

# **City of Gahanna**

*200 South Hamilton Road  
Gahanna, Ohio 43230*



## **Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, October 23, 2000**

**7:45 PM**

**Council Committee Rooms**

## **Committee of the Whole**

*Rebecca W. Stinchcomb, Chairman*

*Karen J. Angelou*

*L. Nicholas Hogan*

*Thomas R. Kneeland*

*Michael O'Brien*

*Donald R. Shepherd*

*Debra A. Payne, ex officio*

**Members Absent:** L. Nicholas Hogan

**Members Present:** Debra A. Payne, Rebecca W. Stinchcomb, Thomas R. Kneeland, Donald R. Shepherd, Karen J. Angelou and Michael O'Brien

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**ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:**

Mayor McGregor, Jerry Isler, Raleigh Mitchell, Karl Wetherholt, Tom Komlanc, Col. Hall, Tom Weber; Press; Visitors - Jack Kirkpatrick, Ron Piehler, Tom Gyde, Debbie Vogepohl; J.R. Thomas, Gary Palatos, Glen Dugger.

**ISSUES - Visitors Present:**

**Franklin County Emergency Management - J. R. Thomas, Director**

J.R. Thomas, Director Emergency Management Agency, was present and presented background information about EMA. Thomas said EMA is a community wide, county wide organization that originally started out as a nuclear war type agency. Now, above and beyond the maintenance of sirens and helping cities with their disaster plans, they work with hazardous materials units and provide exercises for cities to participate in; 20 over the last several years; they control outdoor warning sirens; what takes place to recover if a tornado touches down; planning for the entire county; provide template for the City to fill in. They get the police and fire departments and cities together with the Red Cross and utilities; how react as a community. They do not write disaster plans for a City. Gahanna did benefit from a grant that EMA received from the Department of Justice to obtain SWAT gear. They have not been able to get a community specific plan organized for Gahanna.

Concerning the sirens, there are 5 in Gahanna; 4 are the new electronic sirens with tone activation, voice capability and battery backup; used to work off electric and power lines, but we all know they have outages. In 1998 they were changing the sirens to move over to the new system, and were encouraging communities that had old sirens to upgrade; the siren at Stygler and Agler was one of those, and Joe Spanovich, Chairman Mifflin Trustees, was aware that that siren was going to be cut off. Thomas apologized to the Mayor that EMA did not notify him that it would be cut off. The area to the north has not been covered since 1998. Council members related that would be the areas of Stygler Road, College Park, and Heritage. Thomas continued that the EMA maintains sirens, but they do not purchase them; that is the responsibility of the community.

Payne said if we pull our sirens with EMA we will have to come up with someone else to maintain them. Mayor said we are already working on that with Metro Tele Com. Angelou said that it should be our siren and we should take care of it. Committee discussed the circled areas showing how the areas of Gahanna are covered by the existing sirens. Stinchcomb said there are some areas in Gahanna that are not in the radius of any circled area. She also has serious concerns about this lapse in service to a large chunk of Gahanna; must be serviced properly; also has concern with hiring a new employee.

Mayor said we need to look at the entire system and decide what is best. The voice sirens rotate so you can only understand them when they are pointed at you. He is evaluating the whole situation. A contractor to perform maintenance with EMA drove across one of our soccer fields and left big ruts in the field; there was a gravel driveway

very close that could have been used; City would have worked with them, but they were unresponsive. Mayor continued that Dublin manages their own system; there is advantage not to be part of the county EMA. We have a chance to get a person who spent his whole career in emergency management who is retired and a citizen of Gahanna, who cares what happens in Gahanna. He wants General Williams to make a full study of the entire system and come back to us and explain what we need to have an A plus system.

Thomas said that Dublin is still a member of EMA; have not withdrawn; they use their system for other things since have voice; they use for Muirfield and for things like announcing watering bans. He feels it should only be used in extreme emergency situations.

Mayor said he is not prepared to renew with EMA, and is not prepared to ask Council permission to renew; much better to have Gen. Williams in the position for 12 to 14 months half time. Wayne Howard has done an excellent job keeping our disaster plan up to date, but it is too much for him with all of his police duties. We need the General to coordinate with other agencies also.

O'Brien said there are two separate issues; we need the General for expertise as we move forward in developing our disaster plan; no hesitation to support hiring him, but it is premature to end our relationship with EMA; perhaps one year from now, but not yet.

Angelou discussed payments over the last 7 years of \$90,000 to \$95,000 with approximately \$12,000 a year as our proportionate share, and \$5,000 for sirens; what service are we truly getting. Mayor said we are not getting much for our dollars.

Thomas said they have not been tooting their own horns, but do a lot; help cities with disaster plans; providing exercises after plan is in place to see how it functions; work thru major incidents; mutual aid in getting equipment from other cities if necessary. They are now sending out a newsletter, and they have helped the City get grant money.

Angelou said there has definitely been a lack of communication here; need more communication between the agencies. Mayor said he does not feel comfortable with our current alarm system; circles not correlate with reality; EMA is not maintaining one and cannot drive across another. Angelou said that EMA should have come back to negotiate access to the Headley siren. Mayor said we need a complete and full study, not just circles drawn; that is not acceptable. Mayor feels we can do much better ourselves on maintenance with Metro TeleCom and they can handle the technical with radio frequencies. We are planning a brand new communications center and this will fit right in.

Payne said again, she is concerned with us separating too quickly. Angelou said she wants to know who sets off the sirens if we are not with EMA. Stinchcomb said she feels we should stay with EMA for a while; not totally withdraw; go ahead with General get a recommendation from our own person. She also stated that she cannot hear a siren where she lives; not in Rathburn Woods. It was pointed out that there are also other older areas of Gahanna that are not covered. Mayor thanked Thomas for taking responsibility for the Stygler/Agler siren, but he sees EMA as classic bureaucracy in action directly accountable to no one, and unresponsive. Angelou reiterated that she still does not know who would engage the sirens. Mayor said we would ignite them; we can do that. Angelou said what if we have nothing in place and have a disaster; 4 sirens is better than none. Mayor we would ignite them.

Col. Hall said he agrees with the Mayor; how many areas are not covered; they decide what we are going to pay; we can electronically fire off sirens, we can do that from the Police Station or the Mayor's office. Stinchcomb questioned liability issues.

Weber said he has a legal question. The Mayor has already given notice that as of the first of the year the City will not be using the services of EMA. Mayor said he does not feel comfortable rescinding his letter to withdraw; not receiving adequate protection. Stinchcomb suggested bringing on the General, give EMA six months notice, not renew with EMA, just not cancel so quickly. Angelou said someone has to buy a siren; how much does one cost? Someone said it would be \$18,000 installed. (Several conversations going on at once.) Discussion on the contract being from 1988 and being outdated. Col. said that we have repaired the siren and are ready to put it up at the Moose Lodge, but they will not hook it up. Mayor said this would better cover the area; but they will not hook it up.

It was agreed that Thomas and the Mayor would enter into discussion; Mayor to voluntarily rescind his letter on a temporary basis, and try to reach some agreement to come back to Council at the Nov. 13th Committees.

### **Creekside Plan**

White said the Slum and Blight Study has been recommended by legal counsel and Development Committee recommended that it be on for first reading Nov. 6th. She continued that Creekside as now proposed would concentrate on the west side revitalization. This is down from the 22 million discussed. We believe we can embrace 10 million or 11 million thru bonding, without strapping the finances of the City; she has identified speculative avenues to pay it back. How we divide up the land will also figure in the payback; more land dedicated for public use, such as parks, payback would be in use by the public; or economic return with commercial sale or lease of property with generation of revenue. She is recommending that CIC actually become the agent that would hold the bonds and properties and work with developers. With the 10 million the canal would not be extended; not cross Mill Street, but terminate there; but could come at a later date. She feels we should focus on property acquisition, and related key properties that would produce the critical mass for the creation of future development. Critical mass properties are NAPA, Clark Station, the apartment building (Leithart) and Summerfields. We already have the Fire Station, Best Courier and the Post Office; do not own Janis's. She continued that we want to focus on bringing people to Creekside all year around; think ice skating in the winter can help accomplish that and it would be simple to do. They would add a manmade extension to the canal and put chilling tubes in the concrete liner; summer boats and winter ice skating; would be the only outdoor ice skating venue in the area. The hotel would still be the critical anchor. We will need the infrastructure with related flood walls and excavation. If this plan is adopted everything will have to come back thru Planning Commission and Council for more specificity; right now still conceptual.

Angelou said if it works as the catalyst that we expect, we would still have the ability to extend to the other side of Mill Street. White addressed several options that would be possible in the future. The Sanctuary is booked for over a year in advance; a Convention Center would be wonderful.

White continued that this proposal does not include a parking garage; parking study also suggested we obtain surface parking; can have approximately 100 spaces underneath the hotel, and are looking at a piece of land where we could do 75 to 100 more parking spaces. We are also working on a COTA link to help control traffic for mass transit. Kneeland asked about a time frame for bonding.

White said possibly the first 6 months of 2001.

Jack Kirkpatrick said he is concerned about the quality of the water in the Mill Race; it is brown, not clean and clear; not attractive. He continued to speak about putting in a well and pumping fresh clean water; 50,000 gallons for aesthetics; EPA not permit. He feels water is a wonderful attraction, but Council has been misguided as to how to use it. He also spoke to the ice skating rink and said people do not want to skate at the bottom of a trough; people would have to look over the edge; doesn't add anything; suggest it might not be appropriate for our area.

Stinchcomb said when San Antonio built the Riverwalk the water was very clean and they made it muddier; people did not want to see the bottom of the canal; looks more natural. White said the area is in the 100 year flood and referenced elevations, and the necessity of the floodwall. She also explained that the proposed ice skating venue would be very wide and people would not have to look over the sides and down to see ice skaters. Council members also assured Kirkpatrick that Creekside is a conceptual plan that will keep changing; that is what a concept plan is; it will continue to change and not be set in stone; will be spurred by the economic development.

Ron Piehler said he is tired of hearing about San Antonio; 38,000 people in Gahanna, cannot compare to San Antonio. He asked if Urban Spaces has done smaller projects, for cities more the size of Gahanna. Council members said they definitely have done smaller projects; San Antonio is just the one that is most visible.

Tom Gyde said first he would like to apologize to Council if the comments he made last week seemed to speak to a lack of integrity of Council members. He questioned Al Groves not being able to reference information he asked for in conversation last week; cannot compare Gahanna to Kansas City or Indianapolis. He asked how what goes in at Creekside can be controlled. Council and White said that it can be controlled by zoning. White said we can also control by the City owning the property. Discussion with several conversations going on at once.

White said that Council has to adopt the Conceptual Plan before we can get financing to go ahead.

Recommendation: 1st Reading, Consent Agenda, Conceptual Plan.

Kirkpatrick asked about lighting in the Sanctuary parking lot that was promised and never installed. Mayor will check on that.

#### ORD-0243-2000

TO ACCEPT THE FINAL PLAT FOR PROPERTY KNOWN AS WOODMERE PLACE; BROOKWOOD CONSTRUCTION CO., INC., APPLICANT

Glen Dugger asked that this be postponed until the November 20, 2000 meeting. He will be working with the Mayor to resolve some necessary issues.

**Recommended for Postponement to a Date Certain**

#### **ISSUES - Carried Over from Previous Meeting:**

##### **Hamilton Road Widening (Discussion based on Public Meeting held 9/26/00 & Planning Commission Recommendations)**

This will be carried over to the November 13, 2000 Committee of the Whole.

##### **Morse Road Right of Way (From Committee of the Whole 9/25/00)**

Wetherholt introduced Gary Palatas and Dave Pierceson from the Franklin County Engineers Office who presented Council with map showing Corporation lines for Gahanna, Columbus, and New Albany and boundary lines for Jefferson and Plain Townships, in an effort to show which portions of Morse Road are in which City or Township; divided into segments by colors. They would like to get different areas in one jurisdiction. There are 5 developers coming in in this area and they would like to get these lines worked out so it is not so confusing. Glen Dugger is also helping with this and he said that before he and the engineers did a lot of work on this he felt it was best to come to Gahanna and see if we would agree with their proposal.

Palatas continued segment between Hamilton and Cherrybottom, the south curb lane is in Gahanna, and the pavement is in Columbus; Hamilton to Johnstown, the south half is in Gahanna and the north is unincorporated, Plain Township; East of 62 Gahanna has the south half and Columbus has the north half, and the Franklin County Engineer maintains it.

To get the areas into one jurisdiction they are proposing that east of Hamilton would all be in Gahanna, and west of Hamilton would be in Columbus. They would ask Columbus to de annex from Johnstown to Reynoldsburg New Albany, and Gahanna to de annex from Cherrybottom to Hamilton.

Angelou asked why we would want to give up roadway that we just spent \$1 million on to improve the intersection. Discussion followed concerning plowing snow and maintenance of the road, and the widening of Morse Road to 3 and possibly 5 lanes.

If Columbus is willing to de annex the portion from Johnstown Road to Reynoldsburg New Albany Road and Gahanna can have the right of way, and if Gahanna can have the right of way, up to 50', for the property north of Morse but still in the township, then it would be reasonable and Gahanna would consider it. There was discussion that Columbus would probably give Gahanna the right of way. It was asked about the property controlled by the New Albany Company.

Dugger is to come back to Council with information about the right of way at the Nov. 13th Committees.

Palatas said this would have to be accomplished in phases.

### **Hannah Property Residence (From Service Committee 9/25/00)**

This will be carried over to the November 13, 2000 Committee of the Whole.

### **Chapter 505 - Animals & Fowl (From Safety Committee of 9/25/00 - Review legislation and be prepared to discuss on November 13, 2000)**

#### **PENDING LEGISLATION**

##### **ORD-0250-2000**

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION - Gas & Oil

**Recommended for Adoption, Consent**

##### **ORD-0251-2000**

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION - Parts

**Recommended for Adoption, Consent**

##### **ORD-0252-2000**

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION - Garage Mechanic

This will be carried over to the November 13, 2000 Committees.

**Recommended for Postponement to a Date Certain**

**ORD-0253-2000**

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION - Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission

This will be carried over to the November 13, 2000 Committees.

**Recommended for Postponement to a Date Certain**

**ORD-0254-2000**

TO CREATE THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT; FOR THE PERIOD OF 14 MONTHS BEGINNING NOVEMBER 1, 2000 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2001; TO ESTABLISH COMPENSATION THEREFOR; TO SUPPLEMENTALLY APPROPRIATE FUNDS THEREFOR; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY

**Recommended for Adoption, Consent**

**ISSUES:**

**Contract with Urban Spaces**

Mayor expressed his concern that the project is moving into engineering functions, and we are not even reviewing the plans; moving from Development to Engineering. Council said that they had pushed Groves to move ahead, but he has gone farther than expected; will pay the bill and then nothing further without Engineering approval; \$140,000.

Recommendation: 1st Reading, Consent; back to Committee.

**School Compensation Agreement**

White said this can wait; do not have final figures anyway; just wanted Council to be informed.

**Donna Jernigan, CMC/AAE, Deputy Clerk of Council**