

Meeting Minutes

Ad Hoc Rules Committee, Gahanna City Council

Thursday, February 12, 2026 — 1:00 PM

City Hall, Law Library

A. Roll Call

Councilmembers Merisa Bowers, Nancy McGregor, and Kaylee Padova attended the meeting. All members were present by 1:00 p.m. Clerk Jeremy VanMeter also attended.

B. Previous Meeting Minutes

The committee discussed how to approve minutes from February 4, 2026, and made several corrections to the draft that the Clerk had prepared. Clerk VanMeter noted there should be some formal acceptance of the minutes for the record. Councilmember Bowers stated that the Council should hold a discussion to accept the minutes. Councilmember McGregor suggested that the minutes should reflect that the ad hoc committee members had reviewed them for corrections and that the larger body should have the opportunity to ask questions. Mr. VanMeter noted he would attach the draft minutes to the rules file for the next Committee of the Whole.

C. Review of Rules of Procedure

The committee reviewed the Council Rules of Procedure, last amended March 18, 2024, including the City Attorney's redline amendments to Sections 8.12, 8.13, and 8.14 and additional ad hoc committee redline amendments to Sections 5.10, 5.20, 5.40, and 5.41.

Renumbering: Councilmember Bowers stated that the numbering system required cleanup and indicated that she supported whatever numbering system the Clerk recommended. Councilmember Padova asked whether any references to those sections would require retention of the current numbering. Councilmember McGregor suggested including a statement regarding renumbering. Councilmember Bowers asked the Clerk to standardize the numbering.

Section 3.40 – Absence of Officers: Councilmember Bowers referenced page 4, Section 3.40, regarding the absence of officers and the President of Council running the Committee of the Whole in the absence of the Vice President.

Article V – Meetings: Councilmember McGregor confirmed that no reference to January 2 should appear because the Charter addressed it. Clerk VanMeter addressed the removal of Section 5.20(A) regarding caucus. Councilmember Bowers stated that the cleanup of Section 5.40 aligned with current practice and clarified that Section 5.41 no longer remained necessary because Section 5.40 clarified the issue.

Article VIII – Legislation: Councilmember Bowers addressed Article VIII, Legislation, and noted the addition of redlines to Section 8.10 concerning removal of the words “or recommended,” also stricken in Section 8.12, along with additional redline edits. Councilmember McGregor stated that, in practice, when a member wanted an item to return to committee, that request often stemmed from questions that required answers to be provided later and did not necessarily require a vote to send back to committee. Councilmembers Bowers and Padova discussed scenarios involving implementation of the prior language compared to the proposed redline language. There was consensus on language that the President of Council shall, upon request of a member of Council, reassign pending legislation to committee for further discussion and evaluation.

Section 6.30 – Hearing of Visitors: The committee discussed the Hearing of Visitors language. Councilmember Bowers asked whether the Council should require a speaker to state their name and address at the meeting and whether the minutes should record that information. Councilmember McGregor stated that a speaker could always send an email to Council if they were not comfortable providing this information at a meeting and expressed her view that speakers should state their name and address. Councilmember Padova stated that she understood concerns on both sides and noted that, if a speaker did not state their information aloud but included it on the speaker slip, the minutes could still reflect it. Councilmember McGregor stated that some level of accountability should exist for speakers. Councilmember Padova stated that an address helped Council understand where a speaker resided geographically. Councilmember Bowers stated that she would report to Council on the Hearing of Visitors requirement, including the pros and cons and the value it brought, and noted that the committee did not advance a recommended change at that time. Councilmember McGregor stated that requiring speakers to state their name and address provided protection for Council. Councilmember Bowers stated that she saw the value in the requirement. Councilmember Padova noted that a speaker could provide either a home or business address. Clerk VanMeter also noted previous requests from speakers to use the screens in Chambers to display content and the response has been that Council would not permit use of its facilities for such requests during Hearing of Visitors, but that as an alternative, an individual could email or print out material to distribute to Council. Councilmember Bowers noted there were First Amendment issues to consider if this was allowed.

D. Meeting Outcomes/Next Steps

The committee anticipated presenting a report and recommendations to the Committee of the Whole on Monday, February 23, 2026.

E. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Jeremy VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Accepted by City Council this ____ day of _____, 2026

