



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, September 9, 2024

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda was published on September 6, 2024. All members were present for the meeting. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Vice President Weaver announced a slight change to the meeting agenda. After completing the discussion on items from the Planning Commission, specifically the final plat application, the Council would move directly to Ordinance 0057-2024. This would place Ordinance 0057-2024 immediately after the final plat discussion. Following that, the Council would resume with the remaining items from the Department of Engineering as originally planned.

C. ITEMS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

[ORD-0055-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT A FINAL PLAT APPLICATION FOR CRESCENT WOODS - LOOP ROAD; CONSISTING OF 14.96 +/- ACRES; PARCEL ID 025-013767; CURRENT ZONING GENERAL COMMERCIAL (GC); CRESCENT WOODS LLC, GRIFFIN CALDWELL, APPLICANT; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Michael Blackford, Director of Planning, presented the item for the Crescent at Central Park. He explained that this was the second time a plat for this property had been reviewed. Previously, the property had been subdivided into three lots and one road, with one lot remaining undeveloped at 14 acres. The current request was to subdivide the 14-acre lot into two lots-one 11-acre lot and one 3-acre lot, along with a road. Blackford clarified that while this would typically be an administrative application, the inclusion of a public road required platting by the state, which necessitated Council approval. The

Planning Commission had reviewed the request and recommended approval unanimously. The two lots met all code requirements, and staff also recommended approval. Blackford noted that there were no development proposals for the 11-acre lot, while the 3-acre lot had been approved for a gas station. He mentioned that the applicant requested a waiver and emergency, as requested for a prior plat.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked about the cost of the new road, noting that an existing stub street had a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) arrangement to cover costs. He wanted to confirm whether the new road would be at the developer's expense.

Director Blackford stated that the entire development, including the new road, was part of the same development agreement.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked if this meant the additional road was part of the development agreement.

Kevin Schultz, Senior Director of Operations, clarified that both the existing road and the loop road were identified in the original development agreement. He confirmed that all expenses had already been accounted for, and there were no new costs to consider.

President Bowers thanked Councilmember Schnetzer for raising the question. She then inquired about a decision reflected in the Landscape Board minutes, noting that street trees recommended by the board differed from those listed in the materials. She asked for clarification on the tree selections, noting that the board had recommended black gum trees, but the materials listed swamp white oak and tulip trees.

Director Blackford responded that the street tree plan attached to the application was reviewed and approved by the Parks and Recreation team, which also presented the plan to the Landscape Board.

Mr. Griffin Caldwell, the applicant, stated that he did not have specific information about the tree recommendations at that time, but would follow up to provide clarification with the Landscape Board or directly with President Bowers.

President Bowers thanked Mr. Caldwell and acknowledged that the street tree selection was not directly related to the plat being considered for approval, but she noticed the discrepancy and wanted clarification.

Councilmember McGregor raised a point about tulip trees, noting that they are among the tallest trees in Ohio, questioning whether they were suitable as street trees. Councilmember McGregor voiced appreciation for President Bowers having raised the issue.

Vice President Weaver echoed appreciation for any follow-up regarding the street tree plan and suggested that information could be shared with either Director Blackford or Director Schultz. He noted that the item included a request for a waiver and emergency approval, as mentioned by Director Blackford.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda with Waiver of Second Reading and Emergency Adoption on 9/16/2024.

D. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING:

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

Tom Komlanc, Director of Engineering, introduced the first item, accepting the Crescent Place roadway and supporting infrastructure, which included domestic water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer systems. Komlanc informed the Council that the infrastructure was recently completed and passed all necessary inspections. He noted that the only remaining item was the installation of street lighting. While the conduit, pull boxes, and foundations were already in place, the streetlights and luminaires were still in transit. However, Komlanc assured the Council that once they arrived, installation and activation would only take one or two days. He recommended the acceptance of the public infrastructure associated with the project and made himself available for any questions.

There were no questions from the Council.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 10/7/2024.

1. West Gahanna Sanitary System Evaluation & Recommendations

[2024-0168](#) West Gahanna Sanitary Sewer System Evaluation & Recommendations Presentation COTW 9.9.2024

Director Komlanc provided an update on the westside sanitary sewer evaluation and recommendations. He introduced Marcia Bland from EMH&T, who was assisting the City with the assessment. Komlanc explained that the evaluation was conducted in three phases, and a PowerPoint presentation would provide further details and recommendations. The map displayed showed the sanitary sewer service district area. The red lines indicated the sanitary wastewater collection system, which carries wastewater such as dishwashing and laundry water, ultimately connecting to a City of Columbus trunk line following the Big Walnut. The area served covers approximately 1,200 acres and includes around 3,000 parcels. Komlanc highlighted subdivisions like Royal Manor, Brentwood, College Park, and Heritage, built between the early 1960s and 1970s. In the 1990s, the area had experienced

water-related sewer backups, leading to the remediation of foundation drains and depressed driveways. These backups were caused by stormwater entering the sanitary sewer system, which is not designed to handle stormwater. Komlanc then turned the presentation over to Ms. Bland to discuss the detailed findings and recommendations.

Marcia Bland, EMH&T, began by explaining that the study was triggered by two significant rainfall events in March and May of 2020. Both events were classified as 10-year rainfall events, with the March event resulting in 71 basement backups and the May event, which delivered 4.5 inches of rain over two days, causing 53 water-in-basement incidents. Bland emphasized that the May event was not isolated to Gahanna, as the entire Columbus region was affected, with parts experiencing a 25-year event. The City of Columbus sanitary system, which Gahanna ties into, provides a 10-year level of service for basement backups and a 25-year level for sanitary sewer overflows. These events prompted the start of a three-phase evaluation project. The City installed flow meters, developed a sanitary sewer model to understand the impact of rainfall, and conducted field investigations to identify potential causes of the backups. Bland explained that the sanitary sewer system was not designed to handle stormwater flow, which leads to inflow and infiltration (I&I) issues. Inflow occurs when there is a direct connection of stormwater sources like downspouts or catch basins to the sewer system, while infiltration is caused by groundwater entering through defective laterals or pipe joints. Bland presented data showing that only 8.6% of the rainfall from these events ended up in the sanitary sewer system, which is a relatively low number considering the age of the infrastructure. However, the system was not designed to handle even this additional flow, which caused surcharging and led to backups. She noted that while the percentage was low compared to other communities, the surcharging highlighted the need for further action to address the issue.

Ms. Bland explained the profile of the sanitary sewer system, illustrating how it behaves during different rainfall events. The profile shows a cross-section of the sewer system with manholes, dry weather flow, and the system's capacity during rainfall. The dry weather flow is depicted as a black line, which shows how the system handles average sanitary flow. During a 10-year rainfall event, the flow increases to the level represented by a blue line, indicating significant surcharge. A 25-year rainfall event, represented by a red line, demonstrates an even greater surcharge. Bland explained that the sanitary sewer system, built in the 1960s, was constructed using standards from that time, known as 10-State Standards. These standards allowed for 100 gallons per person per day, factoring in inflow and infiltration (I&I). If the sewer were built today, current standards would require a larger sewer to accommodate the increased flow. The exhibits showed areas where the sewer is not sized appropriately to handle stormwater during heavy rainfall, even though it manages regular sanitary flow efficiently.

In the next slide, Bland highlighted areas in blue where basement backups were predicted by the sewer model. Although the model predicted 293

possible backups, only 71 occurred during one event and 53 during another. She explained that the model closely followed actual occurrences, even though more backups were predicted than actually happened. Bland then discussed the alternatives considered for addressing the sewer issues. Over 20 different options were evaluated, including backflow preventers, water reuse systems, relief sewers, and pump stations. The recommended solution was a relief sewer constructed parallel to the existing sanitary sewer system. This relief sewer would capture flow from Coronation and Imperial and divert it into the new parallel sewer, which would then connect to the City of Columbus system. With the relief sewer in place, the sewer model predicted a significant reduction in surcharging during a 10-year event, with no expected basement backups. However, during a 25-year event, some surcharging would still occur, and some properties could experience water in basements. Bland emphasized that Gahanna cannot design beyond the capacity allowed by the City of Columbus' system, as their outfall limitations govern the improvements Gahanna can make. The relief sewer recommendation was approved by the City of Columbus, ensuring compliance with their system capacity.

Questions from Council:

Councilmember McGregor raised a question regarding the predicted basement backups, noting that most of the blue dots on the map seemed to be in Brentwood, while many complaints originated from College Park. She asked whether the proposed solution would address the issues in College Park.

Ms. Bland confirmed that with the installation of the relief sewer, there were no predicted water-in-basement issues across the whole area, including College Park. She noted that during a 25-year event, there would still be some properties impacted, specifically the lowest-lying properties. Bland emphasized that the model is an estimate, using auditor data to predict potential backups based on basement elevations. Although the model predicted 293 backups, only 53 actually occurred, suggesting the model's estimations are conservative. Director Komlanc added that the 293 predicted backups from the model were consistent with the 71 reported during the March event and the 53 from the May 2020 event. This consistency supports the accuracy of the model's predictions.

Councilmember McGregor inquired about homeowners with depressed driveways, who did not participate in the City's modification program years ago. She wondered if it would be beneficial to revisit those properties to see if addressing them could have an impact.

Ms. Bland explained that the system captures 8.6% of rainfall during such events, which is a relatively low capture rate. She referenced the City of Columbus's "Blueprint" project, which typically addresses private property issues and achieves about a 30% I&I reduction. Bland suggested that the

seven remaining properties likely would not significantly affect the system, as reducing the I&I rate below 8.6% would be difficult without a larger-scale project. However, she agreed to look further into whether addressing those properties would make a difference.

Councilmember McGregor acknowledged the long duration of the project, noting that the issue began in early 2020 and that the current discussion was taking place in the third quarter of 2024. She expressed appreciation for the work that had gone into the project and its complexity.

Ms. Bland explained that sewer projects take time, particularly the flow monitoring process, which requires six months to a year of data collection to accurately predict system behavior. The project included evaluating potential sources of inflow and infiltration, developing a model, and receiving approvals from the City of Columbus. Although the process was lengthy, the flow monitoring and model evaluation ultimately led to the relief sewer recommendation, which has been approved by Columbus.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked if any attempts had been made to locate the source of infiltration. Bland confirmed that extensive efforts were made, including field investigations, but no significant sources were found. Schnetzer then asked for clarification on common sources of infiltration.

Ms. Bland explained that laterals, the pipes connecting individual properties to the main sewer line, are often the weakest point and a common source of infiltration due to cracks or root intrusion. While granular backfill between storm and sanitary sewers can also be a source of infiltration in some communities, this was not found to be the case in Gahanna. The primary source of infiltration in this area appeared to be the laterals, which contributed to both public and private system defects. Director Komlanc added that many of the sewers in the area were installed using clay pipes, which deteriorate over time. The joints at the bell connections of the pipes are particularly prone to infiltration, contributing to the system's issues.

Councilmember Jones asked for clarification on something needing approval from the City of Columbus.

Ms. Bland clarified that approval had already been obtained from Columbus. However, she noted that in the first quarter of 2026, Columbus would be installing a control gate on the Blacklick Creek trunk sewer. This gate will help manage flow from the three main trunk sewers (Big Walnut, Alum Creek, and Blacklick Creek), alleviating the bottleneck at the Three Creeks area by utilizing storage in Columbus's tunnels during high flow events.

Councilmember Jones then asked if there could still be problems before 2026, if there were heavy rainfall.

Ms. Bland confirmed that if another significant event like a 10-year or 25-year rainfall occurred, citywide before 2026, basement backups could still happen,

though these types of events had been rare, with the last major issues occurring in 2020 and 1990.

Councilmember Renner expressed his appreciation for the extensive analysis done by Ms. Bland and her team. He noted that while the model predicted certain events, there were likely more unreported cases. He emphasized that many residents do not report basement flooding. Renner highlighted the significant contribution of private connections (50%) to rainwater infiltration into the sewer system. Renner further noted that the study focused on how the sanitary sewer reacted and asked when the hydraulic study for rainwater would occur.

Director Komlanc responded that funds had already been set aside for the hydraulic modeling of stormwater tributary areas, though the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for services had not yet been issued. He explained that the upcoming improvements would be comprehensive, covering not only the relief sewer but also any roadway, water main, and stormwater infrastructure improvements needed in the selected corridor. Komlanc noted that the recommended relief sewer project was estimated at \$4.9 million and would be phased, with Phase 1 focusing on extending from the Columbus 84 trunk line to the Imperial and Agler intersection, and Phase 2 extending further to the Coronation area.

Councilmember Renner inquired whether development along Agler Road, which was delayed due to sewer issues, could proceed after Phase 2.

Director Komlanc clarified that during dry weather conditions, there were no issues with development. The challenges arose during heavy rain or groundwater infiltration events. He noted that Columbus's guidelines were followed in evaluating the capacity for each development.

Councilmember Renner followed up, asking specifically if the sewer handling issues that delayed development would be resolved by the end of Phase 2.

Director Komlanc responded that there was a section on Stygler Road that was operating at or slightly above 75% capacity, which would be addressed in Phase 1 of the project. Ms. Bland added that often in redevelopments, new sewers are installed, which do not increase rainwater flow into the system. Her team evaluated these potential developments with the model to ensure they did not cause additional backups, following the same method used by Columbus.

Councilmember Renner asked if connection to the main trunk sewer could occur before 2026.

Director Komlanc confirmed that the connection could not happen until after the first quarter of 2026.

Vice President Weaver thanked Ms. Bland and Director Komlanc for their

detailed information. He expressed appreciation for the comprehensive analysis and stated that he had no further questions at the moment. Director Komlanc offered to answer any follow-up questions if needed.

2. Requested Action Items:

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

Director Komlanc reported that the developer had extended a public water main along Morse Road, installing an 8-inch line. This line provides expanded domestic water utility service and additional fire flows in the Morse Road corridor as part of the Discovery Storage development. The infrastructure has passed all required inspections, and the Director recommended the acceptance of the public infrastructure, which includes the water main and the associated easement. Upon acceptance, the easement will be recorded with the County Recorder.

President Bowers inquired about the process by which the City determines that there has been substantial completion of the infrastructure project.

Director Komlanc explained that after the water main is installed, it must pass inspections, including chlorination and other safety checks. If there are minor punch list items, such as grass not yet grown due to drought, those are noted but do not affect the acceptance of the main infrastructure. Once the infrastructure passes inspections, it enters a one-year maintenance warranty period during which the developer holds a maintenance bond. An 11-month warranty walkthrough is conducted to ensure everything is operating correctly before final acceptance.

President Bowers asked if the inspections are handled internally or by external parties.

Director Komlanc clarified that the City hires independent third-party inspectors for private and commercial development projects, as it cannot staff for the work volume required for such inspections.

President Bowers confirmed that all inspection reports are reviewed by the City before a letter of recommendation is issued to the Council; Director Komlanc affirmed that the necessary documents are reviewed by his team.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/7/2024.

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

Director Komlanc presented updates on the Wynne Ridge Bridge project, starting with legislation related to the City's participation in the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Municipal Bridge Program. The City is partnering with ODOT, which has committed to covering 95% of the construction costs. Current estimates for the construction are at \$1.7 million, and the City would be responsible for 5% of any overage, up to the maximum allowable amount of \$1.8 million. This legislation is intended to formalize the partnership and continue the project under the Municipal Bridge Program.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/7/2024.

[RES-0034-2024](#)

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

Director Komlanc discussed the necessity and intent to appropriate real estate for right-of-way and construction easements. The City requires temporary construction easements and permanent right-of-way on four properties. Third-party agents have conducted appraisals and are managing negotiations on the City's behalf. Two of the property negotiations have been resolved, and discussions are ongoing for the remaining two. However, in order to keep the project on schedule, the City is preparing to move forward with appropriations if necessary, to ensure the project timeline remains intact.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 9/16/2024.

[ORD-0059-2024](#)

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

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/7/2024.

[ORD-0060-2024](#)

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

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/7/2024.

E. ITEMS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

1. 825 Tech Center Drive Update

[2024-0173](#)

825 Tech Center Drive Construction Update - COTW 9.9.2024

Director Schultz provided a construction update on 825 Tech Center Drive. He noted that the last update was given in mid-July and mentioned that the purchase agreement for two acres with Value Recovery Group, which Council approved the previous week, was signed. The closing is expected within the next 45 days.

Schultz shared that significant progress has been made at the 825 Tech Center site since construction began in late April or early May of 2024. The majority of the demolition work has been completed, though some tasks, such as the roof demolition, are still ongoing. The building was reduced to its studs to allow for reconstruction based on the new design. Structural reinforcement and interior wall construction are now underway, and the foundation footers and elements are mostly complete. This work clearly defines the future footprint of the building. He highlighted several key areas of the construction, including the multi-purpose room, the front lobby area (which will house City Council chambers), the basement storm shelter, and the firing range. Photos from July 2024 were shared, showing the rapid progression of the project.

In addition to the construction update, Schultz directed Council and the public to the "Facilities for the Future" section on the City's website, which contains a wealth of resources related to the project. This includes studies, presentations, and livestreams that document the need for new facilities for the Police Department, City Hall, and the Senior Center. The project page for 825 Tech Center Drive, which is regularly updated, contains an extensive list of past presentations and materials dating back to August 2022.

Director Schultz extended an invitation to any Councilmembers interested in touring the construction site. Visits are typically scheduled on Tuesday afternoons, but other times can be arranged, if necessary. He concluded by offering to take any questions related to the construction updates at 825 Tech Center Drive. There were no questions from Council at this time.

2. Requested Action Items:

[ORD-0061-2024](#)

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

Director Schultz provided an update regarding the egress plans for 825 Tech Center Drive. Initially, during the design process, the City planned to create a third egress point on the site under the existing pine trees, leading onto Tech Center Drive. However, upon further review, it was determined that a more

effective solution was to seek an easement through a neighboring property owned by American Electric Power (AEP). This easement would allow Public Safety vehicles to exit through an existing curb cut on AEP's property, designated only for emergency vehicles using lights and sirens. Director Schultz presented a draft easement for the proposed exit route, showing the location and details of the easement area. He noted that the City has been in discussions with AEP for some time, and the draft easement was reviewed and approved by City Attorney Priya Tamilarasan, with the only pending change being the removal of an indemnity clause, as public bodies cannot be indemnified. This change is currently pending approval from AEP. Schultz requested that the ordinance to accept the easement be brought back to Committee in two weeks and be moved for first reading to maintain the construction schedule. He indicated that an emergency would be requested after the second reading to expedite the process.

President Bowers asked for clarification on an alternate route that might provide direct access to Morrison Road. Schultz confirmed that while the City owns a portion of land extending towards Morrison Road, no improvements are currently planned there, and the parking lot's constraints make it unsuitable for the primary egress for the Police Department. However, the City may explore a secondary easement for future use.

President Bowers then inquired about how the driveway for the emergency egress would be separated from the main parking lot, to prevent public access. Schultz explained that a controlled gate, activated by an Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) reader, would manage access. Vehicles without proper authorization would be denied entry, and any unauthorized vehicles would be redirected to the main parking lot. A camera and intercom system would further ensure that only authorized emergency vehicles use the egress point.

President Bowers raised a concern regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety related to the multi-purpose path returning to the south side of Tech Center Drive, particularly in proximity to the area near the egress for emergency vehicles at 825 Tech Center Drive.

Director Schultz confirmed the concern and explained that there is indeed a potential pedestrian conflict, particularly with police vehicles using lights and sirens. He noted that the pedestrian path is also located on the same side of the street as the 825 Tech Center Drive property, which could help mitigate some of the conflicts between pedestrians and police vehicles exiting the property. He emphasized that pedestrians and officers alike must remain aware of potential conflicts at intersections like this.

President Bowers recalled previous discussions with Chief Spence, where it was noted that most responding police officers are typically already out in the community rather than responding from the police department, which helped alleviate some of her concerns. However, she expressed continued caution and concern about the potential conflict between cyclists, who may be

traveling at higher speeds, and police vehicles at the driveway crossing the multi-purpose path.

Director Schultz added that, by utilizing the existing driveway for egress rather than creating a new one, the City is reducing pedestrian conflicts, especially at the location near the pine trees that have since been removed. He stated that this solution is preferable to increasing confusion with an additional driveway.

When asked by President Bowers to elaborate on the challenges of using the southern parking lot for egress, referred to as "the foot," Director Schultz explained that parking at Ohio Aggregates, which is adjacent to the lot, creates additional conflicts. Vehicles park close to the lane, complicating the process of exiting the lot. Although this option may be explored in the future, it was not considered feasible for this phase of the project.

Councilmember McGregor inquired whether the egress would only be used for vehicles with lights and sirens, and if it would solely be for exiting rather than returning. Director Schultz clarified that while the egress would primarily be for emergency vehicles with lights and sirens, other marked vehicles such as police cruisers or the Chief's vehicle would also use it. Personal vehicles of officers would not use this egress, as officers park behind the building, change into their uniforms, and use the designated side door to access their police cruisers. Additionally, in cases where medics are needed on site, such as to assist individuals in holding, they would also use this access point.

Councilmember Padova asked if the entry and exit for police vehicles through the AEP parking lot would only be used for emergency vehicles or if other vehicles with lights and sirens could use it as well. She also inquired whether this would be the only entry and exit point for police vehicles from the gated parking lot.

Director Schultz clarified that while this would be a main point of access, there is a secondary parking area at the back of the facility. However, until an easement is secured with Ohio Aggregates, the police vehicles will not use that back parking lot for ingress or egress. He added that marked police vehicles would have the ability to park in the back and access the facility through the west if needed, such as during AEP maintenance work.

Councilmember Padova asked if the gated parking lot would have any other entry and exit points, and Director Schultz confirmed that there is a back parking lot, but it will not be used until the easement with Ohio Aggregates is finalized. He noted that there may be construction needed in that back lot due to the presence of a 6-inch curb.

Councilmember Padova asked about the fencing in the AEP parking lot, and Director Schultz confirmed that the AEP fenced area starts south of a specific tree island, and that the easement would end at this point, not affecting their fenced fleet vehicle area.

Councilmember McGregor inquired about future grants or considerations for the maintenance of the easement area, questioning whether the City would be responsible for the costs. Director Schultz confirmed that the City would be responsible for a proportional share of the maintenance, particularly for any paving or related work in the area covered by the easement.

President Bowers raised a concern regarding the authority to make needed improvements for emergency vehicles in the future, based on the current contract (easement) with AEP. She asked if the City had the right to make necessary changes if required for emergency vehicle access.

Director Schultz clarified that it is an easement, not a contract, and any future improvements or modifications to the easement, such as altering the driveway or shifting entrances, would require AEP's approval, just as they had approved the clearance for the utility line.

City Attorney Tamilarasan added that AEP reserved the right to approve any alterations beyond those already agreed upon. Any additional construction would require their approval.

Vice President Weaver mentioned that this item would return to the Committee in two weeks. President Bowers confirmed this, asking if it was necessary to bring the issue back to the Committee.

Director Schultz explained that the only change currently needed is the removal of an indemnification clause that AEP needs to approve, and it was scheduled to return to the Committee only to confirm that AEP had agreed to the changes.

President Bowers suggested that if no substantive changes were made after first reading, the item need not return to the Committee. However, if any substantial amendments were made, it should be revisited.

Mayor Jadwin confirmed that if a substantive change occurred, the item would come back to the Committee, but otherwise, it could proceed to the first reading with the emergency request for the second reading.

The Council agreed to move the item to first reading at the next meeting, with the understanding that it would either be brought back to the Committee or proceed to second reading depending on whether AEP approved the changes or required further adjustments.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024;
Second Reading/Emergency Adoption on Regular Agenda on 10/7/2024.**

[ORD-0062-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING TO OHIO POWER COMPANY, ITS SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS, THE RIGHT TO ACQUIRE, CONSTRUCT, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE IN THE STREETS, THOROUGHFARES, ALLEYS, BRIDGES AND PUBLIC PLACES OF

THE CITY OF GAHANNA, STATE OF OHIO, AND ITS SUCCESSORS, LINES FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC ENERGY TO THE CITY OF GAHANNA, STATE OF OHIO, AND INHABITANTS THEREOF FOR LIGHT, HEAT, POWER AND OTHER PURPOSES AND FOR THE TRANSMISSION OF THE SAME WITHIN, THROUGH OR ACROSS SAID CITY OF GAHANNA, STATE OF OHIO; AND WAIVING SECOND READING

Director Schultz presented the second item regarding the City's 25-year franchise agreement with American Electric Power (AEP) Ohio, also known as Columbus Southern Power. The current agreement, which allows the company to construct, maintain, and operate electrical lines and apparatuses within the City, is set to expire in October of 2024. The administration requested an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a new 25-year franchise agreement with AEP Ohio. Director Schultz initially requested both emergency and waiver on this item, but City Attorney Tamilarasan clarified that emergency action is not available for franchise agreements per the City's Charter. Only waiver is permitted. Director Schultz amended his request, stating that the administration is respectfully requesting an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into the 25-year franchise agreement with Columbus Southern Power, with a waiver of the second reading. The Council agreed to proceed with the waiver request, ensuring that the agreement could be adopted before the current one expires.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver of Second Reading and Adoption on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024.

F. ITEMS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY:

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

City Attorney Tamilarasan presented the updated Chapter 5 review, which included both redline and clean versions. She noted that the only substantive change since the previous version was the addition of a definition section related to adult cannabis use, as these definitions were introduced by the state. She mentioned that she had an opportunity to discuss the proposed changes with Chief Spence.

Chief Spence confirmed that they reviewed the redline version and primarily addressed cleanup language to align with the Ohio Revised Code. The main substantive changes were in section 513.02 concerning adult use cannabis. He acknowledged that the cannabis laws remain a shifting landscape with the introduction of recreational cannabis use, suggesting the potential need for future amendments as regulations evolve.

Vice President Weaver inquired whether City Attorney Tamarasan intended for the item to proceed to the first and second readings for adoption or if more discussion was needed.

City Attorney Tamarasan indicated that while she was open to more discussion and feedback, she was ready to move forward with the first reading. She reiterated that this would be a part of the routine annual review of all codes and, if necessary, would bring forward amendments in collaboration with Chief Spence.

President Bowers asked if the amendments to section B of 509.04 (disturbing a lawful meeting) followed state code amendments, to which City Attorney Tamarasan confirmed they did. President Bowers requested clarification on when those changes were made, and City Attorney Tamarasan offered to follow up with that information.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 9/16/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 10/7/2024.

G. ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL OFFICE:

[RES-0033-2024](#)

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

Councilmember Jones announced that Hispanic Heritage Month would begin on September 15 and run through October 15, 2024. A resolution has been drafted to recognize the month, which will be presented at the next council meeting. Additionally, a small group of Gahanna residents from the Hispanic and Latine community, who are also local business owners, have been invited as special guests for the presentation. The draft resolution is open for feedback and aligns with the theme for Hispanic Heritage Month, "Shaping the Future Together," which ties in with Gahanna's 175th anniversary and its forward-looking initiatives.

Vice President Weaver expressed appreciation for Councilmember Jones' efforts in drafting the resolution.

Councilmember McGregor added that the draft looks good and shared an interesting statistic: the Hispanic and Latine student population at the high school has the highest graduation success rate, although the exact number of students was not mentioned.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 9/16/2024.

H. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
day of 2024.*

Trenton I. Weaver
Chair