



## TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY

### Special Called City Council Meeting

### February 02, 2026, 6:00 PM

### Minutes

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#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Greer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Mayor Gerald Greer  
Councilman Tim Adkins  
Councilwoman: Nicole Binkley  
Vice Mayor Chris Kerrigan  
Councilman Michael Smith  
Councilman Kevin Thompson  
Councilman Tony Young

#### **PUBLIC HEARING**

A motion was made by Councilman Thompson, seconded by Vice Mayor Kerrigan, to close the Public Hearing. All approved by voice vote.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Councilman Thompson, seconded by Councilman Smith, to approve the agenda. All approved by voice vote.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

NONE

#### **PUBLIC FORUM**

**Stacey Stuart** shared her views on ward versus at-large voting. She noted that while at-large voting may work for the current board due to members' familiarity with the community and ability to represent all wards, she expressed concern about fair representation in the future and whether it could become concentrated in one area of town.

**Amanda Bell:** spoke as a property owner, business owner, and member of the Downtown Merchants Association. She expressed concern about revisiting and revoting on matters previously decided by the City Council, stating that doing so without new information, legal justification, or procedural error undermines the integrity and finality of Council decisions and creates confusion for citizens, staff, investors, and property owners.

**Steven Stratton:** stated that he has received calls regarding the issue and that those he has spoken with support localized representation. He expressed concern about another vote that was made without the community's knowledge of the prior meeting and stated his preference to retain ward-based voting to ensure localized representation and clear points of contact for resolving issues.

**Gina Binkley:** stated that all city residents deserve fair and equal representation and that electing representatives by ward is the most democratic approach. She noted that the city has used ward-based voting for many years and expressed her desire to keep the current ward system in place.

#### **MAYOR STATEMENT**

Mayor Greer recognized the Public Works, Police, and Fire Departments; Councilman Tim Adkins; Councilman Mike Smith; city employees; Kelly Ellis of the Cheatham County Chamber; and numerous volunteers for their assistance during the recent weather emergency. He clarified that the

Red Cross is typically responsible for staffing the emergency shelter, but due to the widespread nature of the event, the Red Cross was unavailable and the City stepped in to operate the shelter. He also thanked local businesses for providing food and noted that the shelter will close at noon tomorrow as the need has decreased.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Charter Change; Elections**

**Mayor Greer** clarified the process leading up to the charter change discussion. **Councilman Adkins** requested Attorney Noe review the history of the issue, noting it has been discussed for several years. **Councilman Thompson** stated his concern that the item was not included on the workshop agenda and that he was unaware of the prior vote due to his absence.

Mayor Greer explained that state legislation effective January 1, 2024, requires the City to choose between ward-only voting or at-large voting. Because the issue was not previously finalized, the City must now make that determination. He stated his original intent was to discuss the matter at workshop and vote in February, but the timeline was moved up due to legal discussions. He emphasized his support for workshop discussion prior to voting and noted the January vote occurred without public input, leading to public concern. After consulting with legal counsel and the State, it was determined the vote could be revisited, and this meeting was called to allow public comment. Attorney Noe added that this was on the agenda in December of 2023 and it did not pass and was never put back on the agenda. Mayor Greer added this is the first time we have given the 2 options to correct the violation of the election laws.

Attorney Noe noted that following Robert's Rules of Order, we will need to have a motion to have a discussion with a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> and then we can discuss the issue. Then we will need to have a motion with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> to close the discussion and then we can vote on the issue.

A motion was made by Councilman Thompson, seconded by Councilman Smith, to open the floor for a discussion. All approved by voice vote.

**Councilman Thompson** stated that he understands both options presented. He noted that while he was elected at large, he represents Ward 3 and has always addressed issues brought to him by residents from any ward. He stated that this approach works for the current board, but his concern is for future boards. He expressed his personal preference to retain ward-based voting.

**Councilwoman Binkley** stated that her opinion has not changed, and she still believes we should vote by wards even if that means just the residents in each ward would elect us to the seat. This would maintain the board's integrity and ensure fair representation.

**Councilman Adkins** asked about homeowners that have properties in different wards. Would they need to choose a ward to cast their vote. Answer: Yes, they would need to choose a ward.

**Vice Mayor Kerrigan** stated that he has spoken with residents and conducted research on both options, noting that each has pros and cons. He explained that ward-based voting provides residents with local representation but can lead to infighting, while at-large voting allows all residents to vote but can present similar challenges. He noted that the current council works well together, but his concern is future representation. He stated he does not believe there is a risk of one area dominating council seats and suggested a hybrid model with three council members elected at large and three by ward to ensure balanced representation.

**Mayor Greer** stated he also thought about a Hybrid model and still has concerns of equal representation. He stated that no one knows better about what is happening in a ward than a

council person that lives in that ward. Voting at large or hybrid could both leads to an imbalance in the wards.

**Attorney Noe** advised the council the difference in reconsidering a vote and rescinding a vote. She recommended the option to rescind would be the best option.

A motion was made by Councilman Thompson, seconded by Councilman Smith, to rescind the vote that was made on January 13, 2026. Voting Yea: Councilman Thompson, Councilman Smith, Councilwoman Binkley, Councilman Young, Mayor Greer. Voting Nay: Vice Mayor Kerrigan, Councilman Adkins

The floor was opened back up to discuss the available options and also to consider the hybrid option. Attorney Noe advised she had not typed anything up for the Hybrid option but if it is chosen the board can approve it with changes and she marked up the ward copy she has.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Binkley, seconded by Councilman Thompson, to conduct our elections by wards. Voting Yea: Councilwoman Binkley, Councilman Thompson, Councilman Smith, Councilman Young, Mayor Greer. Voting Nay: Vice Mayor Kerrigan, Councilman Adkins

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Councilman Thompson, Seconded by Councilman Smith, to adjourn the meeting. All approved by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

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MAYOR GERALD GREER

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CITY RECORDER MARY MOLEPSKE