

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

PUBLIC HEARING

Monday, December 7, 2015

The City Council met in a **PUBLIC HEARING**. The President of Council called the hearing to order at 5:45 p.m.

Member(s) Present: Mr. John S. Roskovics (Ward 1)
Mr. August A. Pugliese (Ward 2)
Mrs. Alice T. Cook (Ward 3)
Mrs. Josephine Misener (Ward 4)
Mr. Kris E. Hamrick (Ward 5)
Mr. J. P. Ducro IV (Council President)

Member(s) Absent: Mr. Christopher J. McClure (Vice President)

Officer(s) Present: Mr. James M. Timonere (City Manager)
Mr. Michael Franklin (City Solicitor)
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 present the City of Ashtabula's 2016 Budget Appropriations.

WELCOME: The President of Council welcomed visitors, the youngest being Gabriella Hamrick, daughter of the Ward 5 Councilor.

DISCUSSION

The Finance Director reported what is before Council this afternoon is the "Appropriation". "I just want to point out that the original budget estimate that the City Manager presented (and is on the website and has been advertised), stands as the City Manager's recommendation. You'll notice that the appropriation ordinance is a lot less. And, that is because – it's the same thing as last year – we can't appropriate more than our 'Certificate of Estimated Resources'. And, that is based on what we submit to the County as part of the Tax Budget. So, what we didn't know in July – things like we would do the Waste Water Treatment loan for another \$6 million. We can't appropriate that, although it's in the City Manager's budget recommendation, because know we know we're going to borrow that money and get the loan proceeds. It is confusing, but after the first of the year, just like last year, I will submit to the Budget Commission, the actual year-end balances and adjustments - basically what we presented in the Tax Budget, and we will have to pass the appropriations as the City Manager presented. They're just a lot lower because we can't appropriate more than our Certificate."

COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

President: Where may we find the differentials in the numbers.

Finance Director: The Budget Estimate is not a part of tonight's packet, but is on the City's website.

City Manager: That is the budget I passed around, which showed a difference between the General Fund revenues and expenses of 139.00. So, that's still the recommendation as the Finance Director explained in that we have to go by what was presented in our Tax Budget.

President: ...compared to the figure in our Council packet, which is more or less.

Finance Director: Less; the appropriations are less.

President: The appropriations are much less than what we are approving this evening.

Finance Director: Right. After I submit the year-end actual cash balances and updated revenue projections, the County will issue an Amended Certificate; and that is standard because, our budget is so tight. When you find out things in October that you didn't know in July (*which is when the Tax Budget is submitted*), you can't get those on your Tax Budget. And, we did the same thing last year.

President: And, then if we have further changes that have to be made because of overtime in a department or the Municipal Court has personnel added, or anything like that, that will have to be dealt with later through modifications, appropriations, other cuts, or whatever.

Finance Director: Yes. And, throughout the year, if we find out, again, we're going to get additional revenue or decreased revenue, I do the same thing – I submit something to the County and get an Amended Certificate, and that's how we appropriate our funds.

Parking Deck: The Ward 2 Councilor asked what the \$8,000 expenditure is for, and if the parking deck is being used. The Manager said the expenditure is "basically" for electricity, and that the deck is being used every since the lights were installed on the ground, first, and up towards the second floors.

The Clerk of Council asked the Finance Director if she would email her the definition for Appropriation, Budget Estimate, Tax Budget, and Amended Certificate, and that she could forward them to the members of Council. The Finance Director said she would be happy to.

The Ward 4 Councilor asked if the letter from the Ashtabula County Budget Commission that accompanied the annual request for the "Acceptance of Amounts and Rates as determined by the Commission", is sent yearly. The Finance Director said no. She further said she asked the Clerk of Council to provide this Council with a copy of the letter because she does not know if there is something else coming from the Commission. She said she was not asked for additional

information when our Tax Budget was submitted, "So I don't think that particular letter applies to us." The Ward 4 Councilor said she thought it was odd that we received the letter, and felt that only the entities with problems should have received it. The Finance Director said she would hope the Budget Commission is asking questions if they have suspensions. She said we carry a high permanent improvement balance, part of which is property tax, but there is a reason for that. She then said, "I just wanted Council to see it because I didn't know if something else was coming or if the Budget Commission had other plans." The Ward 2 Councilor asked if the City would be notified of a problem prior to the budget passing. The Finance Director said yes, and that the Commission issued our Certificate according to the need we presented when we submitted our Tax Budget in July, and that the Commission made no changes to it. The President commented that the letter is of a "very general nature", and sought confirmation that "we have no reason to believe that anything was determined in our budget that was in reference to this document". The Finance Director responded, "Right".

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS - None

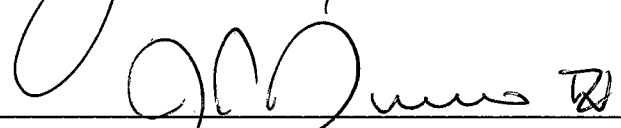
CLOSING REMARKS

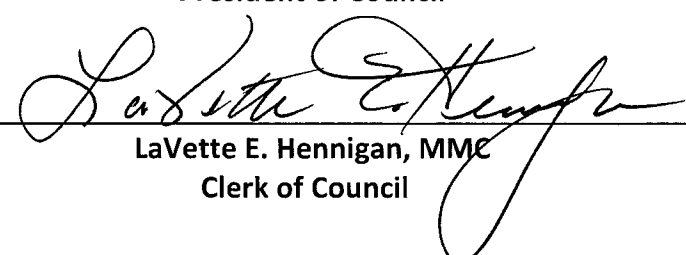
The President announced that, by law, no formal action may be taken at a public hearing. The ordinance enacting the 2016 Budget Appropriations is scheduled for a vote of Council at this evening's Regular Council meeting to begin at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

Hearing no more business to come before this Council the President adjourned the Public Hearing at 5:40 p.m.; motion CARRIED.

DATE APPROVED: January 4, 2016

ATTESTED BY: 
J. P. Ducro IV
President of Council

ATTESTED BY: 
LaVette E. Hennigan, MMC
Clerk of Council