

ASHTABULA CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF ASHTABULA – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 5, 2018

The President of Council called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., the Ward 2 Councilor offered the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A moment of silence was observed for the passing of former City employee, Ms. Betty Johnson, who served as the Secretary to the Fire, Recreation and Engineering Departments.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Mr. August A. Pugliese	(Ward 2 Councilor)
	Mr. Michael D. Speelman	(Ward 4 Councilor)
	Mr. Reginald M. Holman	(Ward 3 Councilor)
	Ms. Jane E. Haines	(Ward 5 Councilor)
	Mrs. Kym Harley	(Ward 1 Councilor)
	Mr. Christopher J. McClure	(Vice President)
	Mr. John S. Roskovics	(President)

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: None

OFFICER(S) PRESENT:	Mr. James M. Timonere	(City Manager)
	Mrs. LaVette E. Hennigan, MMC	(Clerk of Council)

OFFICER(S) ABSENT:	Mr. Michael Franklin	(City Solicitor)
	Mrs. Dana D. Pinkert	(Finance Director)

EXCUSED ABSENCE(S): None

SUNSHINE LAW: The Clerk of Council certified conformity to the Sunshine Law.

AGENDA APPROVAL: None

PRESENTATION(S): None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda is a means whereby Council is able to efficiently conduct business by grouping routine items for consideration and disposal.

PRESENTATION OF MEETING MINUTES

The Clerk of Council presented the February 20, 2018, Special and Regular Council Meeting Minutes and the February 26, 2018, Emergency Meeting Minutes. Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Speelman seconded to waive the reading of the minutes; motion CARRIED. Hearing no corrections the minutes were approved as presented.

LEGISLATION AGENDA

- **Formal Legislation Request(s):** None
- **Form and Correctness:** None
- **Legislation Overview**
The Clerk of Council provided a brief overview of the legislation agenda, consisting of Ordinance Nos. 2018-20 and 2018-21.
- **Public Discussion** (Legislation Portion Only)
The President announced public discussion would take place during the Regular Agenda Legislation portion of this meeting.
- **Legislation Reading:** None

REGULAR BUSINESS

PRESENTATION OF MEETING MINUTES

None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS and COMMUNICATIONS

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager presented the following:

A.P. O'Horo – Water Pollution Control (WPC) Digester Rehabilitation Project

An ordinance to enter into an agreement with A.P. O'Horo with a mailing address in Youngstown, OH, as the most responsible bid for the WPC Digester Rehabilitation Project in the amount not to exceed \$1,717,510.00 once loan approval is obtained for the remaining WPCLF loan funds and CDBG funds are awarded. Funding for this project will be paid for through a Water Pollution Control Loan and Community Development Block Grant out of the WPC Fund 504 and CDBG Fund 290 once this funding is secured. Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Speelman seconded to approve this request; motion CARRIED.

Thursday, March 1, Snow Storm Report

Last Thursday's storm resulted in about ten inches of heavy, wet snow and high winds, which downed several trees and power lines. Crews are instructed not to address downed trees until they are sure no power lines are in them, and until the Cleveland Electric Illuminating (C.E.I.) company gives the go ahead. The third shift crew was called in early. When the Red Cross was contacted, they suggested we issue their phone number to the public for assistance. If the call volume was high enough Red Cross would help to open warming stations throughout the City. Through Sunday, they only received five calls. So, while the Red Cross did not have to open warming stations, other facilities opened and

neighbors helped neighbors. About 8:00 p.m., last night, power was restored to everyone who did not have damage on their property, which needed to be taken care of prior to restoring power. It was almost about 10:00 p.m., last night, before our Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) had restored power. When there was no power at the plant the diesel generator (a 1.2 million dollar piece of machinery) kept the entire plant operating. The Manager praised all first responders, Public Works crews and C.E.I. for doing an outstanding job. Pothole patching will resume when the storm clean up is completed.

On behalf of City Council, the President said Council also commends crews for a job well done.

CITY SOLICITOR

No Report

FINANCE DIRECTOR

No Report

CLERK OF COUNCIL

The Clerk of Council issued a reminder that Financial Disclosure Statements have been issued, with a filing deadline of May; that hardcopies were placed in some mailboxes and that online filing is available.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS and COMMUNICATIONS

(Chair/Vice Chair)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PARKS & RECREATION (CD/ED/P&R)

(Roskovics/Speelman)

The Chair reported that at the committee's Tuesday, January 13, meeting, Ms. Christine Seuffert, Lift Bridge Community Association Chairperson, provided an update on this year's Wine and Walleye Festival planning. She said planning is on track for an outstanding festival and many popular items from 2017 will return.

FINANCE & PERSONNEL - (F&P) (McClure/Pugliese)

The Chair announced, at the advice of the Finance Director, the committee's Friday, March 9, at 8:00 a.m., meeting is cancelled. The committee will meet on Friday, April 13, in the municipal building 2nd floor conference room at 8:00 a.m.

PUBLIC WORKS/PUBLIC UTILITIES/CABLE/SCHOOLS - (PW/PU/C/S) (Pugliese/Holman)

The Chair announced the committee did not meet this month. They will meet Friday, April 6, at 8:00 a.m.

SAFETY FORCES - (SF) (Speelman/Harley)

The Chair reported on the committee's Monday, February 26, 8:00 a.m., meeting, as follows:

Downtown Safety Concerns

Councilor Haines expressed Main Avenue merchant's concerns (of which she is one), with panhandlers going in businesses asking for money, the homeless population moving up and down the road and some being disruptive. Police Chief Robert Stell said it is an on-going issue, not exclusive to our community, the jail lacks capacity to hold disrupters and when reports of unruliness are received officers are dispatched and persons are moved out of the areas. The City has one homeless shelter with limited beds. There are resources available to help the homeless, if they desire help, which is not always the case. The chair also invited anyone with suggestions that would help address our homeless population to come to his committee meeting or get in contact with him.

Police Division Calls for Service

The Police Division daily average of calls for service daily is forty-three, which keeps them busy. Because of this average they have to take a reactive approach to policing rather than a proactive one.

2017 Police and Fire Division Annual Reports

Annual reports have been submitted. Request for copies may be directed to the Clerk of Council.

Park Haven (vacant) Property

Fire Captain Steve Chase gave a report on the weekend fire at this building. The department believes it resulted from someone trying to stay warm. *(See City Manager's comments during the Public Comment/Discussion portion of this meeting)*

Police Levy Renewal

The levy renewal discussion has begun. The first time the issue should be placed on a ballot is November of this year.

The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 26, at 8:00 a.m., in the Municipal Building 2nd floor conference room. The chair extended an invitation to the public to attend.

WORK SESSION

The President announced City Council will meet in a work session this spring or summer. The President reminded members to provide the Clerk of Council with dates they are unavailable so she may plan the session.

LEGISLATION AGENDA

- **Formal Legislation Request(s):** None
- **Form and Correctness:** None
- **Legislation Overview**

The Clerk of Council announced this evening's Legislation Agenda consist of Ordinance Nos. 2018-20 through 2018-22.

- **Request Legislation Presentation by Consent Agenda**

Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Speelman seconded to present the legislation as a consent agenda; motion CARRIED.

- **Public Discussion** (Legislation Portion Only): None

- **Legislation Reading**

The Clerk of Council presented the following legislation:

ORDINANCE NO. 2018-20, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$225,000 WITH CT CONSULTANTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING ADMINISTRATION SERVICES FOR THE POLLUTION CONTROL PRE-TREATMENT PROGRAM AT THE CITY'S WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT.

ORDINANCE NO. 2018-21, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ASHTABULA COUNTY Y.M.C.A. FOR LIFEGUARDS.

ORDINANCE NO. 2018-22, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH A.P. O'HORO COMPANY, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$1,717,510.00 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING SERVICES AND MATERIALS FOR THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL DIGESTER REHABILITATION PROJECT, (CONTRACT E).

NOTE: The City Solicitor instructed the Clerk of Council to, "note Mr. Holman's vote separately in the minutes, and show the total tally with and without his vote, effective with the effective date of the Resolution finding his office forfeited." The document finding the Ward 3 Councilor's office forfeited is RESOLUTION NO. 2018-17, A RESOLUTION FINDING THAT REGINALD HOLMAN HAS FORFEITED THE OFFICE OF ASHTABULA CITY COUNCIL WARD 3 REPRESENTATIVE. City Council enacted the resolution at their Regular Council meeting held Tuesday, February 20, 2018. The following vote transcription reflects these instructions.

Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Speelman seconded to waive the reading of the legislation; motion CARRIED.
Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Speelman seconded to waive the Charter requirement of two readings. On the roll call to waive the Charter requirement of two readings: Mr. Pugliese, Mr. Speelman, Ms. Haines, Mrs. Harley, Mr. McClure, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED. On the roll call to adopt the legislation: Mr. Pugliese, Mr. Speelman, Ms. Haines, Mrs. Harley, Mr. McClure, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

On the roll call to waive the Charter requirement of two readings: Mr. Holman voted yea.

On the roll call to adopt the legislation: Mr. Holman voted yea.

The motion carried by a vote of 6 to 0 exclusive of Mr. Holman's vote and by a vote of 7 to 0 inclusive of Mr. Holman's vote.

NEW BUSINESS

“Tell Us Something We Don’t Know” Segment

This segment was suggested by the Council President in order to give members of City Council and the Administration the opportunity to tell something about Ashtabula we may not know.

1. President Roskovics announced Mrs. Hennigan has been the Ashtabula City Clerk of Council for 26 years. “Her hard work and care for the City is always obvious” The Clerk responded, “Thank you.”

President Roskovics reported that while recently substitute teaching a class called “History of Ashtabula”, he asked students to write on the board something positive and negative about Ashtabula. The students said they would like to see more of a variety of stores in which to shop and less of the dollar and auto supply stores. One student would like to see Route 20 paved, so he was able to tell her a portion of it will be this year.

2. The Ward 2 Councilor commented on the Washington Post article about the good and not so good parts of Ashtabula that appeared yesterday in the Plain Dealer. He said it was really interesting; it really didn’t degrade Ashtabula but explained how we used to have one of the biggest ports on the great lakes and now it is “down to nothing”. His hope is this can change if U.S. President Donald Trump goes through with his campaign promises. He said a few people approached him today who felt the article was negative. He responded to them by saying he believes the article was telling the ‘then and now’ story and that the City of Ashtabula is not alone, noting the City of Cleveland, Ohio has lost steel mills and other industries. The President said the article mentioned 1 out of 7 residents is college educated, and that the City Council’s Community Development/Economic Development/Parks & Recreation Committee is trying to address this issue. The Ward 4 Councilor said he believes a college education is not always needed, because he does not have such an education and said, “I’m doing alright”.

3. The Ward 4 Councilor reported because Mr. Dave Clint, owner of Dublin Down Restaurant on Main Avenue, was really shaken by the Parkland, Florida school shooting, on February 14, he hosted an informal meeting with some folks to have a discussion about ideas for school safety. Mr. Mark Potts, New Interim Superintendent for the Ashtabula Area City Schools, Mr. Donald Rapose, Lakeside High School Principal and Ms. Susan Hagan, Geneva City Council President. Everyone agreed the issue is about people and not guns. He said, “If we can focus on kids, I think we’re going to take a step in the right direction.” He thanked Dave for putting it together and making sure it was not a “gun discussion”. He also thanked everyone who attended.

The Ward 4 Councilor said he was going to ask the City Solicitor for an update on Resolution No. 2018-17 City Council enacted (see above) and the court case pertaining to the Ward 3 Councilor’s legal challenges, but in the Solicitor’s absence he asked the Ward 3 Councilor for an update on charges against him for election falsification. The Ward 3 Councilor responded that he had been advised not to comment. The Ward 4 Councilor voiced his frustration and disappointment.

4. The Ward 5 Councilor said last Thursday's wind/snow/ice storm caused long periods of electricity outages, which may have caused a loss of food. She encouraged donations to food banks.
The Ward 5 Councilor encouraged residents to go to the Ashtabula County website and registry their cell phones with Swift 911, so they will be notified of what to do in emergencies. She said, "Communication is really, really important".
5. The City Manager commented on the Washington Post article, as follows:
 - He and many other elected officials were contacted to be interviewed for the article
 - Ashtabula County Commissioner, J. P. Ducro IV, wrote a nice email to David Lynch the article's reporter, telling him the next time he is in town we would like to show him the wonderful things about our community
 - He believes the article was "written purposefully to highlight all the disadvantages that we have and didn't once take a look at the advantages. When you look at that article, could anybody believe that almost five-hundred million dollars is spent here in tourism?"
 - There are now over 7 restaurants on Bridge Street; we were rated the best place to dine between Cleveland and Erie, PA
 - Back in the day, Bridge Street was known as the roughest, toughest port in the country; he is glad that has changed
 - Technology has changed; a lot of the dock workers went away when the hulets left and we've had to adapt
 - Our industry is no longer the chemical plants and factories; our industry is the smaller factors and tourism, which is an industry
 - The article was written as it was to push the President of the United States and the federal government, because many of our issues are because of changes from "up top"
 - The coal dock is closed because of a federal regulation; it was not because of something we did and it did not only happen in Ashtabula;
 - The State of Ohio's Local Government Funding has been taken away
 - Federal laws related to industry have caused local governments and the companies operating within municipalities to adapt
 - "We usually have to put up with the decisions that are made at those higher levels", which is challenging, but with a good City Council and staff we have done a pretty good job keeping our heads above water for a long time
 - We may not be expanding but we are retaining good companies who are; and
 - He hopes the next time the reporter will agree to being shown what we have to offer.

Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Speelman seconded to have the City Manager write a letter to the reporter, signed by all members of City Council and the Manager, inviting him to return for a tour of what we have to offer. The Manager said there has been a suggestion that elected officials write letters to the editor of the Washington Post and Plain Dealer. The motion CARRIED.

The Ward 5 Councilor said it is important when speaking about Ashtabula in the community, to folks outside the community and to each other, that we use the word “redeveloping”; because that is exactly what is happening.

6. The Ward 3 Councilor responded to the Ward 4 Councilor’s earlier comments with, “I do have these charges against me; I am not going to resign, and until I am proven guilty I would be pleased with letting the law do what they have to do and people’s personal opinions could be set to the side until this is worked out. But, until then, you’re entitled to say what you want to say, when you want to say it, but make sure it’s factual – what you have to say.” The Ward 4 Councilor said his first request for the Ward 3 Councilor’s resignation was because of the positive drug test outcome, which he believed there to be “no contesting that”.
7. Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. McClure seconded to have a resolution drafted acknowledging Mr. Richard Quaranta’s many years of community service; motion CARRIED.
8. The President entertained a motion to appoint Ms. Mary Kiehl as a member of the Ashtabula City Parks & Recreation Board. Mr. McClure moved, Mrs. Harley seconded to approve the appointment; motion CARRIED.
9. On behalf of the full City Council, the President congratulated:
 - The Lakeside High School team, who competed against two other high school teams, on their 1st Place win on a television show called, Academic Challenge, which aired Saturday
 - Lakeside High School on their recent 1st Place victory in the Ashtabula County Scholastic Bowl
 - Derik Elrod, a junior high school student at St. John School, for his 1st Place victory at the State Junior High School Wrestling Championships; and
 - Three Lakeside High School wrestlers who won their division titles, and are headed to the State Championships.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION/COMMENTS (General Matters)

The President announced members of the public who would like to speak must now place their name on a sign in roster in order to accurately reflect their name in the meeting minutes.

Mr. Raymond Hall, East 7th Street resident

Mr. Hall said he appeared before City Council three times last year to complain about the condition of his road and the ditches, which he said are worse than when he first complained, and explained. He said two vehicles are unable to pass on the road at the same time; suggested the operation of heavy equipment on the road has contributed to the problem, including that of the telephone company who brings heavy trucks on the road to work on their telephone exchange on the west end of the road.

He said he will continue to complain until something is done because he has paid several thousands of dollars in taxes and should not have to continue to address the lack of attention given to this issue. He invited any and everyone to visit the road to see for themselves.

The Manager reported he was present when the ditching was performed last year, enumerated what has been done, and said he has no doubt more attention to the road is needed given the harsh winter we have experienced. He suggested this road would be a good one to apply the "chip and fog seal" process to, because it would encapsulate the road, which would then help the water better drain off the road.

The Ward 2 Councilor enumerated what needs to be done to properly address the problem; asked Mr. Hall if he and his neighbors would be willing to be assessed to pay for the road to be properly addressed, which the Councilor said was the standard procedure some 25 to 30 years ago. Mr. Hall said given the amount of taxes he has paid over 40 years, the road should have been repaired.

The Council President reported that in this evening's Pre-Council meeting, the City Manager announced there have been eight freeze/thaw cycles, which probably has created some more road damage. He said once the weather is better, the City Manager will have the road addressed.

Mr. Varnell Johnson, 1101 Seymour Drive

Mr. Johnson asked if speed bumps could be placed on Seymour Drive due to excessive speeding of motorists who use the road as a short cut from West Avenue and from Route 20. He expressed his concern that it is just a matter of time before something tragic happens. The Manager reported speed bumps are not placed on City roads, but that "Children at Play" signs may be erected. The Ward 3 Councilor said "slow" signs are on the road but are turned in the incorrect direction. The Ward 5 Councilor and Safety Forces Committee Chair said the City Manager will have the Police Division conduct a study to determine the best plan of action and bring the study results and their recommendation to his committee for review and consideration.

Mr. J. P. Ducro IV, 430 West Prospect Road

Mr. Ducro thanked the Ward 2 Councilor and City Manager for bringing up the Washington Post article (see above comments). He said he has spent a lot of time on social media talking about the article, felt the amount of discussion was good, and was disappointed because there was such a concerted effort to provide positive information. He said he does not have a problem with the truth, realizes Ashtabula has a lot of challenges, but does not appreciate one-sided stories. He said information was given to the reporter on the Road Trip Masters program, which highlighted five local businesses, the Convention and Visitor's Bureau promotional video, and contact information for numerous very positive people that know of the good things happening in our county. He hopes there is a follow up article that shows the better side of Ashtabula. He said he was particularly discouraged when the article appeared on the front page of the Plain Dealer, which is an hour away, because he thought it was specifically for the Washington Post. He said the Plain Dealer only seems to come to Ashtabula when there is something negative to report. He encouraged letter writing to both media outlets to express feelings about Ashtabula if it is believed that the article did not paint a fair picture of what all our community has to offer.

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Monday, March 5, 2018

Mr. Ducro said he understands the taxes on the vacant Park Haven structure have been paid. He asked what is the future of the structure and the timeframe. The City Manager responded by saying the City does not own it, but has been trying to make contact with the owners to get someone to secure it. The taxes were paid because there or a potential sale. City crews have not had the opportunity to board up the structure because of their need to tend to matters stemming from inclement weather. The Manager said if there is no response and the City has to secure the structure, we will put the cost on the property taxes, for which we will not recover. Demolition costs are estimated at about \$500,000, which he believes did not include asbestos abatement. He said because the structure has burned, asbestos abatement may be prohibited because it will be considered "friable", meaning it is in the air and all over everything, which means all on-site material would be considered to be contaminated. If this is the case the materials would have to be placed in sealed containers and taken to a special landfill – much like the former West Elementary property, which cost over \$900,000 to demolish. We may have to endure a boarded up structure for some time if a funding source is unavailable or unless the court places heavy pressure on the owners.

Mr. Ducro said someone reached out to him about a local business celebrating 40 years; that the Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners would be happy to acknowledge them, but thought if City Council was going to, as well, it would be nice to do it at a regular city council meeting so recipients would not have to attend two different meetings. He asked the President if he received his last email correspondence about the matter. The President yes, but that City Council has not discussed it, but will give it some attention.

Ms. Shelia Jemison, Ashtabula City Resident

Ms. Jemison concurred with Mr. Hall's comments (see above) about the condition of West 7th Street. She said given what she has heard this evening, she wanted to say it takes prayer to get things done, and that we may disagree but still should be friendly. She announced she is involved in a faith-based homeless shelter (details for which were not provided), asked that persons in need are put in touch with her (440) 992-2485, and that she has put the needs of our community in the hands of the Lord.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before this Council, the President declared the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: MARCH 19 2018

ATTESTED BY: John S. Roskovics

**John S. Roskovics
President of Council**

TTTESTED BY: LaVette E. Hennigan

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