

Council met in a **PUBLIC HEARING**. The President of Council called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Member(s) Present: **Mrs. Ann I. Stranman** (Ward 3)
Mrs. Julie A. Lattimer (Ward 4)
Mr. James M. Trisket (Ward 5)
Mr. August A. Pugliese (Ward 2)
Mr. Richard F. Balog (Ward 1)
Mr. Christopher J. McClure (Vice President)
Mr. J. P. Ducro IV (Council President)

Member(s) Absent: None

Officer(s) Present: **City Manager James M. Timonere, City Solicitor Michael Franklin
City Auditor Dana D. Pinkert, Clerk of Council LaVette E. Hennigan**

Officer(s) Absent: **None**

SUNSHINE LAW: The Clerk of Council certified requirements of the Sunshine Law were been met.

PURPOSE: The Council President announced the purpose of this Public Hearing was to permit the City Manager to present the 2013 Budget for the City of Ashtabula.

WELCOME: The President welcomed visitors.

DISCUSSION

The City Manager presented the Budget and following items were touched on by him and Administration:

- * Thanked Auditor for help and assistance with the budget process;
- * The budget may be passed only if ending balances are positive;
- * 2013 will be tight; not a lot of leeway;
- * Reduce expenditures by 9 Public Works (PW) Department staff layoffs due to \$600,000 in General Fund supplement to PW; PW staff will be reduced from 32 to 23; salary reductions of 2% for all non-union exempt and non-exempt employees, voluntary \$10,000 reduction in Manager's salary, and buyouts of employees who are within two years of retirement;
- * Concerns with citizen service reductions due to proposed layoffs and how it will affect city 2013 income tax renewal; the City will be in trouble if services are unable to be provided; it is Council and Administration's responsibility to educate public on necessity of income tax revenue;
- * PW has more equipment than personnel;
- * Sick-time buyout;
- * Timeframe for when layoffs and buyout decisions have to be made;
- * Safety Forces staffing is at an all time low;

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- * Safety Forces is considering the adjustment in their minimum manning to reduce overtime expenditure;
- * There is not enough revenue to keep everyone working in 2013;
- * Auditor still working the numbers;
- * When things get tight all personnel should to take on extra duties;
- * Department budgets will not change, so departments will have to live within their budget appropriations;
- * Outsourcing is not a goal of the Manager;
- * Manager looking at combining Public Works and Sanitation Departments to have more flexibility in job responsibilities and scheduling; services will be assigned in order of priority; a lot of supervision and management will be required to get things done, which has been lacking; there used to be 60 persons in Public Works at a time when there was more revenue;
- * Manager and Auditor met three to four times with Municipal Court Judge Campese; told him he has to cut \$100,000 from request;
- * City income tax revenue accounts for over half the City's revenue;
- * If there are any unforeseen lawsuits or insurance claims, etc, tougher decisions will have to be made;
- * Has revenue from Cleveland casino started coming in; it was thought that the County will receive the revenue on behalf of all Ashtabula County governmental subdivisions, and the County would be the central distribution center; Manager said he was told municipalities should not count on the casino revenue, much like the lottery revenue;
- * Mr. Earl Tucker, Parks & Recreation (P&R) Board Chair said: Board was established in 2007; In 2009, former Council President Rodger Altier requested an ordinance to allow the Board to receive a budget from Ohio American Water Company (as of April 2012 known as Aqua OH) franchise fee of \$44,000 plus. He is concerned with budget proposal to take \$20,000 of that revenue and place in General Fund because he believes parks will become neglected again, and believes there is a great chance that the reduction will not be reinstated. He asked Council to look at alternatives that would prevent cuts in the P&R budget;
- * It was suggested that the ordinance establishing the P&R budget be suspended for one year;
- * Lifeguard salaries;
- * Budget was \$1.3 million off with the first submission; department heads were asked to cut where they could, now within \$700,000 in General Fund;
- * President welcomed P&R Board's suggestions/alternatives to the proposed \$20,000 budget reduction; Mr. Tucker said Board would discuss the request at their December meeting;
- * President gave P&R Board "kudos" for being good stewards of their funds; when he first took office he thought he would have to look at the P&R budget, and supports the Manager's decision to cut the P&R budget in light of the City's financial position; and
- * Ward 3 Councilor commended P&R Board for lessening the City's expenditure for lifeguards by reworking the lifeguards work schedule to have them on duty at times when they would be needed the most.

Closing Remarks

The President announced that the budget will be on display in the City Auditor's Department beginning Tuesday, December 4 through Friday, December 14. The Special Meeting where Council will formally vote to accept the budget will be scheduled for Monday, December 17, at 5:45 p.m. in Council Chambers. He thanked everyone for coming.

Adjourn

Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Trisket seconded to adjourn the public hearing at 6:17 p.m.; motion CARRIED.

DATE APPROVED: December 17, 2012

ATTESTED BY: _____

**J. P. Ducro IV
President of Council**

ATTESTED BY: _____

**LaVette E. Hennigan, MMC
Clerk of Council**