

**Mayor's Report**  
**City of Gahanna**  
**Regular Council Meeting – March 15, 2021**  
**Mayor Laurie A. Jadwin**

The following is respectfully submitted on behalf of the Mayor's Office for Monday, March 15, 2021:

General Information

- City Hall will continue limited public access through April 2, as vaccines continue to roll out around the region. City Hall will reopen to the public, with limited access in the building, on Monday, April 5. Staff will continue to work remotely from home wherever possible.
- Vaccination Updates:
  - As of March 4, vaccinations are open for law enforcement, people age 50+, and individuals with certain health conditions.
  - Statewide mass vaccination pop-up clinics will be held this weekend, March 20-21.
  - To find out if you are eligible to be vaccinated and to sign up, go to:  
**GetTheShot.coronavirus.ohio.gov**
    - First dose dates: March 18, 19, 20, 21 (9 am - 7 pm)
    - Second dose dates: April 8, 9, 10, 11 (9 am - 7 pm)
  - FCPH: Online scheduling will open at 4 pm on Friday, March 12th by visiting <https://vax2normal.org/vaccine/>. No appointments can be made before this time.
  - The Governor reaffirmed his goal of having all adults eligible for vaccination of May 1.
- Effective Monday, March 8, Michael Blackford has been reclassified to the position of Director of Planning.

Department Updates

- *Gahanna Division of Police*
  - Staffing Updates
    - Final interviews were held on March 15 with five candidates for police officer vacancies.
    - Three officers concluded their internal training process by presenting their Neighborhood Portfolio Exercises on Thursday, March 11. The officers interviewed residents, businessowners, as well as the Mayor and several Council members as part of their research.
  - Communications Center
    - A public information campaign is now underway introducing Smart 911 to the community. Over 200 Gahanna residents subscribed to Smart 911 in the first week of the program.

- Construction continues at the new consolidated Communications Center at 400 West Johnstown Road. All dispatcher workstations have been installed and work now begins on the many technology connections to each station.
- o General Operations
  - Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools returned today to “all-in” instruction (five days per week). Due to limited busing, additional officers will be deployed during key times to manage expected traffic congestion around certain buildings within the District.
  - On Thursday, March 4, Ohio law enforcement officers were eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Several members of the Division have already received their vaccines through self-scheduling with The Ohio State University and other providers. The Division is also working with the Mifflin Township Fire Department to facilitate employee vaccinations.
  - The monthly civic association meeting was held by teleconference on Thursday, March 25 at 7p.m.
  - The Division’s 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter in-service training (firearms proficiency and State-required qualification) is scheduled for the week of March 22.
- o Investigations
  - Five shootings, two resulting in homicides, have occurred in a little over a month. Only one incident, the late-night shooting of rounds into Middle School West, appears random based on facts, evidence and known circumstances. The other four occurrences – rounds shot into a house on Hines Road, the Brookhill Drive homicide, Stoneridge theater homicide and felonious assault, and the shooting of rounds into a house on N. Stygler Road – appear to be targeted incidents and none are related. Investigations into all five continue with the involvement of several area law enforcement partners.
- o *Department of Public Service & Engineering*
  - o 2020 Street Ratings/2021 Street Program
    - Bids were opened on March 5 and are currently under review. A preliminary review has shown the bids to be successful.
  - o Private Development
    - 7 development projects are undergoing final engineering design and review.
    - 18 projects are in the active construction stage.
  - o US EPA Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment (needs survey)
    - The US EPA has once again selected Gahanna to participate in the 2021 Survey. The survey is intended to capture the infrastructure needs of the

utility, which is reported to Congress. The results of the survey will help to determine funds to be allocated to the Federal Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) in Ohio. We will be working with the Ohio EPA throughout the year to provide them with the needed information.

- Annual National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) report
  - We are in the process of completing our Annual NPDES report as part of our MS4 permit with the Ohio EPA. The annual report has multiple requirements that ensure entities are taking the appropriate steps to keep our streams and waterways clean.
- Monthly Utility Billing
  - The first monthly bill will be mailed next month for roughly one-third of the City. By June, all Gahanna residents will be on a monthly billing schedule. The transition to monthly billing will happen over a three-month period, beginning in April.
- ADA Transition Plan
  - Working with outside consultant, City Attorney, Mayor's Office and Communications Department to finalize the City's proposed ADA Transition Plan, including developing a communications plan for seeking public input. We anticipate a presentation to Council in April, following a public input session.
- Sidewalk Program
  - Holding weekly meetings with the Mayor's Office, Communications Department, and City Attorney to discuss plans to gather public input and potential for combining with ADA Transition Plan.
  - Working on draft code for the proposed program, to be presented to Council.
- Creekside Garage
  - A river gauge located at the Granville Street Bridge has been authorized for construction. This gauge will automatically alert critical staff of real-time river levels and flood risks.
  - We are working with FEMA on submission of a corrective action plan that will identify actions already taken as well as next steps to address identified issues.
- East Johnstown Bike Trail Extension
  - Finalized and executed contract with Korda/Nemeth Engineering, Inc. for the design of the East Johnstown Road Bike trail between YMCA Place and Riva Ridge Blvd. Design work has begun and is expected to be completed in Summer 2021.
  - Field Survey is underway, and residents should be on the lookout for crews in the area.

- East Johnstown Drainage Improvements
  - IBI Group is preparing construction drawings for drainage improvements along East Johnstown Road near Larry Lane.
  - Field Survey is underway, and residents should be on the lookout for crews in the area.
- SCADA Update ( Water and Sewer Management System)
  - We are in the process of updating our software, which includes moving to a new virtual server. The updates will ensure safe and reliable management of the water and sewer network, including increased security.
- Wynne Ridge Culvert Rehabilitation
  - We are in contract negotiations for the design of rehabilitation measures for a culvert under Wynne Ridge Court.
- Cherry Bottom Road Stabilization
  - We are finalizing contract negotiations for the design of slope stabilization measures for two areas along Cherry Bottom Road. A final contract is anticipated in the next few weeks.
- Taylor Station/Claycraft Road Intersection
  - Preliminary design is underway.
- Big Walnut Trail Section 8
  - The Engineering Division is coordinating with the Parks and Recreation Department and American Structurepoint to select a design alternative for Big Walnut Trail Section 8 over I-270.
- City of Columbus Hamilton and Morse Rd Widening
  - The City of Columbus and contractor, Shelly and Sands, have used the favorable weather to kick off the construction season this past week.
  - Traffic has been shifted to temporary pavement to allow the contractor to construct the opposite side of the street. Columbus expects this traffic plan to be in place for the majority of 2021.
  - A baseline schedule has not been approved yet, but the expected substantial completion date will be summer 2023.
- Department statistics:
  - Converted 12 streetlights to LED, saving 880 watts of electricity.
  - Responded to 5 after-hours emergencies.
  - The Water Division has begun replacing fire hydrants, with plans to replace 15 to 20 fire hydrants this year.
  - Received and addressed over 30 citizen requests so far this month.
  - Received comments by residents to the Public Service Department:
    - "Thank you for getting the plows out and cleaning our court. Really appreciate it – a big thank you."

- "Thank you for filling the potholes on Coldwell Drive within one day."
- "Please express my thanks to the people that went out of the way to pick up a dead animal on a very busy day. I appreciate the work of my local government, you've all been very thoughtful."

- *Department of Parks & Recreation*

- Projects

- Splash pad: A design has been selected. OHM made a preliminary site visit on 3/10. Surveyors will be on site again 3/15.
- Playgrounds: Midstates Recreation has been selected for the designs of the playground replacements at Headley Park and Woodside Green. The designs will be submitted to and reviewed by Planning Commission.
- Price Road Renovation: Three proposals have been received for the design and engineering of the project.
- Parking lots: RFP was sent to 4 firms for the design and engineering for Gahanna Woods and Price Road parking lots and Trapp Park path. The deadline for submission is April 5.

- Recreation

- Staff finalized and submitted content to the Communications Department for Spring and Summer programs to be included in the first edition of the City's magazine.
- Pool memberships went on sale today, March 15
- Finalizing new format for youth summer camps. Multiple locations and half day options for youth activities will be new for the 2021 season.
- Finalized St. Patrick's Day scavenger hunt in the parks.
- 3,795 meals have been provided to seniors within the Gahanna community since the onset of COVID.

- Arbor

- Arbor team is working with Columbus Academy Environmental Club to schedule 45 hours of volunteer events at Academy Park and Woodside Green Park. Projects include litter clean-up, invasive plant removal, tree planting, mulching, and weed pulling
- Plant grass/wildflower mix on #1 hole at Golf Course
- Plant wildflower prairie at Brookhill drive
- Tree Removal of all dead trees marked on golf course
- Prune all parks for mower clearance
- Evaluating spring tree installs and locations
- Arbor day planning-program set for May 8
- Oversaw AEP tree trimming near Academy Park
- Completed landscape agreement for Spring
- Trees pruned: 20
- Trees removed: 3

- Trees resident/contractor calls: 10
- Trees zoning application reviews: 5
- Hazard tree evaluations: 1
- o Parks & Facilities
  - Staff responded to 7 resident concerns
  - Completed reorganization of yard and storage areas at parks garage
  - Planning camera installs/security improvements at Price Road House
  - Install new lighting at Creekside bathrooms
  - Replenish playground mulch
  - Clean, prep and paint Creekside water wall
  - Install new boiler at Hunters Ridge Pool
  - Built shed for split wood
  - Install New Eye Wash Station in Garage
  - Repair tile, grout, clean and paint Creekside Rock fountain
  - New trees planted on southwest end of golf course. Trees & supplies provided by National Church Residence.
  - Prep Creekside lagoon and water wall for April 1st. Clean, touch up paint, etc.
- o Golf Course
  - Prepared grounds for soft opening on March 9
- o *Department of Economic Development*
  - o Working with a regional industrial broker/developer on the construction of a 100,000 sf building on land off Morrison Rd
  - o Working with engineering and planning on roadway improvement project (Leavitt Service Road)
  - o Participated in two rounds of interviews for Development Director position
  - o Working with a local developer to overcome utility hurdles in order to construct four (4) new flex – industrial buildings
  - o Engaging with ODOT Jobs and Commerce to discuss funding of certain roadway projects
  - o Finalizing the Crescent Development Agreement
  - o Mill Street project: Continuing negotiations with Developer on latest executive summary proposal

- Working with a broker to secure a new business interested in locating in an existing Gahanna facility
- Working with a developer on a new \$30 million project that would entail construction of 3-4 buildings in the industrial zone
- Assisting an existing Gahanna business in partnering with a developer to construct a facility that would accommodate expansion of its business
- Engaged in ongoing communications with a large business regarding interest in locating in Gahanna, including exploration of available incentives (locally and statewide)
- Partnering with Department of Communications & Marketing to redesign the development page of City's website to provide needed information in a more user-friendly approach and define a call to action. As part of an overall strategic plan for development marketing for the City, the Development Department is working with the Communications & Marketing Department to develop a program for video testimonials from existing Gahanna businesses.
- *Planning, Building & Zoning*
  - Zoning Code:
    - A rough draft has been provided for staff review. The rough draft provides a new format for the Code which emphasizes ease of use by providing pictures of development types, charts, and simplified language. Next step is for staff to review and provide preliminary feedback.
    - After formatting is refined, we will shift focus to specific areas of the Code which have been previously identified as areas that do not meet the recommendations of the land use plan or have been identified as no longer meeting the priorities of the city.
  - Building Division:
    - Issued 56 permits in last two weeks
    - Average permit issuance: 12 days (includes processing, review, and resubmittals; State allows 30 days per submittal)
    - Review of customer permitting portal
      - approximately 50% of permits are submitted online
      - looking for areas of improvement, reduction in incomplete or multiple submissions of permits
      - streamlining of information

- Continue review of permit applications to simplify and reorganize forms, with goal of avoiding errors, improving accuracy of information, reducing submittals, improving customer experience
- o Code Enforcement:
  - Conducted 166 inspections in last two weeks
  - Interviewed 14 candidates for new full-time Code Enforcement Officer position.
  - Working with IT Department on implementation of new Rental Registration Code, including digital accessibility, development of forms, payment processing
  - Reviewing 2018 SOPs with goal to update to improve consistency and timeliness
- o Planning/Zoning:
  - Online portal for signs, sheds, fences, and zoning certificates is now live.
  - 2021 Projects Approved:

Project	Number	Investment \$	Job Creation
New Construction (Approved)	3	\$26 M	430
Expansion and Renovation (Approved)	2	\$3.3M	5

- 2021 Projects Pending:

Project	Number	Investment \$	Job Creation
New Build (Pending/Tentative)	8	\$107M	408
Expansion/Renovation (Pending/Tentative)	0	0	0

- o *Department of Human Resources*
  - o Benefits
    - Reconciled and paid February benefits – Delta Dental, VSP, Standard Life Insurance
    - Submitted SERB annual insurance report
  - o HRIS
    - Working with Munis rep on migrating personnel files from intellivue to Tyler Content Manager



- Continuing to work on the 834 insurance file from Munis to the City's health insurance vendors
- o Wellness Program
  - Finalizing the 2021 calendar
  - Meeting with Wellness Center (ExpressMed) and Mt. Carmel to discuss 2021 plans.
  - Working with Mount Carmel to schedule smoking cessation course as required by the Wellness Program.
- o Recruitment and Hiring
  - Currently accepting applications for the following applications:
    - Seasonal positions through May 30
      - Interviews are being conducted by the Recreation Team.
      - Reviewing pay rate determination sheets and extending conditional offers of employments for seasonal positions, including Golf Course Pro Shop and Aquatics
    - Team Member (part-time) through May 30
- o Civil Service Hiring Updates
  - 911 Dispatcher - scheduled civil service exam for the week of March 22.
  - Police Officer - testing window closed March 12. Physical fitness examinations will be held in April.
  - Oral examinations completed for positions of Maintenance Worker, Facilities Maintenance Worker, Horticulturist, Code Enforcement Office; scores sent to consultant.
- o Unclassified Hiring Updates
  - Applications for Project Inspector are being reviewed by Hiring Managers. Interviews will be scheduled this month.
  - Applications are being reviewed for Planning & Zoning Administrator. Interviews will be scheduled in March.
  - Second round interviews held for Director of Economic Development.
  - Completed interviews for Team Member (part-time) Public Service.
- o Additional Staffing Updates
  - Interviewed 4 interns from Columbus academy for an unpaid HR internship
  - Team meeting to discuss onboarding plan and needed revisions
  - Tested and implemented electronic offer letters through the City's applicant tracking system NEOGOV. This created an efficiency where new hires can accept an offer by clicking a button. In addition, E-offers allow the tracking of offers sent and accepted

- Leave Management
  - Regular weekly leave management and working with supervisors and employees on temporary restrictions and return to work
  - Continued to monitor employees out on long-term medical leave
  - Held quarterly call with Sedgwick regarding employees in the worker's compensation process
- Safety
  - Working to finalize edits to the City's DOT policy
  - Working with PD to reduce the amount of items in their Cintas first aid box
- Labor Management
  - Held monthly labor management meeting with United Steelworkers union group.
- COVID response
  - Meeting held with Division of Recreation to discuss facial coverings and other COVID precautions for seasonal employees
  - Continued to monitor employees on quarantine
  - Sent out email to employees 50+ on how to sign up for a vaccine
- Training
  - Scheduled employees for customer service training
  - Held meeting with PRADCO to discuss management training for City leaders
- Other
  - Continued work with consultant on job audits and compensation review
  - Notifying employee's of unemployment fraud
  - Completed annual review of employee driver's license history
  - Preparing HR Records Disposal Form
- *Department of Finance*
  - The 2020 audit plan is underway.
  - Preparation of the 2020 CAFR is in progress.
  - The timekeeping portion of the Tyler contract has been terminated, as the vendor was unable to fix the overtime calculation errors; holding preliminary discussions with current vendor to discuss upgrade options.
  - We are also working on a temporary solution to move payroll processing into MUNIS, the accounting/HR system purchased from Tyler.
  - Working with Mayor's Court on banking relationships.

- *Department of Information Technology*
  - Facilities Master Plan:
    - Draft plan has been received and is being reviewed internally.
  - City Council Livestream Technology Assessment
    - We have been successfully livestreaming to YouTube since the beginning of the year. Implementation will take approximately 90-120 days.
  - New Communications Center:
    - Meetings held to discuss implementation and upgrade of the Voice Recording solution.
  - Asset & Workorder Management System with Citizen Engagement
    - RFPs have been sent out; responses are due April 1.
    - Addendum was added to the RFPs to include review of modules for code enforcement, building and zoning.
  - Virtual Computing Environment Refresh
    - Servers needed to update the Failover site located at Fleet Facility have arrived and have been installed.
    - An overall storage strategy for both our primary (City Hall) and failover site will be formalized, and backup and recovery strategy will be adjusted to accommodate a more complete strategy.
  - Rental Registration Online Application & Permitting through LAMA
    - Held additional conversations with LAMA to discuss implementation of the new legislation.
- *Department of Marketing & Communications*
  - Smart 911: Information has been rolled out w/an article to ThisWeek News, press release, community signboards, GovDelivery eblast, social media posts. Flyers will be printed for distribution at assisted living facilities, etc. Information was sent to Mifflin Township for distribution. Coordinated w/Mifflin PIO and Fire Chief, Police Chief and Dispatch (emergency communications center).
  - Updates to the website are underway, with primary focus on ensuring up-to-date and accurate content. The team is currently reviewing the 100s of pages on the website for needed content updates.
    - Updated Parks and Recreation section of website with 2021 summer camp, pool operations and event information. Registration for Camps opens March 22; Pool members are on sale as of March 15.
  - Preparation of the 2021 State of the City is underway, with filming of videos and interviews. SOTC video will be posted and will debut on Gahanna.gov on Tuesday, March 30.
  - New City magazine, *Uniquely Gahanna*, is in production w/ 614 Media Group. Magazine will provide programming information for the Department of Parks &

Recreation, and information on city-wide projects and initiatives to keep residents informed and up-to-date. First edition is expected to be distributed in mid April.

- Working with Department of Parks & Recreation on opening of new Level 1 Aboretum, including finalizing signage, photos, press release and ribbon-cutting ceremony.
- Worked with the Mayor and Public Safety officials to film PSA on trends in violent activities in Gahanna.
- Continued work with Department of Public Service & Engineering and Mayor's Office on plans for the public input meeting for ADA transition plan/sidewalk program.
- Met with Public Safety team to discuss overall communication workflow between GPD and the Communications Department as part of development of citywide communications plan; discussed social media best practices and guidelines.
- Attended weekly FCPH COVID status call; participated in call w/Columbus Public Health, FCPH, Franklin County Commissioners and other PIOs and communications personnel regarding statewide mass vaccination pop-up clinics.
  - Weekly COVID updates are posted every Thursday on [Gahanna.gov](http://Gahanna.gov), unless a significant change occurs. Vaccination information, including listing of providers, continues to change daily. For latest information, please visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov).
- Met with SWACO on cart-tagging, recycling education project. Working with them to finalize overall communication plan
- Coordinated with COSI and GJPS on upcoming COSI Science Festival. Spoke with COSI representative and connected her with GJPS on donation of science kits and nomination of a STEM star student.
- Drafted, edited and finalized water billing newsletter (insert in water bills), in collaboration w/Public Service staff.
- Supported Department of Parks and Recreation with creation of graphics, flyers, and website content on pools, camps and event info, including a St. Patrick's Day scavenger hunt.
- Manage multiple city social media accounts, including sharing of information, responding to resident questions and concerns, and posting emergency alerts
- Ongoing/recurring projects:
  - Respond to resident questions and inquiries on social media

- Working with the Department of Human Resources, Department of Parks & Recreation, and Gahanna Division of Police on development of promotional materials for job postings and recruitment efforts
  - Attend weekly meetings with Parks & Recreation staff
  - Write and distribute weekly "Senior Spotlight" e-newsletter
  - Write and distribute monthly City and Parks and Rec e-newsletters (sent out March 1)
  - Publish monthly PD bulletin on Gahanna.gov and Facebook.
- *Office of the Mayor*
    - Attended virtual meeting of Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association
    - Met with Congressman Troy Balderson to discuss issues impacting Gahanna, potential impact of American Rescue Plan on city operations, and pending legislation
    - Met virtually with MORPC Executive Director William Murdock, Kerstin Carr and Director Ferrell to discuss opportunity for Gahanna to participate in upcoming regional trail study
    - Attended MORPC (virtual) meeting of Commission and Transportation Policy Board
    - Attended virtual annual meeting of Jobs Ohio, reviewing progress of Ohio in job creation and development despite impact of COVID-19, and discussion of forecast for future growth in state
    - Participated in virtual meeting with members of the Creekside District Alliance to outline and discuss ongoing city projects, the City's vision and plans for the Creekside District, and opportunities for the City and CDA to align initiatives and objectives.
    - Continued work on development of Sustainability Task Force, including review of suggested outline and timeline for creation, research on similar organizations in peer communities
    - Met virtually with Gahanna businesses to discuss interests in expanding and discussion of opportunities for partnership with City to support expansion
    - Met with existing Gahanna business to discuss traffic and roadways in anticipation of pending development projects within industrial area
    - Participated in second round interviews with candidates for position of Economic Development Director

- Held virtual meeting with Interim Development Director and local developer regarding (re)development opportunities in Gahanna
- Working with Communications & Marketing Department on content and presentation of upcoming State of the City
- Held multiple (virtual) meetings with M. Blackford to discuss Code Enforcement operations, status of operational review, and continued evaluation of current processes
- Working with Development team and outside legal counsel on evaluation of incentives for proposed development agreement(s)
- Held discussions with Chief Spence and IT Manager Schultz regarding timeline and needs for continued development of new Communications Center
- Met virtually with representatives of Gahanna Area Arts Council to discuss their future plans for growth of organization
- Attended Parks Board virtual meeting, as well as virtual Planning Commission meeting
- Worked with Director Ferrell in finalizing plans for pool operations for 2021, including work on presentation to Council
- Worked with Communications Manager Wester, Chief Spence and Director Winn on creation of PSA to share messaging and information with residents regarding recent crime trends around the county
- Met (virtually) with Visit Gahanna and internal city department representatives to discuss approach to plans for summer events in light of COVID and pending limitations
- Held regularly scheduled weekly touchbase meetings with each department director to update and provide direction on ongoing projects
- Continued work on ongoing/pending initiatives: development of sidewalk program, ADA transition plan, Facilities Assessment, strategic plan refresh, code development/updates