



TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY
Special Called City Council Meeting
May 26, 2026, 6:00 PM
Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Greer called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilman Thompson, seconded by Vice Mayor Kerrigan, to approve the agenda. All approved by voice vote. **MOTION PASSES**

PUBLIC FORUM

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Greer advised this was the 1st reading of the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget and requested City Recorder Mary Molepske read Ordinance 649. Finance Director Will Duffel then reviewed the proposed budget. He stated the Town anticipates ending Fiscal Year 2026 with an estimated deficit of approximately \$153,000.00 (One Hundred Fifty-Three Thousand Dollars), while Fiscal Year 2027 proposes a deficit of approximately \$450,000.00 (Four Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars). The General Fund Balance is projected to end Fiscal Year 2026 at approximately \$12.3 million (Twelve point Three Million Dollars) and Fiscal Year 2027 at approximately \$10.7 million (Ten point Seven Million Dollars). Attorney Noe requested a motion to approve the ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilman Thompson, seconded by Councilman Smith, to approve Ordinance 649 on first reading.

Mr. Duffel explained that the revised projected deficit was reduced from earlier discussions due to a spreadsheet error involving duplicated insurance expenses in several departments, lowering the estimated deficit from approximately \$600,000.00 (Six Hundred Thousand Dollars) to \$450,000.00 (Four Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars).

Councilman Thompson asked what property tax increase would be necessary to balance the budget with no deficit. Mr. Duffel advised a tax increase of \$.16 (Sixteen Cents) would balance the budget. Using a home valued at \$267,000.00 (Two Hundred Sixty-Seven Thousand Dollars), the increase would equal approximately \$107.00 (One Hundred Seven Dollars) annually, or \$8.91 (Eight Dollars and Ninety-One Cents) per month. Councilman Thompson stated that inflation and increasing operating costs made balancing the budget necessary and proposed raising the property tax rate from \$.4648 (Point Four Six Four Eight) to \$.6248 (Point Six Two Four Eight). He later suggested a smaller increase of \$.10 (Ten Cents), which would reduce the projected deficit to approximately \$136,000.00 (One Hundred Thirty-Six Thousand Dollars) and

increase taxes by approximately \$67.00 (Sixty-Seven Dollars) annually, or \$5.58 (Five Dollars and Fifty-Eight Cents) per month, for the homeowner.

Councilwoman Binkley stated she understood the concerns but preferred giving the Town another year before implementing a tax increase, with the understanding that an increase could be considered next budget year if financial conditions did not improve. Councilman Adkins agreed with waiting another year. Discussion also included future expenses such as Phase 2 of the Bicentennial Trail Project and emergency radio system costs.

Vice Mayor Kerrigan stated he believed the Town should utilize reserve funds rather than impose additional taxes on citizens at this time, noting the Town would still maintain approximately \$10.7 million (Ten point Seven Million Dollars) in reserves. He also encouraged citizens to shop locally to help increase sales tax revenue within the community.

Mayor Greer stated it had taken more than a year for the Town to reach its current financial position and would take time to recover. He agreed with reassessing the budget next year before considering a tax increase.

Attorney Noe clarified that the motion on the floor was to approve the budget ordinance as presented with no amendments. Before the vote, Councilman Thompson stated he believed reserve funds should be preserved for future emergencies and advised he would abstain from voting because he did not support approving the budget without addressing the deficit.

1. Ordinance 649: 2026-2027 Budget - 1st Reading

A motion was made prior to discussion by Councilman Thompson, seconded by Councilman Smith, to approve Ordinance 649 with no amendments in property taxes. Voting Yea: Councilman Smith, Councilwoman Binkley, Councilman Young, Councilman Adkins, Mayor Greer. Voting Nay: Vice Mayor Kerrigan. Abstain from vote: Councilman Thompson

Motion passed 5 to 1 with 1 abstention.

Attorney Noe advised the second reading of the budget ordinance would be held during the regular City Council Meeting on June 9, 2026, under unfinished business. City Recorder Mary Molepske confirmed the required budget advertisements had been submitted to run twice to satisfy the ten-day notice requirement. Mayor Greer then called for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Kerrigan, seconded by Councilman Smith, to adjourn the meeting. All approved by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

MAYOR GERALD GREER

CITY RECORDER MARY MOLEPSKE