



# City of Gahanna

## Meeting Minutes

### Committee of the Whole

200 South Hamilton Road  
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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

*Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council*

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Monday, April 27, 2026

City Hall, Council Chambers

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**Immediately following the regular City Council meeting beginning at 7:00 PM**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

*Gahanna City Council met for Committee of the Whole on Monday, April 27, 2026, in Council Chambers. Vice President of Council Jamille Jones, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:26 p.m. The agenda was published on Friday, April 24, 2026. All members were present for the meeting. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.*

**B. DISCUSSIONS:**

**1. New Community Authority Presentation  
Caleb Bell and Michael Ringle, Bricker Graydon Wyatt**

[2026-0083](#)

New Community Authorities Presentation by J. Caleb Bell and Michael Ringle, Bricker Graydon Wyatt 2026-04-27

*Introduction*

Jeff Gottke, Director of Economic Development, introduced a presentation and stated that Council would hear from regional experts on New Community Authorities (NCAs). He noted that the presentation would not come from him and clarified that the item did not include a request for action but served as an informational session. He explained that the purpose of the presentation was to provide additional understanding of an economic development tool that the city used in a limited capacity. He stated that he aimed to move toward the model presented and encouraged the Council to consider that approach.

Director Gottke discussed the importance of expanding the city's use of economic development tools to strengthen fiscal health and create opportunities for businesses and residents. He explained that the city used NCAs in a limited scope and geography and noted that the presenters would address ways to expand their geographic use and increase fiscal versatility for both the city and development projects. He then introduced Caleb Bell and Michael Ringle from Bricker Graydon Wyatt, noting that the firm served as a statewide leader in the creation and administration of NCAs. He reiterated that the presentation was informational and invited Councilmembers to ask questions at the conclusion.

Caleb Bell introduced himself as Chair of the Public Finance Group at Bricker Graydon Wyatt and a partner in the firm, and he introduced Michael Ringle, Public Finance Attorney. He stated that they would provide a high-level overview of the NCA tool and asked Mr. Ringle to begin with organizational dynamics.

Michael Ringle explained that a New Community Authority functioned as a separate political subdivision with a board appointed by the City Council or the statutory developer. He noted that the city previously used an NCA as a single development finance tool but stated that the presentation would address how the city could deploy the tool citywide and tailor it to individual projects while maintaining control. He explained that, at formation, the developer must control the land included in the authority and that the authority held flexible powers under the Revised Code to finance community facilities. He added that the tool supplemented the city's economic development efforts. Mr. Ringle described the creation process, stating that a developer would file a petition with an organizational board, which in this case would involve submitting a petition to the City Council for review, a public hearing, and approval. He stated that the Council must determine that the authority served the public health, safety, and convenience. He also explained that both the developer and local government shared board appointments and noted that the Revised Code allowed the city to serve as the developer. Mr. Bell emphasized that concept, stating that the municipality could act as the developer of an NCA. He noted that several central Ohio communities, including Hilliard, Sunbury, Galena, Mount Vernon, and New Albany, used this approach to manage development activity within their boundaries. He explained that when the city served as the

developer, Council would appoint the board, which would then carry out the city's development plan. He stated that this approach allowed the city to direct development rather than respond to developer proposals. Mr. Bell provided an example from Hilliard, explaining that the city applied a community authority charge to all new residential lots through a policy that imposed a five-mill charge. He described the charge as similar to a municipal special assessment or unvoted debt capacity on new development. He stated that as development increased, the resulting revenue created a significant funding source that the city could use to address development priorities. He added that this approach could provide the city with greater leverage in working with developers by establishing clear policies and addressing needs through contractual agreements.

#### *Community Development Charges & NCA Enhancement*

Mr. Bell explained that the primary mechanism that enabled an NCA to operate was the community development charge. He stated that, in municipally driven authorities, these charges typically ran with the land through a recorded declaration. He compared the charges to homeowners' association assessments but clarified that they functioned as millage, such as one, three, or five mills, applied as an assessment that provided a benefit to the property. He described the dynamic between existing and new development, stating that established residents already funded infrastructure such as roads and public facilities, while new development benefited from those prior investments. He explained that the community authority structure allowed new development to contribute appropriately to the existing community rather than creating tension between new and existing residents. Mr. Bell stated that the charges could take various forms, including fixed dollar amounts or millage, and noted that more advanced authorities could apply specialized charges such as hotel bed taxes or retail sales charges. He referenced Bridge Park in Dublin as an example of a development that utilized both types of charges. He explained that the approach allowed the city to take a more active role in shaping development outcomes by partnering with developers. He described how the city could allocate portions of the revenue to support site amenities and public improvements, such as parks and shared spaces, thereby enhancing overall development quality. He emphasized that the establishment of a

community development charge created a future revenue stream that could support and improve development projects.

Mr. Ringle outlined permissible uses for community development charges. He stated that the charges could finance, reimburse, or pay for community facilities, including land acquisition and development. He explained that the funds could also support debt service on bonds issued for such improvements and cover the costs of operating and maintaining those facilities. Mr. Ringle then described the types of community facilities that qualified under the statute. He identified public buildings, public spaces, recreational facilities, parks, open spaces, cultural facilities, streets, lighting, pedestrian access, bicycle systems, water supply, and sewer infrastructure as examples. He noted that the definition of community facilities exceeded the scope of public improvements typically eligible under tax increment financing. He stated that the broader definition allowed greater flexibility in both the types of charges imposed and the range of projects funded, as well as the geographic area in which funds could be used.

#### *Advantages of NCAs*

Mr. Bell outlined several advantages of New Community Authorities. He stated that they functioned as separate governmental entities with different rules than municipalities, which allowed for more efficient processes, such as expedited project implementation when working with developers on infrastructure like sewer installation. He explained that one significant advantage involved property taxation, noting that municipalities in Ohio could abate, redirect, or add taxes, and that adding millage through a community authority avoided conflicts with schools, counties, or municipal budgets. He stated that this approach augmented revenue without creating competition for existing tax resources. Mr. Bell explained that NCAs could operate for extended periods and noted that some defined terms, such as 20 years, while others operated for longer durations. He encouraged municipalities to consider defined terms based on community needs and market factors, including the marketability of lots. He stated that in Delaware County, numerous authorities existed, some with millage rates exceeding 10 mills per lot, and he noted that such charges had not negatively affected development demand. He stated that the use of community authority

charges was common in central Ohio and that new development effectively contributed to the cost of existing community infrastructure.

Mr. Ringle added that the structure included due process through a recorded declaration that disclosed the charges to prospective property owners. He stated that buyers received notice of these charges before purchasing property. He also noted that the presence of an NCA could enhance competitiveness by enabling additional amenities, and he stated that communities without such tools could face disadvantages in attracting development. Mr. Ringle explained that, because an NCA functioned as a separate political entity, it could issue debt supported by its charges without affecting the City's debt capacity. He noted that this feature allowed municipalities to pursue significant infrastructure projects without straining general obligation capacity.

Mr. Bell provided an example in which a major road improvement required significant funding and explained that a community authority could leverage development to finance such improvements without relying on the City's general obligation bonds. Mr. Ringle concluded by noting that community development charges offered greater flexibility than other financing mechanisms, such as special improvement districts, and that boards could implement and adjust charges more easily. He added that, when private developers participated, they could access private markets to finance projects, which further expanded funding flexibility.

*Case Study: Bridge Park, Dublin, Ohio*

Mr. Bell presented Bridge Park in Dublin as a case study, describing it as a 30-acre development along the river that redeveloped former strip mall properties into a new space. He stated that parking infrastructure represented a significant cost and that the community authority system supported that development through multiple revenue sources. He explained that charges applied to real property secured debt, while additional charges applied to hotel stays and retail transactions within the district. He noted that the percentage added to restaurant bills within the district supported repayment of parking garage debt. He stated that layering these charges within a defined area proved effective and described the development as highly functional and well managed. Mr.

Bell stated that such tools allowed municipalities to enhance development sites and emphasized that NCAs could apply to individual sites or multiple types of development. He explained that a single authority could manage different projects, including downtown developments and residential areas, and allow the city to maintain control when working with developers. He noted that Columbus initially created multiple authorities but later consolidated them into a more centralized structure to improve efficiency and oversight. He stated that a managed, city-led system provided a more effective approach than creating a new authority for each development.

Mr. Ringle referenced considerations for forming a citywide NCA and stated that, although the presentation did not constitute a formal proposal, it outlined factors for the Council to consider. He then invited questions.

#### *Questions from Council*

Councilmember Schnetzer thanked the presenters and asked questions regarding the practical application of New Community Authorities. He referenced the example of Hilliard and asked whether an authority must consist of contiguous land or whether the city could establish a single, overarching authority across noncontiguous areas. Mr. Bell responded that changes in state law approximately ten years earlier eliminated contiguity requirements. He explained that municipalities could now apply a “Swiss cheese” approach, targeting specific developing areas and incorporating them into a single authority without requiring geographic continuity. He stated that separate developments could contribute collectively to shared community improvements, such as parks or facilities, under one authority. Councilmember Schnetzer acknowledged the potential benefit of such an approach in addressing public concerns about the impact of new development on existing infrastructure. He then asked about the relationship between NCAs and tax increment financing (TIF), specifically whether the tools functioned as complementary or conflicting mechanisms. Mr. Bell stated that the tools complemented each other. He explained that municipalities could redirect property taxes through TIF while also adding community development charges through an NCA. He described how a development could include both a TIF component and an additional charge, resulting in a combined tax

structure. He stated that TIF often served as a primary tool for infrastructure improvements, such as roads, utilities, and traffic-related projects, while community authority charges could support site-specific amenities, including recreational facilities and community spaces. He explained that municipalities could adjust the balance between the two tools to meet project needs. Mr. Ringle added that using multiple tools could improve financing outcomes, particularly when projects require upfront funding. He explained that tax increment financing relied on future tax revenue generated after development, which could limit early borrowing capacity. He stated that layering community development charges could provide more immediate and predictable revenue streams, helping to support debt service during early project phases. Mr. Bell summarized that combining the tools could reduce variability in TIF revenue and create a more stable financing structure by incorporating community development charges. Mr. Ringle added that community development charges could also fund additional public facilities, including recreational amenities and services related to public safety, such as police and fire infrastructure, to accommodate increased demand from new development.

Councilmember Bowers continued the discussion regarding the differences between New Community Authorities and Tax Increment Financing. She stated her understanding that TIF redirected existing property tax revenues for defined public benefits, while an NCA added an additional assessment to fund similar or expanded improvements. She also asked about governance, noting that a new governing body would oversee the use of those fees rather than the Council. Mr. Bell responded that the Council retained control by forming the community authority and serving as the developer through the municipal corporate body. He explained that the authority operated based on the Council's policy and that a cooperative agreement between the city and the authority governed the use of funds. Mr. Ringle added that, while the Council typically adopted TIF legislation directly, in this case the Council would review and approve projects and the structure under which charges would later be applied by the authority's board. Mr. Bell further explained that the Council controlled the admission of property into the authority, which allowed the Council to determine whether specific developments participated.

Councilmember Bowers asked whether the authority's board would

petition for developments to be included. Mr. Ringle clarified that, after the initial formation, subsequent applications for additional land would come before the Council for approval. Mr. Bell noted that implementing such a policy required establishing clear expectations with developers and that initial adoption could present challenges as the City established new standards. Councilmember Bowers asked whether the authority could waive assessments. Mr. Ringle explained that municipal formations often began with city-owned land that carried no charges and that, in practice, charge levels were negotiated based on the needs of each development. He stated that while flexibility existed, he recommended establishing a baseline expectation for charges. Mr. Bell added that, after initial obligations were met, the authority could reduce charge levels over time, subject to contractual commitments. He provided an example in which a community authority reduced its millage as development matured and financial obligations decreased. Councilmember Bowers presented a hypothetical scenario involving future redevelopment within an established authority and asked whether the authority could reduce millage for such a project. Mr. Bell stated that any reduction would depend on existing contractual obligations, including outstanding debt, but noted that reductions could occur if those obligations were satisfied and if the Council granted the necessary authority. Councilmember Bowers asked whether residents voted on the millage. Mr. Bell stated that residents did not vote on the charges because the obligation attached to the property through a recorded declaration disclosed at the time of purchase. He explained that disclosure requirements ensured that buyers understood the charges and noted that standard real estate contracts in the region included such disclosures. Mr. Ringle added that the authority's board operated as a public body and conducted open meetings accessible to residents.

Councilmember Bowers asked about the relationship between property tax abatements and New Community Authorities. Mr. Bell stated that residential tax abatements were generally disfavored due to their impact on schools but acknowledged that some communities continued to use them. He explained that some municipalities paired abatements with community development charges to offset lost revenue, particularly in areas with existing abatement policies. He described this approach as a method to replace or supplement revenue that would otherwise be reduced through abatement. Councilmember Bowers remarked that the approach appeared to differ from traditional incentive strategies by

focusing on maintaining community quality while supporting development. Mr. Ringle responded that the approach functioned as a more targeted method for economic development.

Councilmember McGregor stated that Gahanna was largely built out and questioned the applicability of the NCA tool given the limited availability of undeveloped land. Mr. Bell acknowledged the question and stated that, even in built-out communities, redevelopment opportunities continued to arise. He explained that projects such as renovations, conversions of office buildings to residential use, and other property changes created opportunities to apply the tool. He also noted that annexation could introduce new development areas, depending on available corridors. Additionally, he described emerging applications of the tool in built environments, including the use of community authority charges on existing retail areas, citing an example in the Short North area of Columbus, where property owners agreed to implement a retail charge along North High Street. He stated that the tool could adapt to different development scenarios depending on property conditions and community needs. Mr. Ringle added that Bridge Park in Dublin provided an example of redevelopment, explaining that the site previously functioned as a struggling strip mall. He stated that the City of Dublin redeveloped the site, including construction of a suspension bridge connecting new development to the historic downtown, which supported reinvestment in that area.

President Weaver thanked the presenters and asked about examples of communities that implemented a citywide New Community Authority approach, as well as the typical length of terms for such authorities. Mr. Bell responded that “citywide” referred more accurately to a citywide policy, as the authority itself applied only to consenting properties, typically new development. He cited Galena as an example, explaining that while the authority applied only to newly developing areas, the city maintained a consistent policy across developments. He stated that terms could vary and that some authorities used defined durations, such as 20 or 30 years, while others incorporated renewable or longer-term structures. He noted that communities often determined term lengths based on financial goals and anticipated revenue needs. President Weaver asked whether different areas within a citywide policy could include varying terms and requirements. Mr. Bell confirmed that the City could establish different structures, such as varying millage or charges

depending on the type of development, including hotel or residential uses. He also explained that changes in state law expanded municipal control over the tool, eliminated contiguity requirements, removed minimum acreage thresholds, and allowed authorities to include different types of development rather than requiring a single, functionally related community. President Weaver asked whether the city could apply the tool to an existing residential neighborhood to support public improvements. Mr. Bell responded affirmatively in concept, and Mr. Ringle clarified that property owners would need to consent to participation. He explained that obtaining consent from existing homeowners could prove challenging due to mortgage obligations and the addition of a lien through the recorded declaration. He stated that communities more commonly applied the tool to redevelopment or new development areas. President Weaver asked about the process for implementing such an approach in an existing area. Mr. Bell stated that the city could establish a policy, create an authority, and then approach property owners to seek voluntary participation for funding improvements. He noted that such an application would represent a new approach for existing residential areas. Mr. Bell added that the city could use the tool to encourage voluntary participation in funding improvements, similar to a special improvement district, particularly for localized needs such as drainage. Mr. Ringle added that community development charges could support facilities across a broader area than tax increment financing, allowing new development to help fund improvements that benefited nearby built-out areas. President Weaver then asked whether the city could incorporate additional requirements, such as green infrastructure, into a NCA policy. Mr. Bell confirmed that the city could do so and recommended establishing broader policy goals rather than overly specific requirements. He provided an example from a community near the Darby area, where development policy required contributions to environmental objectives through either direct fees or participation in a community authority structure.

Councilmember Bowers asked follow-up questions regarding the structure of a potential single NCA board and inquired whether the Council would determine the number of board members. Mr. Bell stated that the statute required a minimum of seven members and noted that some authorities had nine members, though he indicated that seven members typically worked best. He explained that the City Council

formally appointed four members, while the city, acting as the corporate body and developer, appointed three members. He stated that Council could determine how to structure appointments, including whether to appoint all members directly or include staff or individuals with relevant expertise, such as developers or builders, while maintaining overall control of the board. Councilmember Bowers expressed concerns about potential conflicts of interest, particularly if developers served on the board, and noted similarities to community improvement corporations. She also raised concerns about governance under a single board, including the possibility of competing priorities and allocation of funds across projects. She stated that the concept required detailed policy consideration. Mr. Bell acknowledged those concerns and stated that the proposed approach emphasized a municipally driven policy framework, with the Council and administration providing direction. He explained that this structure reduced the likelihood of individual developers exerting influence over decisions and emphasized that the board would function similarly to other boards or commissions with policy oversight. Mr. Ringle added that the Council retained appointment and removal authority over board members.

Director Gottke clarified his intended approach, stating that he viewed NCAs as a tool for new growth rather than for existing development. He stated that he did not intend to apply additional charges to existing property owners. He explained that he envisioned creating a flexible set of tools that the city could apply when working with developers on new projects, allowing the city and developers to structure charges that supported both development feasibility and city goals. He emphasized the need to balance affordability with revenue generation and described the approach as a “pay as you grow” model.

Vice President Jones thanked Director Gottke for clarifying the concept and stated that his explanation helped summarize the key takeaway from the presentation. She then asked if there were additional questions. Seeing none, she thanked Mr. Bell and Mr. Ringle for their presentation and expressed appreciation for their time.

## **2. Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC) Rates Discussion**

[2026-0084](#)

Gahanna Energy Plus (CCA) Program Updates Presentation by Luke Sulfridge, SOPEC 2026-04-27

Corey Wybensing, Senior Deputy Director, introduced Luke Sulfridge, Executive Director of Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC), and stated that he would provide an update on the Gahanna Energy Plus community choice aggregation program. He explained that the program served as a tool to provide access to competitive electric rates, particularly through a 100 percent renewable option. He stated that the presentation would include an overview of the current program, newly established aggregation rates, and factors influencing those rates. He also noted that recent communication was sent to residents regarding the disclosure period for a new three-year term and stated that the presentation would address those details. He reminded residents that additional information, including rates and program details, was available on the city's website.

Luke Sulfridge thanked Council, Mayor Jadwin, and staff and reported that the program generated nearly one million dollars in savings for Gahanna participants compared to the standard service offer, contributing to approximately \$40 million in total savings across SOPEC membership over five years. He noted that the data reflected figures through February 2026 and would continue to increase through June 2026. He stated that current rates remained below the AEP Ohio standard service offer and would continue through May 31, 2026. He advised residents to review current rates through available resources and noted that SOPEC maintained fixed, flat rates during the contract period.

Mr. Sulfridge reported that rates would increase in the upcoming term and stated that SOPEC monitored market conditions to secure the lowest possible rates. He explained that regional energy markets, including PJM, faced capacity constraints due to limited new capacity and retiring legacy generation, which increased costs. He noted that capacity charges now comprised a significant portion of generation costs and described additional factors, including weather conditions and global conflicts, that affected energy prices. He emphasized that SOPEC's fixed-rate structure protected residents from market fluctuations during the contract term.

Mr. Sulfridge explained that the aggregation program allowed residents to opt out at any time without penalty and described the opt-out process, including a 21-day disclosure period following receipt of notification

letters. He advised residents with independent supplier contracts to review any early termination fees before switching. He clarified that the program operated as an opt-out model, meaning residents participated automatically unless they chose otherwise.

Mr. Sulfridge outlined additional benefits of SOPEC membership, including administrative support, legal resources, and grant assistance. He reported that SOPEC secured more than \$25 million in grants and supported initiatives such as electric vehicle infrastructure and solar deployment. He also described advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels related to energy policy and capacity needs. He stated that renewable energy sources, particularly solar, provided a timely solution to meet increasing energy demand. Mr. Sulfridge explained that most Gahanna participants selected the renewable energy option, while a smaller number chose a non-renewable alternative. He provided information on how residents could access program details, opt in or out, and contact SOPEC for assistance. He then invited questions.

#### *Questions from Council*

President Weaver asked a clarifying question regarding the term of the aggregation program, noting that the letter referenced a one-year term while prior comments referenced a three-year term. Mr. Sulfridge explained that the pricing operated as a one-year fixed-rate product that reset annually, while the overall program structure functioned on a three-year cycle for notification and opt-out purposes. He stated that SOPEC would work with the city to establish each subsequent 12-month term based on market conditions and clarified that the three-year reference in the letter related to the regulatory notification cycle. President Weaver acknowledged the clarification and commented that residents expressed concern about rate increases compared to the current price to compare. He stated his expectation that the standard service offer would also increase and noted that residents could wait for updated pricing information before making decisions, as SOPEC allowed participants to opt out without penalty.

Councilmember Schnetzer thanked Mr. Sulfridge for the presentation and confirmed that the reported savings represented the difference between SOPEC rates and the standard service offer for participating residents

and businesses. Mr. Sulfridge confirmed that the savings reflected reduced charges on customer bills compared to what they would have paid without the aggregation program. Councilmember Schnetzer asked about future energy rate trends and whether any relief might occur after recent increases. Mr. Sulfridge stated that he had not observed indications of near-term relief and explained that strong demand, including anticipated growth in data centers, continued to place pressure on the energy grid. He stated that supply and demand dynamics would likely maintain upward pressure on rates. He also noted that SOPEC continued to explore strategies such as solar deployment and large-scale generation projects to stabilize long-term costs.

Councilmember McGregor commented that residents who used the “Apples to Apples” comparison tool should carefully review contract details, including monthly fees and cancellation terms, as some lower advertised rates included additional costs. Mr. Sulfridge agreed and advised residents to review contract terms closely, including teaser rates and renewal conditions, noting that rates could increase significantly after initial terms expired if customers did not monitor their contracts.

**C. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:**

[ORD-0012-2026](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION - General Fund for Contract Services to Support Cultural and Artistic Programming

Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services, requested a supplemental appropriation of \$100,000 to support cultural and artistic opportunities through the Gahanna Area Arts Council. She stated that the administration and the Arts Council worked together to identify ways to enhance culture and art in the city and noted that the effort aimed to promote cultural vitality, civic engagement, and economic vibrancy. Senior Director Vollmer stated that the funding would support goals outlined in the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan, including elevating unique places, fostering inclusive and engaged neighborhoods, connecting the community, and strengthening Gahanna’s identity. She explained that the partnership would allow the city and the Arts Council to leverage additional funding through the Ohio Arts Council and the State of Ohio and noted that the Arts Council would serve as the official arts agency for the city. Senior Director Vollmer stated that staff continued to finalize the agreement and requested the supplemental appropriation due to its

timing outside the budget cycle. She noted that, following review by City Attorney Tamilarasan, Mayor Jadwin could execute the contract under procurement thresholds. She also stated that Councilmember Padova requested the contract and that staff continued to negotiate its terms but developed portions of the scope with the Arts Council.

Senior Director Vollmer outlined anticipated elements of the agreement, including continuation and expansion of existing programming such as Bright Blocks and LIVE at Headley Park, with potential expansion into 2027 and 2028. She stated that the city anticipated a three-year agreement to maintain continuity. She added that beginning in 2027, the Arts Council would serve as the primary producer for the city's summer music and arts series and other mutually agreed-upon programming. She stated that the Arts Council would assist in identifying and applying for grants related to capital improvement projects and would support development of a master arts plan, including community engagement, consultant support, and preparation of a final report similar to the strategic planning process. She also noted that the Arts Council would align its work with both the city's strategic vision and its own mission, establish strategic revenue and performance goals, and maintain a board of directors to ensure oversight and accountability. Senior Director Vollmer concluded by stating that the requested funding would come from the unencumbered, unappropriated balance of the general fund and would be allocated to the contract services line within the Department of Finance.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked why the request differed from typical contract services line items in the budget, noting that such items usually appeared at a departmental or project level rather than identifying a specific organization. Senior Director Vollmer explained that the request specifically identified the Gahanna Area Arts Council because the organization held a unique ability to leverage additional funding through the Ohio Arts Council, which no other entity could provide for the city. She added that the administration sought to maintain transparency regarding how arts and culture funding would be allocated. Councilmember Schnetzer asked whether the city identified \$100,000 in specific projects or programming for the current fiscal year. Senior Director Vollmer responded that staff continued to work through details of the agreement and that payments would occur on an invoice basis. She explained that

the Arts Council would submit invoices for eligible expenses up to the approved amount, and the city would process those through its accounts payable procedures.

Vice President Jones asked whether the Arts Council might not utilize the full amount. Senior Director Vollmer confirmed that possibility and explained that the Arts Council could invoice for specific program costs, such as Bright Blocks, and that the city would retain the ability to audit expenditures to ensure proper use of funds.

Councilmember McGregor requested access to the Arts Council's financial records for the previous one to two years. Senior Director Vollmer stated that she would request that information from the Arts Council.

Vice President Jones asked how additional programming would be identified. Senior Director Vollmer explained that staff continued to develop those details and that the Arts Council could assume responsibility for certain programming, potentially reducing workload for the Parks and Recreation Department while also introducing new programs. Vice President Jones referenced the summer music series at Creekside, and Senior Director Vollmer confirmed that it fell within that category. Vice President Jones asked about the role of the Public Arts Advisory Committee. Senior Director Vollmer stated that the committee and the Arts Council would work together and that staff continued to define those roles.

Mayor Jadwin added that the request differed from standard appropriations because the Arts Council required documented municipal support to access funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. She also clarified that the Arts Council would provide administrative support to the Public Arts Advisory Committee, while the committee would determine public art placements, noting that the roles would remain distinct but complementary.

Councilmember Padova expressed support for the proposal and noted that the Arts Council's access to additional funding opportunities made the approach fiscally responsible.

Vice President Jones stated that the item would receive a First Reading

on May 4, 2026, and proposed a vote on May 18, 2026. Councilmember Schnetzer requested that the item return to the Committee of the Whole with additional contract details for public review. Vice President Jones confirmed that the item would return to the Committee of the Whole on May 11, 2026, and proceed to a First Reading and anticipated vote on the Regular Agenda May 18, 2026. She then thanked staff for the presentation.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 5/4/2026; Further Discussion in Committee of the Whole Scheduled on 5/11/2026; Second Reading/Vote on Regular Agenda on 5/18/2026.**

**D. ITEMS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS:**

**Councilmember Padova:**

[RES-0013-2026](#) A JOINT RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING MAY 2-8, 2026 AS "HERB'N RESTAURANT WEEK" IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA AND CELEBRATING THE CITY'S DESIGNATION AS THE HERB CAPITAL OF OHIO

Councilmember Padova announced that Herb Day would take place on Saturday, May 2, 2026, and that Herb'n Restaurant Week would also begin that day. She stated that she intended to present a joint resolution and proclamation with Mayor Jadwin at the next meeting to recognize Herb'n Restaurant Week, celebrate Gahanna's designation as the Herb Capital of Ohio, and highlight participating local restaurants. She noted that the event coincided with National Small Business Week and stated that the recognition would pair those themes together. She invited participating businesses to attend the meeting for the presentation and noted that she did not expect all businesses to speak.

**Recommendation: Introduction/Vote on Consent Agenda on 5/4/2026.**

**E. ADJOURNMENT:**

*With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:52 p.m.*

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**Jeremy A. VanMeter**  
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this  
day of 2026.*

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**Jamille Jones**

DRAFT