

**ASHTABULA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF ASHTABULA, OHIO  
4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Monday, January 4, 2016**

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

<b>Member(s) Present:</b>	Mr. John S. Roskovics	(Ward 1)
	Mr. August A. Pugliese	(Ward 2)
	Mrs. Alice T. Cook	(Ward 3)
	Mrs. Josephine Misener	(Ward 4)
	Mr. Christopher J. McClure	(Vice President)
	Mr. J. P. Ducro IV	(Council President)
<b>Member(s) Absent:</b>	Mr. Kris E. Hamrick	(Ward 5)
<b>Officer(s) Present:</b>	Mr. James M. Timonere	(City Manager)
	Mr. Michael Franklin	(City Solicitor – arrived at 5:40 p.m.)
	Mrs. Dana D. Pinkert	(Finance Director)
	Mrs. LaVette E. Hennigan, MMC	(Clerk of Council)

**Officer(s) Absent:** None

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

**PURPOSE:** The President of Council announced the purpose of this Public Hearing was to allow for public comments and recommendations regarding the 3<sup>rd</sup> AMENDMENT TO THE JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (J.E.D.D.) CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF ASHTABULA AND ASHTABULA TOWNSHIP.

**WELCOME:** The President of Council welcomed visitors. The Finance Director announced two staff members from the City's Income Tax Department were present - (Trisha Patton, Income Tax Specialist and Mariangeli Montalvo, Finance Clerk).

**DISCUSSION**

The City Manager reported that:

- The location of the property is on the south side of Route 20 near Wal-Mart
- He believes a strip mall is going to be constructed
- The type of businesses going into the suspected strip mall are not known; and
- The City/County Sewer Agreement requires a JEDD be in place before businesses located outside City limits are able to tap into our sewer system.

### **CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS**

The Ward 4 Councilor asked if the location is also known as the northwest corner of Metcalf Drive off Route 20. The Manager responded, yes.

The Ward 2 Councilor asked if the number of potential employees is known. The Manager responded, no.

The President said he does not know why new structures are being built when there are so many vacant structures available.

The Clerk of Council reported she believes the strip plaza concept has returned. She said first there were mom and pop stores, then downtown shopping, then strip malls/plazas, then enclosed malls, then outlet malls which are generally accessed through exterior storefronts, and now retail has returned to the strip plaza concept. She reported going into GameStop which was previously located in Ashtabula Towne Square, however relocated to a strip plaza that opened on Route 20 a few years ago. She asked then how their business was doing since moving. They said it had tripled and that many people who visited the store were surprised to find out they had been in town for years. The Clerk said storefronts visible from the road are getting more business than when they were located in an enclosed area, simply because they are visible to motorists.

The Ward 1 Councilor asked if it is normal for a JEDD contract to be approved with so little information being provided. The City Manager responded, yes.

The Vice President said even if more information was provided the City could not stop the business plan because JEDD contracts are for properties located outside City limits. He added that zoning regulations also drive the activity. He said JEDD contracts secure income tax revenue for the City that otherwise would not be realized.

The President said a JEDD provides the City the ability to avoid litigation, time, and resources given the alternative to getting some type of revenue would be for the property owner to petition the City for annexation into the City in order to tap into our sewer system. He said it is a win/win for the City, Township, and business owner.

The Vice President concurred, adding that annexation would require the City to provide police and fire services which are currently at minimum staffing, but that JEDDs do not.

The Ward 1 Councilor noted his concern with the vagueness of information is that if City businesses were leaving and going into the township as part of a JEDD, we would not know this in time enough to sway them to remain because the information we receive is so vague.

The Clerk of Council reported that, on Sunday, when she was in Ashtabula Towne Square mall, it was very busy. She said there were stores open she was not aware of and that a new food service called "Soda Jerks", has also opened. She encouraged ones to visit the mall or else those stores will not survive. The President concurred, and encouraged "shopping locally".

The Clerk of Council asked if the formation of a new JEDD board is needed for this 3<sup>rd</sup> Amendment. The City Manager responded, no, that the current Ashtabula Township JEDD Board will be the same for this JEDD.

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS**

None

**CLOSING REMARKS**

The President announced that, by law, no formal action may be taken at a public hearing. The ordinance enacting the JEDD is scheduled for a vote of Council at this evening's Regular Council meeting to begin at 7:00 p.m.

**ADJOURN**

Hearing no further business to come before the Council, the President adjourned the Public Hearing at 5:42 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

*January 19, 2016*

ATTESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

*J. P. Ducro IV*

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

ATTESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

*LaVette E. Hennigan*

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