



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Committee of the Whole

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Trenton I. Weaver, Chair
Merisa K. Bowers
Jamille Jones
Nancy R. McGregor
Kaylee Padova
Stephen A. Renner
Michael Schnetzer

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, December 8, 2025

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Gahanna City Council met for Committee of the Whole on Monday, December 8, 2025, in Council Chambers. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The agenda was published on Friday, December 5, 2025. All members were present for the meeting.

Vice President Weaver noted that the agenda would include an added resolution under "Item H" from Councilmember Padova, following the item from Councilmembers Jones and Renner.

B. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

[ORD-0060-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE AND TRANSFER OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 110 N. HIGH ST., 120 N. HIGH ST., 130-140 MILL ST., 152 MILL ST., 153-155 MILL ST., 161-167 MILL ST., 169 MILL ST., AND 170 MILL ST. IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA, OHIO

Director of Economic Development Jeff Gottke stated that Council received the first in a series of documents generated from the development agreement with Connect Real Estate. He explained that several documents would follow over time. He described the item as procedural, noting that the creation of a TIF (Tax Increment Financing) required the City of Gahanna to be in the chain of title for the properties covered by the development agreement. He said the legislation before City Council allowed the city to receive those properties from the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) and then transfer them back after recording, ensuring the city appeared in the chain of title. He emphasized that the legislation did not create the TIF and served only to transfer the parcels in and out. Director Gottke reported that it was discussed internally whether the legislation required a waiver of second reading,

emergency adoption, both, or neither. He stated that it required neither, as long as the process occurred before the closing on the properties, which he anticipated could occur within several months, up to six, after the development agreement became effective. He said the legislation could therefore proceed through the regular legislative process. He reiterated that the item involved a simple procedural transfer and that a later TIF proposal would come before City Council with a full presentation and discussion. He concluded his remarks.

Councilmember McGregor asked whether the city would transfer only the same properties it received, describing it as a “10 in, 10 out” situation, though she did not know the exact number. Director Gottke confirmed that this was correct.

Vice President Weaver asked Director Gottke to confirm that this process was routine for these types of TIFs and that other communities followed similar practices. Director Gottke affirmed that it was standard practice for this type of TIF.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 1/2/2026.

C. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION:

[RES-0057-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION 2026 PRICING POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Director of Parks and Recreation Stephania Ferrell reported that she had one item for the evening. She explained that the pricing policy outlined and guided the establishment of fees for the Parks and Recreation Department and that the city’s code required the Parks and Recreation Board to review the policy annually. She stated that the document included several changes, most of which involved formatting improvements. She noted that the department added language to outline expectations for residency and proof of residency, which reflected an existing policy and improved clarity in the document. With the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Board, she requested adoption of the proposed 2026 Pricing Policy.

Vice President Weaver thanked Director Ferrell and asked if any colleagues had discussion. After noting that no one did, he asked if members supported placing the item on the consent agenda for December 15, 2025.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/15/2025.

D. ITEMS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

[2025-0255](#)Gahanna Civic Center (825 Tech Center Drive) Construction Update
12.8.2025

Senior Director of Operations Kevin Schultz reported on the 825 Tech Center Drive project and noted that he had not provided an update since August 11, 2025. He apologized for the delay and explained that other events over the past few months in the Council Chambers contributed to the delay. He stated that the project continued to progress steadily and that his presentation would cover construction activities from September, October, and part of November 2025. Director Schultz said that anyone who drove by the building saw the ongoing transformation of the exterior. He showed a photo of the building from August 19, 2025, and a comparison photo from November 18, 2025, just before Thanksgiving. He highlighted the installation of all three solar arrays, noting that two arrays sat on the Police Department side of the site and one sat behind the building for city fleet vehicles. He reported that the city installed all passive security measures, including the primary wall at the site entrance and the seat walls incorporated throughout the landscaping. He added that contractors completed the asphalt for the entire parking area the previous week. He said they installed the parking lot lighting and most landscaping lighting, with some ground lighting still pending. He also stated that paving on the multi-use trail occurred late the previous week and that the landscaping throughout the site was complete except for the beds closest to the building. He provided an additional photo to show that landscaping near the building still needed installation and that crews continued work on the stone columns. He pointed out the security fence along the Police Department perimeter. He described how the site was taking on the “park-like” character shown in previous renderings, including defined entryways, awnings, and the combination of softscape and pavers both in front of the building and behind it.

Director Schultz then discussed interior progress. He showed photos of the main lobby and the planning lobby, where residents seeking specialized zoning or building assistance would go. He noted that the terrazzo flooring was finished in large portions of the public first-floor spaces and described the open character created by the connection between the first and second floors. He indicated the location of the Council Chambers and the customer service windows, which residents would see when they entered and turned left. Director Schultz stated that the third floor was in the “punch” stage, meaning contractors and Elford identified items that required correction. He explained that after Elford completed its punch work, trades corrected the issues, and then the owner and architect team completed a second punch to identify any additional items. He said the third floor was nearly complete aside from punch-list items and a few flooring issues that would be addressed in the coming weeks. He reported that crews were installing all exterior doors and that work continued on the police locker room, which was taking shape

and nearing completion. He noted that technology installations were underway, including networks, radio systems, and 911 systems. He added that furniture installation would begin in early January on the third floor and then move downward to the second and first floors in the following weeks. Director Schultz stated that the project was approximately 88 percent complete. He concluded by showing restroom photos and explained that finishes throughout the building were consistent. He said the main restrooms shared identical finishes, including blue tile backsplashes, subway tile walls, porcelain tile floors, and white countertops with under-mounted sinks.

Director Schultz continued his update by reviewing office finishes. He explained that he displayed some of the photos before but included them again because it was some time since his last presentation. He stated that two of the photos depicted second-floor spaces and that the top-left photo showed the City Council office reception desk, which would welcome visitors to the Council Offices. He noted that the photo also showed three offices: the Deputy Clerk, the Clerk, and the Assistant City Attorney. He added that the City Attorney's office sat beyond the boxes shown on the right side of the image. He pointed out that carpeting in these spaces was well established. Director Schultz said the middle photo showed part of the third-floor Human Resources suite, including Mr. Nolan's office and two conference rooms within that space. He described how the colors of the doors, finishes, and carpet tied the building's design together. He stated that the Clerk's Office, the City Attorney's Office, Council Offices, and Human Resources all appeared nearly identical in layout and finishes, regardless of location in the building. Director Schultz remarked that although people in Information and Technology (IT) often said the last 10 percent of a project was the hardest, he learned through experience that the same held true for construction projects. He referred back to the project being 88 percent complete and said they were now working through the most difficult phase, with many tasks left to complete before moving into the building.

Schultz then presented the October 2025 financials, reflecting activity through October 31, 2025. He stated that GMP1 and GMP2 represented two construction contracts totaling \$59.6 million and that total invoicing to date stood at \$51 million, or 86 percent. He noted that the total included retainage held to ensure contractor and Elford accountability. He explained that allowances totaled \$1 million, of which the project spent 59 percent. He stated that owner and construction contingencies totaled \$3.7 million, with 67 percent spent. He reported that the combined spending of \$3.1 million across allowances and contingencies amounted to an average usage rate of 65 percent, which he described as healthy. He added that several larger changes remained pending and that although some were approved, they did not appear in the October 2025 report and would show up in the January 2026

financial update. He concluded by inviting questions.

Questions from Council

Vice President Weaver thanked Director Schultz for the update and for his continued leadership on the project. He said the progress looked exciting and that everyone looked forward to seeing the project reach completion. He invited discussion from Council.

President Bowers asked Director Schultz to explain the next steps and the move-in and transition schedule. Director Schultz reported that the project remained slightly behind schedule. He said that within the next 30 days staff expected to have a clearer understanding of the move-in timeline and would be able to set a specific date. He stated that they anticipated a move sometime in March and expected to narrow that date soon. He explained that complications arose because all trades needed to finish work on the third floor before furniture installation could begin. He described how overlapping trades created damage disputes, and the owner ultimately paid when no one accepted responsibility. He said trades needed to complete the third floor, then the second floor, and finally the first floor before furniture installation could proceed. He noted that the furniture package was sizeable. He continued by stating that some trades struggled to keep pace and that he and Elford were working with them to accelerate progress, particularly on the first floor. Schultz said the second floor was in decent shape but still not where it needed to be, as it should have been completed the previous week. He confirmed they remained a few months behind schedule for moving in.

President Bowers asked about logistics for internal moves. Director Schultz said they were about to bring a moving and logistics company on board. He said staff completed inventory of all three facilities, City Hall, the Police Department, and the Senior Center, and identified what items the city would keep, what had no value, and what remained for auction. He said they would meet with the logistics company to review the process and sequencing. Schultz also stated they already met with Police to determine who would move first, second, and last, and to identify the correct timing for the Senior Center to begin using its new facility for programming. He said discussions about sequencing City Hall staff would occur soon, including whether second and third floor office staff or first floor public-facing staff should move first. He expected more information in January 2026.

Councilmember Padova said the update excited her, especially after touring the new high school the previous week. She said she looked forward to a future walkthrough of the new facility. She asked when City Council would begin discussing the current City Hall property and whether those

discussions would occur after the move or sooner. Director Schultz reminded City Council that the Montrose Group was working on a highest-and-best-use Return on Investment (ROI) analysis, which was in draft form and nearly ready for review. He said City Council could begin discussing future uses of the property in January or February 2026. Mayor Jadwin added that the city would have a more defined timeline within 30 days, and that clarity on that would influence the discussion about the future of the current property. Director Schultz shared that the city planned to maintain and continue programming the Senior Center facility because it remained an asset. He said it would still host rentals such as graduation parties and that the city would continue paying utilities and maintaining the building. He noted that staff did not yet know whether the property would eventually be sold, rented, or used for another purpose, so they needed to keep it in usable condition.

Councilmember Jones asked whether the city also needed to keep utilities running at City Hall and the Police Station even after the buildings became vacant. Director Schultz confirmed that they did. He compared it to starting a car that sits unused in a garage, explaining that they needed to maintain the buildings to preserve their value, which would decline significantly if they sat vacant and deteriorated. Councilmember Jones then asked whether the items identified as junk or for auction would be handled before decisions about the properties or as part of that process. Director Schultz explained that those were separate decisions. He gave an example, stating that the two tables in Council Chambers would not move to the new facility but could be auctioned before determining the future of the properties. He said the chairs would move to the new facility and be used in various locations, although they would not remain for public seating in Council Chambers.

E. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING:

[ORD-0055-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH ELITE EXCAVATING COMPANY OF OHIO, INC. FOR THE 2025 STREET REBUILD AND WATERLINE PROGRAM (ST-1116)

Senior Director of Operations Kevin Schultz introduced the first action item, the 2025 Street Rebuild and Waterline Program, and stated that the item concerned awarding the contract. He reported that the project would occur on Laura Drive, Heil Drive, and Rocky Fork Boulevard. He said the work would include waterline replacement, stormwater improvements, new curb and gutter, selective sidewalk work, and full road and road base reconstruction along all three streets. Schultz reported that the department released invitations to bid on October 30, 2025, and received seven bids. He noted that Elite Excavating Company of Ohio, Inc. submitted the lowest and most responsive bid, and the administration recommended awarding the contract

to that company. He stated that the total contract cost was approximately \$2.9 million and included an alternate bid of \$123,000 for the use of highly recycled asphalt. He added that the contract also included a 10 percent contingency of approximately \$272,000 to cover unforeseen construction costs. Schultz requested an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with Elite Excavating Company of Ohio, Inc. for the program. He noted that the attached contract required a small amendment to adjust retainage figures due to a recent change in Ohio law that reduced retainage from 8 percent to 4 percent. He said he would work with the city attorney to revise the contract and reattach it to the agenda for first reading the following week.

Councilmember Padova asked when the work was expected to begin and how long it was expected to take. Director Schultz said Columbia Gas was currently lowering gas lines on Rocky Fork and Laura Drive in support of the project, although that work was not part of the city's contract. He said waterline work on all three streets was anticipated to begin in January and could extend into February 2026, depending on contractor mobilization. He stated that street reconstruction would begin after school ended. He explained that once the waterline was installed and asphalt patches were placed, the streets would be torn up in May 2026, for reconstruction. He said the contractor expected about a two-week turnaround for each street and that Laura and Heil together would take approximately one month. He added that Rocky Fork, being a single stretch, would also be reconstructed after school ended.

Councilmember McGregor asked whether sidewalks would be installed on both sides of Laura and Heil. Director Schultz explained that Laura involved sidewalk maintenance only. He said the city used a resident petition process to determine support for improvements and that the petition for sidewalk installation on Heil failed by a wide margin. He said no installation would occur on Heil and that, to his recollection, Laura would not receive extensions either because the resident petition failed. Councilmember McGregor asked whether sidewalks already existed on Laura. Director Schultz confirmed that sidewalks existed on one side of the street.

Councilmember McGregor then asked where Rocky Fork Boulevard ended and Waterbury began and how far the project extended. Director Schultz said the project did not extend all the way around and consulted a map. After brief clarification among City Council, he stated the project area ran on Rocky Fork Drive North from Flint Ridge to Cliffview Drive. He apologized for previously misspeaking and clarified that he edited the report when it was sent forward.

President Bowers asked when the petition process occurred. Director

Schultz said the timing of the 2025 program related to a design issue and the petition process, which took place around the middle of the previous year. President Bowers asked him to explain the process. Director Schultz said the petition process was based on frontage, and residents cast an up or down vote on whether they accepted the proposed improvement. He said parcels with more frontage carried more weight in the tally. He stated that the majority of residents along Heil and the corners of Laura voted against sidewalk installation. He added that the south side of Heil already had relatively new sidewalk that would receive maintenance, while no new sidewalk installation would occur on the north side. Mayor Jadwin asked Schultz to describe the notice process used during the petition effort. Director Schultz said the city sent multiple letters and made multiple visits to residents to ensure they understood the process and cast a vote. He said staff made several visits to residents at the corners of Heil and Laura to secure their responses. Mayor Jadwin added that the city also held a community meeting with residents, and possibly with EMH&T present, to explain the petition process. President Bowers asked whether staff felt satisfied with the response rate. City Attorney Tamilarasan explained that the sidewalk petition mechanism came from statute and was initiated by residents. She said citizens in any neighborhood could petition the city for a new sidewalk with a cost share. She stated that in this instance the city took a proactive role to determine whether sufficient interest existed to initiate the petition. President Bowers said the preliminary results did not indicate support for the project. Director Schultz clarified that the actual results, not preliminary figures, showed insufficient support. He said residents received a letter requesting a yes-or-no vote and that the final count showed the petition did not pass. Mayor Jadwin said statute required a 60 percent approval threshold. President Bowers again asked whether staff felt the response rate was adequate. Director Schultz said they achieved a 100 percent response rate because staff kept the proceeding open until they received every vote. He noted that the petition area contained only six or seven parcels, making the weighted frontage system more significant. He added that landscaping considerations influenced many residents' decisions. President Bowers thanked him for explaining the process. She then asked about the notice process for upcoming work and whether the contractor would provide notice. Director Schultz said city staff would make first contact, followed by placement of sign boards on the street. He said door hangers would be distributed when work approached, providing information about closures and a Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) explaining what residents could expect during a rebuild. He said notice would occur in two phases: one for the waterline and another closer to the street reconstruction. President Bowers said social media helped with notifications as well. Director Schultz said social media was difficult in such a targeted project area. President Bowers noted that many nonresidents traveled through the area. Mayor Jadwin stated that Communications Manager Dan Pearlman was working

with the engineering team to develop the communication plan, and that the draft initial letter awaited review for release in January 2026. The plan would include strategies for notifying residents and those who passed through the area, especially during school traffic.

Councilmember McGregor said that although the petition process was not used often, neighborhoods have used it to request decorative lighting instead of overhead lights. She said neighbors achieved over 60 percent support and chose either to pay upfront or through assessments on their taxes. Director Schultz agreed and said, as the city attorney noted, the process usually began with a citizen request for a specific improvement such as street lighting or sidewalks.

Vice President Weaver asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he stated the item would move forward for first reading on December 15, 2025, and then for consent on January 2, 2026, pending receipt of the amended contract. He thanked Director Schultz.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 1/2/2026.

[ORD-0056-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH SHELLY & SANDS, INC. FOR THE TAYLOR ROAD WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT (ST-1121)

Director Schultz presented the second item, the replacement of the Taylor Road water line between Morrison and Helmbright. He explained that the project would replace the existing 12-inch water main with a new 16-inch water main and include related improvements such as valves, hydrants, and site restoration. He stated that the existing line was installed in 1964 and that he or the Director of Engineering previously discussed that this line terminated at the pump station at Helmbright, which also served the water tower. He said the replacement was necessary to improve the quality and life expectancy of the pump station. Schultz noted that the project would update approximately 1,600 feet of residential sidewalk on the north side of Taylor Road to Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) standards per city code. He reported that bids were opened and reviewed on November 20, 2025, and that seven bids were received. He stated that Shelly & Sands submitted the lowest and most responsive bid, with a contract price just over \$2.5 million, including a 10 percent contingency to cover unforeseen construction costs. He added that the project, like the previous item, was fully funded through the 2025 capital budget and required no additional funds. He requested an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with Shelly & Sands for the Taylor Road water main replacement project.

President Bowers asked about the timeline for the project. Director Schultz

stated that the project would run for about nine months, from January through September 2026, with substantial completion expected in September 2026. President Bowers asked whether the city could communicate with nearby neighborhoods, including Rathburn Woods and Hunters Ridge, even though they were not adjacent to the work area. Director Schultz said staff could review what extended notification might look like and that Taylor Road was a good opportunity for communication through social media due to its traffic volume. Mayor Jadwin added that Home Owners Association (HOA) communications could also help. President Bowers asked about school-related traffic impacts and whether a lane closure would occur. Director Schultz said the road would remain open but restricted, and that the center turn lane would likely function as the travel lane. He stated that the water line was on the north side of the road and believed it was located within the roadway itself.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 1/2/2026.

F. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:

[RES-0058-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY OF GAHANNA CYBERSECURITY PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO DESIGNATE A PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR SAID PROGRAM

Senior Director of Administrative Services Miranda Vollmer presented several items for City Council's consideration. She introduced a resolution adopting the city of Gahanna's Cybersecurity Program and designating a person responsible for the program. She stated that House Bill 96 created Ohio Revised Code Section 9.64, which required each political subdivision to adopt a formal cybersecurity program. She said the program must safeguard the city's data, technology, and information systems by ensuring confidentiality, integrity, and availability consistent with best practices. She noted that the program attached to the agenda complied with Section 9.64 and state guidance, and that it defined governance, security controls, response procedures, and continuous improvement standards for Gahanna's digital environment. She requested adoption of the resolution and authorization for the mayor to designate the responsible individual. She stated that the statute required legislative adoption by the end of the year.

President Bowers asked whether any internal timelines existed for implementing the program requirements. Vollmer said Director René Carter and the IT team already began work prior to the passage of the law and that the program complied with state requirements. She noted that the city already performed many of the required practices to maintain insurance and that the team continued to advance the cybersecurity program while setting internal deadlines to put all program components in place. President Bowers asked

whether an internal process existed for reviewing the program and how often it would occur. Vollmer said Director Carter would prepare and present those items for approval.

Councilmember Michael Schnetzer stated that he had no debate on the item and noted the increasing risk of ransomware attacks affecting municipal governments and other sectors. He said the expense was necessary even though it was not ideal and stated that City Council needed to recognize the cost while acknowledging the need for the program.

Councilmember Jones asked whether the House Bill imposed any deadline for implementation. Vollmer stated that the only requirement was adoption of the program by December 31 of the current year. Councilmember Jones asked whether any annual compliance or check-in existed. Vollmer said the auditors would review Section 9.64 during the audit process each year to confirm that City Council acted by year-end and that other requirements were met. She said auditors would test selected items each year rather than all one hundred or so requirements.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/15/2025.

[ORD-0058-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE SALARIES FOR PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2026, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2026; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Senior Director Vollmer introduced Human Resources (HR) Manager Ben Nolan who would present on the next two items.

HR Manager Ben Nolan stated that each year, before adoption of the upcoming budget, the Department of Administrative Services presented the annual salary ordinance for non-union personnel. He summarized the changes in the 2026 salary ordinance, including text updates and modifications to Table Two. He said these included deleting the Manager of Marketing position at paygrade C19, changing the Supervisor of Recreation position from paygrade C15 to C16 based on the city's compensation consultant, and continuing 4 percent pay increases for employees above the midpoint of their pay grades. He requested adoption of the ordinance on emergency and waiver to align salary adjustments with the 2026 budget.

Vice President Weaver asked for discussion and stated that the ordinance would appear on the regular agenda next week with the requested waiver and emergency.

Recommendation: Introduction with Waiver of Second Reading and Emergency Adoption on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025.

[ORD-0059-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE BENEFITS FOR PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2026; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

HR Manager Nolan then presented the 2026 Benefits Ordinance, the companion ordinance for unclassified personnel. He said the ordinance established fringe benefits for non-union personnel and included formatting updates along with several changes. He stated that Article Three updated service credit payment amounts to align with union contracts. In Article Four, the ordinance added a new vacation accrual tier for employees with 26 or more years of service, also aligned with union contracts. In Article Six, he said the ordinance clarified that short-term disability coverage began on the first day of the month after hire and updated Employee Assistance Program (EAP) eligibility to end on the last day of the month of separation. In Article Seven, he said the ordinance replaced donated leave eligibility subsections and now allowed donors to contribute sick or vacation leave in 8-hour increments while retaining at least 240 hours of sick leave. He stated that Articles 10 and 21 updated the employee wellness incentive program by removing spouses from eligibility, consistent with the city's wellness provider recommendation. He requested adoption with emergency and waiver to maintain alignment with the 2026 budget.

President Bowers asked whether aligning service credit with union contracts benefited or harmed non-union employees. Vollmer replied that it benefited them.

Vice President Weaver asked for clarification about the removal of spouses from the wellness incentive. Vollmer explained that when the city left the healthcare consortium and implemented a new self-funded benefits program, it also implemented a new wellness platform. She said the new vendor's technology assigned each person a separate account and could not combine spousal activity toward a single \$400 incentive. She said the change would otherwise create a potential \$800 incentive for married employees, which exceeded union agreements. She stated that the city could revisit the issue if future technology allowed combined participation.

President Bowers asked whether the former policy provided an aggregate \$400 benefit per family. Vollmer confirmed this and said the employee would now earn the \$400 themselves. She noted that the new program offered many new ways to earn the incentive, including wellness courses, award nominations, and other activities that were not available earlier.

Vice President Weaver thanked Vollmer and, hearing no further discussion, stated that the item would appear on the regular agenda next week with the requested waiver and emergency.

Recommendation: Introduction with Waiver of Second Reading and Emergency Adoption on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025.

[RES-0059-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF THE FRANKLIN COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT (FRANKLIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH) FOR 2026 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Senior Director Vollmer presented the final item, a resolution authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with the Franklin County Board of Health for public health services. She said the contract was standard each year. She reported the amount was \$361,186, or approximately \$10.49 per capita, and represented a 1.9 percent increase from the 2025 contract. She requested approval of the resolution.

Vice President Weaver asked for discussion and, hearing none, stated the item would appear on the consent agenda next week.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/15/2025.

G. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE:

[ORD-0057-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025; AND WAIVING SECOND READING - General Fund, TIF Fund, Parks and Recreation Fund, and Leave Pay-Out Fund

Director of Finance Joann Bury presented a final 2025 supplemental appropriation request following a year-end analysis of areas that needed adjustments. She noted that the reasoning for each adjustment appeared in the accompanying chart and offered to answer questions. Vice President Weaver asked for discussion and, hearing none, stated the item would appear on the regular agenda next week.

Recommendation: Introduction with Waiver of Second Reading and Adoption on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025.

H. ITEMS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS:

Councilmember Jones and Councilmember Renner:

[RES-0060-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING HUMAN DIGNITY AND STANDING WITH SOMALI RESIDENTS AND ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS TARGETED BY HATE IN GAHANNA

Councilmember Jones introduced a draft resolution and thanked everyone for their patience as she and Councilmember Renner worked through several versions. She explained that the latest version was the one in front of City

Council without the City of Gahanna header. She said the resolution focused on showing support for community members who were targeted by hate and by harmful speech, which she said increased nationally and affected residents locally. She noted that December was Universal Human Rights Month and said the resolution tied together human rights, belonging, inclusion, and safety as fundamental human rights. She invited Councilmember Renner to add his comments.

Councilmember Renner said Councilmember Jones explained the resolution well. He said the resolution did not focus on identities or labels, but instead intended to set a clear civic standard in Gahanna that rejected dehumanizing speech and stood with all residents who experienced racism, xenophobia, and targeted harm.

Councilmember Jones said she and Councilmember Renner welcomed discussion and feedback on the language and text. She said they went through several versions and felt confident in the latest draft, and that they intentionally avoided calling out any one identity in order to stand in solidarity with all identities.

President Bowers asked for clarification on whether the document came forward as a joint resolution and proclamation. Councilmember Jones replied that they had not yet received a formal answer from the mayor and that the "joint resolution and proclamation" heading came from a previous template. She said they would welcome a joint resolution but had not yet received a formal response.

Mayor Jadwin said she appreciated the invitation to participate and thanked Councilmember Renner for sharing the latest version, which she received around 6:00 p.m. She said she agreed with the spirit and intent of the resolution and said that, over the last several years, everyone witnessed an increase in hurtful rhetoric that deepened divisions across the country. She noted that people often reminded children that words matter and said that principle applied equally to adults. She said words could serve as powerful tools to connect people, but could also become weapons that inflicted harm. She said formally recognizing Universal Human Rights Month and Human Rights Day sent an important and reaffirming message to the community. She said it was important to stand with all residents when language increased fear, heightened vulnerability, and undermined the sense of belonging that Gahanna valued. She said the city needed to focus on the inalienable rights that every person held regardless of race, color, religion, sex, language, political viewpoint, national or social origin, or any other status, and said those rights guided Gahanna's priorities.

Mayor Jadwin said she preferred the latest version of the resolution over the earlier one. She said she had one concern about phrasing and suggested broadening the language, as there were other community groups that approached City Council in the past. She suggested wording such as “the rise in harmful rhetoric directed toward any group or any community group within the City of Gahanna is cause for deep concern” to send a clear message of support to all diverse groups. She also suggested adjusting the title, “affirming human dignity and standing with all community members targeted by hate in Gahanna,” because it could imply that hate crimes or hate rhetoric were occurring in Gahanna. She said her understanding was that the resolution responded primarily to national rhetoric that affected local residents and that a more nationally focused title might avoid confusion.

Councilmember Schnetzer thanked everyone who worked on the resolution and offered structural and content-related suggestions. He said he preferred to focus on positive aspects of Gahanna and said that language about “hate” in the title and in the first “whereas” clause felt negative. He suggested beginning with positive statements about what made Gahanna strong, then moving toward more specific concerns later in the resolution. He also recommended including language from the city’s strategic plan. He cited text from the values section that described Gahanna as a welcoming, supportive, and safe community that built lasting connections and fostered mutual respect, understanding, and belonging. He said that language reflected who the community said it was and contrasted with the national dialogue. He said recent conversations while going door to door reminded him that Gahanna remained a wonderful community that did not reflect the tone often seen on social media. He encouraged everyone to revisit the strategic plan and consider borrowing language from it.

Councilmember McGregor said that, when she first read the original resolution and then the revised version, it felt like a reaction to national events. She said that if City Council reacted to every objectionable statement made at the national level, they would be passing resolutions frequently. She said she agreed with emphasizing positive aspects of Gahanna and focusing on what the city did well, rather than reacting to national issues.

President Bowers thanked Councilmembers Jones and Renner for bringing the draft resolution forward and said she appreciated the constructive feedback. She said she did not want to lose sight of the reasons behind the resolution. She noted that December was Universal Human Rights Month and referenced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She also said December 15 was Bill of Rights Day, recognizing the adoption of the first ten amendments to the Constitution in 1791. She said that in the past week, rhetoric led to policy that disproportionately harmed certain communities. She

said her understanding was that leaders used language that informed policy, and that this policy took a toll. She said she read coverage from Minnesota Public Radio regarding United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) enforcement in Minneapolis, which had the largest Somali population in the United States and noted that many members of that community were U.S. citizens. She said those residents still faced targeted immigration enforcement and said that concerned her because the central Ohio region had the second-largest Somali population in the United States. She said anyone who visited local schools could see that reality reflected in Gahanna's own community. She said the community was fortunate to include Somali immigrants and that she never asked anyone about their immigration status, because it was not her business. She said she wanted them to feel safe in the community. She agreed with the mayor that other groups expressed concern in the past, but said this situation involved federal policy that could physically affect people, which she found especially concerning. She said she supported making the resolution inclusive, but did not want to lose sight of the specific events that prompted it. She thanked Councilmembers Jones and Renner for their work and said she would support the resolution in whatever form it came forward.

Councilmember Padova thanked President Bowers for her comments and said she agreed with them. She said she supported the resolution and appreciated the conversation. She said she supported revising the title to avoid misinterpretation, especially in light of other recent headlines that were misunderstood. She said she remained supportive of the resolution overall and thanked Councilmembers Jones and Renner for their work.

Councilmember Renner thanked everyone for their thoughtful comments and acknowledged that the subject was difficult for many people. He said he believed City Council and Mayor Jadwin could reach agreement because they all had the courage to face the issue directly. He thanked Mayor Jadwin for her remarks about human dignity and said that concept captured the core of the resolution. Renner said the resolution did not respond only to recent events but addressed an issue that existed for many years. He said City Council should have taken this step ten or twenty years earlier. He said the resolution sought to set civic standards for proper speech and for civil conversations among elected leaders and residents in a free and democratic society. He said the city saw an erosion of institutions and norms over the last twenty years, and that social media amplified harmful statements that then became legislative priorities. He said the community needed to draw a line and declare that it would not accept racist, xenophobic, and dehumanizing speech and refuse to accept it. He said the resolution affirmed that no one should strip others of their dignity and that this applied not only to other cultures, but also to interactions with residents who disagreed with City Council. He said

leaders needed to listen even when residents were angry, but that the community needed to intervene when language became dehumanizing. He said the resolution recognized Universal Human Rights Month and called for a title that reaffirmed the city's commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and welcoming city while explicitly affirming human dignity. He said he believed that emphasis created a positive message. He said the resolution aimed to uphold standards that made it possible to communicate even with people who used hostile language. Councilmember Renner added that immigrants and refugees were legal members of society.

Councilmember McGregor noted legal immigrants.

Councilmember Renner responded that City Council did not need to qualify that language because immigration status was not the city's role to determine. He said residents included legal citizens, immigrants, and refugees, and that they paid taxes, contributed to the economy, and participated in local schools. He said Gahanna's job was to recognize all people, affirm their right to exist, and affirm that they belonged, as Councilmember Jones stated. He said the resolution declared that, as long as people lived within the city's borders, the city would treat them with respect and commit to fostering a safe and inclusive environment.

Councilmember Jones thanked everyone for their passion, feedback, and comments. She said she agreed with changing the title and acknowledged that harmful statements occurred all the time, but she said current rhetoric went beyond "dumb" comments or mere offense. She said that when leaders in positions of power used dehumanizing language, that language became dangerous and placed already vulnerable communities at even greater risk. She said the resolution arose from that concern. She acknowledged that the city did not adopt resolutions for every community that was targeted in the past, but said silence implied acceptance and that City Council might have misstepped by not speaking earlier. Jones said national events deeply affected community members in Gahanna and that she believed City Council had a responsibility to speak. She said she wanted a resolution that everyone on City Council could support and said she would make whatever changes were necessary to achieve consensus. She also said, for the record, that recent rhetoric targeted the Somali community and that this needed to be said publicly. She said the resolution could use inclusive language, but that City Council knew what was said and knew that residents they saw daily were harmed. Councilmember Jones said she believed it was important to acknowledge that fact, even as she remained willing to support whatever language the group ultimately adopted.

Councilmember Schnetzer said he heard and respected the passion in the

discussion. He said he wanted to keep attention on the strategic plan because it was recent and incorporated extensive community input. He said the document spoke from the perspective of “who we are as a community,” rather than only as City Council or Mayor Jadwin. He quoted sections that described Gahanna’s aspirations to cultivate neighborhoods and opportunities to connect and thrive, and that described community values such as vibrancy, connection, stewardship, and community. He repeated that the plan described Gahanna as a welcoming, supportive, and safe community that built lasting connections and fostered mutual respect, understanding, and belonging. He said he strongly encouraged using similar language and tying the resolution back to that community-based document.

Councilmember Renner said he thought that was a good idea. President Bowers said she supported that recommended revision. Councilmember Jones agreed and said she did not intend to disagree with that suggestion. Councilmember Schnetzer said he understood and only wanted to ensure that City Council did not lose sight of the connection to the strategic plan.

Councilmember McGregor said she researched Universal Human Rights Month and learned that the declaration included 30 articles, but said she was not able to find a list of the specific rights. President Bowers said the United States signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Councilmember McGregor replied that she wanted to know what the 30 rights were. President Bowers said she could not recite them from memory but said the declaration was available. Councilmember McGregor said she did not find them listed and said she thought it was important to know what the city supported. City Attorney Tamilarasan said the document and its 30 articles were available as a PDF on the United Nations website. Councilmember McGregor acknowledged the response.

Vice President Weaver thanked the city attorney and then thanked Councilmembers Jones and Renner for their work. He said the topic involved strong feelings and that serving in City Council roles required advocacy for residents while recognizing that not everyone would agree. He said he appreciated Councilmembers Jones and Renner’s willingness to work with their colleagues and incorporate suggested changes. He said he agreed that emphasizing human dignity and a welcoming community for all highlighted one of the traits that made Gahanna a wonderful place. He said leading with positive language contrasted Gahanna’s values with the rhetoric heard recently. He said he generally felt hesitant to address national issues in his role because he believed City Council’s focus should remain on the local community, but he said that when national comments directly affected local residents, it made sense for City Council to respond. He referenced Councilmember Renner’s earlier remarks and said that national rhetoric had

a direct impact on residents and neighbors. He said he once worked in the immigrant space with the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security, and central Ohio's immigrant population and saw the effects of such language. Weaver said he was also the child of immigrants and felt proud that his parents chose to make the United States, Ohio, and Gahanna their home. He said he returned to his hometown to raise his own family and lived two doors down from his parents, which he described as a meaningful choice. He said he hoped Gahanna would remain a great place for his family and for families who did not look, speak, or practice faith as he did. He said his parents had asked him questions about ongoing rhetoric and policy at the national level and that language had a ripple effect that clearly affected the community. He said he hoped a joint statement could reaffirm the city's commitment to all residents and affirm that Gahanna was a welcoming home for everyone. Vice President Weaver thanked his colleagues for the discussion and thanked Councilmembers Renner and Jones for bringing the resolution forward. He said he saw Councilmember Jones taking notes on possible edits and heard Councilmember Renner express openness to changes. He suggested that an updated draft be circulated to City Council during the week so that they could consider it and vote on it at the next meeting, and he asked if that approach was acceptable.

Mayor Jadwin asked whether City Council would include her for the purpose of making a joint resolution and proclamation or whether she should plan a separate action. Vice President Weaver said they would share the updated draft. Councilmember Renner said they would include Mayor Jadwin. Mayor Jadwin thanked them.

Vice President Weaver said the item would appear on the regular agenda on December 15, 2025, and said City Council looked forward to reviewing the updated draft.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025.

Councilmember Padova:

[RES-0061-2025](#)

A JOINT RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PINNELL CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA AND ITS CONTINUED PHILANTHROPIC IMPACT ON THE GAHANNA COMMUNITY

Councilmember Padova reported that she attended the 50th anniversary of the Pinnell Christmas Extravaganza on Saturday. She stated that the event began 50 years earlier as a performance for senior citizens at the Stygler Village Senior Center and grew into two shows at the high school, where attendees arrived about an hour early to save seats. She said the fire marshal often received calls because so many people attended. She explained that

organizers collected donations for Gahanna Residents In Need (GRIN) as the entrance fee and that this donation served as one of GRIN's largest of the year. She said she wished to bring forward a resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary and the impact the event had on the community by raising awareness of GRIN, collecting donations, and providing a Christmas show for residents. She apologized for the last-minute resolution and invited questions or feedback.

Vice President Weaver asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, he said he struggled to believe the event had run for 50 years. He recalled watching the Pinnells perform during varsity varieties when he was in high school and said that even then he felt they were always part of the community. He remarked that high school now felt like a long time ago, so 50 years seemed possible. He thanked Councilmember Padova for bringing the item forward and said City Council would place the resolution on the consent agenda for the following week.

Councilmember Padova added that she believed Jeri and Ashley Pinnell would attend the meeting, and that she was still finalizing those arrangements. She said there would be a presentation to Jeri Pinnell as the founder and noted that Jeri had begun to pass responsibilities on to her daughter Ashley.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 12/15/2025.

I. ADJOURNMENT:

Before turning the meeting over to Chairman Renner for the Finance Committee, Vice President Weaver noted he did not anticipate holding a Committee of the Whole meeting on December 22, 2025. He noted that staff and Mayor Jadwin appeared to agree and said he had no desire to attend alone. He thanked everyone and said it was a wonderful year. He expressed appreciation for everyone's dedication and time.

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
day of 2025.*

Trenton I. Weaver