



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Committee of the Whole

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Trenton I. Weaver, Chair
Karen J. Angelou
Merisa K. Bowers
Nancy R. McGregor
Kaylee Padova
Stephen A. Renner
Michael Schnetzer

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, April 10, 2023

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 7:04 p.m. The agenda was published on April 10, 2023. All members were present for the meeting. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. DISCUSSIONS:

1. Sidewalk Maintenance Program Update

Director Komlanc updated Council on the 2022 program. Approximately a month ago, the city noticed residents in the revised 2022 program area of their defects and associated scope of work and probable cost for corrective action. About 65 resident inquiries have been logged. Most were related to not having enough time to procure a contractor to get multiple quotes and entering into a contract, as well as get the construction underway pursuant to Section 521.06, granting 105 days for the overall completion. Given this feedback from residents, at the March 27, 2023, meeting, Komlanc recommended a pause of the program to give property owners additional time to contact contractors, get quotes, contact the city for questions related to the panels marked as defective, and identify what options are otherwise available. The intent going forward is to continue with the 2022 program, giving residents more time to get a contract if they wish to opt out and perform the work themselves. Otherwise, the city will move forward with bidding a contract to pursue the work, advertising the work in January or February 2024 and the work occurring in the spring/summer of 2024. The city engaged in a third-party consultant, Cole, to do a city-wide assessment. It is anticipated to get a pilot of the information in the next month. This will do a quality assurance control check on the field inspections versus what the data is presenting from the 3D laser scan. Mayor Jadwin said that the contractor from Cole has already been out on the Segway. Komlanc said that next Friday the mobile street pavement rating vendor will be conducting the assessment of the pavement rating, capturing that data and having it available to make more informative decisions moving forward with the street repair/maintenance and sidewalk maintenance programs that coincide with one another.

Councilmember Bowers wants to make sure she understands that for the 2022 Sidewalk Program Council previously voted to reduce scope of the parcels. What he is saying to Council is that the timeline and the deadline for that scope is being lengthened. Komlanc said that is correct. Bowers said there is no action that is required from Council because that is just administrative determination. Komlanc said that is correct. Bowers said the work that is being done by Cole now is so there will be some type of raw data within a month or two. Komlanc said likely mid-May to evaluate against the filed inspections that were previously done. Bowers asked if there is a sense of what the sidewalk maintenance program area scope would be for the next cycle. Komlanc said that they can take some of the balance of what was previously envisioned for the 2022 program and utilize it. The information from Cole can be utilized, as well as an evaluation of proximity to schools and parks and prioritize based off location. The information citywide will be available to make more informed decisions, as well as pairing it up with the street maintenance and street reconstruction activities. Bowers said one of the discussion items from the last Committee of the Whole meeting was expanded opportunities or vehicles for greater affordability for residents. She asked if he anticipated that being a future discussion that will come forward to Council. Komlanc said the city is looking at best practices of peer communities. They will come back with a recommendation that could potentially be code modifications or policy updates.

Mayor Jadwin said to go back to how we got here, as many residents do not understand, there was a finding issued against the City in October of 2019 under the prior administration. The finding from the federal government issued against the city was for not having ADA compliant sidewalks. Her first day in office, she found out the city's answer to that finding was due the following week. An answer had to be put together and then the city had to work with the federal government to produce a plan as to how the city was going to address sidewalk maintenance. That led to 18 months of trying to come up with a program. There were multiple workshops with Council working through different options, everything from sidewalk code violations to a potential sidewalk maintenance program, and how those would mesh or not mesh. It culminated into the present sidewalk program. She believed it was adopted in June 2021. It was intended to be an affordability tool for residents to be able to keep up with the state mandated responsibility that sidewalk maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner. When the 2021 program was rolled out, it went through a cycle from beginning to end that we would not know the consequences. We knew we were going to have to go back and tweak what was working and what was not, such as the timeframes. This is what we are seeing now with the first cycle going through. Now, it is going back and understanding that there are some things that need addressed. The timelines that were set forth in code are significant problem and exacerbated by the growth happening in the region. She appreciated the flexibility of Council to extend those deadlines to allow residents more time to make a fully informed decision on whether to opt in or opt out. At the last meeting, Councilmember McGregor asked about the five-year assessment and if five years should be extended. Having the opportunity to examine that, keeping in mind what the spirit of the program was for it to be an affordability tool for residents, and using Issue 12 dollars to put toward that to help, is part of this. This will help create a sustainable program for the city to be able to continue for years to come.

Bowers said that they are talking specifically about the sidewalk maintenance program and expanding and extending deadlines that were originally created because the city has better information about the timeline process. Bowers asked if Cole would help better identify, better collect data around code violations to manage that differently? Komlanc said the information obtained from the Cole technology will indicate where

there are ADA defects that otherwise need corrective action. We will have that baseline citywide, and where there are issues, there will be the opportunity to take corrective action. Bowers asked if the city is considering extending the compliance timeframe for residents who are subject to a code violation who are not in a program area. Komlanc could not speak directly to that; however, he would say that similar flexibility is given to a resident who receives a citation. They will receive ample time, as long as they are showing a good faith effort and taking steps to get a contractor to have the work performed as opposed to not having any progress being made. From the code enforcement side things, he believed that would be the approach. Mayor Jadwin said that the code enforcement division has taken the approach, in consultation with the city attorney, that as long as the resident who receives a citation is in communication with code enforcement and is working toward trying to find a contractor and exhibiting good faith, the city will continue to stay connected with them and allow them some flexibility. Some of the contractors are not up to date on what Gahanna code does or does not require. Making sure those contractors know what Gahanna code says is important.

Councilmember Padova thanked the administration for the updates and history of the projects. She asked how the information from Cole was going to be delivered and how the city can use it to help plan. How can the city help the residents plan to know that if they have an issue with their sidewalk? They could be in the sidewalk program in four or five years. Can they start to plan for that themselves rather than having to be in the sidewalk program? She knew that some of the neighborhoods have taken it upon themselves to get together to fix some of their sidewalks. If they could be encouraged to do that, or give them the tools to be able to know that and see that, is there a plan for using the data to do that? Komlanc responded that the information is a GIS deliverable and geo-referenced. It is anticipated to get a pilot deliverable of a target area in May. They will evaluate the deliverables regarding its capabilities of producing on a parcel-by-parcel basis what the defects are, as well as from intersections to have a comprehensive understanding of how profound a particular issue is on a particular roadway to make informed decisions. Is it best to reconstruct the entire facility because a vast majority of sidewalk in that area has significant defects or the condition of the sidewalk itself is in disrepair? Now is the opportune time to take corrective action and build a brand-new pedestrian accommodating facility that meets ADA requirements to the extent practical.

Councilmember McGregor said that code sets forth deadlines, and once they issued a letter, that set-in motion deadlines that the city had to meet. Staff has since rescinded the letter, so now there are no deadlines in place. At some point in the future, they will issue another letter which will set deadlines from that point. McGregor asked if staff foresees a time where code needs changed so that the deadlines are different. Komlanc said yes. McGregor asked if there is a way to know if someone in a certain area might have mobility issues, such as maybe they are blind or have a child with a wheelchair they walk with. She proposed targeting those areas first if the city is choosing the area. In her neighborhood, there is a wheelchair bound child. When the city did the ADA ramps, they did the neighborhood first because that facilitated his mom walking him all over the neighborhood. Could something like that be considered? Komlanc said it is a great consideration, and it is a matter of having the data regarding where those individuals reside to make that informed decision related to where the city otherwise puts those dollars first.

President Renner wanted to follow up on when neighborhoods may be getting together to do the work. He is aware that some residents are downloading the city program and taking an active interest and wanting to do it. His mantra is "talk to the city." He wants

them to make sure that if they go as far as getting a contractor, have the contractor talk to the city. The City of Columbus has sidewalk specification sheets available for downloading. He asked if the city has the specification sheets available. Komlanc said the city follows the City of Columbus standard detail drawings as it relates to sidewalks and references those within the city standard specifications.

Councilmember Angelou said schools were mentioned as a consideration. Are the schools going to be first because of all the children being around, as well as Creekside? Komlanc said that he believes that having the information in a GIS format and understanding where schools, parks, places of worship, etc., and where the city would like to weight areas due to proximity, the city will have the capability of doing that.

2. Capital Improvement Plan

[2023-0067](#)

COTW 4.10.2023 CIP Presentation

Senior Director of Operations Kevin Schultz shared a document overview of the 2023 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) (attached). Schultz shared the process of the CIP will help the administration and Council make informed decisions about how capital dollars should be spent. A CIP is intended to identify plan, prioritize all major investments that support the city core functions. Those core functions are defined as city infrastructure, roads, bridges, utility infrastructure, parks and recreation facilities, and equipment that might be used to lift a truck or respond from a public safety standpoint. The CIP looks similar to the Capital Needs Assessments (CNA). The CNA was a collection of projects. It lacks the sufficient detail to be a guiding document that gives administration and Council the ability to make informed decisions related to capital improvements throughout the city. Capital maintenance is a big part of the CIP. It is about taking care of existing infrastructure and existing assets that the city has. Given the condition of some of those assets throughout the city, this is maybe more important than the new stuff. The CIP identifies projects that are already vetted, identified, prioritized in many of the plans the city has. The Go Forward Gahanna Plan only goes back to 2016, and anyone involved in that plan knew the strategic work that it took in order to put that plan together and identify the needs, wants, desires of the community from a strategic standpoint. There are different projects identified from that, as well as the Land Use Plan, the Thoroughfare Plan, the ADA Transition Plan relating to sidewalks, and the Parks Master Plan. The Parks Master Plan did a community survey that informed the CIP as to what should be in it and what specific years and specific capacities were to meet those needs, wants and desires of the residents as it related to quality life issues around parks and recreation. Most of the plans listed in the presentation have some type of public engagement component. They do community surveys, focus groups, community engagements, that all inform the CIP. The plan categorizes the different projects into six different categories. There is transportation and mobility, which is roads, bridges, and pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalk). Utility systems are water storm sewers, and sanitary sewers. Parks and Recreation includes playground equipment and surfacing, parks and trails, improvements to parks and trails, pool infrastructure, and street tree program. City facilities includes 825 Tech Center Drive, Creekside, and Creekside garage. Equipment includes police equipment and the radios. The technology program includes city servers, storage area for those, and the fiber network. If you are familiar with the CNAs, you are familiar with the project priorities. Building upon the CNAs that everyone was familiar with reading and utilizing over the years, the project priorities document comes with some additional guidance.

Schultz explained that the CIP Advisory Committee can use the ratings to properly prioritize projects into the various categories. Priority one, or must do items, is essential. Priority two is items the city should do. Priority three items are those that the city would like to do. After that are items that the city would like to have. There is also the capital maintenance item. This is where the complexity of the document really begins to be shown. It has all the priorities. As to priority one, must do items, such as police radio network and radios, the state is making some changes to their radio network and the radios must be able to communicate when a police officer or emergency responder is in a situation. They must be upgraded. This is a document should consistently change and be updated for things like priority. Budgeting and scheduling on the CIP are paramount to the success of the plan. The city has limited resources to do a lot of work. How does the city prioritize year-to-year to maximize the resources available in order to upgrade core infrastructure and get the benefits out of Issue 12 and other capital funds for residents to begin to see those benefits? The city wants to avoid placing undue limitations on the resources that could be used for other projects. In the CNA days, the city would tie up some funds because we would say the project was going to cost a million dollars to do, and it wasn't necessarily ready to start. That project could have been for two or three years out. This plan identifies those projects and puts them in the right place and allocates funds appropriately and doesn't tie up those funds. The Capital Budget is the annual budget Council approves with the operating budget. When the 2024 Capital Budget is presented, those items will be directly from this plan. Besides the capital funds from Issue 12, there are the special revenue funds that have proprietary funds, water and sewer fees that are assessed. Other local funding sources, such as special assessments, the business improvement district, private grants, or donations, could also be part of this. There are TIFs and grant funding. Section two of the plan identifies the advisory committee as the governing body of the plan. The committee is made up of the Mayor, Council President, Council Finance Chair, Senior Director Vollmer, Senior Deputy Director Wybensinger, Finance Director Bury and Schultz. The stakeholders are the department heads that would bring projects to the advisory committee for review and incorporation into the document before bringing it forward to Council for adoption of the plan and approval of the priorities set by the committee.

The plan process continues with assessing and prioritizing each of the projects. The departments assess a project. They put together a worksheet and justification of the project. They submit that project to the committee. Vollmer, Wybensinger, and Schultz vet the projects. Then, they present the project to the advisory committee for incorporation into the plan and/or for discussion. If it continues through the process, it comes to Council for action. Council incorporates those projects into the CIP. Then, ultimately that project should follow all of the procurement and legislative processes of Council. Chief Spence is bringing forward today a request for radios. This is a requirement of the procurement policy that Council adopted. Just because it is in the CIP does not mean they can just be bought. The procurement policies and the legislative policies must be followed when they meet certain thresholds.

Capital Maintenance suggests a minimum allocation towards maintenance. This is one of the biggest challenges the city currently has. The deferred maintenance on the infrastructure that the city has had for many years has not just gone away. We would expect to see in the first few years a lopsided capital maintenance allocation inside of the plan. We would also see lopsided priority one items inside of the plan. There is a lot of work that needs done that would rise to the level of either capital maintenance by definition and/or priority one items that need addressed more immediately. It shifts the city from a reactive to a proactive model. In past years, the city was very reactive to

capital maintenance. Dedicated Issue 12 dollars have made it possible to be more proactive with capital maintenance. The city should replace fire hydrants every 50 years. It creates predictable maintenance schedules and expenses as opposed to how many we should replace versus how many we can replace. At some point, you start back at the beginning. You are just continuing to do the work and are no longer bogged down by the massive amount of work that might need to be done.

Schultz said project expiration is outlined in the plan. There are a variety of reasons that a project could be stalled, and not necessarily a product of staff or resources. At some point in time, for whatever reason, it just has not come to fruition. Maybe there are other ideas or other ways to approach a problem that are cost prohibitive, and we studied it and it came back as a bigger fix than we originally thought. At some point, we may have tied up the funds for the project that were never released and we want to study it some more. We might remove those funds from that allocation in many instances, such as when a project is completely stalled, one that has not seen any progress for over 24 months or more. A project that is actively being built might take three or four years to build is considered an active project. Those resources are not subject to the project expiration. It frees up financial resources to be used to address other priorities and critical needs that are necessary. The project timeline talks about a 20-year capital plan. One of the items included is prior year appropriations. Council will be able to identify those items easily. Just because a plan item or a project was identified in 2023 and started in 2023 does not mean it will not be seen in 2024 or 2025. Council will still see projects that were completely funded in 2022 for 2023. They will see the project and the status updates of that project inside of the plan. For the 2023 Capital Improvement Plan, it has the current five years which is 2023 to 2027. These items are largely ready to go or in the implementation phase. The scope of the project has been properly identified, as well as budgets and contingencies. In year one of a project, the city may be looking to do a study of a particular sewer system or area of sewers. It will be studied, and they will get a good, better, best scenario that comes back, and they will add it into the CIP. Working down into the plan years, it is a little less detailed. For the years 2028 to 2032, or phase one, these projects are largely in a planning and assessment phase. It is underway. It is being understood and developed but the budget is based on best known information. It is based on what the cost is in 2023. In 2028, what will the project really cost? There could be significant differences. For 2033 to 2037, or phase two, there are items that are being considered for the CIP. We know we are going to need to address certain items. It is being considered for the CIP but the budget lacks certainty and how much it will cost in 2033. The last five years, or the 20-year mark, consists of just visionary-type projects. They lack a fully defined scale and scope of the project. The advisory committee is struggling with beyond 2038. It is a challenge. Using the community center as an example, do we want to put that in year 16, 17 or 18 of the CIP? It is one of the bigger, more resource intensive projects that have been identified. When looking at the Parks Master Plan as an example, the need and the community desire for a community center, it is hard to get it into phase three of the plan. If that project doesn't fall into phase three, it is hard to figure out another project that does. There needs to be further conversation in phase three, years 16 through 20.

Schultz showed that sections four through nine includes category goals and objectives and gives a project summary listing. The projects are listed in three different sections. This is the first time you see project specific information. Inside of each section is the project number, project name, priority, the start year, duration, and budgetary estimate. Section 10 is the detailed project listings and detailed project worksheets. This is where you will see the cost allocations and budget estimates from year-to-year, including what was encumbered in previous years, what you expect to see in 2023

forward, to the total amount of the project. The advisory committee talked about having a secondary project listing worksheet where Council would be able to see exactly which funds were impacted by each project. A project could be using Issue 12 money out of the capital funds but could also be using water proprietary funds or TIF funds to totally fund a project. It would not show how those funds were being distributed across the variety of funds. The detailed worksheet does show that information. It gives the project priority, cost, duration, and gives an overview of the project. There are lines for planning and assessment work. Council will be able to see how a project is constructed in all of its parts and pieces as opposed to one single line. It also includes the funding sources being utilized. The example showed the encumbered amount of money from last year and the money being used from the 2023 budget. There is a project worksheet for all projects that are within the first five years of the plan itself. The next steps and updates are included for each project. If there are any modifications, additions, or deletions, this information will be included. The document will be updated from year to year.

In term of next steps, Schultz explained this as continuing working on program development for those programs that need to inform the CIP. The continued work plan development is talked about in two different ways. From a Parks & Recreation standpoint, the master plan process they went through walked through their work program and how that work program needed to be developed and what those budget estimates should be. They identified 70 to 80 different projects for a variety of years. There are good budgetary numbers for replacing playgrounds or adding trails. They are developing the budget worksheets for every project. The Engineering Department has in their program development good worksheets, but they are working on the budgetary and engineering estimates for each project. The worksheets in the CNA have been incorporated into the CIP with updates to the budgetary numbers. All the projects need prioritized and a budget analysis needs completed. There are limited funds and need to be prioritized. The CIP will be published in June and given to Council. There will be a town hall regarding the CIP. Then, it will be brought to Council to act on in August. This will be the 2024 CIP. The 2024 capital budget, along with the operating budget, timeline is in November/December 2023.

Councilmember Bowers asked if the vision is that Council will be adopting a separate operating budget and separate capital budget starting in 2024 and then each subsequent year. Schultz said they are adopted at the same time. Bowers asked if they were two separate budgets. Director of Finance Joann Bury said it is just the appropriation ordinance like it is now; it includes the capital. With this, it will also include the same capital budget and the same appropriation ordinance, but the backbones will be the CIP that supports those numbers that Council is adopting as part of that capital budget. Bury said it is one big appropriation. It is not going to be adopting operating and then adopting capital.

Councilmember Schnetzer commented that the advisory committee spent the bulk of their time at the last meeting discussing the process. He believed it is essential to understand the process. The process is going to be followed every year. He thinks the goal of the process is that it is logically defensible, and from a mechanical perspective, it is sound. If you follow this process, you will ultimately have a document or a capital budget that has a high degree of efficacy. There were the various priorities. It was mentioned that the first capital budget that comes forward by way of this process is likely to be very front loaded with "must dos" and capital maintenance. It is optimistic that following this process there will be less of the dollars going towards the "must dos" and the maintenance and more towards the "like to do" or the "want to do" projects. The goal is that every year this process is followed, and you have a capital

budget that comes forward for adoption.

President Renner added that the chart included a lot of detail that is not being said. The chart of the plan process includes when the project is presented to the advisory committee, then Council action. There was a lot of discussion about communication and throughout the year. It is not Council action at the fall, but Council is going to be involved throughout the year. There are going to be reports and updates so that there is ongoing dialogue about the status of the current projects and what is coming up. There is dialogue with Council and feedback can be given by Council and the public.

Schultz said the analogy used was when Director Bury comes forward with the quarterly finance budget, it would be something akin to that, and some sort of a weigh station as you move through time. Here are the projects you approved, and here are some new things that may have come up throughout the course of the year.

Councilmember Bowers said to understand the timeline and check points, the CIP will be published in June, and at that point, there will be public participation in a town hall that would be determined by the Administration. Schultz said also with the advisory group. Bowers said that Council would act on the plan in August. Bowers asked for help on understanding where the participation from Council comes in in terms of involvement with the public. Schultz said it has been tentatively discussed for presenting the document to Council in a June meeting. Council will have the ability to review the document and have discussion at a Committee of the Whole (COTW) meeting. This would lead up to the public participation in the town hall. Then, when it is brought to Council for adoption, there is a presentation, first reading, COTW, second reading and adoption. There is a minimum of three COTW meetings. There are other COTW meetings where, if needed, it can be an agenda item specific to another conversation. There is the ability and timeline to do that whether in June or July. Bowers asked if the plan is not ready for publication or presentation to Council, what are the next steps that need to happen for it to be ready for the public? What is happening from now to June to when the plan is going to be published? The plan was marked with draft. Schultz said that they are continuing the work for program development, what needs to be done, and the next five-year period of what do we want to see done, where they want to bring something to Council that has a high degree of efficacy so that work continues. The projects need prioritized. All \$500 million worth of projects cannot be brought forward in the 2024 Capital Budget. They need to assess on how the plan looks over the next five, ten years and the budget analysis needs to occur with the finance team. Schultz said they are very close to being finished. Mayor Jadwin said that both Councilman Renner and Councilman Schnetzer have some feedback for the committee on some items they wanted incorporated into the document regarding identifying funding mechanisms. Some of the suggestions they have, those revisions, need made before it is finalized. Bowers said there had been maybe a different apprehensive timeline and the update and timeline helps to better understand. Schultz said they realized the original timeline of presenting this information to Council was by the end of March. It is now April but the other thing they realized is that there is a 2023 Capital Budget that has been approved in 2022. They wanted to polish the information and provide a better product to Council in June as opposed to rushing it in March and getting them something that does not necessarily require Council action now. Mayor Jadwin said this is the first phase of in the delivery of the CIP. This is something new for the city. This is understanding how it is like the CNAs and how it is different and understanding the extended process that has gone into putting this together and all of the data that has been gathered over the last five years through the various plans identified. All those have been used to inform the CIP. It is important to understand the process that has been used thus far to put all this

together so that when Council does see it, Council can understand what they are looking at, the data that is incorporated by reference in the plan and what has been used to inform the information. The mayor appreciated the comments. If they can get it to Council before June, they will do that.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked for comment on how the August deadline was derived and how this first go-round of the CIP feeds into the budget cycle. Bury said that getting it in August gives her time to lay in all the numbers, including the resources which will already be apparent in the document. They will refine that for budget presentation with first delivery at the end of October or November. That gives Council more time to look at the budget document itself, its total, including the capital pieces and what the full picture is. She believed there is still two hearings on the budget itself. So, making sure there is time to have those two hearings and time to get the budget passed at the last formal meeting in December is the goal. Schnetzer said August was not an arbitrary month chosen. It was specifically chosen because that feeds into everything else the finance department takes care of.

Vice President Weaver asked how the CIP, broadly speaking, considers unexpected expenses and unexpected revenue streams, such as grants. They are tough to predict when the city may receive them and a lot of times, they are for those "could do" items. He would hate to see opportunities missed for a "could do" item. Schultz said there is emergency maintenance, such as a playground slide gets damaged. A slide could easily cost six thousand dollars and meet the thresholds for a capital item. There will capital maintenance lines in the CIP that specifically talk to those types of maintenance items so that the department has the ability to have funds allocated towards the replacement of that apparatus. If funding becomes available, there needs to be projects that can be ready to go forward. One of the other reasons the advisory committee meets is to review situations such as a grant award that the City had not planned to do by itself until three years from now but now there is the ability to advance that. It might take additional dollars to make that match whole. At that time, the advisory committee would meet and recommend a Council action to accept the grant and then ask Council for a supplemental appropriation for the match. That process is outlined in the document. It gives ultimate flexibility to Council on a regular basis to make sure that we can stay in lockstep with what might be happening from the state and federal grant procurement standpoint and to be able to tee up projects more readily than in the past. Weaver said flexibility is important and much of what we do is reactionary to the needs that arise. Planning often doesn't go according to plan.

Councilmember Padova asked what the plan is for communicating and advertising for the town hall. Mayor Jadwin said there still needs to be some conversation around what that looks like. She imagined that it would be done in multiple ways: social media, website, newsletters, email blast, and community sign boards. Once everything has been finalized with the CIP, a date can be set. Padova asked if people who sign up for the agendas will get a notification. Mayor Jadwin said that mechanism would also be used for the town hall.

C. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL OFFICE:

[RES-0014-2023](#) A RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING THE CITY OF GAHANNA'S COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AND RECOGNIZING APRIL 22, 2023, AS EARTH DAY

Councilmember Padova shared she worked with President Renner to draft the resolution. After attending the Simple Times ribbon cutting, it is important to recognize

a business in Gahanna that is doing a really good job at investing in our planet with their goal of having zero waste. Padova has reached out to this business and invited them to attend the meeting to receive the resolution.

Councilmember McGregor commented on the first whereas where it said there is climate change. She said it is not that she does not think there is climate change, she doubts that it is man-made or that there is much that can be done about it. She thinks this is unsettled. She guessed that it could be stated, but she does not necessarily agree with it. She referenced reading a book called "Unsettled," written by the former Under Secretary of Science for the Department of Energy during the Obama Administration. She has just started in the science of it. It was recommended to her by a retired three-star general who was a board member of a solar energy company in Colorado. He said to her that before she made up her mind on this to read this book. Because of the first whereas, she will not be in support of this. She said everything else is fine.

[There was additional deliberation on this item at the end of the meeting. See additional discussion prior to adjournment.]

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 4/17/23.

D. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY:

[ORD-0021-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO) CONTRACT WITH THE GAHANNA-JEFFERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

Chief Spence said that the SRO contract is being presented to Council for adoption. Once Council adopts the contract, it will be presented to the school board for adoption. The total contact term is \$217,494 in cost-sharing for the salaries, benefits, training, and proportionate overtime of the two SROs at the high school. There are no substantive changes in the agreement. It represents an increase of almost \$9,000, or a 4.3 percent total increase over the previous agreement.

President Renner asked if there were three [SROs] this year, was it two and a float? Chief Spence said that there have been three SROs. The contract covers the expenses of two SROs, and a proportionate share of the two officers that are anchored at the high school. The third is fully funded by the city. That officer floats to the middle schools and elementary schools. Renner said there are still going to be three SROs. Chief Spence said that is correct. Three officers are assigned to the SRO duties within the division.

Vice President Weaver asked about the cost-sharing, 50 percent for the first officer and 75 percent for the other officer. He assumes the remainder is borne by the school district. Chief Spence said they pay 75 percent of the cost of one officer and 50 percent of the second officer. The remainder is borne by the city. The \$217,494 is

reflective of those cost-sharing arrangements.

Councilmember Angelou asked why there is going to be one that is going to the middle schools. Why would we not have the schools spend some money on that? Chief Spence said that the third officer provides some flexibility elsewhere in the city. They are not solely supporting the schools. They are also supporting some of the private schools. There is a community focus of that officer. Those officers do float and rotate the assignment. Angelou is a believer in the third one. She just wondered why the city would pick that up, but after the Chief's remarks, it made sense to her.

Councilmember Bowers asked if there has been any discussion on expansion of the SRO program. Chief Spence said there has been no formal discussion on expansion. It was briefly touched on in the safety forum with the superintendent and principals. If the program was to expand, there would need to be some discussion with the school as they open the new building. The building has a considerably larger footprint than what is currently operated. The third officer provides an element of relief factor. The contract does mandate that there are two officers there. There are training requirements and other things that are stipulated in a companion MOU between the division and the superintendent's office. It does offer a relief factor. If one of the SROs is sick, the third officer can act as a relief factor. There will be further discussion as the building project gets closer to opening.

Vice President Weaver, a GLHS graduate, shared he remembers the great interactions the officers had with the students. They are a fixture in the community inside the schools and out. It is a wonderful program he is happy to support.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 4/17/23;
Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 5/1/23.**

[ORD-0022-2023](#)

**AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE OF PORTABLE
RADIO'S AND FIRMWARE UPGRADES FROM MOTOROLA
SOLUTIONS PURSUANT TO STATE TERM CONTRACT**

Chief Spence said the next item is a capital request for portable radios and firmware upgrades. They are in a seven-to-eight-year life cycle management window. They are coming due for replacement. There are several factors, including certain firmware requirements, that the state is mandating for subscribers to the multi-agency radio communication system (MARCS). That is how the radios communicate, and the division is a subscriber to the state's system. Due to their age, they are aging out of the warranty period and will no longer be able to be serviced at the end of the year. Based on the dollar amount and the procurement rules, Council authorization is needed. The purchase will be done in accordance with Ohio State term contract. The dollars were included in the CNA for 2023 for the division.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 4/17/23;
Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 5/1/23.**

E. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

RES-0014-2023: A RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING THE CITY OF GAHANNA'S
COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AND RECOGNIZING APRIL 22, 2023,
AS EARTH DAY

Vice President Weaver said there has been a request to go back to RES-0014-2023 for further discussion.

Councilmember Schnetzer said the goal of a resolution should be that it isn't contentious. Rather than putting forward something that doesn't necessarily reflect all of Council's thoughts or opinion, he wondered if there is an opportunity to massage the language so that there can be greater consensus amongst everybody on Council. He asked Councilmember McGregor if there is rephrasing of the first whereas that would accurately reflect her sentiments. In his understanding of climate change, and acknowledging he was not a scientist, Schnetzer said one challenge is things are drying out in certain areas and reducing arable land across the globe. As he drives up Route 23 to Lake Erie, this all used to be farmland. This is not sustainable. He said we cannot continue to lose arable land in some places and consume arable land for housing in other places. Schnetzer asked if it would be amenable to perhaps rephrase the first whereas to just simply acknowledge that there are challenges that communities are facing because of climate change, and we commit to trying to reduce those to the extent that we can. McGregor said that would probably be okay. She reiterated that her issue was not that she did not think the climate is not changing. She is not sure she believes that man has caused it or that anything can be done to stop or change it because climate changes all the time and has for millions of years. What Schnetzer has said would be fine. Councilmember Angelou proposed taking out the first whereas. McGregor said that there are changes that are brought about by climate change and that this is a fact. There are challenges brought on by climate change. She does not disagree with that statement. Schnetzer said as it feeds into the rest of the document, those challenges increase the necessity for sustainable approaches to things and asked if that is a fair and accurate way to present it. McGregor said yes, but she doesn't want to change it if everybody else thinks it is fine. Schnetzer said he has been reviewing the document and felt like the first resolution on this from last year was very heavy on climate. When he was in school, Earth Day was focused on litter cleanups and planting trees. One of the city's amenities is the Big Walnut Creek. He has witnessed people literally dumping yard waste into the creek and has seen evidence of people pouring paint down the storm drains. Those are local things that we should discourage and maybe raise awareness of. He wondered, again, if this is an opportunity in this resolution to maybe not highlight those specific egregious examples but insert in section three, where it says, "this Council encourages residents and business to invest in our planet by taking steps towards a more sustainable lifestyle," reducing pollution and enjoying our natural resources or something to that effect. That is where his mind goes when he thinks of Earth Day. It is less the global and more the local, immediate environmental impact. McGregor said that is true. When she has spoken to school groups, they do not realize there is more than one type of sewer. Schnetzer said that this might not give Council a nice clean thing to essentially move on to the next stage in the legislative process, but more just a thought, seeing if anybody has some suggestions for language that gets closer to a 7-0 vote.

Councilmember Padova said she appreciated the comments and would also like it to

be a 7-0 vote. She was not sure if she understood what the language is that is wanted in the first whereas. She doesn't see anything specifically that it is man-made, or the issue McGregor brought up that she is not sure she believes. Padova doesn't believe that belief is in the first whereas. She is open to suggestions, but she hasn't heard anything specific. Schnetzer said that since he made the ask, he asked Clerk VanMeter to help wordsmith the item. If the first whereas simply said something to the effect of this Council recognizes the challenges that climate changes poses and that they are committed to sustainable best practices or something like that. Bowers offered language to say climate change is a critical issue facing Earth's family of nations. McGregor said it is a critical but not most critical [issue]. Weaver asked Clerk VanMeter if the comments make sense. VanMeter said he understand the intent of the comments. Renner said that he thinks that Council has backed up and said instead of changing anything drastically, and instead of saying the "single most critical" we can just say "a critical" issue. He asked if this is correct. McGregor said that is okay. Renner said the word earth remains in the Earth Day resolution. He said that a year ago he gave a presentation which he thought was pretty good and backed up by scientific evidence. It is upsetting to him that science has become politicized. For anyone to ignore science data that putting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere is not changing our planet, for that to be ignored is outrageous. McGregor said he is not the only science major [on the dais]. Renner said McGregor had not presented any scientific evidence to the contrary and none of the naysayers have. Schnetzer said his trepidation with just moving forward with it currently as written is we must recognize that we live a very elevated political climate and there is not consensus among the electorate. And he thinks to sit on Council and jam anything down anybody's throat, whether it is a member of Council or a member of the community, is a bit foolish. He understood that there are passions on both sides of this, and as policymakers, as leaders in the community, Council needs to recognize those passions. Is there a way that the message can be communicated that doesn't inflame some of those passions? He agreed with Councilwoman Padova. Nowhere in the first whereas does it say explicitly that it is man-made. But he thinks that being cognizant of those passions, it is implied. What he thinks that want is for residents is to take more care of the local environment. How can we have a resolution or a policy statement that has that call to action without being ignored by 50 percent of the population because of how they read the document? He believed that is what the goal should be here. He wondered if tweaking a couple of words helped create better policy, better legislation. Renner said he is fine with that.

Vice President Weaver said he is hearing that they will strike "single most critical" or "the single most" and substitute "a critical" issue. He asked if that would work for McGregor and Schnetzer. McGregor said yes. Schnetzer said if there can be some reference to or acknowledge the challenges that it poses. Weaver asked VanMeter to add it in. Schnetzer asked if anything was needed added to section three, about mitigating pollution, taking greater care of the environment or anything like that. It is kind of generic, there is a lot of talk about sustainability. Padova said she was fine with that. Weaver asked VanMeter to circulate the edits made to Council. Weaver asked if there is still a desire for regular agenda or consent. McGregor said consent was fine.

F. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
day of 2023.*

Trenton I. Weaver
Chair