

To: City Council Members

CC: City Attorney Priya Tamarasari, Mayor Laurie Jadwin, Sr. Dir. of Operations Kevin Schultz, Director of Parks and Recreation Stephania Bernard-Ferrell

From: Council President Merisa Bowers

Date: Nov 8, 2024

Re: Proposed Amendments to Appointment of Parks Board Member Ordinance 153.01 and 151.03

Over the last year, the City has been reviewing board and commission appointments and related ordinances. I am seeking an amendment to Gahanna Codified Ordinances 151.03 and 153.01 relating to the Parks and Recreation Board appointment of a Gahanna-Jefferson School District employee. Currently, there are seven appointed Parks and Recreation Board members, each paid per attended meeting: 3 appointed by the Mayor and 3 appointed by the City Council for three-year terms. The seventh member is a special member who is an employee of the Gahanna-Jefferson School District appointed by the Gahanna-Jefferson School Board to a one-year term. Gahanna C.O. Section 153.01 (the [current ordinance](#)).

This presents a deviation from other City of Gahanna board and commission ordinances regarding appointed members. I have also reviewed Parks and Recreation Board appointments in other communities and the current arrangement is non-standard. This proposal has been shared with the President of School Board in advance of this meeting.

Proposed Changes

The proposed amendments to C.O. §153.01:

- Retains a resident employee of the GJPS District as a member of the Parks and Recreation Board,
- Standardizes the term to three years (consistent with other board members),
- Preserves the member's voting status, and
- Changes the appointing authority to City Council, who shall appoint the employee recommended by the GJPS Board of Education absent good cause. This is also reflected in the amendment to C.O. §151.03.

This proposal retains the important perspectives of a GJPS employee, creates greater uniformity and parity among board members, and aligns our ordinances with best practices.

Logistics of Recommendation of Employee

1. If starting a new term, School Board sends notice to Council of the recommended employee 30 days in advance of the start of the new term. Council then appoints the recommended resident employee absent good cause.
2. If there is a vacancy mid-term, School Board has 15 days from the vacancy to make the recommendation to allow Council the remaining 30 days to finalize that appointment.
3. With the amendment, if adopted, the ordinance takes effect on January 1, 2025. I have requested as a courtesy that the School Board notify Council by December 16 so we can appoint with a clean start on January 2, 2025.
4. If there is instead a vacancy on Jan. 2, 2025, which is when the ordinance would take effect and the term of the current special member expires, School Board has an additional 15 days to make a recommendation to Council, and Council would then have to act within 30 days, to satisfy the 45-day total for Council to fulfill its appointments.

Timeline

- First discussion at Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, Nov. 12
- Introduction and First Reading on Monday, November 18
- Second Reading and Adoption on Monday, December 2

No need for waiver or emergency.