



# 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*

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Monday, September 16, 2024

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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

*Gahanna City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, September 16, 2024, in Council Chambers. President of Council Merisa K. Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver delivered an Invocation and led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda was published on September 13, 2024.*

**Present** 7 - Merisa K. Bowers, Jamille Jones, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

**B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

None.

**C. PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. Proclamation Presentation by Mayor Jadwin  
Childhood Cancer Awareness Month**

[2024-0176](#)

Mayoral Proclamation - Childhood Cancer Awareness Month 2024-09

Mayor Jadwin introduced a proclamation that she has presented for the last four years, addressing a critical issue: Childhood Cancer. She noted that while many proclamations celebrate joyous occasions, this one serves to raise awareness about a devastating matter. Mayor Jadwin shared alarming statistics, including that approximately one in 260 children in the United States will be diagnosed with cancer by their 20th birthday. Each day, 47 children, or 17,155 annually, are diagnosed with cancer. The average age of diagnosis for children is 6 years old, compared to 66 for adults. Furthermore, 80% of childhood cancer patients are diagnosed late, with metastatic disease, and in the last 20 years, only six new drugs have been approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) specifically to treat childhood cancer. This highlights the importance of September being designated as Childhood Cancer Awareness

Month and the need for investment in research.

Mayor Jadwin introduced resident Tracy Gold, a graduate of Gahanna Lincoln High School, who shared the story of her daughter, Alex.

Ms. Gold recounted that Alex was diagnosed with cancer at just 3 months old after a rhinovirus and bronchiolitis led to severe health issues. Within 24 hours of being in the hospital, Alex developed petechiae bruising, leading to a diagnosis of Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). Despite undergoing seven treatments of chemotherapy over seven months, Alex's cancer mutated into a second form, Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML). The situation became refractory, and there were no more options available at the local children's hospital. When St. Jude's was contacted, they were denied trials because there were none available for children under the age of one. At that time, Alex was 10 months old, and her family was told she would not survive to her first birthday. Tragically, two weeks later, on April 18, 2016, Alex passed away. Ms. Gold emphasized that children with cancer are still being treated with adult chemotherapy drugs, merely in smaller doses, and urged everyone to raise awareness. She called for new drugs and treatments, hoping that no other child or family would have to endure the same heartbreak.

Mayor Jadwin praised Tracy and her family for turning their pain into advocacy through their work with the Friends of Faith Pruden Foundation, an organization that supports oncology patients and their families. While acknowledging that it was not a proclamation she was eager to present, Mayor Jadwin expressed her honor in recognizing Tracy's dedication to raising awareness and supporting other families. She then presented the proclamation designating September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Gahanna.

President Bowers thanked Mayor Jadwin for sharing such an important issue and for highlighting the ongoing efforts to raise awareness of Childhood Cancer.

## **2. Resolution Presentation by City Council Hispanic Heritage Month September 15 - October 15, 2024**

President Bowers introduced the next presentation on the agenda, noting the shift in tone. She remarked that, as Mayor Jadwin had mentioned earlier, resolutions and proclamations are often used to celebrate joyous occasions, while sometimes they serve to raise awareness of important issues. Bowers explained that the next resolution did both-raising awareness of the contributions made by the Hispanic and Latine communities to Gahanna while celebrating the community as well.

Councilmember Jones thanked President Bowers for the introduction. She explained that the resolution was in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, which is celebrated from September 15 through October 15. Jones highlighted key points from the resolution, emphasizing that diversity is one of Gahanna's greatest strengths and that the City prides itself on being a community where all are welcome, included, and celebrated. She also

acknowledged the contributions of Hispanic and Latine business owners, entrepreneurs, and professionals, noting that their impact goes beyond economic development by enriching the community with diverse perspectives, cultures, and traditions that enhance collective understanding and unity. Jones expressed her honor in inviting several special guests to receive the resolution that evening. These guests included Marisa and Emilio Vicens, residents and owners of SpreadLaLuz, and Yudith Colon, a resident and owner of Paint Party en Español. Jones also gave a special mention to Ani Palacios, a Gahanna resident, author, and journalist, who was unable to attend. Jones invited her Council colleagues to step down to present the resolution and welcomed the guests to share brief remarks if they wished.

Ms. Marisa Vicens began her remarks by expressing her gratitude to the Council for the opportunity to speak during Hispanic Heritage Month. She shared that she has lived in Gahanna with her family for nearly two years and appreciates how welcoming and diverse the community is. Her oldest daughter recently started kindergarten at High Point and loves it. Ms. Vicens emphasized the importance of celebrating her Hispanic culture, especially during this month, by supporting Hispanic-owned businesses and learning new dishes. Hispanic Heritage Month holds special meaning for her as she reflects on the bravery of her ancestors who immigrated to the United States. She now shares their stories and challenges with her children. As the proud owner of a small Latino-owned business called Spread La Luz ("Spread the Light"), she spoke not only as an entrepreneur but as someone inspired by her ancestors' dreams and sacrifices. Her Play-Doh business, Dream Doh, is occupation-themed to inspire children to explore their dreams without boundaries, regardless of where they come from or the color of their skin. Ms. Vicens urged the Council to continue advocating for small business owners in Gahanna and encouraged the creation of markets and spaces to help these businesses thrive, similar to those in cities like Dublin and Worthington. She stressed that supporting small, local businesses means supporting culture, history, and the rich legacy of the community. She concluded by encouraging the continued celebration of Hispanic heritage beyond just this month, highlighting the importance of a future filled with creativity, love, and limitless possibilities for children.

Ms. Yudith Colon followed, sharing that she was born and raised in New York City to parents from the Dominican Republic. Moving to Ohio was a drastic change, but she acknowledged that it was the best decision her mother could have made for her children. She has lived in Gahanna since 2009, starting out as a single woman and now raising two children with her husband. Her children also attend Gahanna schools, and they love their learning experiences. Ms. Colon remarked on how much the Hispanic community has grown since she first moved to Gahanna and expressed excitement about the initiative to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. She highlighted the importance of opening discussions about the Hispanic community, embracing diversity, and moving beyond the negative stereotypes often portrayed in the news. She believes that celebrating culture is a win-win for the community. As the founder of Paint Party en Español, Ms. Colon hosts paint parties in both Spanish and English. Her goal is to provide an enjoyable, relaxing, and fun experience for participants, helping them escape the everyday stresses of

life. She concluded by expressing her gratitude for being part of the evening's celebration and looking forward to seeing how Gahanna continues to embrace its growing Hispanic community.

Councilmember Jones thanked both Ms. Colon and Ms. Vicens for attending and sharing their stories. She emphasized the importance of recognizing and celebrating the diversity of the community, particularly in highlighting local businesses. She wished both women, their families, and their businesses much success and prosperity, and encouraged them to continue offering feedback and ideas as the city works to elevate its community's diversity. She also thanked her colleagues for providing the time and space for this important celebration.

**D. HEARING OF VISITORS:**

President Bowers began by welcoming the attendees and noting that there were several new guests at the meeting. She explained the process for "Hearing of Visitors," clarifying that it is an opportunity for members of the public to offer comments. Typically, there is no direct response from Councilmembers unless the item is on the agenda, and there may not be immediate discussion on the topics raised. Bowers emphasized that the public's comments would be taken into consideration, made part of the record, and could potentially lead to follow-up in the future. She also noted that several speaker slips had been submitted regarding the Action Sports Park and introduced members of the leadership team from the Parks and Recreation Department who were present, including Director Stephania Ferrell, Brian Gill-Huston, and Zac Guthrie.

Director Stephania Ferrell provided an overview of the Action Sports Park project, summarizing its purpose and current status. The project stemmed from feedback received regarding the condition of a deteriorating asset at Shull Park, which had to be removed due to its poor state. Many residents who had used the park across multiple generations expressed a desire to see it replaced with a modern alternative. In 2023, Gahanna adopted a Parks Master Plan, which highlighted the importance of adventure and action sports to the community. Based on community input and discussions during City Council's Capital Improvement meetings, the decision was made not to replace the old skate park with a like-for-like amenity, but to upgrade and modernize the space to meet current standards. City Council approved funding in 2024 to develop conceptual designs and cost estimates for a new project. Lower McCorkle Park was identified as a potential site due to its proximity to the Big Walnut Trail, which serves as a regional corridor, as well as the ongoing development of a nearby mountain bike trail and Creekside area. Ferrell explained that the site is divided into three zones: a wooded area on the east side of Ridenour that is in a regulatory floodway and is being considered for low-impact features such as a Frisbee golf course or canopy walk, the existing soccer field where an Action Park may be built, and a parking lot on the west side of Ridenour that may be improved. A third-party consultant is currently conducting a site analysis and collecting community input on what the Action Sports Park should include. Ferrell explained that features under consideration include a skate park, climbing wall, pump track,

and hockey rink. The study is also reviewing the environmental and traffic impacts of the project. The current timeline anticipates receiving three conceptual designs by the end of the year, with further community input to follow. Should the project move forward, the entire year of 2025 would be dedicated to permitting and development, with no construction expected until the following year.

President Bowers thanked Director Ferrell for the summary and added that Councilmembers may also comment during the Council Comment period later in the meeting. She informed attendees that if they left before that time, they could view council comments on the City's YouTube channel. President Bowers then moved on to the speaker slips in the order they were received.

*Michael Heitzman of Gahanna, OH, spoke on the proposed Action Park project.*

Mr. Heitzman stated his strong opposition to the proposed relocation of the skateboard park from Shull Park to Lower McCorkle Park. He emphasized that many neighbors of Lower McCorkle, including himself, attended the recent Parks and Recreation Board meeting and expressed the same opposition. He noted that the room was full of individuals against the project at Lower McCorkle Park. Mr. Heitzman acknowledged that funding had been approved for consultants to create a conceptual design for an action park, which he supported in principle. However, he questioned the choice of Lower McCorkle Park as the proposed location, reiterating that he was not against the skate park itself, but against its placement in this location. He raised concerns about the loss of valuable green space and the environmental impact of replacing natural areas with concrete. He argued that Lower McCorkle Park should be preserved and that green spaces like these are essential for the community. He also addressed concerns about flooding and suggested that if Lower McCorkle Park could be remedied of flooding through this project, similar efforts could be made at the current Shull Park location. He expressed disappointment with the level of community engagement, stating that those most affected by the project had not been adequately consulted. Mr. Heitzman was also surprised to learn that Lower McCorkle was the only park being considered for the project, and he called for a broader exploration of alternative locations. He requested that the City remove Lower McCorkle Park from consideration, explore other options, and include Council and Parks Board members on the Action Park Committee. Finally, he asked the Council to deny further funding if Lower McCorkle Park remained the project's location.

*Jenny Hecker of Gahanna, OH, spoke on the proposed Action Sports Park.*

Ms. Hecker acknowledged concerns about flooding at Shull Park but noted additional issues, such as its proximity to two bars, which she felt contributed to unwelcome behavior. She suggested that Lower McCorkle Park could be a good option, and that other alternatives would likely be welcomed in further discussions. Ms. Hecker emphasized that the project was not about creating a "concrete jungle" but rather an extension of the Arboretum at Creekside, a beautiful landmark the community had worked hard to develop. She believed

that the new park could feature trees, greenery, and pathways where people could walk and gather, and that it would enhance the area. She also highlighted the potential for relocating the soccer field to Shull Park if the Action Sports Park moved to Lower McCorkle. Ms. Hecker supported the creation of the Action Sports Park as a space for teenagers in the community who currently lack a place to practice their sports, which she believed would help keep them out of trouble. She noted that the park would not only serve children but also adults who enjoy sports like BMX and skateboarding. She urged the Council to consider the positive impact of the project on the community and expressed her hope that collaboration would lead to the best solution.

*Shane DeGarmo of Gahanna, OH, spoke on the proposed Action Park.*

Mr. DeGarmo began by thanking Director Ferrell for her comments, which helped clarify several aspects of the proposed Action Sports Park project. He noted that while he did not prepare formal remarks, he felt it was important to speak due to the conflicting information he had heard over the past week regarding the proposal, its timeline, and its potential outcomes. Mr. DeGarmo expressed his desire not to repeat points already raised by his neighbors, who had spoken previously and would likely continue to share their views in future discussions. Instead, he emphasized the importance of full transparency in the decision-making process. He urged the Council to use its influence to ensure that all parties-whether they support, oppose, or seek alternative solutions to the project-are fully informed and have the opportunity to review and comment on the information gathered through the site evaluation and planning process. He concluded by asking that any decisions on the project be made with careful consideration and full input from the community before moving forward with approvals. He thanked the Council for their work and their ongoing consideration of the community's input.

*Maria Duque of Gahanna, OH, spoke on the proposes Action Sports Park.*

Ms. Duque stated that she and others are not opposed to having a park or a space for teenagers and adults to participate in action sports such as skateboarding. However, she emphasized that the space currently being considered, Lower McCorkle Park, is an important part of the community that is actively used by multiple soccer teams, children, and dog owners. Although the park is not utilized 24/7, it is a valuable space for community activities. Ms. Duque raised concerns about the potential ecological impact of the project. While assurances have been made that trees would not be affected, she pointed out that the installation of a disc golf course would likely require some clearing. She also noted that the area is home to a bald eagle, whose nesting site has been frequently observed by the community. Additionally, the area includes wetlands, which are protected and serve as a habitat for various wildlife, including deer and wild turkeys, which are seen regularly. Ms. Duque expressed frustration that neighboring communities were not adequately informed about the project. She emphasized that while they understand the project is still under discussion, they hope it remains an open conversation where all ideas can be considered. She reiterated that while they support the idea of the park, they are strongly opposed to the proposed

location. Ms. Duque also addressed concerns about flooding in the area, noting that Lower McCorkle Park is prone to flooding, particularly in the spring and fall. She questioned the logic of moving a park from one flooding area to another and pointed out that Old Ridenour Road, which frequently closes due to flooding, would be further impacted by increased traffic if the project moved forward. Ms. Duque stressed that speeding on the road is already a problem and that increased traffic would pose safety risks for children and pets. She concluded by expressing hope that the community and City officials could work together to find a solution that is feasible for everyone.

*Angel Poynter of Gahanna, OH, spoke on road repairs on Coldwell Court.*

Ms. Poynter expressed concerns regarding ongoing issues with road work and sidewalk construction on her street. She had previously emailed photos to the Council to illustrate the problems but noted that the images could not be presented during the meeting. President Bowers confirmed that the Councilmembers had received the photos in their inboxes. Ms. Poynter explained that the construction work on her street began in mid-May, and despite it now being mid-September, the work remained incomplete. Specifically, she pointed out that a section of sidewalk was still missing due to the construction company breaking a water shut-off valve underneath it. This missing sidewalk was particularly problematic because it was located next to a resident who uses a power wheelchair, limiting their ability to use the sidewalk. Ms. Poynter described several issues with the quality of the work being done. In her case, the construction company had cut her driveway and replaced a portion of it with loose stone, which she believed would not withstand water damage. She emphasized that the driveway required proper repair, including reheating, tamping down, rolling, and sealing. She added that other residents with asphalt driveways experienced similar issues, while a neighbor with a concrete driveway was told it would be two months before her broken driveway could be repaired. Additionally, Ms. Poynter mentioned that an internet cable had been left strewn across the street for over a month, with a large wad of cable blocking the sidewalk. The streetlights had also been out for two and a half months after the construction company damaged them, leaving the street in darkness. Further issues included poorly planted grass, which she described as full of weeds and flowers, with some areas not growing at all. Ms. Poynter also highlighted problems with the mailboxes, which were not installed level and were wobbly. Despite offering the construction crew a level to fix the issue, they dismissed her concerns, claiming the mailboxes were straight based on their 6-inch level. Ms. Poynter feared that once her mailbox's magnet wore out, the door would begin popping open due to the improper installation. She concluded by noting that she had provided all these issues in the emails sent to the Council and indicated that another neighbor was present who might wish to elaborate on similar experiences.

*Jeff and Debbie Mitchell of Gahanna, OH, spoke on street and sidewalk improvements.*

Mrs. Mitchell echoed the concerns previously raised by Ms. Poynter regarding the incomplete construction work on their street. She began by

acknowledging that while the street and sidewalk repairs had improved certain aspects, such as leveling the sidewalks and smoothing the road, there were still ongoing issues. Mrs. Mitchell highlighted standing water on the new pavement, which she believed would worsen over time and cause further damage to the road. She also pointed out that, like Ms. Poynter mentioned, an internet cable had been left on top of the street, which appeared to have been forgotten during the construction process. This oversight had affected some residents' ability to work from home, as the cable had not been properly buried. Mrs. Mitchell shared her personal experience of being trapped in her own driveway during the construction, as there were no sidewalks or clear paths for her to navigate. The driveways were ripped up, and the streets were torn, making it difficult for her to access her parked car. She described how a board was placed across her grass to serve as a makeshift pathway to the sidewalk, but it did not account for the drop-off into the road, where construction equipment and debris were present. This made it especially challenging for her to maneuver her wheelchair. In her comments, Mrs. Mitchell requested better communication from the City, particularly regarding project timelines and delays. She expressed frustration that the work, which started in May, still remained incomplete by September. She felt that their street had been forgotten as the construction crews moved on to other areas, and she did not know when or if they would return to finish the repairs.

President Bowers acknowledged Mrs. Mitchell's concerns and noted that the City's Director of Engineering, Tom Komlanc, was present and had heard the comments made that evening. Bowers also confirmed that the emails from Ms. Poynter had been forwarded to Senior Director Schultz and Mayor Jadwin. She assured the residents that their questions would be addressed and thanked all community members who spoke, expressing appreciation for their involvement and the opportunity to collaborate and connect on the issues raised.

#### **E. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

[ORD-0053-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE PLAN OF OPERATION AND GOVERNANCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL ("SOPEC") ELECTRIC AGGREGATION PROGRAM, AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF JOINTLY ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING AN ELECTRIC AGGREGATION PROGRAM

President Bowers opened the second public hearing on Ordinance 0053-2024. She began by reviewing the Council rules (9.10 and 9.11) that govern public hearings. According to these rules, the President of Council provides a brief statement or explanation of the item under hearing before opening the floor for public comments. She also mentioned that the Administration could make a presentation regarding the item in question, and the applicant or their representative may present or comment for up to 10 minutes. Since there was no proponent or applicant present at this meeting, the public comment period would follow, with each speaker allowed three minutes. President Bowers invited anyone wishing to comment on Ordinance 0053-2024, which approves the plan of operation and governance for the Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC), to complete a speaker



slip and come forward. She explained that this ordinance is the next step in advancing municipal aggregation in Gahanna.

President Bowers provided a summary of the municipal aggregation initiative, explaining that it is a tool communities can use to reduce energy costs for residents while pursuing environmental goals. Aggregation allows local governments to leverage their purchasing power to secure electricity from specific sources, often at a lower cost. It can also help communities achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals by choosing renewable energy sources. Last year, the City began gathering information about municipal aggregation programs, leading to a resolution authorizing a partnership with Power a Clean Future Ohio. This spring, the Administration released a request for information (RFI), and after reviewing four responses, the Council, in collaboration with the Administration, passed a resolution pledging to become members of SOPEC. The adoption of the operation and governance plan is the next step in advancing this partnership. President Bowers concluded by reiterating that this public hearing was the second regarding the adoption of the electric plan of operation and governance. The first hearing was held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, and the plan was initially introduced at the Committee of the Whole on August 26, 2024. Notice of these public hearings was published in *The Columbus Dispatch* and posted on the exterior signboard of Gahanna City Hall.

*President Bowers opened and closed the Public Hearing to public comment at 7:46 p.m., as there were no speakers from the public.*

## **F. CONSENT AGENDA:**

### **1. Minutes - To Approve:**

[2024-0169](#)

Council Regular Minutes 9.3.2024

**The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.**

[2024-0170](#)

Committee of the Whole Minutes 9.9.2024

**The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.**

### **2. Resolutions:**

[RES-0033-2024](#)

A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA SEPTEMBER 15 - OCTOBER 15, 2024

**The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.**

[RES-0034-2024](#)

A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE THE NECESSITY AND INTENT TO APPROPRIATE REAL ESTATE FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY AND TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENTS FOR THE WYNNE RIDGE COURT BRIDGE PROJECT

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

### **3. Ordinances for Second Reading and Adoption:**

[ORD-0052-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS  
- General Fund Council Office Professional Services for Grant Award

The clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the  
Consent Agenda.

### **End of Consent Agenda**

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Weaver, to Pass the Consent  
Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

### **G. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:**

[ORD-0054-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO PART FIVE  
GENERAL OFFENSES CODE SECTIONS OF THE CODIFIED  
ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA; TO PROVIDE FOR  
PENALTIES; TO PROVIDE FOR CODIFICATION; TO PROVIDE FOR  
SEVERABILITY; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO  
PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

[ORD-0056-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING PUBLIC WATER IMPROVEMENTS  
AND EASEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE DISCOVERY STORAGE  
DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT 4569 MORSE ROAD

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

[ORD-0057-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING CRESCENT PLACE PUBLIC  
ROADWAY, WATER MAIN, STORM SEWER, AND SANITARY SEWER  
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH  
THE CRESCENT WOODS DEVELOPMENT

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

[ORD-0058-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PROVIDE CONSENT  
AND ENTER A PARTICIPATORY AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR BRIDGE  
REPLACEMENT ON WYNNE RIDGE COURT

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

[ORD-0059-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY OR THE CITY

ATTORNEY'S DESIGNEE TO FILE FOR APPROPRIATION OF RIGHT-OF-WAY AND TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT FOR 986 RIDGE CREST DRIVE, PARCEL ID 025-010858; SAYOKO T. CULLEN, OWNER; IN FURTHERANCE OF THE WYNNE RIDGE COURT BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

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

[ORD-0060-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY OR THE CITY ATTORNEY'S DESIGNEE TO FILE FOR APPROPRIATION OF RIGHT-OF-WAY AND TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT FOR 320 WYNNE RIDGE COURT, PARCEL ID 025-010865; LAUREN RENNER AND PETER RENNER, OWNERS; IN FURTHERANCE OF THE WYNNE RIDGE COURT BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

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

[ORD-0061-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ACCEPT AND ENTER INTO AN ACCESS AGREEMENT WITH OHIO POWER COMPANY, SUCCESSOR-IN-INTEREST TO COLUMBUS AND SOUTHERN OHIO ELECTRIC COMPANY, FOR PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICULAR ACCESS TO 825 TECH CENTER DRIVE; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

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

**H. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING / ADOPTION:**

[ORD-0053-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE PLAN OF OPERATION AND GOVERNANCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL ("SOPEC") ELECTRIC AGGREGATION PROGRAM, AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF JOINTLY ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING AN ELECTRIC AGGREGATION PROGRAM

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Jones, that the Ordinance be Amended to Declare an Emergency.

Discussion on Amendment (for emergency declaration language):

Councilmember Renner spoke in support of moving forward with the municipal aggregation program. He referenced conversations he had with experts, including those from SOPEC, and noted that given the current fluctuations in energy markets, it would be advantageous for the City to take action as soon as possible. He expressed confidence that SOPEC could recommend favorable rates if the City proceeded without delay.

Councilmember McGregor agreed with Councilmember Renner's sentiment, sharing a personal experience with changing energy providers. She explained that when she compared energy prices through the Apples-to-Apples program, she noticed that rates had increased within just three days after her initial review.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Renner, that the Ordinance be Adopted, as Amended, as an Emergency.

Discussion on Main Motion (as amended):

President Bowers concluded the discussion by noting that the Council looks forward to further communication and updates from the Administration and SOPEC regarding the next steps in the municipal aggregation program. She highlighted the importance of broader community outreach to ensure residents are well-informed about the program. President Bowers also reiterated that the program would operate as an opt-out program, meaning residents would automatically be enrolled unless they choose to opt out. Final details, such as establishing rates and other mechanisms, would be communicated once they are in place.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

#### **I. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION, WAIVER & ADOPTION:**

[ORD-0062-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE GRANTING TO OHIO POWER COMPANY, ITS SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS, THE RIGHT TO ACQUIRE, CONSTRUCT, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE IN THE STREETS, THOROUGHFARES, ALLEYS, BRIDGES AND PUBLIC PLACES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, STATE OF OHIO, AND ITS SUCCESSORS, LINES FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC ENERGY TO THE CITY OF GAHANNA, STATE OF OHIO, AND INHABITANTS THEREOF FOR LIGHT, HEAT, POWER AND OTHER PURPOSES AND FOR THE TRANSMISSION OF THE SAME WITHIN, THROUGH OR ACROSS SAID CITY OF GAHANNA, STATE OF OHIO; AND WAIVING SECOND READING

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Jones, that the Ordinance be Waived for Second Reading. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

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

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

#### **J. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION, WAIVER & EMERGENCY ADOPTION:**

[ORD-0055-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT A FINAL PLAT APPLICATION FOR CRESCENT WOODS - LOOP ROAD; CONSISTING OF 14.96 +/- ACRES; PARCEL ID 025-013767; CURRENT ZONING GENERAL

COMMERCIAL (GC); CRESCENT WOODS LLC, GRIFFIN CALDWELL, APPLICANT; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion was made by Jones, seconded by Padova, that the Ordinance be Waived for Second Reading. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Jones, that the Ordinance be Adopted.

President Bowers asked a follow-up question regarding the tree concerns that had been raised earlier, noting that while it did not directly pertain to the plat application, she wanted clarification. She acknowledged the presence of Mr. Griffin Caldwell and thanked him for addressing the question.

Mr. Caldwell explained that the decision regarding the selection of trees was made after consultation with their landscaping consultant. The trees chosen were Gahanna-approved species, and the consultant aimed to prevent the risk of disease affecting all trees by diversifying the selection. He added that they were open to working with the landscaping crew if changes to the tree selection were desired.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

## K. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

### 1. Clerk

[2024-0171](#)

Ohio Division of Liquor Control Notice to Legislative Authority Permit NEW 8340526 JAMES SNYDER DBA ANTOLINOS PIZZA, 1050 BEECHER CROSSING N STE G

Mr. VanMeter informed the Council that the application under review was for a new permit. He stated that he had checked with the Division of Police and confirmed there were no objections or any history associated with the item. If there were no objections from the Council, he would proceed with returning the notice indicating that a hearing was not requested.

President Bowers confirmed that there had been no prior liquor permit at this location, making this a completely new application. She thanked Mr. VanMeter and asked if there were any discussions or objections from the Council. Hearing none, the Council agreed to move forward without requesting a hearing.

### 2. Council - None.

## L. REPRESENTATIVES:

## 1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) - Renner, Weaver

Vice President Weaver reported that the next meeting would be held Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. in the Committee Room.

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

[2024-0172](#)

Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 9.16.2024

Vice President Weaver noted that a detailed report had been attached to everyone's agenda. He expressed his appreciation to the Council Office for preparing the report and highlighted a few key items. Vice President Weaver informed the Council that the commission met on Thursday, September 12, 2024, and that the next meeting was scheduled for October 10, 2024. He shared the exciting news that the MORPC had received the largest grant in its history-\$15 million-for electric vehicle infrastructure. Additional information about the grant was included in the attached report for Councilmembers to review. Looking ahead, Vice President Weaver reminded the Council that the Summit on Sustainability would take place on October 29, 2024, encouraging any Councilmembers planning to attend to notify Mr. VanMeter. He also provided legislative updates from the General Assembly, specifically highlighting a few bills:

House Bill 315, which would revise Ohio's Township Law and now includes housing technical assistance funding for political subdivisions, passed the House in June and was pending in the Senate.

House Bill 536, which would make the failure to wear a seatbelt and failure to properly secure a child in a booster seat a primary offense, had its third hearing in the Criminal Justice Committee.

Vice President Weaver noted several upcoming events:

- 1) Money Mondays sessions, with today's conversation featuring Vincent Coleman from Columbus Realtors on affordable housing efforts, and next week's session on sustainability projects featuring Chad Gibson from Upper Arlington.
- 2) The MORPC State of the Region event, scheduled for March 21, 2025.
- 3) The results of the annual salary and fringe benefit survey, expected to be available in the next few weeks.
- 4) A meeting in partnership with Ohio State University (OSU) on Thursday, September 26th, focusing on responding to the housing crisis, which could be attended via Zoom or in person.

## 3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova provided an update on recent and upcoming activities at the Ohio Herb Center. She shared that the center hosted two motor coach groups in the past month, both of which participated in private workshops and garden tours while visiting Gahanna. Classes at the Herb Center have been very successful this year, with most of the three monthly classes selling out. Councilmember Padova noted that many attendees were not Gahanna residents, and some had even traveled from neighboring states to participate in the classes. Looking ahead to October, Councilmember Padova announced that the Ohio Herb Center will be offering three ghost tours on Friday nights, led by Amanda Ferguson, the Center's coordinator. Two of the tours have already sold out, and more information can be found at [OhioHerbCenter.org](http://OhioHerbCenter.org). In addition, Visit Gahanna is assisting in the promotion of Basset Fest, which will take place at Pizzurro Park on Saturday, September 28, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This event has been held in Gahanna for several years, attracting hundreds of Basset Hound owners, enthusiasts, and spectators. Councilmember Padova noted that the event draws visitors who stay in local hotels, dine at restaurants, and shop in the area, making it a great community event. She encouraged those with Basset Hounds or those interested in seeing the dogs to attend the festival.

#### **4. School Board (SB) - Jones**

Councilmember Jones noted that there would be a regular school board meeting on Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 6:30 PM at Clark Hall. She encouraged everyone to attend and participate. Councilmember Jones added that the agenda for the meeting would be available on the school's website via BoardDocs on Tuesday, September 17, 2024.

### **M. OFFICIAL REPORTS:**

#### **1. Mayor**

Mayor Jadwin provided several updates to the Council. She first expressed her gratitude to the Recreation team for their work on last week's Senior Expo, which was a well-attended event at the Gahanna Sanctuary, where multiple vendors shared resources with seniors in the community. She also thanked the Public Service team for their efforts during the second Shred and E-Recycle event of the year, which was held in response to public demand. Gahanna Residents In Need (GRIN) was present at the event, collecting donations.

Mayor Jadwin reminded everyone of the upcoming Touch a Truck event, scheduled for Saturday, September 21, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Hannah Park. GRIN will again be present, accepting food and monetary donations.

Next, Mayor Jadwin discussed several Capital Improvement projects that the City staff had been working on, some for several years, which were now being finalized. She celebrated the early opening of the Taylor Station-Claycraft roundabout, which opened 23 days ahead of schedule. This

\$2.9 million project, funded in part by a \$999,999 grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC), was completed and under budget by 12 percent. The roundabout is expected to significantly improve traffic flow in a historically congested area.

She also provided updates on ongoing street and sidewalk programs, explaining that the City is currently in the punch list phase, where the contractor's work is being reviewed to ensure it meets the City's quality standards. Additionally, the Water Tower Rehabilitation project is ongoing, expected to last for at least the next two months, and the Havens Corners and Claycraft-Taylor Station water line projects were completed earlier this year. Mayor Jadwin mentioned that the design phase for the Link to Literacy Trail is underway, connecting Hamilton Road to Shull Park and Creekside, along with the design of Section 8 of the Big Walnut Trail, which will coincide with the Hamilton Road Bridge work next year. Furthermore, the Mayor announced the recent replacement of playgrounds at Ambassador Commons and Upper McCorkle Park and the swearing-in of five new police officers, bringing the City closer to being fully staffed.

In terms of public safety, Mayor Jadwin highlighted the installation of four solar-powered speed deterrent signs placed along key roadways in Gahanna-Hines Road, Clark State Road, Cherry Bottom Road, and East Johnstown Road. The signs are movable and were installed at a lower cost than anticipated, allowing for the installation of four instead of the initially planned three. She also noted the installation of 21 Flock cameras, which were instrumental in the recent apprehension of an individual wanted on a felonious assault charge. She praised both the Gahanna Police officers and Senior Director Kevin Schultz for their efforts in making the Flock camera project a success, ensuring public safety.

Lastly, Mayor Jadwin addressed the community concerns about the proposed Action Sports project. She reassured residents that the project is currently in the early stages of evaluation and community engagement. A consultant was engaged six weeks ago, and the public input process has just begun. She emphasized that there would be many opportunities for residents to provide feedback over the coming months, including during events such as the Mill Street Market at the end of September. She encouraged residents to stay informed via the City's website, social media, and email newsletters. Mayor Jadwin concluded by thanking residents for their participation and assured them that their feedback will be considered as the process continues.

## **2. City Attorney**

City Attorney Tamilarasan informed the Council of two settlements that had been finalized regarding workers' compensation claims for two former employees. She explained that these claims had involved ongoing litigation, including dismissals and refilings earlier this year. Both refilings have now been dismissed, and Senior Director Vollmer had previously approached the Council for appropriations to settle these claims. City Attorney Tamilarasan also provided an update regarding upcoming matters, noting that while the Council had recently focused on the criminal side of the code review, there



was a pending 2024 traffic code update. This update is shorter than previous reviews and is intended to catch up from a carryover in 2023 and resume an annual review of the traffic code. She indicated that the traffic code update would be addressed in future committee meetings.

**N. COUNCIL COMMENT:**

Councilmember Jones added an amendment to her earlier school board report, acknowledging that this week is "Start With Hello" week. All Gahanna-Jefferson Elementary Schools would be participating in this initiative, which was developed by the Sandy Hook Promise. The program aims to create connections and a sense of belonging at local schools. She shared her plans to participate at Lincoln Elementary the next morning and encouraged her colleagues and community members to reach out to local elementary schools if they wanted to get involved. Councilmember Jones concluded by thanking the guests in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month and expressing appreciation to the residents who attended the meeting to share their voices and perspectives.

Councilmember McGregor expressed gratitude to all who came to speak about the Action Park issue. She noted her concern about the narrow and winding nature of Ridenour Road, which has a 15 mph speed limit, and hoped that this would be taken into consideration as discussions about adding traffic to the road continued. She also thanked Councilmember Jones for the resolution on Hispanic Heritage Month and shared a personal story about her family's Hispanic heritage, emphasizing the importance of diversity and how it enriches the community.

Councilmember Padova praised City staff for completing the roundabout project ahead of schedule and under budget, calling it a significant accomplishment. She also announced that she would be the special guest at a toddler story time at the Gahanna Library on Monday, September 23rd, and invited anyone interested in having a conversation afterward to join her.

Councilmember Renner thanked everyone for attending and addressing the Council, acknowledging that the meeting agenda was lengthy. He explained that regular sessions of Council meetings tend to be less eventful as most of the discussions and decisions happen during committee meetings, which are more action-oriented. He emphasized the importance of residents speaking to the Council directly, rather than relying on platforms like Facebook, and encouraged continued engagement through emails, phone calls, or speaking at meetings.

Councilmember Schnetzer echoed the sentiments of his colleagues, thanking the guests who attended the meeting for the proclamation and resolution, as well as those who spoke during Hearing of Visitors. He highlighted the importance of public participation in government, which is a key part of the democratic process.

Vice President Weaver also thanked everyone for attending, whether for Hearing of Visitors or the proclamation and resolution. He emphasized that

Council meetings are meant to be accessible to everyone and noted the various ways residents can participate, such as submitting video comments or contacting Councilmembers through email or phone. Vice President Weaver expressed personal thanks to Mayor Jadwin for recognizing Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, sharing a personal story about how cancer had affected his family. He also thanked Councilmember Jones for leading the recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrating the diversity of the community. Finally, Vice President Weaver expressed gratitude for the efforts of City staff and the community in organizing and attending several recent events. He mentioned that he participated in the Kyle Miller 5K after the Hops & Vines festival and was thankful for the opportunity to drop off items at the shred event over the weekend.

President Bowers thanked everyone for attending and began by expressing her excitement for upcoming events, specifically mentioning that she was a bit jealous of Councilmember Padova's upcoming story time at the Gahanna Library. Bowers shared that she would be participating in a panel at the Columbus Metropolitan Club alongside Dr. Craig Pollock, Westerville Councilman and Mayor Ken Wright, former Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman, and moderated by Darci Congrove of GBQ. The panel, titled "Health, Housing, and Hope," will focus on public policy surrounding affordability, housing needs, and how communities can balance those needs with funding realities, advancing inclusive, dynamic, and diverse communities through housing policy. Looking ahead, President Bowers also mentioned her excitement for the upcoming Mill Street Market on Sunday, September 29, 2024. She noted that the City would be organizing a table for the event and that several Councilmembers, as well as Mayor Jadwin, would be present to connect with residents. Bowers extended her gratitude to Señora Colon and Señor and Señora Vicens for attending the meeting, stating that they are part of the vibrant community fabric that Gahanna is proud to celebrate. She thanked Councilmember Jones for recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month and Mayor Jadwin for the proclamation on Childhood Cancer Awareness. Turning to the Action Sports Park discussion, President Bowers thanked residents for voicing their concerns and emphasized that Councilmembers were actively listening to the points raised. She acknowledged the traffic concerns around Old Ridenour and shared a personal anecdote about enjoying local parks with her son, noting that it is important to strike a balance between community amenities and addressing residents' concerns. While no decisions have been made, Bowers assured attendees that the planning process was being approached thoughtfully, with input from a skilled and considerate team. She emphasized the importance of continued dialogue and thanked residents for their engagement. In closing, President Bowers shared an inspirational thought based on her admiration for author Brené Brown. She discussed a concept from CR Snyder's research on hope, which posits that hope is not an emotion but rather a cognitive behavioral process. According to Snyder, hope consists of three components: goal, pathway, and agency. Bowers reflected on the importance of having a clear goal, understanding the path to achieve it, and having the persistence and belief in one's ability to make it happen, even when encountering obstacles. She encouraged the Council and community to work together toward common goals, fostering hope for the future.

**O. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**A motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Schnetzer, to go into Executive Session under authority of Section 5.40(a) of the Council Rules of Procedure to consider the appointment of public employees or officials.**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes:** 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

President Bowers noted the Council would meet in Executive Session in the Law Library, with no expected action to follow.

Council rose to report to Executive Session at 8:20 p.m.

Council rose to report from Executive Session at 8:47 p.m., with no further action.

**P. ADJOURNMENT:**

*With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the meeting at 8:47 p.m.*

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**Jeremy A. VanMeter**  
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the City Council, this*  
*day of 2024.*

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**Merisa K. Bowers**