

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

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Monday, April 6th, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

The President of Council called the virtual meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., the Ward 1 Councilor offered the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Octavia V. Harris (Ward 4 Councilor)
Ms. Jane E. Haines (Ward 5 Councilor)
Mrs. Kym A. Foglio (Ward 1 Councilor)
Mr. Calvin C. Crawford (Ward 2 Councilor)
Ms. Laydean Young (Ward 3 Councilor)
Mr. Michael D. Speelman (Vice President)
Mr. John S. Roskovics (President)

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: None

OFFICER(S) PRESENT: Mr. James M. Timonere (City Manager)
Ms. Traci R. Welch (Director of Finance)
Mr. Michael Franklin (City Solicitor)
Mrs. Stacy H. Senskey (Clerk of Council)

OFFICER(S) ABSENT: None

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Due to the current stay-at-home order imposed by Governor DeWine, the Council President announced the Council Rules of Order may be temporarily suspended at any meeting of the City Council. Ms. Haines moved; Ms. Young seconded to suspend the Council Rules of Order for the duration of the meeting. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

PRESENTATION:

Health Commissioner of Ashtabula City Health Department, Christine Hill shared current City Health Department actions regarding the COVID-19 situation. She reported as of 2:00 p.m. this afternoon, the State of Ohio has 4450 confirmed cases and 1214 hospitalized patients. In Ashtabula County, there are 15 confirmed cases, 9 under the Ashtabula County Health Department’s jurisdiction and 6 under the Ashtabula City Health Department’s jurisdiction. Five county residents are currently hospitalized. Ms. Hill explained how her department is

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overseeing the day-to-day operations. The City's Nursing Division is handling case investigations and managing isolation and quarantine of the positive cases. Along with the 6 positive cases, there are twenty quarantined at this time. New guidance for tracing contacts of positive cases dictates the nurses interview people who have had close and prolonged interaction with positive cases for the 48 hours prior to the patient's onset of symptoms. They are also focusing on priority groups such as first responders and health care workers. University Hospitals and Ashtabula County Medical Center/Cleveland Clinic are progressively testing these priority groups. The Nursing Division is also keeping a close eye on the nursing home and long-term care facility population. Ohio Department of Health is recommending but not requiring the use of cloth face coverings while in public to slow the spread. Please DO not use medical supply masks, as those should be reserved for healthcare workers. Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for the stay-at-home order. The Environmental Health Division is enforcing the Stay-at-Home and essential work orders which were recently amended. Businesses are to determine and enforce the maximum number of customers in the store at one time. All waiting lines must demonstrate the six-foot social distancing requirement. Public swimming pools and private pools at clubs and housing complexes will be closed. Campgrounds will be closed with one exception. If a camper or RV in a campground serves as the permanent residence, the citizen may follow the Stay-at-Home order in the campground. The Vital Statistics division is answering phone calls from the public and directing calls to the proper divisions. They are also directing the public to call the COVID-19 211 call center which is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and the Ohio Department of Health 1-833-427-5634. Birth and death certificates questions also are answered through the Vital Statistics division. The staff at the City Health Department is in every day and are working very long hours. Ms. Hill is grateful that in general, most people of the City have been compliant during the pandemic. Ms. Hill thanked her staff, the citizens, the City Manager and the City Police and Fire Departments for all their support and cooperation. Ms. Hill advises adhering to the six-foot social distancing rule outside as well as inside and associate only with family members within your home dwelling. The City Manager had to close the basketball court because of the difficulty in keeping social distancing, but people are encouraged to go outside. Churches are working hard to protect their parishioners by having online services, even though religious services are exempt from the rule. The public is urged to refrain from gathering with extended family for Easter Sunday dinner. The City Solicitor retold a situation where a group of young people gathered at a township park to smoke marijuana and were cited by police for violating the state and local Stay-at-Home orders. The penalty for possessing marijuana is classified as a minor misdemeanor with a small fine. In contrast, the penalty for violating the Stay-at-Home orders is classified a first degree misdemeanor and can be up to 6 months jail time and \$1,000.00. Ms. Hill explained it is unknown at this time if a person can contract the coronavirus more than once and further scientific studies are needed. The City Manager praised for Ms. Hill and her staff. They are small but mighty and have been working non-stop every day for the past three weeks. Their communications and collaborations with other health departments and services set the pace for the entire County.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA

PRESENTATION OF MEETING MINUTES:

The Clerk of Council presented the minutes from the following meetings:

- March 16, 2020 Regular Council Meeting
- March 19, 2020 Emergency Meeting

Mrs. Foglio moved; Ms. Haines seconded to waive the reading of the minutes. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS and COMMUNICATIONS

CITY MANAGER:

Formal Requests -

The City Manager requested a resolution in support of the designation of U.S. and State bicycle routes with the cooperation of the Ohio Department of Transportation. Ms. Haines moved; Ms. Young seconded to add this item to tonight's Regular Business Legislation Agenda. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

The City Manager requested an ordinance to enter into an agreement with Brobst Tree & Stump Service with a mailing address of 7935 Center Road, Saybrook, OH 44004, to provide dumping of yard debris for the City of Ashtabula in the amount not to exceed \$9,900.00 annually for yard debris. Larger quantities of wood or stumps will be charged at an additional rate of \$50.00 per truck load as needed. Mr. Crawford moved; Mrs. Haines seconded to approve the City Manager's request. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

The City Manager requested an ordinance to enter into an easement agreement with Petmin USA, Inc. for an easement for ingress and egress purposes over City property located on East 5th Street. Ms. Haines moved; Mr. Crawford seconded to add this item to tonight's Regular Business Legislation Agenda. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED. The City Manager clarified Petmin USA, Inc. would be responsible for constructing and maintaining a driveway located on the portion of the property in front of the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

The City Manager requested an ordinance to enter into an easement agreement with Aqua Ohio, Inc. for a utility easement over City property near Henry Street between Marina Drive and Goodwill Drive in anticipation of the new River Bend Hotel. Mrs. Foglio moved; Mr. Crawford seconded to add this item to tonight's Regular Business Legislation Agenda. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED. The City Manager explained River Bend Hotel requires a larger water line for its services.

The City Manager updated issues at the parks. City staff secured playground areas to reduce usage. Police officers were notified and will be patrolling these areas. The City Manager realizes

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it is a difficult situation for everyone but anticipates these practices will slow the spread. In regard to the YMCA summer lifeguard contract, the City Manager and YMCA CEO Trevor Sprague agreed to a daily \$380 discount for every day the beach is closed. The language will be added as an amendment to the contract. The status on the concession stand is unknown at this time and bands for this summer's "Bands on the Beach" events do not expect to be paid if the pandemic situation prevents their activities. Band contracts were revised to indicate the agreement.

The Finance Director and City Manager are reviewing the City's budget after Governor DeWine suggested a 20% reduction in spending. The City is facing less revenue from the State of Ohio Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax, which funds Public Works. The transfer station is bringing less revenue since closing it to the public, but the City Manager may be modifying the restrictions. Fines and court fees have decreased, and the Court has been asked to also reduce their budget. The City Manager is terribly apprehensive about the budget since it is unknown how long the pandemic situation will continue.

The City Manager addressed concerns about local food pantries and distribution. Most all are remaining open, but some may have modified their days and hours. The information will soon be posted on the City website and new Facebook page. City schools are doing a tremendous job distributing food to students. Their places of distribution are subject to change, but they do post information on their website, <https://www.aacs.net/>. There is a tab near the bottom of the page entitled, "AACS Lunch Distribution Sites".

The mutterings of some people about the coronavirus and its impact on our lives required the following explanation from the City Manager. The restrictions are in place to keep the number of hospitalized cases as low as possible. The average hospital stay for a COVID-19 case is 17 days. Many of those days are spent isolated in the Intensive Care Unit. COVID patients are highly contagious, most need ventilators, and require constant care. By slowing the spread, the health care systems will be better equipped to handle the growing number of patients. Preparations can be made now, while the numbers are still low, in anticipation for a surge in COVID cases.

CITY SOLICITOR:

The City Solicitor stated his department is operating with staggered work weeks. The workload seems to have reduced and is being completed in a timely manner at this point. He discussed the United States Small Business Administration's (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) designed to help small businesses with 500 or fewer employees. SBA will forgive the loan if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities. He suggested Andover Bank is an existing SBA lender, but other banks in the area may also be able to help with the PPP. More information is available on the SBA website, <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program-ppp>.

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FINANCE DIRECTOR:

The Finance Director addressed public concern about city payments. Because her department is also using staggered work weeks, they are operating with half staff every day. Of her seven staff members, one primarily works on posting payments. The Finance Director asks for patience and advises to plan for delays during this time. If you make your sewer or trash payments online through the City website, there is a \$2.95 service charge collected by the servicer of those payments. In accordance with the Ohio Revised Code, the City is not allowed to pay those costs. Another payment option is to use your bank's online bill pay service at no charge. She also mentioned late fees would be waived until further notice.

The Finance Director requested an ordinance waiving interest and penalties on the Ashtabula Municipal Income Tax for 2019 if returns are filed and taxes paid by July 15, 2020. Ms. Haines moved; Ms. Young seconded to add this item to tonight's Regular Business Legislation Agenda. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

The Finance Director requested an ordinance to make supplemental appropriations in the General, Public Works and CDBG funds for current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Ashtabula, State of Ohio, for the period January 1 through December 31, 2020. Mrs. Foglio moved; Mr. Crawford seconded to add this item to tonight's Regular Business Legislation Agenda. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

The Finance Director requested an ordinance authorizing the City Finance Director to enter into a modification agreement with Charles E. Harris & Associates and State Auditor Keith Faber for the City of Ashtabula's annual audits in order to include the City Health Department and City Port Authority. Ms. Haines moved; Mrs. Foglio seconded to add this item to tonight's Regular Business Legislation Agenda. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

CLERK OF COUNCIL:

The Clerk of Council said she has been working from home for 10 days, although she is in the building to manage the logistics of virtual Council Meetings. Her office phone 440-992-7119 is forwarded to her cell phone and she has complete access to her work computer from home. She can also be reached through her email address, clerkofcouncil@ashtabulacity.com.

Many Clerks in other nearby municipalities are handling Council meetings in the same manner as Ashtabula because of Ohio House Bill 197 which allows virtual public meetings. In order to reach more city residents, tonight's meeting is also the first City Council meeting on Facebook Live. She appreciates the public's patience.

The Clerk of Council stated she is in the final week of High Performance Leadership Academy. She found the coursework informational and exciting not only professionally, but also on a personal level. Out of fifty students, the Leadership Coach asked her to summarize her personal take-aways during the final class teleconference this Friday. Since the class is over,

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she enrolled in online course work based around the topic of Parliamentary Procedure. This course offers her 23 points toward becoming a Certified Municipal Clerk.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS and COMMUNICATIONS

Council committees meet in the August A. Pugliese Conference Room – M.B. 2nd Floor

ALL COMMITTEE MEETINGS ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

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

Members: Chair/Council Liaison to Parks and Recreation Board Haines; Vice Chair Harris; Roskovics

Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday @ 4p

The Committee Chair is concerned about the financial crisis to our business community and wants to make sure business owners are getting the information they need. She wants all the businesses in Ashtabula to regain their health after this is over.

FINANCE & PERSONNEL - (F&P)

Members: Chair Foglio; Vice Chair Young; Roskovics

Meetings are held the 2nd Friday @ 8a

The Committee Chair stated as soon as the Committee can get together, they will be working on the City Finances.

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

Members: Chair Crawford; Vice Chair Harris; Young

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday @ 5p

SAFETY FORCES - (SF)

Members: Chair Speelman; Vice Chair Foglio; Haines

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday @ 8a

LEGISLATION AGENDA

- Formal Legislation Request(s):
- Form and Correctness
- Legislation Overview

The Council President provided a brief overview of the Legislation Agenda, consisting of Resolution No. 2020-35 and Ordinance Nos. 2020-36, 2020-37, 2020-38, 2020-39, and 2020-40.

- Public Discussion (on legislation only) – The City Manager added locational information about the Federal and State Bike Routes. The Resolution is stating the City supports the project.

CONSENT AGENDA FORMAT:

Mrs. Foglio moved; Mrs. Haines seconded to dispose of Regular Business Legislation by Consent Agenda Format. On the roll call: Ms. Haines, Mrs. Foglio, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Young, Ms. Harris, Mr. Speelman, Mr. Roskovics voted yea; motion CARRIED.

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LEGISLATION READING

The Clerk of Council presented the following legislation:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-35 A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF U.S. AND STATE BIKE ROUTES (City Manager)

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-36 AN ORDINANCE WAIVING INTEREST AND PENALTIES ON THE ASHTABULA MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX FOR 2019 IF RETURNS ARE FILED AND TAXES PAID BY JULY 15, 2020 (Finance Director)

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-37 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH PETMIN USA, INC. FOR AN EASEMENT FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS PURPOSES OVER CITY PROPERTY ON EAST 5TH STREET (City Manager)

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-38 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH AQUA OHIO, INC. FOR A UTILITY EASEMENT OVER CITY PROPERTY NEAR HENRY STREET BETWEEN MARINA DRIVE AND GOODWILL DRIVE IN ANTICIPATION OF THE NEW RIVER BEND HOTEL (City Manager)

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-39 AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE GENERAL, PUBLIC WORKS AND CDBG FUNDS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF ASHTABULA, STATE OF OHIO, FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2020 (Finance Director)

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-40 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY FINANCE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A MODIFICATION AGREEMENT WITH CHARLES E. HARRIS & ASSOCIATES AND STATE AUDITOR KEITH FABER FOR THE CITY OF ASHTABULA'S ANNUAL AUDITS IN ORDER TO INCLUDE THE CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND CITY PORT AUTHORITY (Finance Director)

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

NEW BUSINESS

TELL US SOMETHING WE DON'T KNOW

The Council President is at home and noticed the Sanitation Department just drove by. He asked the City Manager to thank the Department for the dedication they are exhibiting. The City Manager is committed to keeping all essential City staff safe and divided the Sanitation department in two shifts, one in the morning and one in the evening. Public Works and the Police and Fire Departments are also adapting to the schedules staggering the workforce.

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PUBLIC DISCUSSION/COMMENTS (General Matters)

The Clerk of Council shared two emails from the public.

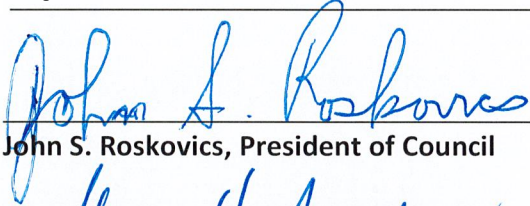
Mr. Jeff Nash about West Avenue in front of his home. The Ward 3 Councilor spoke with Mr. Nash about the damage done to the front of his property because drivers going off the roadway for various reasons. He believes a potential solution is a turning lane on West Avenue. The City Manager is aware of the issue in the area and will respond to Mr. Nash's request.

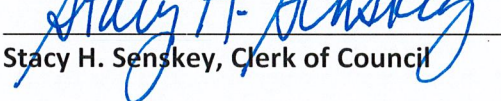
Mr. Kellat is urging the City to adopt a resolution in support of Ashtabula County broadband task force. The City Manager believes he wrote a letter of support and will share at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before this Council, the President thanked the community for understanding the situation and declared the meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: April 20, 2020

ATTESTED BY: 
John S. Roskovics, President of Council

ATTESTED BY: 
Stacy H. Senskey, Clerk of Council