



# 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, July 1, 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, July 1, 2024, in Council Chambers. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Councilmember Kaylee Padova delivered an Invocation and led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda was published on June 28, 2024.*

**Present** 6 - Jamille Jones, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

**Absent** 1 - Merisa K. Bowers

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

None.

**C. PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. Resolution Presentation by Council - Disability Pride Month**

Councilmember Jones expressed gratitude and excitement for the near standing-room-only attendance in the Chambers, thanking everyone for being present. She noted that the day marked the beginning of Disability Pride Month, which is celebrated each year in July, to honor the disability community's histories, achievements, experiences, and struggles. She emphasized the promotion of the idea that disability is a natural part of human diversity. Councilmember Jones provided a brief history, stating that Disability Pride Month began as a day of celebration in 1990, the year the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law. To honor this significant moment, several special guests were introduced. From the Gahanna Employability and Adult Readiness program (GEAR), Jonathan Escobar Soto was set to make remarks. Instructors Shane Natale and Ruthie Yoder, from the Extended Support Services (ESS) program at the high school, were also present. Students Jaiden Fisher and Elijah Ruben were scheduled to make comments

and were accompanied by their teachers and supporting adults, Tiffany Hanna, Jill Long, Katie Roslovic, and Sue Wieging. Additionally, from Gahanna Special Olympics, fresh off the games this weekend, torchbearer Keyona Peck was slated to make some comments. Before the guest remarks, Councilmember Jones invited the special guests forward for a photo with the Council and then turned the microphone over to them.

Mr. Jonathan Escobar Soto greeted the audience and introduced himself as part of the Gahanna Employability and Adult Readiness (GEAR) program. He explained that the program helps students learn job skills they can use to find and apply for jobs that best fit their skills and interests. Mr. Escobar Soto shared his experiences in the program, detailing his work in the print shop where he performed tasks such as laminating, printing, and making deliveries throughout the district. Additionally, he worked as a school custodian at Chapelfield, Clark Hall, and Lincoln Elementary. At Chapelfield, his responsibilities included cleaning the teacher workroom, assisting students during lunchtime, cleaning water fountains, maintaining bathrooms, vacuuming, using a floor scrubber, and cleaning tables. He mentioned that this summer, he secured a job as a custodian at Chapelfield Elementary, where he helped with deep cleaning tasks, such as cleaning tables, rugs, and chairs. He also worked at Guardian, where he learned to cut grass, a skill that he was able to apply at home. Mr. Escobar Soto emphasized that none of these opportunities would have been possible without the GEAR program. He expressed gratitude for the skills and experiences he gained through the program and concluded by thanking the audience.

Ms. Keyona Peck introduced herself as an athlete with Gahanna Special Olympics. She expressed her gratitude to the Gahanna City Council for recognizing Disability Pride Month in July. She emphasized that Disability Pride Month is a time to celebrate people with disabilities, acknowledging their strength, determination, and capability to achieve amazing things. Ms. Peck highlighted that while some tasks might be different for people with disabilities, it does not mean they are unachievable. She shared her personal experience as an athlete with Special Olympics, stating that her disability does not define her but is merely a part of who she is and does not hold her back. Through Special Olympics, she made incredible friends, pushed herself beyond her limits, and even won some medals. Ms. Peck was honored to be one of the four torchbearers at this year's Summer Games Opening Ceremonies at the OSU football stadium, "The Shoe." She mentioned the participation of officers from Gahanna Division of Police in this year's Law Enforcement Torch Run and expressed gratitude for their support, along with that of Mayor Laurie Jadwin. Ms. Peck again thanked the Council for acknowledging Disability Pride Month, stating that this recognition helps show the community that people with disabilities are just like everyone else. They deserve to be proud, included, and given the chance to reach for their dreams. On behalf of all Gahanna Special Olympics athletes, she expressed her thanks for this honor and encouraged everyone to celebrate Disability Pride Month and recognize the amazing things people with disabilities can do. She concluded by affirming that people with disabilities are proud, talented, and ready to keep reaching for their dreams.

Ms. Tiffany Hanna introduced herself and acknowledged that she, along with Jill Long and Katie Roslovic, were teachers in the Gahanna Lincoln High School Extended Support Services (ESS) program. She expressed gratitude on behalf of herself and her colleagues for recognizing a very important group within the Gahanna community. Ms. Hanna was joined by two current students, Jaiden Fisher and Elijah Ruben, at the podium. Ms. Hanna highlighted the significance of the Gahanna Jefferson Public Schools in serving over 1,350 students with special needs, ranging in age from 3 to 21. She noted that last year, 149 students were enrolled in their Extended Learning Support Services (ELSS) and ESS programs, which support students with the most intense learning differences. She concluded by thanking the council for their recognition and support.

Ms. Katie Roslovic, a teacher at Gahanna Lincoln High School, spoke about the focus of their classroom. She emphasized that their major objective is to teach students to be as independent as possible, primarily through community-based instruction. This approach helps students learn important skills such as safety, communication, and social skills while they are in the community at local stores and job sites. Ms. Roslovic also mentioned that to teach students hands-on skills, they run several micro-businesses, including the Gahanna Barkery, where students make dog bones, and The Mane Cup, a coffee shop within Gahanna Lincoln High School. These businesses allow students to participate in all aspects of the business and engage with the Gahanna community.

Ms. Jill Long spoke about the "Spread the Word" initiative, a nationwide effort to stop the use of the "R" word, which has become a major district-wide event in Gahanna. She highlighted that this initiative is a way for Gahanna schools and the community to recognize the diversity and value of all students. Since its inception in 2010 in Gahanna, the initiative has grown from being celebrated in two schools to all 12 Gahanna Jefferson Public Schools (GJPS). Ms. Long explained that the day is honored through signing pledges, school events, and wearing specially designed and produced t-shirts. At this point, Elijah and Jaiden presented each councilmember with a t-shirt and invited them to the upcoming events for the year.

Ms. Hanna added that the t-shirts are different every year and are specific to Gahanna. They are developed by the School to Work Advanced Graphics (SWAG) classes and produced by Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), with proceeds benefiting all special needs programs, including the ELSS and ESS programs in Gahanna. Each year, the t-shirts feature a different theme. This year, the theme was "I belong, you belong, we all belong. Period." She expressed gratitude for the Council's support and invited everyone to their event next March, 2025.

Councilmember McGregor thanked everyone for attending, expressing appreciation for the wonderful event. She acknowledged the hard work of the teachers and the participation of the students and parents.

Vice President Weaver also extended his gratitude to everyone for joining the meeting and sharing information about the school district's programming and

its significance. He specifically thanked Councilmember Jones for her efforts in presenting the resolution.

**D. HEARING OF VISITORS:**

*Paul Bryson of Gahanna, OH, spoke on RES-0028-2024.*

Mr. Bryson introduced himself, mentioning that he worked for a nonprofit law firm providing free legal services to low-income people and families throughout Central Ohio. He clarified that he was not present in that capacity or representing any client but was speaking as an expert on how utility aggregation can affect low-income individuals, particularly in relation to the Energy Choice resolution. Mr. Bryson expressed concern that the impact of utility aggregation on low-income people was not well understood. He believed that with proper knowledge, Gahanna could create a system that avoids harmful consequences for low-income residents. He stated his general support for the resolution, appreciating the move towards green energy and the potential for lower utility bills. However, he highlighted a significant issue: most households in Gahanna would be served by an electric company not regulated by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), which could have adverse effects on low-income families. Providing context, Mr. Bryson cited census data, estimating that approximately 750 families in Gahanna are at or below 175% of the federal poverty level, equating to an annual income below \$43,000 for a family of three. He emphasized the importance of several PUCO programs for these households, such as the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP), medical certificates, and reconnect orders. These programs provide essential assistance by capping energy bills, granting 30-day extensions for medical needs, and offering emergency payment terms to reconnect services. He pointed out that these programs are not available through unregulated utilities, leading to severe consequences like freezing nights, unfinished schoolwork, and an inability to keep or cook fresh food. Mr. Bryson noted that households already on PIPP would be ineligible to join the new utility plan due to aggregation regulations, which does not protect families experiencing a sudden drop in income due to illness, death, or job loss. He suggested a potential solution in creating utility assistance programs similar to those provided by PUCO.

*Joshua Smith of Gahanna, OH, spoke on disabilities.*

Mr. Smith began by thanking the Council for their time. He shared a personal story about his son, who, at the age of three, asked why his grandmother, whom he called "Ama," could not join them for bedtime reading. The reason was that the door was too small for her wheelchair. His son's simple solution was to build a bigger door. Mr. Smith highlighted that, according to census data, one in ten people in Gahanna identify as disabled. This statistic includes one in twenty children, one in thirteen working-age adults, and one in four retired-age adults. He emphasized that disability is not an aberration but a common aspect of life, with up to 90% of disabilities being invisible. He pointed out that if one lives long enough, experiencing disability is inevitable. He noted that barriers to accessibility are just as common as disabilities, and Gahanna is no exception. While praising the evening's resolution as an

important step, he stressed that much work remains to be done. He pointed out that several City websites, including those for utility bill payment, pool membership purchases, and the Blues and Jazz Festival, do not meet web accessibility standards, despite claims to the contrary. Mr. Smith raised concerns about the accessibility of City events, questioning how individuals with hearing impairments, blindness, or motor impairments could participate in Council meetings or fill out speaker slips and read agendas. He stressed that these barriers exist throughout the community and represent opportunities for improvement. His call to action included investing time, money, and effort into making Gahanna more accessible. He urged the Council to engage with residents with disabilities, listen to their needs, and involve them in creating solutions. Mr. Smith emphasized that people with disabilities are creative and capable of helping build a more accessible community. He concluded by expressing a desire for Gahanna to become more inclusive, stating that while disabled people are present in Gahanna, the barriers do not have to be.

*Kevin Dengel of Gahanna, OH, spoke on Arts policy.*

Mr. Dengel expressed concern over several misunderstandings regarding the Gahanna Area Arts Council (GAAC) that he had observed over the past year. He requested the opportunity to give a future presentation to share how the Arts Council has partnered with the City thus far and to explore how they might enhance this partnership moving forward. Mr. Dengel raised specific concerns about the Public Arts Advisory Committee (PAAC) currently under consideration, suggesting that its creation could turn the PAAC into a de facto Arts Council, potentially making the two entities competitors rather than collaborators. He requested that the Council delay the selection of PAAC members until after the GAAC had the chance to present its vision and align the roles of these entities. To address misunderstandings directly, Mr. Dengel clarified three key points. First, the Gahanna Area Arts Council was not a self-started group with an independent agenda. It was formed through a multi-year process initiated in 2016 by then-Mayor Tom Kneeland, who asked a group of experts, business owners, and residents to develop arts policy and secure funding for arts initiatives. The current GAAC is the direct result of that committee's efforts. Second, the GAAC is not averse to oversight. Since establishing its Board of Directors in 2017, the GAAC has consistently invited City oversight, requesting two appointments to its board, one from City Council and one from the Mayor. This mechanism is similar to the oversight used for Visit Gahanna. Third, the GAAC has successfully brought over \$40,000 in funding to the community through grants. These funds have been used to host community festivals, bring groups like the Columbus Symphony to perform in parks, and commission more than 70 murals. All projects have been conducted in partnership with city staff, following best practices and formalized through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the City. Mr. Dengel reported that, historically, issues with arts projects have only arisen when the GAAC was not involved. Mr. Dengel emphasized that transparency builds trust and invited the Council to ask any questions now, during a future presentation, or after the meeting. He reiterated that the GAAC is a partner to the City and expressed eagerness to continue working together to benefit Gahanna's residents. He concluded by thanking the Council for their

time.

*Justin Gartin of Gahanna, OH, spoke on Gahanna's trails.*

Mr. Justin Gartin, an educator at Gahanna High School, addressed the Council regarding the increasing levels of despondency, anxiety, and depression he has observed in students throughout his career. He attributed part of the problem to excessive screen time but also highlighted a significant lack of play among children and teenagers. Mr. Gartin shared his research findings, which indicated that children are six times more likely to travel to a location if there is a bike path or walking path. He pointed out that while his community is geographically close to several cultural hubs in Gahanna, such as the library, high school, City Hall, and Creekside, the separation by Clark State Road makes these places feel far away and difficult to access without driving. He expressed support for a proposal being voted on regarding the exploration of a feasibility study for a trail connecting his neighborhood and others to these cultural hubs. He voiced his gratitude to those who would vote in favor of it. Additionally, Mr. Gartin praised the GEAR and ESS programs at the high school, noting their positive impact. He shared personal experiences of receiving coffee from GEAR students and working closely with the print shop and students at Clark Hall on senior projects.

*Benji Gartin, of Gahanna, OH, spoke on bike trails.*

Mr. Benji Gartin advocated for the addition of a bike path along Clark State Road, noting that many residents on that street are typically indoors and not active in the community. He suggested that a path would encourage more exercise and proposed the idea of an annual Clark State Run to raise money. Mr. Gartin concluded by thanking the Council for their time.

*Brenda Fargo, of South Bloomingville, OH, spoke on governmental aggregation.*

Ms. Fargo addressed the Council, clarifying misconceptions from the previous week's Committee of the Whole meeting. She explained that NOPEC (Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council) is not solely a "brown power" option for aggregation. She noted that approximately 15% of the 240 NOPEC communities have selected a 100% renewable option as their default product. The other member communities, prioritizing lower costs, guide interested residents to NOPEC's 100% renewable products. Ms. Fargo highlighted that NOPEC's supply partner, NextEra Energy, is a leader in sustainability efforts through investments in infrastructure and clean energy technology, contributing to an affordable, efficient, and clean energy future. She mentioned that NOPEC was the presenting sponsor of the recent Summit on Sustainability conference in Cleveland, where NextEra provided the Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) for the total carbon offset of the conference. She conveyed apologies from Chuck Keiper, NOPEC's Executive Director, who could not attend the meeting. Ms. Fargo read his comments, which were also provided in a letter to the Council and Mayor. In his letter, Mr. Keiper thanked the Council for the opportunity to respond to Gahanna's Request for Information (RFI) for electric aggregation. He

commended the City for its foresight in pursuing a sustainable future while empowering residents and small businesses. He clarified that NOPEC is the largest governmental aggregation council in Ohio, serving roughly 905,000 customer accounts. He addressed a misconception from the previous meeting, stating that the other governmental aggregation council that submitted a response is only about 20% the size of NOPEC. Mr. Keiper emphasized that NOPEC's programs are based on input from its member communities. He requested that the Council allow both governmental aggregation councils to present their plans in more detail before making a decision. This would provide an opportunity to correct any possible misstatements or misunderstandings from the last meeting. Ms. Fargo concluded by reiterating the request for a comprehensive presentation from both councils to ensure an informed decision. She thanked the Council for their time.

*Emma Cisler, of Gahanna, OH, spoke on multipurpose trails.*

Ms. Cisler advocated for the construction of multi-purpose paths in Gahanna, citing benefits such as promoting exercise and reducing time spent indoors. She emphasized that these paths would provide a good way to get around and benefit the environment by reducing car usage and the associated fuel emissions, which are harmful to the Earth. She concluded by stating that the paths would be beneficial for both people and the planet.

Vice President Weaver addressed the audience, asking if the administration had any comments regarding the feasibility study item on the agenda. He sought clarification on the study for the benefit of the interested audience members present.

Mayor Jadwin provided context for the feasibility study. She recalled that last year, residents along the Clark State Corridor requested the construction of a path. In response, the City reached out to the Franklin County Engineer's Office, as the majority of Clark State Road between Hamilton, Reynoldsburg-New Albany, and Clark State lies in an unincorporated area under their jurisdiction. The Mayor explained that while the Franklin County Engineer's Office had recently completed their 10-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and had no immediate plans for a multi-use path, they offered to conduct a feasibility study to evaluate the potential for such a project. This offer was made by Franklin County Engineer Cornell Robertson. Mayor Jadwin noted that although the feasibility study was not initially in the county's budget, they eventually secured approval and funding for it. They then approached Gahanna to partner and contribute financially to the study. The agenda item under discussion was a supplemental appropriation to fund Gahanna's contribution to the feasibility study. She clarified that if the appropriation was approved, the funds would be allocated, and Gahanna would partner with the Franklin County Engineer's Office to cover the study's costs, estimated at approximately \$67,000. The study was expected to take about a year, considering the necessary engineering analysis. Mayor Jadwin mentioned that the study would examine the feasibility of installing a trail along the Clark State Corridor, considering factors like the bridge at Havens Road, power lines, and drainage ditches. Once completed, the results would help

evaluate the project's feasibility, potential costs, and how it might fit into the county's and City's Capital Improvement Plans. She emphasized that this was the first step in a lengthy process to understand and potentially realize the project.

**E. CONSENT AGENDA:**

**1. Minutes - To Approve:**

[2024-0126](#) Council Regular Minutes 6.17.2024

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0127](#) Committee of the Whole Minutes 6.24.2024

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

**2. Resolutions:**

[RES-0026-2024](#) A RESOLUTION HONORING DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH AND RECOGNIZING GAHANNA EMPLOYABILITY AND ADULT READINESS (GEAR), GAHANNA SPECIAL OLYMPICS, AND THE GAHANNA LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL EXTENDED SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-0027-2024](#) A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE TAX BUDGET OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, OHIO, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

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

[ORD-0042-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PROVIDE CONSENT AND ENTER A PARTICIPATORY AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR ROADWAY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR ON HAMILTON ROAD AND GRANVILLE STREET

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

[ORD-0043-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A DEED OF EASEMENT OF 0.044 +/- ACRES TO BSOH HQ LLC, A PRIVATE ENTITY ALSO KNOWN AS BURNS AND SCALO, FOR THE PURPOSES OF STORMWATER DRAINAGE ONTO CITY PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE



DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT 1070 TECH CENTER DRIVE

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

[ORD-0044-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - General Fund for Clark State Multi-Use Path Feasibility Study

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

### End of Consent Agenda

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

**Yes:** 6 - Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

**Absent:** 1 - Bowers

### F. RESOLUTIONS:

[RES-0028-2024](#) A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THE INTENTION OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA TO PURSUE A COMMUNITY CHOICE ENERGY AGGREGATION PROGRAM WITH SUSTAINABLE OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL (SOPEC)

Councilmember Renner began by expressing his gratitude to Mr. Paul Bryson, one of the speakers during the Hearing of Visitors. He acknowledged his own expertise in the area of utility aggregation and assured that aggregators are indeed regulated by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). He explained that the Council of Governments (COG) structure was being considered for reasons including transparency. He emphasized that SOPEC (Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council), like other aggregators, operates under PUCO regulation, requires certification, and must comply with Ohio state laws. Councilmember Renner addressed the concern regarding the treatment of low-income individuals. He expressed his interest in discussing this issue further with Mr. Bryson to brainstorm on public education initiatives. He mentioned that SOPEC has established payment plans recognized for supporting individuals with limited incomes, demonstrating a long history of sensitivity to their needs. He suggested that SOPEC has additional plans in progress to support low-income residents. He continued by thanking his colleagues for their extensive deliberations on this issue. He noted that the City of Gahanna had been discussing utility aggregation since the fall, following presentations from both NOPEC (Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council) and SOPEC. Councilmember Renner also thanked the administration, particularly Senior Director Kevin Schultz and Senior Deputy Director Corey Wybensing, for their efforts in publishing the Request for Information (RFI). He expressed pride in the RFI process, highlighting that it provided a level playing field where NOPEC, SOPEC, and two commercial aggregators could present their information. In

conclusion, Councilmember Renner emphasized the importance of moving forward with the work and expressed his enthusiasm for joining with SOPEC. He looked forward to the necessary communication with customers and residents about the utility aggregation process and thanked everyone involved.

Vice President Weaver echoed the comments made by Councilmember Renner, expressing his gratitude to the administration, particularly Director Schultz and Director Wybensing, for their significant efforts. He acknowledged the considerable work involved for the administration and staff. Additionally, he thanked Councilmember Renner for his leadership on the issue, noting his role in guiding the conversation and bringing in Mr. Florida from Power a Clean Future Ohio to assist with navigating the process. Vice President Weaver extended his appreciation to all four entities that responded to the RFI. He recognized the healthy discussions that had taken place since the idea first emerged in the fall. He conveyed his support for the Council of Government approach and, based on the discussion, feedback, and responses to the RFI, expressed his comfort with this path moving forward. He shared his excitement about the potential savings for residents and the move towards a more sustainable future for the city. Addressing concerns raised during the Hearing of Visitors, Vice President Weaver looked forward to a productive discussion on how to alleviate potential adverse impacts.

Councilmember McGregor reiterated her position, acknowledging that she might be in the minority. She expressed her support for aggregation, emphasizing that the primary goal should be to secure the least expensive energy, whether it is all green energy or a combination. She stated that the preference for most residents would be to lower the cost of energy, and thus, she advocated for the least costly option.

**A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Padova, that the Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 6 - Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

**Absent:** 1 - Bowers

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

[ORD-0045-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 737 TOBACCO PRODUCT SALES SECTIONS 737.04 AND 737.14 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA

**Vice President Weaver introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.**

[ORD-0046-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - ARPA Fund 2330

**Vice President Weaver introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.**

#### **H. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:**

## 1. Clerk

Mr. VanMeter informed Council about an item that was not included in the Council packet. He stated that the Planning Commission recently recommended to Council the rezoning of property located at 5061 Shagbark Road. The current zoning is ER (formerly ER-2), and the proposed zoning is L-R-4 (formerly LMFRD). He mentioned that he had contacted the applicant, who is expected to be present during the Committee of the Whole meeting on July 15, 2024, to answer any questions the Council might have regarding the rezoning. Additionally, Mr. VanMeter shared a tentative legislative schedule for the rezoning process. Assuming the rezoning is recommended out of the Committee of the Whole on July 15, the first reading would be held on August 5, 2024, followed by a second reading and a public hearing on August 19, 2024, prior to the vote.

## 2. Council - None.

### I. REPRESENTATIVES:

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

Vice President Weaver provided an update on the June meeting of the CIC, noting that it was their regular meeting where members of Council are invited to participate. He expressed happiness at having both Ms. Bowers and Ms. Padova join them. The Finance Committee reported a cash balance of \$208,000 at the end of May. Real estate remained the largest asset, with rental income reported at \$19,000 for the month, which was down slightly due to a few tenants moving out. Property taxes were paid, with the second half of the property tax bill for the CIC properties amounting to \$89,000. Leppert and Company were expected to have the CIC's taxes ready for next month's review. The Mayor's Office provided several updates, including the rezoning reported by the Clerk. Director Blackford mentioned that he and his team had been working on zoning code changes as a result of implementing the new zoning code since May 1, 2024, noting that adjustments are often needed post-implementation. The Administration was also looking into short-term rentals, an area of concern for both the Council and the Administration. Mr. Nate Green of the Montrose Group was introduced and will be assisting the CIC as Director Hamons pursues another opportunity. Vice President Weaver noted that the Development Department would be taking over responsibilities for the Creekside Outdoor Refreshment Area (CORA). Renewal legislation was expected in the July-August timeframe, which would include a small boundary change and a time change to reduce confusion and promote the CORA, thereby supporting local businesses. He also mentioned that the CIC was awaiting word on a grant application filed for demolition assistance. Lastly, Mr. Kelly Fox, a member of the CIC for an estimated eight years, announced he would be stepping down from the board in August. Vice President Weaver thanked Mr. Fox for his service to the CIC.

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

[2024-0128](#)

Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 7.1.2024

Vice President Weaver thanked the Clerk and the MORPC Intern Charlie Schneider for preparing the report included with the agenda. He provided a brief update on MORPC activities, noting that there would be no monthly commission meeting in July. The next commission meeting was scheduled for Thursday, August 8, 2024. In legislative news, Vice President Weaver mentioned that the state legislature had been very busy over the past couple of weeks. He highlighted that both the House and Senate had passed a One-time Strategic Community Investment Funding initiative. He received an email late in the afternoon with details on the various projects receiving funding, which he offered to share. Vice President Weaver also reminded everyone about the "Money Mondays" series. He had highlighted all the upcoming topics at the last meeting, noting that if anyone missed them, they could also stream the sessions after the fact.

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

Councilmember Padova provided an update on upcoming community events and activities. She announced that the volunteer picnic for those who helped with the Blues and Jazz Festival would be held the following day at Friendship Park from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. During the picnic, volunteer groups would collectively receive over \$15,000. Although final numbers were still being reconciled, she noted that attendance at the festival appeared to be comparable to last year's, with all three days enjoying beautiful weather, making it a successful year for the festival. Councilmember Padova mentioned that the first three "Mid-week at The Creek" events had to be postponed due to weather, but they were scheduled to resume the following Wednesday, July 10, 2024 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at Creekside Plaza. She highlighted that Visit Gahanna was collaborating with Make Gahanna Yours to create a spirit station to welcome and cheer on Pelotonia riders passing through Gahanna on August 3, 2024, encouraging everyone to mark their calendars for this event. She also informed the Council that the Herb Center was offering classes for children for the first time since before COVID-19. The first class, titled "Herbal Kids Flowers," would be held on Saturday, July 6, 2024, and would include various activities related to herbs. Additional information about these events and classes could be found on the Visit Gahanna website.

## 4. School Board (SB) - Jones

[2024-0129](#)

Councilmember Jones School Board Report 7.1.2024 GJPS - New Vision, Mission, Values and Logo

Councilmember Jones provided an update on the strategic planning efforts for the school district. She acknowledged the work of a group of community members who, several months ago, began helping to build the strategic plan.

This summer, the administration has been fine-tuning the details and creating a dashboard for the rollout of the plan when school starts in the fall. Councilmember Jones shared the updated vision, mission, and values of the district, which were displayed on a slide. The new mission statement is: "To empower students for lifelong success by ensuring that student learning is our top priority, preparing each student to continually thrive in an ever-changing world." Additionally, she introduced the new logo for the district, featuring the updated Gahanna Lion and the GJPS (Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools) logo. She expressed enthusiasm about sharing this update with the community and colleagues. Councilmember Jones concluded by directing everyone to the district website for a full update and progress report on the strategic plan. She looked forward to seeing the plan come to life as the school year begins in the fall.

## J. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

### 1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin began by expressing gratitude for the Disability Pride resolution, noting it was a wonderful way to start the Council meeting. She mentioned the significance of the event, especially following the Gahanna Special Olympics weekend, where athletes participated in the opening ceremony at "The Shoe." Mayor Jadwin described the experience of seeing thousands of athletes lining the field and the participation of officers from the Gahanna Division of Police in the Law Enforcement Torch Run. She specifically thanked Community Liaison Officer Kaylea Pertz, Sergeant Parrish, Officer Stewart, Officer Smith, Officer Hoffman, Officer Reisinger, and Officer Beardsley for their involvement, as well as two firefighters from Mifflin Township. Mayor Jadwin also expressed gratitude to Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) for their partnership in the recent household hazardous waste collection event and thanked the Public Service team for their hard work in the heat. She reported that 659 cars participated, safely disposing of items such as tires, paint cans, and batteries. She praised the success of the event and expressed hopes for its continuation in partnership with SWACO. Mayor Jadwin announced that the 2022-2023 Bright Blocks were installed along the Big Walnut Trail in various locations, thanking Director Vollmer and Parks Superintendent Zac Guthrie for coordinating the installation. She mentioned an upcoming meeting with the Arts Council to discuss communication and promotion of the Bright Blocks locations and anticipated further installations in 2024. In recognition of Parks and Recreation Month in July, Mayor Jadwin highlighted the importance of parks and recreation in building strong, vibrant, and resilient communities. She noted that this year's theme, "Where You Belong," celebrates the sense of community fostered by parks and recreation programs. She thanked the Council for their investments in parks and announced a proclamation presented to the Parks and Recreation team. Mayor Jadwin reported on the successful open house held in the Council Chambers to discuss the Active Transportation Plan. She thanked the residents and Council members who attended, noting the identification of 60 different projects and the ongoing online survey for additional resident input, available until July 5, 2024. She provided details on upcoming events,

including the Gahanna Independence Day celebration at the Gahanna Golf Course on Wednesday, July 3, 2024, featuring food trucks, vendors, activities, and fireworks at 10 p.m. In case of inclement weather, alerts would be sent out. She also announced the 4th of July parade, presented by the Lions Club, stepping off at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 4, 2024, from behind Clark Hall, ending at Royal Plaza Shopping Center. She encouraged residents to visit [gahanna.gov](http://gahanna.gov) for more information on these and other City events. Mayor Jadwin concluded by wishing everyone a wonderful Fourth of July holiday and reminded that City Hall would be closed on July 4, 2024.

## 2. City Attorney

City Attorney Tamararasan provided an update on the litigation involving Speed Way Towing and Transportation. She reminded the Council that she had reported on this issue multiple times. She was pleased to announce that the City's motion for summary judgment was granted a few weeks ago, resulting in the closure of the federal case. Attorney Tamararasan noted that Speed Way Towing and Transportation had 30 days to file an appeal, but no appeal had been filed yet. She expressed hope that the case would remain closed.

## K. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember Jones extended another thank you to the special guests from GEAR, ESS, and Gahanna Special Olympics, as well as the residents who provided supportive comments and called for action to ensure city accessibility. She specifically acknowledged the younger guests, Emma and Benjamin, commending them for their courage in speaking. She expressed pride in their efforts and encouraged them to continue using their voices for good, noting the positive impact it can have on the world.

Councilmember McGregor also thanked the younger speakers, acknowledging the difficulty of public speaking and praising their performance. She shared her anticipation for the Fourth of July festivities and provided an update on a recent community project involving the Gahanna Area Realtors Association. The association chose the Historical Society as their project for the year, bringing 18 to 20 realtors and their children to help with painting, gardening, and cleaning tasks. She expressed deep appreciation for their efforts, highlighting specific contributions such as power washing and polishing silver.

Councilmember Renner added his thanks, commending Councilmember Jones for the resolution and expressing gratitude to all speakers. He remarked on the impressive turnout of 659 cars at the SWACO event and expressed interest in knowing how much debris was diverted from the landfill. He appreciated the presentation on the Active Transportation Plan, engaging in discussions about mobility and its importance. Councilmember Renner shared a personal anecdote about discovering goats being used for grass maintenance through a contract with Goats to Go, emphasizing its sustainability benefits. He also thanked Benjamin and Emma again for their comments on trails, connecting the discussion to broader themes of mobility and resiliency. He underscored the importance of building infrastructure that

supports sustainability and helps the community adapt to future challenges, such as another pandemic, to become more resilient.

Councilmember Padova expressed gratitude to Councilmember Jones for a great start to the meeting, noting the nearly full house and excitement surrounding the resolution. She thanked all the evening's speakers, appreciating the variety of relevant topics discussed. She gave special thanks to the youngest speakers, commending their impressive ability to sit quietly through the entire meeting, with a particular mention of Emma, who was reading her book. Councilmember Padova reflected on the long-term impact of the Council's work, highlighting that initiatives like going renewable are more for future generations. She shared a personal story about visiting the goats and taking a long walk along the trails from Gahanna Heights to Upper McCorkle Park. She appreciated the connected path system and shared her daughter's excitement about seeing the Bright Blocks along the way. She concluded by expressing hope to see everyone at the parade on Thursday, July 4, 2024.

Councilmember Schnetzer echoed the gratitude expressed by his colleagues, thanking everyone from GEAR, ESS, and Gahanna Special Olympics. He also thanked all the evening's attendees, emphasizing the importance of hearing from residents about their perspectives and concerns. He wished everyone a safe and happy Independence Day.

Vice President Weaver echoed the comments of gratitude, thanking all speakers, including Emma, Benji, representatives from GEAR, Gahanna Special Olympics, and the adult participants. He acknowledged the presence of many educators in the room and appreciated the attendance of school board members Ms. Dimmerling and President Coates. He reminded everyone that the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for next week would be held on July 15, 2024, immediately following the regular Council meeting. He thanked his colleagues for their patience as he stood in for President Bowers and concluded by wishing everyone a happy and safe Fourth of July.

**L. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

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

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Yes:** 6 - Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

**Absent:** 1 - Bowers

Vice President Weaver announced the Council would meet in the Law Library for Executive Session.

Council rose to report to Executive Session at 8:18 p.m.

Council rose to report from Executive Session at 8:43 p.m. with no further action.

**M. ADJOURNMENT:**

*With no further business before the Council, Vice President Weaver adjourned the meeting at 8:43 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**