



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

Monday, August 5, 2024

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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

Gahanna City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, August 5, 2024, in Council Chambers. President of Council Merisa K. Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Councilmember Stephen Renner gave an Invocation and led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda was published on August 2, 2024.

Present 6 - Merisa K. Bowers, Jamille Jones, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, and Michael Schnetzer

Absent 1 - Trenton I. Weaver

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

President Bowers noted that there was a placeholder in the agenda for joint Resolution 0030-2024, to honor the 175th anniversary of the founding of Gahanna. The Resolution is a joint effort of Council and the Mayor. President Bowers noted the Resolution had been circulated to Council and would be attached to the agenda materials and minutes, available for review by the public.

C. PRESENTATIONS:

1. Resolution Presentation by Council - Share the Road Awareness Month

Council presented Resolution No. 0029-2024, "A Resolution Designating August 2024 as Share the Road Awareness Month in the City of Gahanna." President Bowers explained Council extended an invitation to Joe Apgar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), of Pelotonia; however, Mr. Apgar unfortunately, had a schedule conflict that prevented his planned attendance.

In Mr. Apgar's absence, President Bowers reflected on the many accomplishments of Pelotonia, describing it as a beacon of hope and community strength in the fight against cancer. She reflected on the simple power of a collective effort. Pelotonia has been instrumental in raising critical funds for cancer research. The anticipated event is held annually and spans several days, covering a range of distances to accommodate riders of all levels, with a shared goal to eradicate cancer. President Bowers highlighted how Pelotonia amplifies awareness about cyclist safety, fostering a healthier and safer community.

President Bowers welcomed Michael Tamarkin and Tricia Kovacs along with other riders and volunteers, who Council invited to the resolution presentation. President Bowers thanked all participants for making the 2024 Pelotonia event a success, both in Gahanna and across the region. President Bowers thanked participants for their dedication and enthusiasm, describing the support as critical to the organization's mission to end cancer. President Bowers delivered a special thank you to volunteers of *Make Gahanna Yours* and the team at *Visit Gahanna* for their efforts in organizing the *Spirit Station*, which she described as delivering immense energy, encouragement, and community spirit to riders.

President Bowers also extend a collective sincere thanks to the law enforcement officers and street crews who worked to ensure the safety of the event participants. President Bowers noted their efforts were invaluable.

President Bowers recognized participants who were present at the meeting, including:

Michael Tamarkin, Tricia Kovacs, Susan and Steve Mogul along with Harriet and Randy Hansel. Mr. Tamarkin, member of the City Planning Commission, was invited to give remarks at this time.

Mr. Tamarkin shared that this was his 10th year riding in Pelotonia, and the 16th year of the annual event. Mr. Tamarkin shared the event has raised \$289 million for cancer research in the last 15 years. The event raises about \$25 million, a year, for each ride that participants commit to. Mr. Tamarkin explained the fundraising process, which ensures 100% of donations are pushed to cancer research. Mr. Tamarkin noted a couple of big contributors, such as the Columbus Crew and the owners of the Cleveland Browns. Mr. Tamarkin expressed hope that fundraising would reach new record heights this year. This is the second year Pelotonia has traveled through Gahanna. The route was partially determined by the addition of a 20-mile ride option, which passed through Gahanna and New Albany. Mr. Tamarkin reported hearing there were no less than 2,000 riders who participated in this new option. Mr. Tamarkin explained some participants are not regular riders, while other riders, such as himself, ride year-round. Mr. Tamarkin described participation in the Pelotonia as an accomplishment for all riders. Mr. Tamarkin thanked the City and City services, including law enforcement and service departments, as well as Visit Gahanna, Make Gahanna Yours and Donna Simmons from the Parks and Recreation Board. Mr. Tamarkin reflected that every participant

rides for a reason, being touched by cancer one way or another, elaborating on personal losses within his own family and relating multiple examples of friends who are fighting cancer. Mr. Tamarkin revealed that two of the seven members of the Planning Commission are also fighting cancer. Mr. Tamarkin described participants who ride for those they care about, touched by cancer, as well as those who ride for themselves, as survivors. Mr. Tamarkin summarized Pelotonia as a great cause and event, thanking all participants.

Tricia Kovacs, member of the Bicycle and Trails Advisory Committee, was invited to give remarks at this time. Ms. Kovacs shared she was invited to speak about safety, expressing her thanks to Council for proclaiming August as *Share the Road Awareness Month*. Ms. Kovacs described the unique enjoyment of the Pelotonia event coming through Gahanna, cheered on by the community. Ms. Kovacs thanked volunteers along with Visit Gahanna and Make Gahanna Yours, describing Pelotonia as a great event. Ms. Kovacs shared it was not too late to donate to the cause. Ms. Kovacs reviewed sobering statistics related to cyclists and pedestrian crashes in Franklin County and Gahanna. Ms. Kovacs encouraged education of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians, to safely share the road. Ms. Kovacs shared some helpful reference materials, including an informative bicycle safety pamphlet which describes the rules for cycling in Gahanna. Ms. Kovacs described the message as “same road same right, same road same rules,” elaborating that in Gahanna, bicycles are permitted on sidewalks and crosswalks in residential neighborhoods, but not business districts. Ms. Kovacs described further education opportunities through the Bicycle and Trails Advisory Committee.

Ms. Kovacs shared that most of bicycle and pedestrian crashes are the fault of the motorists; most of the crashes are at intersections where drivers fail to yield to cyclist or pedestrians on the roadway and in the crosswalk. Ms. Kovacs emphasized the importance of motorists looking both ways, for cyclists and pedestrians, giving special caution when views are obstructed, before pulling out. Ms. Kovacs reviewed pedestrian crossing laws and rights, as well as recommended safety equipment that enhances vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, safely sharing the road. Ms. Kovacs addressed issues of distracted driving and commended Council, City Attorney Priya Tamaras, Police Chief Spence, Deputy Police Chief Lawless, and Sharon Montgomery, for efforts against distracted driving, such as the City’s recent ordinance enhancing State legislation.

President Bowers thanked speakers, all Pelotonia participants, and Council, for their roles in making Pelotonia and the sharing the road a success.

2. Strategic Plan Update

[2024-0152](#)

Strategic and Economic Development Plan and Application

Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services, provided Council with updates regarding a new Strategic Plan, which will provide guidance on City decisions and priorities. Senior Director Vollmer explained the City of Gahanna is requesting input from the community. Ms. Vollmer described the process for developing a Steering Committee, comprised of 27 members. The committee will include Mayor Laurie Jadwin, as well as two Council liaisons, in its membership. The Steering Committee will work closely with City staff, a planning consultant team, and other community members, to bring insight and perspective to the planning process. Members of the community were encouraged to apply to serve on the Steering Committee, through August 1 -15, 2024, via <https://lnkd.in/gktsu35Y>. Staff will complete a blind review of the applications to ensure community demographics are achieved.

The planning process will take approximately 14 months, kicking off in September 2024. The Steering Committee will meet regularly throughout the program and will provide feedback on both process and recommendations of the plan, serving as community advocates. The first meeting is anticipated in October 2024. There are four public engagement periods planned for staff engagement, and three engagement periods planned for public engagement. Public engagement will include a variety of opportunities, each lasting two to four weeks per engagement period. Currently, those are scheduled for 2025, in late January, end of March through April, then again in August. In addition to staff and public engagement, staff will conduct engagements with active boards and commission members. The final document for Council review and consideration of adoption is anticipated at the end of quarter three in 2025. Ms. Vollmer referenced handouts she provided to Council at the beginning of the meeting; this information is now attached to agenda items.

Staff requests Council's support in championing the process. City staff will provide regular updates to Council. Staff requests Council notify staff of the two designated Council liaisons by August 23, 2024, to facilitate scheduling the first committee meeting. Ms. Vollmer asked Council if they had questions at this time.

President Bowers inquired about the time commitment and notice for committee members.

Ms. Vollmer explained that members could anticipate meeting weekly. Currently, staff are targeting Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays with time blocks proposed at 4-6:00 p.m. and 6-8:00 p.m. This will be clearer as the process develops. There will be approximately seven to eight committee meetings over the span of a year, starting in October 2024, through October 2025.

President Bowers thanked Ms. Vollmer, and clarified that committee meetings included all members, including liaisons and resident participants. Ms. Vollmer confirmed, noting that there are no designees from boards or commissions, and that these individuals would need to apply for membership, as all others who wished to be considered for one

of the 27 membership positions.

Councilmember Jones inquired about the selection process for committee members.

Ms. Vollmer explained that applications gather data which reviewers will utilize to identify representatives for various demographics, to equitably reflect the community.

Councilmember Padova inquired if committee membership was open to residents and business owners, or families in the school district.

Ms. Vollmer shared that priority is given to residents of Gahanna, but others may apply, and distinctions in this information are gathered through the application process.

President Bowers thanked Ms. Vollmer for her presentation, expressing excitement for the process and looking forward to its success.

D. HEARING OF VISITORS:

No comments were shared at this time.

E. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2024-0137](#) Council Special Minutes 7.15.2024

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0138](#) Council Regular Minutes 7.15.2024

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0139](#) Committee of the Whole Minutes 7.15.2024

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Resolutions:

[RES-0029-2024](#) A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING AUGUST 2024 AS SHARE THE ROAD AWARENESS MONTH IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Renner, to Pass the items under the Consent Agenda as published. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner and Schnetzer

Absent: 1 - Weaver

F. MOTIONS:

[MT-0015-2024](#)

A MOTION TO APPOINT ROSE HAWK TO THE PUBLIC ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, COUNCIL APPOINTEE, FOR AN INITIAL TERM ENDING JANUARY 2, 2026

A motion was made by Padova, seconded by Renner, that the Motion be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner and Schnetzer

Absent: 1 - Weaver

[MT-0016-2024](#)

A MOTION TO APPOINT SIDNEY JONES, JR. TO THE PUBLIC ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, COUNCIL APPOINTEE, FOR AN INITIAL TERM ENDING JANUARY 2, 2027

President Bowers thanked all applicants to the Public Arts Advisory Committee. She observed the incredible qualifications of participants, sharing the decision was difficult. President Bowers acknowledged it was somewhat of a new process to create a new committee.

A motion was made by Padova, seconded by Jones, that the motion be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner and Schnetzer

Absent: 1 - Weaver

G. RESOLUTIONS:

[RES-0030-2024](#)

A JOINT RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION COMMEMORATING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF GAHANNA

President Bowers introduced the resolution and verified that all Councilmembers had a chance to review Resolution No.0030-2024, briefly, before the meeting.

Members confirmed.

President Bowers inquired if there were any discussion. There was no

discussion from Council at this time.

President Bowers invited Mayor Jadwin to share comments related to the resolution.

Mayor Jadwin apologized for sharing the resolution with Council at a late hour, noting she had schedule conflicts and the need to confirm relevant information, to include in the verbiage of the resolution. Mayor Jadwin invited any requested edits from Council and expressed positive anticipation of presenting the resolution during upcoming festivities, for the weekend of August 9-11, 2024. Mayor Jadwin inquired if Councilmember McGregor had any comments.

Councilmember McGregor declined to add comments, other than noting the resolution was acceptable.

President Bowers thanked Mayor Jadwin for her efforts, expressing her appreciation of the resolution and anticipation for Council presenting the resolution with the mayor over the weekend.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Jones, that the Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner and Schnetzer

Absent: 1 - Weaver

H. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:

[ORD-0047-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE 0007-2024 ON APRIL 1, 2024; CHANGING THE ZONING DISTRICT OF 2.58 +/- ACRES OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5061 SHAGBARK RD; PARCEL ID 027-000117; CURRENT ZONING ER (FORMERLY ER-2); PROPOSED ZONING L-R-4 (FORMERLY L-MFRD); HC SHAGBARK REAL ESTATE LLC; CHRISTOPHER CHRISTOFF, APPLICANT

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

[ORD-0048-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO THE SUSTAINABLE OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL ("SOPEC"), THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF THE AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING SOPEC, AND APPROVING THE BYLAWS OF SOPEC; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk

Clerk Hilts communicated that Clerk of Council, Jeremy VanMeter, and his family, happily welcomed the new addition of his daughter, to the family, at the end of July. There were no other correspondences shared at this time.

2. Council

President Bowers shared two updates:

a. Board and Commission Appointment Process Discussion

First, that Clerk of Council, Jeremy VanMeter, circulated a list to Council, of members serving on boards and commissions. This list reflects appointment terms which are nearing expiration. Council will review those expiring terms and establish a timeline for soliciting applications for new and returning members. President Bowers communicated Council was looking forward to working with the administration to promote the application process, supporting a wide pool of qualified applicants serving their community.

b. Landscape Plan and Tree Update

Next, President Bowers discussed the City Landscape Plan and Tree update. President Bowers thanked Senior Director Schultz for his support and guidance in providing additional information. In February, the Landscape Board recommended for approval a comprehensive landscape plan, adding a list of recommended trees into the plan. There was a minor modification during their last meeting, approved in February. For clarity, the redline version of the plan was included on the agenda in June. The invasive species list and prohibited tree list did not change in that comprehensive landscape plan. Tree removals are planned for fall of 2024, the list is currently being established with resident notification to take place later in the fall and removals anticipated in November. Removals of trees in the community are done with the intent of improving resident safety and improving overall health of the tree canopy. President Bowers voiced appreciation of the work of the City Arborists, Parks and Recreation team, staff and Mr. Schultz.

J. REPRESENTATIVES:**1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) - Renner, Weaver**

Councilmember Renner noted the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) would meet on Tuesday, August 20, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. in the Committee Room.

2. Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) - Weaver

[2024-0140](#)

Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 8.5.2024

President Bowers noted that while Vice President Trenton Weaver was absent from the Council meeting, his report was attached to the Council agenda, for review.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova announced that Visit Gahanna produced a new visitors guide. The new guides were featured at the Ohio State Fair, Ohio Travel Pavilion. Ms. Padova shared the *Midweek at the Creek* event series continues the upcoming Wednesday, August 7, 2024, on the Rotary Stage, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Due to uncooperative weather, several earlier performances were rescheduled for late summer through early fall, concluding on September 11, 2024. Ms. Padova highly recommend the event. Ms. Padova also promoted the Gahanna Area Art Council's presentation of the Columbus Jazz Orchestra at Headley Park on August 24, 2024, at 7 p.m. Lastly, Ms. Padova noted the upcoming Gahanna 175 celebrations, refraining from going into detail, in anticipation of Mayor Jadwin elaborating on the special occasion, during the Mayor's Report.

4. School Board (SB) - Jones

Councilmember Jones explained school would start in 10 days, August 15, 2024. Ms. Jones described the timing as fitting because August is *Share the Road Awareness Month*. Ms. Jones reminded community members of the upcoming rise in pedestrian and bike travel, with the opening of the schools. Ms. Jones also called attention to the new school hours for middle schools and the high school.

K. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin elaborated on Councilmember Jones' report. High School will begin at 8:00 a.m., coinciding with the time City Hall, located next to the Gahanna Lincoln High School, opens. Mayor Jadwin urged caution and patience for all, especially as everyone acclimates to the new school year and a busy parking lot. Mayor Jadwin emphasized care for pedestrians.

Next, Mayor Jadwin recognized the efforts of Miranda Vollmer, Senior

Director of Administrative Services. Mayor Jadwin commended Senior Director Vollmer's work on the Strategic Plan program update and her leadership. Mayor Jadwin encouraged members of the community to engage in the opportunity, reiterating that applications are open through August 15, 2024.

Mayor Jadwin also noted the opportunity for residents to apply to participate in the inaugural Gahanna Citizens' Academy. This is a six-week program where residents gain access to behind-the-scenes government action, learning how local government works, through interactive facility tours, hands-on activities, and equipment demonstrations. The classes take place Thursday nights at 6:30-9:00 p.m., starting on September 26, 2024. There are 20 participation slots available in the program.

Mayor Jadwin observed that *National Night Out* would take place the next evening, August 6, 2024. This event encompasses the nation, created to help build trust and connectivity between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The event will be held from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Sunpoint Park.

Mayor Jadwin gave descriptions of anticipated celebrations for the City of Gahanna's 175th anniversary Jubilee weekend. Currently at Creekside, the Parks and Recreation Department installed a 20-foot inflatable birthday cake which will be there, through the week, as the city celebrates. Festivities begin Friday night, August 9, 2024, with a special edition of *Creekside Live* at 5:00: p.m. There will be salsa and square dancing, along with special music. At 7:30 p.m. *Pop Gun* will headline. Starting at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, at Jefferson Elementary, there will be an old-fashioned baseball game between City staff's Gahanna Bananas and the Ohio Historical Connection's Ohio Village Muffins. From 6:00 p.m.- 10:00 p.m. the Jubilee Festival will be held down at the Creekside District; roads will be closed. This is a free event with over 50 nonprofit organizations and businesses from the Gahanna Community participating. Mayor Jadwin described this as an opportunity to showcase all that Gahanna has to offer. Included in the festivities are: food vendors, caricature and balloon artists, face painters, chalk art, local performances from Gahanna groups and much more. There will also be a special birthday presentation around 9:15 p.m. where the joint Resolution No.0030-2024 will be presented. At 9:30 p.m., an inaugural drone display will commence, with the best views along Mill Street. On Sunday, the community is invited to Come Together Gahanna at Friendship Park at noon. Participants should bring their own food; however, entertainment will be provided. Mayor Jadwin described the event as an old-fashioned Sunday social. More information can be found about the event at Gahanna175.com.

Lastly, Mayor Jadwin shared a special personal message to her mother. August 5, 2024 was Mayor Jadwin's mother's 86th birthday. Mayor Jadwin's mother is a loyal viewer of Council Meetings, so Mayor Jadwin took the opportunity to wish her mom a happy birthday.

President Bowers thanked Mayor Jadwin for her report and joined her in wishing a happy birthday to the mayor's mother.

2. City Attorney

City Attorney Priya Tamilarasan explained there was a final decision rendered in the Academy Ridge lawsuit that was on appeal. There was a in favor of the City upholding the trial Court's decision. The matter is now closed.

L. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember Jamille Jones reflected it was nice to be in session, following a brief break. Ms. Jones shared August is *National Black Business Month*, and encouraged everyone to celebrate, shop and enjoy the many black-owned businesses in Gahanna. Ms. Jones named a few businesses, acknowledging that she inadvertently would miss naming many applicable businesses. Ms. Jones asked everyone to get out and to celebrate *National Black Business Month*. Ms. Jones also reiterated a thank you to *Visit Gahanna Pelotonia Cheering Station*. Ms. Jones noted that the Community of Gahanna stood out, in her extensive volunteer history, as a commendable example of inclusion. Ms. Jones evaluated the weekend as awesome, noting friends reported to her that Gahanna provided the best support to riders, observing the riders appreciated the love and cheerleaders. Ms. Jones recognized Council Office Intern Charlie Schneider, who will be completing his internship next week. Ms. Jones amplified messaging on the 175 Gahanna celebrations, scheduled for the upcoming weekend. Ms. Jones inquired of Senior Director Kevin Schultz if it were possible to stream the drone show, as Ms. Jones has a schedule conflict which will prevent her participation in festivities. Mr. Schultz communicated this was not possible.

Councilmember Nancy McGregor expressed her hope to see everybody at the Gahanna 175 celebrations over the upcoming weekend. Ms. McGregor communicated anticipation for the drone show, expecting it to be very interesting and sharing she has heard good things about it.

Councilmember Kaylee Padova observed and thanked all the cyclists who were present at the meeting, including speakers on the *Share the Road* Resolution No.0029-2024. Ms. Padova shared a personal anecdote of a friend who is a cancer survivor in his 80s, who participated in the Pelotonia event. Ms. Padova described how special it was to see survivors participate in the event in support of others. Ms. Padova expressed her appreciation for Council's opportunity to recognize everyone. Ms. Padova also shared she was looking forward to the events this this weekend, celebrating Gahanna's big anniversary. Ms. Padova noted her daughter's birthday was coming up on Thursday, August 8, 2024; explaining that she will take her daughter down to see the big birthday cake at Creekside.

Councilmember Stephen Renner observed that it was August, entering the *dog days* of summer. As such, Mr. Renner reminded everyone to please

make sure that they do not leave infants, children, or dogs in the car. Mr. Renner asked people to make sure that their windows are down and make sure that everybody has plenty of water, if left in the car for any time. Mr. Renner promoted water conservation, recommending homeowners let grass go dormant for a little bit and enjoy the fall.

Councilmember Michael Schnetzer had no comments to share at this time.

President Merisa Bowers observed that her colleagues had adequately covered important issues, and she did not wish to repeat things. Instead, President Bowers described the Muddy Miler, an event that is one of her household's favorite Parks and Recreation events of the year, coming up on Sunday, August 18, 2024, at the Big Walnut trail behind the Gahanna Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) site. President Bowers positively described the event as a good, messy, and wild time, encouraging everyone to sign-up.

President Bowers promoted the Gahanna Area Arts Council's Columbus Symphony Columbus Jazz Orchestra event, at Headley Park, on the evening of Saturday August 24, 2024. Ticket information is available on the Gahanna Area Arts Council's website. Ms. Bowers also highlighted the Gahanna Area Chamber of Commerce annual Taste of Gahanna event at Edison. President Bowers shared she was looking forward to enjoying the many upcoming community events with her colleagues and the community.

M. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the Regular Council Meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Jessica Hilts
Clerk

APPROVED by the City Council, this
day of 2024.

Merisa K. Bowers