a "Cookies and Cocktails" event that features local bakeries. The organization also hosts "Galentine's Day" which is a luncheon that features women owned businesses. The organization also raises money through an online raffle sponsored by Vital Spa and the Spa donated six services. Ms. Baldwin Andersen mentioned that during the Covid pandemic many United Way organizations were down in their donations by as much as 25%. The United Way of Ashtabula County experienced a 4% loss at the most. Ward 3 Councilor RoLesia Holman asked Ms. Baldwin Andersen what her goals are as Executive Director. Ms. Baldwin Andersen responded "strengthen community partnership, be more present in the county, and inform the county about their role."

City Manager's Report

City Manager James Timonere stated the City was awarded the Contract for Smith Field. The renovations for the Smith Field project will begin soon. The improvements to Smith Field include repaving areas of the track, adding a tennis court, a basketball court, adjusting the first baseline fencing on the baseball field so that a football field can be added. City Manager James Timonere also reported the drainage at Smith Field is complete. City Manager James Timonere also reported a request would be made to start accepting applications for people to work in the city's various parks. Typically, crews are at the parks in April. Mr. Timonere said he met with Veterans and members of the American Legion about making improvements to Veteran's Park and North Park in preparation for Memorial Day. In regard to economic development, Mr. Timonere is monitoring construction projects. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills asked when leaf bag pickup begin. Mr. Timonere said it is typically around the second week of April.

Parks & Recreation Committee Report

February 6, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Unfinished Business

New Business

Ashtabula City Clean Up 2024

Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills reports that there have been two meetings in regard to Ashtabula City Clean up. She explained that the Clean Up Committee sent out two emails to last year's volunteers as well as interested parties. The committee is in the process of assembling teams. She stated Signature Health is providing lunch for all volunteers. The lunch for the volunteers is in the multipurpose room at the YMCA. City Manager James Timonere said Aqua is donating \$1000 to the City Clean up. Aqua is also cleaning Walnut Beach on April 22, which is Earth Day. Ward 4 Councilor Jodi Mills also encourages everyone to do additional clean up on Monday, April 22 for Earth day. Ward 5 Councilor Jane DiGiacomo City also mentioned Koski Construction is paying their

employees to clean up Main Avenue, the area of North Park all the way to the railroad tracks and Collins Boulevard. Koski Construction are making their contributions to City Clean up on Friday April 19th.

Next Meeting

March 26,2024 at 5:00pm

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23pm by Committee Chair Jane DiGiacomo.