

Mayor's Report & Comments
City of Gahanna
Regular Council Meeting – June 15, 2020
Mayor Laurie A. Jadwin

In light of the virtual meeting aspect of tonight's Regular Council Meeting, I respectfully submit the following report from the Mayor's Office for Monday, June 15, 2020:

City Operations

- *Re-openings:*
 - City Hall is currently open to the public on an appointment-only basis. City Hall will fully re-open City Hall to the public on Monday, July 6. Protocols have been established for visitors to follow when entering any city facility. Please note that some services will be changed in how they are offered, to minimize risk of virus spread. Please consult Gahanna.gov for details on protocols and services. Many thanks to Miranda Vollmer, HR Director, for her extensive work in researching and developing these critical guidelines, and to Grant Crawford, Director of Public Service & Engineering, for his work and the work of his team in implementing alterations to the building to best protect the safety of our team members and the public.
 - The Gahanna Senior Center is still closed to the public per Governor DeWine's *Responsible Restart Ohio* plan. To date, there has been no indication as to when senior centers will be able to re-open. Programming for the Senior Center will continue to be conducted online and through "drive up" activities that protect the safety of our most vulnerable residents.
 - Playgrounds opened on June 10. Basketball courts are still closed per state order. Park shelter houses (including the Gahanna Golf Course Clubhouse) will open on July 1. A formal communication with details will be shared on social media later this week.
- *Youth Programming:*
 - The Dept. Parks & Recreation is offering revised youth programming in light of restrictions due to coronavirus. Options include a "camp crate," virtual camps, and in-person options that follow day-camp mandates. Registration opened today, June 15; Programs begin July 6. For more information: ExploreGahannaParks.com.
 - Paddleboats and kayaks have opened at both Friendship Park and the Creekside Marina. To reserve a session and pay online, go to: PaddleGahanna.com.
 - The 2020 Story Trail opened at Friendship Park on Friday, June 5, with a virtual Facebook Live ribbon cutting contest. This is the 9th year for the Trail, which is the

product of a strong collaboration between the Gahanna branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library and our Parks & Recreation Department.

- *Fourth of July Festivities Re-imagined:*
 - In light of the postponement of Fourth of July fireworks to Labor Day weekend, the Parks & Recreation team is organizing several activities that will enable the community to celebrate Independence Day in ways that are compliant with the safety protocols that are in place. These include holding “drive-in” concerts at several locations around the City. We invite the community to share their ideas for activities by sending an email to: Mayors.Office@gahanna.gov.

Staffing Updates

- Earlier this year, Russ Sims, Streets & Utilities Superintendent, announced his plans to retire this summer. Russ has served as Superintendent in the Public Service Department for 22 years, and has been a committed and compassionate servant of Gahanna residents. His last day with the City will be July 1. We are sad to see Russ leave us, but wish him the very best in his retirement and thank him for his years of dedication to Gahanna.
- In anticipation of Russ’ retirement, we welcome Joe Pederson to our team as the new Streets & Utilities Superintendent. Joe, a long-time Gahanna resident, brings more than 30 years of experience in the public works field, having previously served in supervisory roles in Westerville, Hilliard and, most recently, Dublin. Today is Joe’s first day with the City; we are excited to have him as part of our team.
- Finance Analyst Chance Shannon recently left the City to accept a new position as Associate Director of Business Solutions with the Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio. We wish Chance well in his new endeavors and look forward to working with him in his new capacity. A job description/advertisement for a Finance/Management Analyst will be posted on the City’s website.

Ongoing Projects

- *Re-Opening Gahanna:*

The City is partnering with the Gahanna Area Chamber of Commerce, Visit Gahanna, and the Gahanna Community Improvement Corporation to harness and align resources to best support our Gahanna businesses as they endeavor to re-open and recover from the COVID-19 shutdown. In partnership with the Chamber, a business survey recently was sent to more than 400 businesses within Gahanna, seeking to identify how the City and its partner organizations can best support them. We are in the process of evaluating and implementing several programs in partnership with these organizations, based on the identified needs of the businesses.

- *Creekside Project:*
Survey field work has been completed. Geotechnical testing and structural evaluation are ongoing. We anticipate receiving a report from the consultant company within the next month.

- *Street Project:*
The 2020 Street Program has begun, with rebuilds of Clemson and Oberlin Drives. We anticipate that the project will be completed on schedule. The next phase of the street rebuild program will begin, pending the work schedule of Columbus Gas. Work on Research and Blatt Boulevards should begin within the next month. In the meantime, resurfacing projects are underway.

- *Root Control Program:*
The 2020 Root Control Program is underway. This annual program, which costs approximately \$20,000 annually, focuses on treating roots that protrude into sewer line to reduce potential for blockages. This year's program is focused on the College Park and Gramercy neighborhoods.

General Announcements

- *Protests/Demonstrations:*
Over the last two weeks, we have witnessed hurt, frustration, anger and sadness throughout the country and in our city. The Gahanna community has responded with its heart – through meaningful and peaceful demonstrations, walks and protests that were, in many cases, supported by and conducted in collaboration with our Gahanna Police Dept.

- *Unity Gathering:*
We would like to thank Rev. Dr. Joel King, Jr., Dr. Victor Davis, Pastor Mark Condon, and Public Safety Director Keith Winn for their participation and input in leading the Unity Gathering that was held on Thursday, June 4, at Creekside Plaza. Their words and selfless sharing of experiences were inspirational, and we look forward to working with them to heal the hurt in our black and brown communities in Gahanna.

- *Community Partnerships:*
 - GRIN and Neighborhood Bridges continue to partner together for food collection at GLHS every Tuesday through June and July, from 3 -6 p.m.

 - GJPS is partnering with GRIN to provide FREE lunches for Gahanna students and families in need, from June 1 - August 7. They can be picked up at Middle School West, 350 N. Stygler Rd. and at Goshen Lane Elementary, 370 Goshen Lane.