



City of Ashtabula

Ashtabula City Council
Safety Forces Committee

Monday, March 11, 2024 at 8:45 AM
4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council Safety Forces Committee was called to order at 8:45 a.m. by Committee Chair John Roskovics.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair: Council President John Roskovics, Vice Chair: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Member: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero

Absent: none

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

Ashtabula Department Heads Present: Police Chief Robert Stell, Fire Chief Shawn Gruber

Visitors: None

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

None.

Special Guest Presentation

None.

Police Department – Chief's Report

Chief Stell provided the Ashtabula Police Department's February 2024 Statistics.

Discussion: Chief Stell stated that there is nothing notable in the Department's statistics. Chief Stell stated that their Department released a press statement about an illegal firearm and narcotic seizure. In the statement, investigators seized approximately 900 grams of methamphetamine, 30 grams of cocaine, 365 grams of marijuana, \$1,100 in cash, digital scales and 62 firearms. The firearms have an estimated value of \$75,000 and the narcotics have an estimated street value of \$54,000, according to the release. Chief Stell stated the investigation began in the City of Ashtabula, however the seizure took place in Ashtabula County. Chief Stell says their task force is active all over Ashtabula County. Their task force includes sworn Federal officers, which is why they have jurisdiction outside of the City of Ashtabula. Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked Chief Stell if their department was fully staffed. Chief Stell stated there is pending litigation for one police officer, and several people plan to retire in 2025 (approximately three to four retirements). Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked if training is required to take the test to become a police officer. Chief Stell replied that it is not required, and their department can hire laterally from other departments. Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio asked if there was a potential police officer who is the recipient of the

scholarship founded by the family of Dr. Shelby. (The scholarship helps persons of color go to the Police Academy and receive the training needed to become a City Police Officer) Chief Stell replied not at this time. There is also one current police officer who received the scholarship founded by the Shelby family.

APD Safety Stats February

Was Reviewed.

Fire Department – Chief's Report

Fire Chief Shawn Gruber presented the 2023 annual report and the February 2024 statistics. Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked if the Fire Department was fully staffed. Chief Shawn Gruber responded, saying their last civil service test was taken by six candidates. Out of the six people, there was one suitable candidate. The new person will begin work next Monday, replacing a recent retiree. Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero asked if you have to be trained first before taking the test. Chief Shawn Gruber responded that all firefighters must be a paramedic before they can begin. Chief Shawn Gruber also explains paramedic training and obtaining a medical card takes approximately two years. Chief Shawn Gruber said that the Fire Department takes the top ten people who score the highest on their test. He also states that their test includes dragging a dummy, pulling a hose, raising a ladder, and you have six minutes to accomplish these tasks. President John Roskovics asked what the starting salary is for firefighters in Ashtabula compared to other cities and counties. Chief Shawn Gruber said locations such as Willoughby and Mayfield Heights start their hose-man off in the 90K salary range.

President John Roskovics asked what the regulations are for Boarding Houses and what appliances are allowed in the bedrooms. Chief Shawn Gruber responded and stated their department inspects the houses to ensure they are following the Fire Code. He also states that older homes are not equipped to handle small appliances in every room, because the circuits can become overloaded. Their department also works with the Housing Code Department to make sure occupancy regulations are enforced properly. City Manager James Timonere also commented and stated the City is waiting for the Solicitor's office to provide more guidance about Boarding Houses in the City of Ashtabula. Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio asked if the warming center is up to code. Chief Gruber stated that it is not up to code and will have to close soon. He also stated that the Fire Department has given the warming center several opportunities to remedy their Fire Code infractions. He says he believes the center will close the end of March 2024.

Ashtabula Fire Department 2023 Annual Report

Was reviewed.

Ashtabula Fire Department February 2024 Statistics

Was reviewed.

City Manager's Report

City Manager James Timonere stated that one of the SUVs for the Fire Department is having mechanical issues. The vehicle is a 2009. The City is looking to replace this vehicle. There are funds set aside in the Permanent Improvement budget for a vehicle for the Fire Department.

City Solicitor's Report

None.

Unfinished Business

none.

New Business

None.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2024. However, this is the day of the Solar Eclipse. Many resources will be dispersed across the city. Chief Gruber stated their department would have a boat in the water, as some people may want to take their boats on the lake to view the Solar Eclipse. President John Roskovics said the committee may not meet in April.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:29 a.m.