



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

City Council

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Merisa K. Bowers, President
Trenton I. Weaver, Vice President
Jamille Jones
Nancy R. McGregor
Kaylee Padova
Stephen A. Renner
Michael Schnetzer

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Thursday, January 2, 2025

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

Organizational Meeting began at 7:00 PM; Regular Meeting immediately followed.

A. CALL TO ORDER (Organizational): Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

Gahanna City Council met on Thursday, January 2, 2025, for an organizational/regular meeting in Council Chambers. Mayor Laurie A. Jadwin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked all in attendance to participate in a moment of silence for the victims of the terrorist attack in New Orleans, Louisiana. Councilmember Nancy R. McGregor delivered an Invocation and Chief Spence led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda was published on December 30, 2024.

Present 7 - Merisa K. Bowers, Jamille Jones, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

B. ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

- 1. Open Nominations**
- 2. Close Nominations and Elect President**
- 3. Mayor Jadwin turns over meeting to President**

The first order of business was the election of the Council President for 2025. Mayor Jadwin opened the floor to nominations. Councilmember Renner nominated Merisa Bowers as President of the Council. Councilmember Weaver seconded the nomination. Mayor Jadwin confirmed Ms. Bowers accepted the nomination and asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Renner, to elect Merisa K. Bowers as President of Council for 2025. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

C. ELECTION OF COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT:

1. Open Nominations**2. Close Nominations and Elect Vice President**

President Bowers opened the floor to nominations for Vice President of Council for 2025. Councilmember Padova nominated Councilmember Trenton Weaver for Vice President of the Council. President Bowers confirmed the nomination and asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed.

A motion was made by Padova, seconded by Renner, to elect Trenton I. Weaver as Vice President of Council for 2025. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

D. COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES & OTHER ASSIGNMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT:

President Bowers confirmed appointments as follows:

Community Improvement Corporation Board of Trustees:

Councilmember Renner and Councilmember Padova

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission:

Vice President Weaver

Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors:

Councilmember Padova

Capital Improvement Plan Advisory Committee: Councilmember Schnetzer, Councilmember Renner, and President Bowers

Gahanna-Jefferson Board of Education Liaison:

Councilmember Jones

Incentive Advisory Board:

Councilmember Schnetzer and President Bowers

Volunteer Peace Officers' Dependents Fund Board:

Councilmember Renner and Councilmember McGregor

Finance Committee Chair:

Councilmember Renner

President Bowers addressed the Council regarding the appointment of the Finance Committee Chair. She began by emphasizing the unique role of local government as the closest branch of government to the people it serves, highlighting that it represents the most democratic form of governance. She stated that this proximity to the community brings a special obligation and responsibility to uphold trust in the institution. President Bowers stressed that trust requires not allowing ideologies or policy differences, regardless of how

sincerely held, to interfere with the Council's core responsibilities to its neighbors. She outlined three primary functions of local government: ensuring residents are and feel safe, maintaining and improving the built and natural environment, and ensuring fiscal stability for the city. These responsibilities, she noted, are exemplified in the passage of the annual budget. President Bowers expressed her appreciation for the unique skills and deep competencies of her colleagues, stating that each member has the ability to meaningfully contribute to the Council's work. She also acknowledged the value of differing opinions on policy issues, budget items, and debates over the privatization of services. However, she cautioned that such differences should not obstruct the Council's core obligations, particularly regarding the funding of public safety, public infrastructure, and financial obligations. She emphasized the importance of crafting a budget that reflects fiscal stability, based on trusted forecasts the Council has relied on for years. Citing Councilmember Renner's qualifications, President Bowers noted his extensive experience in government, including over 20 years of professional service and oversight of a \$20 million department budget. She also highlighted his 12 years of service on the Council and his involvement in making difficult decisions related to tax issues and income tax collection. Based on these qualifications, President Bowers proposed Councilmember Renner to serve as the Finance Committee Chair for 2025. She reiterated the importance of the contributions and competencies of all members in budget discussions and processes.

E. COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:

Board of Zoning & Building Appeals, Seat 5 (1/1/25-12/31/27): Paul Bryson
Civil Service Commission, Seat 4 (1/1/25-12/31/27): Carrin Wester
Fair Housing Board, Seat 1 (1/1/25-12/31/27): Carrin Wester
Landscape Board, Seat 5 (1/1/25-12/31/27): Matt Winger
Planning Commission, Seat 3 (1/1/25-12/31/27): Thomas Shapaka
Property Appeals Board, Seat 5 (1/1/25-12/31/27): Jason Ruark

A motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Padova, to reappoint members to boards and commissions seats and terms as listed. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

Parks & Recreation Board, Seat 5 (1/1/25-12/31/27): Harvey McCleskey

Councilmember Schnetzer highlighted Mr. McCleskey's qualifications. He noted Mr. McCleskey's long-time residency in the community, prior service on the Gahanna Junior League Sports Board, and his current role with the Central Ohio Mountain Bike Organization (COMBO). Additionally, Councilmember Schnetzer mentioned Mr. McCleskey's prior employment experience with parks organizations, describing him as an excellent candidate.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, to appoint Harvey

McCleskey to the Parks & Recreation Board, Seat 5 (1/1/25-12/31/27). The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

F. MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS & COMMISSIONS (INFORMATIONAL):

Civil Service Commission, Seat 5 (1/1/25-12/31/27):

Donato D'Alberto

Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council, Seat 1 (1/1/25-12/31/27):

Heyna Deepa Patel

Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council, Seat 2 (1/1/25-12/31/27):

John Hicks

Fair Housing Board, Seat 3 (1/1/25-12/31/27):

Sheila Vitale

Parks and Recreation Board, Seat 5 (1/1/25-12/31/27):

Jan Ross

Parks and Recreation Board, Seat 6 (1/1/25-12/31/27):

Ken Shepherd

Planning Commission, Seat 6 (1/1/25-12/31/27):

Michael Greenberg

Mayor Jadwin announced her appointments to boards and commissions as listed. President Bowers thanked Mayor Jadwin and expressed gratitude to all the returning members of these boards for their continued service to the City of Gahanna.

G. MOTION TO ESTABLISH TIME AND DAY OF REGULAR CITY COUNCIL & COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETINGS:

[2024-0269](#)

Proposed 2025 Legislative Calendar - Regular City Council and Committee of the Whole Meetings

President Bowers introduced the motion to establish the time and day for the regular City Council and Committee of the Whole meetings. She noted that Mr. VanMeter had provided a schedule of all meetings for the coming year. President Bowers proposed continuing the pattern from the previous year, which included having a couple of holiday weeks off. Specifically, for Memorial

Day week, the Committee of the Whole meeting would be held on the Monday prior, allowing for a true holiday week. Similarly, for July, the schedule would follow the same pattern as 2024, with meetings held during the first and third weeks of the month. Committee meetings would be combined with regular meetings to accommodate vacation opportunities. Mayor Jadwin expressed agreement. President Bowers confirmed that regular City Council meetings would continue to be held on the first and third Mondays of the month at 7:00 PM at City Hall, unless the Monday was a holiday. In such cases, the meeting would be held on the subsequent Tuesday. Committee of the Whole meetings would generally occur on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7:00 PM at City Hall, with the same adjustment for holidays as noted. She also noted an adjustment for January. On January 27, 2025, the fourth Monday of the month, the Council would hold a workshop to begin at 6:00 PM facilitated by an outside facilitator in lieu of a traditional Committee of the Whole meeting. She further clarified that there would be no meeting next week, January 6, 2025, as the current meeting replaced the first Monday meeting. President Bowers invited questions or discussion from the council. There were no questions.

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Weaver, that the proposed legislative calendar establishing the time and day for Regular City Council and Committee of the whole meetings be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

H. MOTION TO ESTABLISH BOARD & COMMISSION ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS FOR 2025:

- 1. Landscape Board - Wednesday, January 8 at 6:00 PM**
- 2. Planning Commission - Wednesday, January 8 at 7:00 PM**
- 3. Parks & Recreation Board - Wednesday, January 8 at 7:15 PM**
- 4. Property Appeals Board - Tuesday, January 14 at 6:00 PM**
- 5. Board of Zoning & Building Appeals - Tuesday, January 14 at 6:30 PM**
- 6. Records Commission - Thursday, January 30 at 4:00 PM**
- 7. Civil Service Commission - Thursday, January 30 at 6:00 PM**
- 8. Fair Housing Board - Thursday, January 30 at 6:30 PM**

Clerk VanMeter noted on the item to approve the organizational meetings for boards and commissions listed, he confirmed prior to the preparation of the agenda that each would have a quorum for their meetings.

A motion was made by Jones, seconded by Weaver, that the organizational meeting dates and times for boards and commissions listed be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

I. ADJOURNMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING:

With no further business for organizational purposes, President Bowers adjourned the meeting and opened the regular meeting at 7:16 p.m.

A. CALL TO ORDER (Regular): Roll Call

Present 7 - Merisa K. Bowers, Jamille Jones, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

None.

C. HEARING OF VISITORS:

None.

D. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2024-0267](#)

Council Special Minutes 12.16.2024

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0268](#)

Council Regular Minutes 12.16.2024

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, to Pass the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

E. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING / EMERGENCY ADOPTION:

[ORD-0095-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GAHANNA COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION (CIC) FOR A TERM BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025, TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY FOR THE CITY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title.

A motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Padova, that the Ordinance be Adopted as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

F. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk

[2024-0271](#)

Ohio Division of Liquor Control Notice to Legislative Authority Permit N 11924580055 CALIMIRA LLC DBA RUSTY BUCKET TAVERN & RESTAURANT; 73 N HAMILTON RD & PATIO, GAHANNA, OH 43230

Clerk VanMeter informed the Council about a notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control regarding a permit transfer for Calimira LLC, doing business as Rusty Bucket and Tavern. He stated that the notice had been submitted to the Division of Police, which reported no objections. Clerk VanMeter indicated that if there were no objections from the Council, he would sign the notice indicating that a hearing was not requested. President Bowers asked for clarification on whether the permit was new, differed from an existing permit, or was a renewal. Chief Spence clarified that it was a transfer, not a new permit. With no objections raised by Council, President Bowers thanked Chief Spence and moved on to the next item.

[2024-0272](#)

Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. Letter of Notification: Agler Road NCHP Pipeline Project Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) Case No. 24-1126-GA-BLN

Clerk VanMeter presented a notice from Columbia Gas of Ohio regarding the Agler Road NCHP pipeline project. He explained that the notice had been forwarded to the Ohio Power Siting Board, with the city receiving a copy. He noted that the notice indicated no impact to Columbia Gas service but mentioned that pipeline construction would affect traffic during the project, expected to start in spring 2025. He concluded that he did not see any actionable items for the Council at this time.

President Bowers asked if coordination with the city was needed. Kevin Schultz, Senior Director of Operations, confirmed ongoing communication with Columbia Gas regarding the project. He explained that the project, initially planned for 2026, had been divided into two phases. The western phase, beginning at Agler Road, was expected to start in spring 2025, with the eastern phase to follow in 2026. He added that permitting and coordination were underway, but the spring start date might be delayed due to necessary reviews and coordination with other projects, such as the Westside Sewer Project. President Bowers thanked Director Schultz for the update.

Vice President Weaver asked whether communications with residents about the project would be handled by Columbia Gas or the city. Director Schultz replied that while the project was entirely managed by Columbia Gas, the city would assist in communicating impacts to residents. Weaver then inquired about the location of the eastern phase in 2026. Director Schultz outlined the

path, stating that it would run along Taylor Station Road, Taylor Road, Morrison Road, the Church of the Nazarene's property, and Price Road, extending to James Road and Agler Road before continuing west into Columbus.

2. Council - None.

G. REPRESENTATIVES:

1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)

Vice President Weaver noted that the next meeting of the CIC was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 7:30 AM. He added that all members of Council were invited to attend. The meeting was tentatively planned to be held at the golf course, though the location was still being confirmed.

2. Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)

Vice President Weaver stated that MORPC had concluded its activities for the year and that he had circulated the latest e-newsletter to his colleagues. He noted that the e-newsletter included a survey on economic development in the region. He added that commission meetings would resume next month.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)

Councilmember Padova reported the CVB would hold its annual meeting in March. The date is still to-be-determined and the keynote speaker would be announced soon.

4. School Board (SB)

None.

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin expressed excitement about the start of a new year. She noted that 2025 presented an opportunity to shape a new chapter for the City of Gahanna, emphasizing that the year's story would be written collaboratively by citizens, staff, and the Council. Mayor Jadwin highlighted the strategic planning process, Our Gahanna, which began in late 2024 and would continue throughout 2025. This initiative aims to engage the community, staff, and leadership in determining the future direction of the city. She outlined several ongoing and upcoming projects, including the Columbia Gas pipeline, which, while not a city project, will significantly impact Gahanna. Other priorities include continued investments in infrastructure, services, and

deferred maintenance. These efforts will include an expansive street and sidewalk program, park and trail improvements, and the launch of a new street tree program in 2025. Mayor Jadwin shared plans to welcome several new businesses in the first quarter of the year, including the opening of six medical office buildings at the Crescent at Central Park and Burns & Scalo's new office and manufacturing facility in the industrial sector. She emphasized the importance of continued investments in public safety, which she stated remains a top priority. Reflecting on recent tragic events in New Orleans and local experiences in Gahanna, Mayor Jadwin highlighted the resilience of the community and the professionalism of the city's teams. She commended the efforts of the Division of Police, senior leadership, Communications team, and Public Service team for their dedication to keeping the city safe and unified during challenging times.

Mayor Jadwin extended her gratitude to Councilmember Schnetzer for his contributions as Finance Chair, recognizing his leadership in navigating lean operating budgets, tax initiatives, and the impacts of COVID-19. She expressed enthusiasm for continuing to work with him on Council and congratulated Councilmember Renner on his new role. In closing, Mayor Jadwin reiterated her appreciation for the Council's trust and partnership and looked forward to a productive and collaborative year under the motto, "Together, we thrive in '25."

2. City Attorney

[2024-0270](#)

City Attorney's Annual Report to City Council

City Attorney Tamilarasan presented her annual report, as required by the City Charter, summarizing the outcomes of litigation involving the city over the past year. She noted that much of the information had been shared with Council during regular sessions and stated that a full annual report was attached as an exhibit. Attorney Tamilarasan provided updates on several cases. She reported that there were initially four litigations involving Speed Way Towing. The federal claim remains pending, while the state claim was recently decided in favor of the city by the 10th District Court of Appeals. She clarified that the deadline to request an appeal to the Ohio Supreme Court is January 31st, emphasizing that this would be a request for the court to hear the appeal, not an automatic right to appeal. She also mentioned that the Academy Ridge litigation was completed, with all appeal timeframes having passed. Additionally, the Morehouse and Cochran vs. Gahanna cases were settled and closed.

Attorney Tamilarasan outlined the status of other ongoing cases. A Speed Way Transportation case in the Sixth Circuit is fully briefed but not yet resolved. Another case involving Speed Way in Environmental Court pertains to a Planning Commission and BZBA denial of a conditional use permit. She announced that an agreement for an agreed judgment entry had been

finalized that afternoon and would be presented to the court on Monday, with details to be shared after court approval. The Brookewood Construction case, currently in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, remains in the discovery phase. Additionally, the city has initiated a related case against Brookewood Construction in Environmental Court, which is also in discovery. Finally, the Taglia litigation, which involves both the city and SWACO, has just begun and is in the discovery phase. This case pertains to injuries allegedly sustained at Academy Park. Attorney Tamilarasan concluded her report by stating that updates would be provided as these cases progressed.

I. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember McGregor expressed gratitude for the holiday break, noting that it provided a chance for rest and relaxation. She shared her excitement and hope for the new year and commented on the beautiful holiday lighting displays around Gahanna. She mentioned that she and her husband spent time driving around the city to admire the festive decorations, which seemed more plentiful than in previous years. She thanked the residents for their efforts in making their homes so festive.

Councilmember Jones welcomed everyone back and wished them a Happy New Year. She expressed her enthusiasm for the city's "Thrive in 25" theme and conveyed her optimism for a successful year.

Councilmember Padova wished everyone a Happy New Year and echoed Councilmember McGregor's praise of the holiday lights. She shared that her family also drove around to enjoy the displays and specifically highlighted the Light Up Gahanna winner on Venetian Way, which featured a synchronized light and music show that drew several visitors. She thanked everyone who participated in the event.

Councilmember Renner wished his colleagues and the community a Happy New Year and acknowledged his recent appointment as Finance Chair. He humbly accepted the role and expressed gratitude for the trust placed in him. He noted that he has big shoes to fill and plans to seek guidance from Councilmember Schnetzer.

Councilmember Schnetzer wished everyone a Happy New Year and expressed his eagerness to begin work in 2025.

Vice President Weaver wished everyone a Happy New Year and expressed his appreciation for being entrusted to serve as Vice President again. He also thanked President Bowers for reappointment to the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. Weaver acknowledged the importance of community service and thanked those who applied for board and commission positions,

encouraging others to continue applying as opportunities arise. He also echoed the Mayor's earlier comments, expressing gratitude to First Responders for their dedication, particularly during the holidays, and thanked them for their service. Finally, he announced that he would be hosting a constituent hour on Saturday from 10:00 to 11:30 AM at the library in study room G.

President Bowers concluded the comments by expressing her gratitude to the Gahanna Division of Police and First Responders, commending their leadership, integrity, and dedication to residents. She shared a personal reflection about her early involvement in the community, quoting the late MarShawn McCarrel, who said, "You have to build community to move community." She emphasized her commitment to supporting and advancing the community and thanked her colleagues for trusting her to serve as Council President for another year.

J. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
day of 2025.*

Merisa K. Bowers