



City Council  
200 S. Hamilton Rd., Gahanna, OH 43230

To: Members of Council; Residents of Gahanna  
CC: Mayor Jadwin; City Attorney Priya Tamilarasan  
Council Clerk Jeremy VanMeter  
From: Councilwoman Merisa Bowers, At-large  
Re: **Proposed Elected Official Salary Ordinances**  
Date: February 21, 2025

As discussed at the February 10, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting, a review of elected officials' salaries is timely and necessary. As recently highlighted in a Columbus Dispatch [article](#), the salary set for the Gahanna mayor is well below the regional norm for a top executive of a similarly-sized city. Ohio Municipal League regularly aggregates data on the pay of municipal executives, city attorneys/law directors, and city council members across the state. While the City of Gahanna has thoroughly reviewed non-elected public official compensation in recent years, we have been remiss in assessing the state of elected salaries.

While elected official salaries should not be the reason for serving, they should also not be a barrier to serve.

Pursuant to [Gahanna Charter Section 4.17 - Compensation](#):

Council shall fix the compensation of the Mayor, members of Council, City Attorney [...].

The salary of the Mayor, each member of Council, and the City Attorney shall continue in effect from term to term.

If any proposed salary increases are presented in ordinance and subsequently adopted, the earliest effective date for the increased salary would be for subsequent terms for each seat as follows:

Mayor:	Effective Term beginning <b>January 2, 2028</b>
City Attorney:	Effective Term beginning <b>January 3, 2028</b> (See Charter 10.01)
City Council At-Large:	Effective Term beginning <b>January 2, 2028</b>
City Council Ward:	Effective Term beginning <b>January 2, 2026</b>

## 1. Current Elected Official Pay and Ordinances



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The Mayor's salary was last set by ordinance [0135-2011](#) on July 5, 2011 effective January 2, 2012. This actually maintained the salary effective January 2, 2011 that had been last adopted by Ord. 0243-2006 on December 18, 2006. The Mayor's salary has been set at \$103,809 without adjustment for nearly 20 years. The Mayor's position is full-time per Charter Section 3.01 and Code Section 131.07.

The City Attorney's salary was last set by ordinance [0068-2019](#), Code Section 143.03 which graduated an increase from \$65,563 prior to January 2, 2020, year over year, to \$80,765 effective January 2, 2023. While the charter permits the City Attorney to maintain a private law practice while serving in office, [Code Section 143.03](#) states that the position is full-time effective January 2, 2020.

City Council salaries were increased from \$600 per month to \$800 per month, established by Ordinance 99-0038, passed February 16, 1999, effective January 2, 2000. ORD 99-95 revised Council compensation from \$400 to \$600 monthly beginning January 2, 1996.

In 2006, Council adopted Ordinance 0242-2006 to supplement the Council President's salary by \$100 per month effective January 2, 2008.

There have been no adjustments to this salary since this time.

## **2. Senior Official Salaries adopted under the City's 2025 Salary Ordinance**

Given the Mayor and City Attorney's full-time roles and contributions to the day-to-day leadership and operation of the City, it is instructive to review senior public official salaries per the [City's 2025 Salary Ordinance](#) adopted by [Ord. 0090-2024](#) in comparison:

Title	Classification	Hourly (Mid Year 5)	Annual
Senior Director of Administration	C27	\$70.62	\$146,889.60
Senior Deputy Director	C25	\$62.85	\$130,728.00
Senior Director of Operations	C27	\$70.62	\$146,889.60
Assistant City Attorney	C20	\$46.96	\$97,676.80
Director of Public Safety	C26	\$66.62	\$138,569.60
Chief of Police	C27	\$70.62	\$146,889.60

## **3. Comparable Communities' Elected Official Pay**

Various charts and studies are provided as attachments to this Memo:



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- Elected Officials Compensation Averages – City Population 10K Above and Below Gahanna.pdf
- Elected Official Salary 7.10.2024.pdf
- OML CITY SALARY SURVEY 23.xlsx
- Above and Below 10K Cities – Council and Committee Meeting Frequencies.xlsx
- 2024-MORPC-Salary-Survey.pdf

Highlighting the most relevant from this research:

City	Charter/ Statutory	Population	Employees	F/t Employees	Seasonal/Part- Time	Type	Salary	Source
Mayor								
Gahanna	Charter	35726	218	195	23	F/t	103,809	MORPC 2024
North Ridgeville	Charter	35280	220	192	28	F/t	136,341	OML 2023
Stow	Charter	34483	328	248	80	F/t	81,193.68	OML 2023
North Olmsted	Charter	32442	454	213	241	F/t	111,338.10	OML 2023
North Royalton	Charter	31322	210	161	56	F/t	100,523.02	OML 2023
Bexley	Charter	13928	123	96	27	F/t	155,000	MORPC 2024
Whitehall	Charter	19974	186	162	24	F/t	105,000	MORPC 2024
Reynoldsburg	Charter	41076	210	195	15	F/t	124,036	MOPRC 2024

City Attorney
See Page 3 of Elected Officials Compensation Averages - City Population 10K Above and Below Gahanna.pdf



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City	Population	Meetings/Month	Annual Salary	Source
Council Members				
Gahanna	35726	4	9600/10800	MORPC 2024
Hilliard	36892	4	14,876	MORPC 2024
Grove City	41252		11000	MORPC 2024
Westerville	39199		12000	MORPC 2024
Whitehall	19974		6500	MORPC 2024
Reynoldsburg	41076		8647	MORPC 2024
Stow	34483	4	14949.73	OML 2023
North Ridgeville	35280	2 to 3	11875	OML 2023
North Olmsted	32442	4	14635.47	OML 2023
North Royalton	31322		13299.72	OML 2023

#### 4. OPERS Minimum Monthly Earnable Salary for health care coverage

In order to qualify for health care eligibility, an OPERS participant must earn sufficient service credit, which requires a minimum monthly earnable gross earnings of \$1,000. This is more than the requirement for service credit for the pension. See <https://www.opers.org/members/pension-hc-eligibility/>

In conclusion, given the above factors, I propose the following:

1. That the Mayor's salary be increased to \$130,000 annually effective January 2, 2028, so long as the position remains full-time.
2. That the City Attorney's salary be increased to \$110,000 annually effective January 3, 2028. so long as the position remains full-time.
3. That the Council Member annual salary is increased to \$12,750 for members (\$1,062.50/mo), and retain the additional \$100/mo for Council President for an annual salary of \$13,950 (\$1,162.50/mo), effective January 2, 2026 for members elected by Ward, and effective January 2, 2028 for members elected at-large.