



# City of Gahanna

## Meeting Minutes

### City Council

200 South Hamilton Road  
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

*Merisa K. Bowers, President*  
*Trenton I. Weaver, Vice President*  
*Jamille Jones*  
*Nancy R. McGregor*  
*Kaylee Padova*  
*Stephen A. Renner*  
*Michael Schnetzer*

*Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council*

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Monday, June 17, 2024

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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**A. CALL TO ORDER: Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call**

*Gahanna City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, June 17, 2024, in Council Chambers. President of Council Merisa K. Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver delivered an Invocation and led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda was published on June 14, 2024.*

**Present** 6 - Merisa K. Bowers, Jamille Jones, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

**Absent** 1 - Nancy R. McGregor

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

None.

**C. PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. Resolution Presentation by Council - Juneteenth  
Presented to Keena Smith, Women's Center for Economic Opportunity**

Councilmember Jones spoke about the upcoming Juneteenth celebration on Wednesday, June 19, 2024, also known as Emancipation Day or Freedom Day. She highlighted the historical significance of the day, noting that it marks the occasion when Union troops in Galveston, Texas, ensured that all enslaved African-Americans were informed of their freedom. Councilmember Jones emphasized that Juneteenth embodies the ideals of liberation, opportunity, and prosperity. In recognition of this day, Councilmember Jones proposed honoring Gahanna resident Keena Smith, founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Women's Center for Economic Opportunity (WCEO). Councilmember Jones described how WCEO helps African-American and other women of color by providing resources to create generational wealth and a legacy of economic impact, promoting economic equity, inclusion, and justice. Councilmember Jones commended Ms. Smith

for her inspirational work and contribution to the community. Councilmember Jones announced that Ms. Smith and some members of WCEO were present at the meeting. Councilmember Jones invited members of WCEO forward for a photo with the Council, followed by any remarks they wished to make.

Ms. Keena Smith, founder and CEO of the Women's Center for Economic Opportunity, expressed her deep gratitude to Mayor Jadwin, President Bowers, and other members of the City Council for the Resolution honoring her and her organization. She conveyed her humility in receiving this recognition in the community where she raised her children, who graduated from Gahanna Lincoln High School, and where she has lived for nearly 25 years. Ms. Smith dedicated the honor to the women standing with her and the thousands of members of their business accelerator community. She described these women as brave, fierce, persistent, and successful business owners who contribute significantly to the quality of life in the city, county, state, and nation. She connected the recognition to the celebration of Juneteenth, highlighting its historical significance as the date in 1865 when all Americans could truly aspire to the ideals stated in the Declaration of Independence. She emphasized that these rights apply equally to women. Ms. Smith was accompanied by several members of the Women's Center for Economic Opportunity, who briefly introduced themselves: Jai Fletcher, Ashequka Lacey, Lucretia Talison, LaTanya Settles, Tia Johnson, Dr. Erika Pryor, Beatrice Nokuri, JD, Regina Al Hassan, and Victoria Murray. Ms. Smith praised their contributions to the community and mentioned Fatima Bouyer, another Gahanna business owner, who was unable to attend as she was delayed returning from a trip to Spain. In conclusion, Ms. Smith extended her thanks to Councilmember Jones, the entire City Council, and Mayor Jadwin for their support and recognition.

Councilmember Jones reiterated her thanks to Ms. Smith and all the women CEOs who were able to attend the recognition. She expressed her gratitude to all for their support of their families and impact within the community.

## **2. LinkUS Presentation - Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)**

[2024-0118](#)

LinkUS Presentation Materials for City Council 6.17.2024

Monica Tellez-Fowler, the new President and CEO of the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), addressed the Council, introducing herself as a resident of Gahanna. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to discuss the LinkUS initiative, a comprehensive transportation and mobility plan designed to address growth, affordability, sustainability, and opportunity in Central Ohio. She acknowledged collaboration with the City of Columbus, Franklin County, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), and engagement from Gahanna and other communities. Ms. Tellez-Fowler highlighted that 2023 marks COTA's 50th anniversary of serving the region, employing over 1,100 people and providing fixed-route bus transit, paratransit, and microtransit services across 562 miles, including Lines 24, 25, and 46 in Gahanna. She mentioned that in May, 2024, COTA's Board of Trustees had approved placing a levy on the November 5, 2024 ballot. If passed, this levy

would create a dedicated funding stream for expanded, modernized public transit and infrastructure. With nearly 15 years of experience in transit, Ms. Tellez-Fowler spoke about the transformative power of public transit and emphasized the need for Central Ohio to move beyond being the largest region without rapid modern transit. She envisioned a mobility ecosystem accommodating all modes of transportation, including transit, bikes, cars, and more. Tellez-Fowler concluded by introducing COTA's Senior Director of Development, Kimberly Sharp, and MORPC's Principal Planner, Elliot Lewis, who were set to provide further details on the plan.

Kimberly Sharp, Senior Director of Development for COTA, thanked the Council for the opportunity to present the long-term regional growth plan which has been in development for many years. She referenced the Insight 2050 Corridors Concepts, among other planning documents, as foundational to understanding and preparing for regional growth. Ms. Sharp emphasized that the community is already feeling the impact of this growth, with its challenges and opportunities directly affecting both public and private spaces. Sharp outlined that the plan aims to accommodate a projected increase of a million more people in the region, addressing the impracticality of a corresponding increase in vehicle traffic. She highlighted the rising costs of housing and living, underscoring the need for affordable living options for the workforce and students. The plan also seeks to bridge opportunity gaps, noting that over 40,000 Franklin County households lack access to a car, yet still need reliable transportation options to access education, healthcare, and employment.

Sharp detailed the three main components of the LinkUS initiative: 1) Faster, more reliable public transit, which would increase transit services by 45%; 2) Safer and expanded sidewalks, bikeways, and trails, termed "transit-supportive infrastructure," with active community engagement in the process; 3) Focused growth around walkable communities that enhance the usability of transit and reduce dependency on large parking lots, thereby making walking and biking more feasible options. She noted that these strategies are designed to benefit all 17 cities, nine villages, and 17 townships within the COTA service area, which includes all of Franklin County and parts of Union, Delaware, Licking, and Fairfield Counties where city limits extend.

#### *COTA Levy Investments*

Ms. Sharp provided details about the funding mechanism for the \$8 billion mobility infrastructure package planned to be developed over the next 30-plus years. She explained that by state law, a transit authority in Ohio can request and receive up to 1% of the sales tax revenue. Currently, COTA operates with 0.5% of the sales tax, while other cities like Cleveland and Cincinnati utilize 1% and 0.8%, respectively. Ms. Sharp announced that COTA would be asking voters in the upcoming fall election to approve an increase in the sales tax contribution from 0.5% to 1%, which would make the tax permanent. This increase is critical to the financial model designed to fund infrastructure development over time. Additionally, the increased funding would allow COTA to leverage substantial federal dollars for which they are currently queued, ensuring a sustainable local revenue source to support both the leveraging of

those federal funds and the ongoing operation of the transit system.

### *Bus Rapid Transit*

Ms. Sharp discussed the concept of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), highlighting several features that contribute to its efficiency. She began by explaining that BRT involves level boarding, which eliminates the need for passengers to step up or down, similar to boarding a train. Additionally, fares are paid before boarding to speed up the process. Ms. Sharp emphasized that the real speed of BRT comes from dedicated lanes. These transit-only lanes in the middle of roads enable buses to move quickly through the community without typical traffic delays. During her presentation, a video was shown to illustrate these points. The video featured the proposed BRT system on Olentangy River Road, described by Ms. Sharp as a six-lane mini-highway. The video depicted expanded sidewalks, crosswalks, dedicated bike lanes, and center station platforms, all components of the LinkUS plan, designed within the existing roadway's right of way. Ms. Sharp also pointed out the need for higher-density development around transit stations to enhance accessibility and convenience. She mentioned a hypothetical example where a popular fast-food restaurant, like Canes, could occupy the first floor of a three to four-story building, which would increase the area's density and utility. She concluded by reiterating that the primary goal of BRT is to facilitate fast, efficient public transit.

### *Regional Transit Vision*

Ms. Sharp presented an overview of COTA's existing and planned transit systems. She started by explaining the current system, represented in very light gray on the map, which includes 38 lines and 3,000 stops. She discussed the ongoing evaluation of 24/7 service on particular lines, emphasizing that such expansion would involve increased frequencies and improved transfers and connections. Ms. Sharp highlighted the rapid transit corridors shown in dark blue on the map, such as the West Broad, East Main, and Northwest corridors, which are currently in engineering phases. The light blue lines, planned for near-term study, extend from downtown past the airport towards the Intel area. These lines have received funding from the Ohio Department of Transportation for feasibility studies to determine appropriate transit solutions with the cooperation of the municipalities along those routes. She also noted the green lines on the map, designated for future study based on growth areas and job centers, as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning process facilitated by MORPC, involving extensive data analysis and public engagement. Further, Ms. Sharp introduced the financial model that includes up to eight new COTA Plus zones, an on-demand service similar to Uber or Lyft but operated by COTA, offering affordable rides with special rates for seniors and free rides for students or to transit stops. This service is designed to facilitate first-mile and last-mile connections. Ms. Sharp used the East Main corridor as an example, detailing plans for 18 stations extending from downtown to Reynoldsburg, crossing into Licking County. This project involves comprehensive street reconstruction, utility management, and the installation of safety features, ADA-compliant mechanisms, and transit infrastructure to enhance speed and

accessibility. She also described micro-mobility stations planned along each corridor where travelers can access bikes or scooters. This initiative aims to bolster the usability of the transit system, with visual examples provided during the presentation. Concluding her overview, Ms. Sharp mentioned ongoing efforts to increase the frequency of Line 24 as part of the September service changes and anticipated future discussions on corridor development. She then handed over the presentation to her colleague Elliott Lewis, MORPC, who would discuss transit-supportive infrastructure.

*Sidewalks, Bikeways, and Trails: Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI)*

Elliott Lewis, Principal Planner at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and the project manager for transit-supportive infrastructure, addressed the council. He emphasized the importance of creating pathways that connect residents from their homes to public transit as essential components of a successful mobility network. Lewis described the role of transit-supportive infrastructure, simplifying the concept as involving sidewalks, bike trails, and bikeways. He highlighted ongoing collaborations with municipal partners across the region to identify gaps in the infrastructure network that, if filled, would facilitate better access to public transit. He noted that early assessments identified over 500 miles of infrastructure gaps and proposed an additional \$250 million in complete streets upgrades. These upgrades would reimagine road space to make it more inclusive of non-vehicle traffic, part of the broader LinkUS initiative. Lewis explained that over a quarter of the revenue from the proposed half-cent sales tax increase would be dedicated to funding these infrastructure improvements, amounting to \$50 to \$60 million annually, significantly more than current regional funding levels. Lewis also discussed the extensive community engagement process that involved every jurisdiction within the COTA service area, resulting in about 30 meetings to discuss potential projects. This process aimed to align local priorities with the expected revenue from the additional sales tax.

Focusing on Gahanna, Lewis appreciated the instrumental role City staff played in identifying projects and shaping the program to benefit the region. He outlined specific projects for Gahanna, including the expansion of the Big Walnut Trail and connections to burgeoning residential areas and mixed-use developments. Lewis concluded by inviting any questions and mentioned that further details could be sought from City staff. He then handed the presentation back to Kimberly Sharp to conclude the session.

*Making Investments to Benefit All: Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD)*

Ms. Sharp continued her presentation by discussing the final component of the transit system planning, which focused on the communities built around transit stops or how the transit system serves existing communities. She explained that discussions about Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) were ongoing with various stakeholders. ETOD is a well-established concept that focuses on development around transit stops, as exemplified by Arlington, Virginia, where significant density has been built around these

stops. Sharp addressed the critical need for more housing in Central Ohio, noting the influx of jobs and correlating housing demands. She referred to findings from the Insight 2050 Corridors Concept study, which suggested that if a majority of housing and jobs were developed along five of the rapid transit corridors, it could potentially accommodate 60% of the region's jobs and housing. This development strategy would make living more affordable, enabling families to rely less on car ownership.

Further explaining ETOD, Sharp highlighted its dual focus on preserving existing neighborhoods to prevent displacement and on fostering new housing and business investments. This approach also emphasizes ensuring affordable housing and broadening access to opportunities. She provided an example from Cleveland's Health Line, an 8-mile transit line built in 2008 with a \$200 million investment, which subsequently attracted \$9.5 billion in private investments and significantly increased local housing and job opportunities. This project exemplified how transit-oriented development can transform communities into walkable, accessible areas. Sharp described the desired outcomes of these planning efforts as aiming to create vibrant places that reflect each community's unique values as defined in their comprehensive and mobility planning efforts. The overarching goals of the LinkUS initiative include: increasing equitable access to opportunities, accommodating regional growth in a productive manner, enhancing economic vibrancy, and reimagining the region for shared prosperity.

#### *Next Steps & Comments from Council*

Ms. Sharp provided an update on the next steps in the transit planning and development process. She highlighted the ongoing community engagement efforts, the progress in corridor design, and the federal grant application process. Ms. Sharp noted that the ballot language had already been presented to the board, marking a completed task. She also mentioned the development of an Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) action plan, anticipated to be available on the website by August, 2024. She thanked the MORPC team for their work on expanding sidewalks, bike paths, and trails, and mentioned the upcoming COTA levy in November, 2024. Ms. Sharp concluded her update by inviting any questions or comments from the Council.

President Bowers asked how the priority Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) projects were identified and whether they were overlaid with ridership data.

Mr. Lewis responded, explaining that several metrics were considered in the selection process, including proximity to high-frequency transit lines and the existing active transportation network, which includes sidewalks and bike trails. He noted that these considerations were integrated into a holistic view for selecting projects for a potential draft Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

President Bowers then inquired about the potential for additional considerations in future planning rounds.

Mr. Lewis affirmed that the program was designed to include annual updates, allowing for continuous expansion and integration of public input as well as the incorporation of newly updated plans. This setup ensures that each year presents a new opportunity to refine and expand the projects under consideration.

President Bowers thanked all the presenters for their time and sharing the developments of the LinkUS initiative.

**D. HEARING OF VISITORS:**

*Nathan Graves of Gahanna, OH spoke on improved busing in Gahanna.*

Mr. Graves shared his thoughts on the LinkUS initiative and its coordination with Zone-in, emphasizing their significance in addressing the challenges related to housing and transportation in the growing region. He expressed personal encouragement as a young resident eager to remain in Columbus, noting the critical importance of having access to dense, affordable housing linked to effective mass transportation. Graves highlighted that such amenities are crucial, not only for him, but also for many other young people deciding where to live. Graves pointed out that while LinkUS would be a positive addition to the City, he advocated for a stronger integration of Gahanna into the initiative. He described the dilemma of investment versus ridership in areas like Gahanna as a "chicken and egg" situation, citing evidence from other transit systems which shows that well-invested systems tend to achieve high ridership. He noted that large parts of Gahanna lack adequate bus service, sharing his personal experience of living near one of the few bus stops, which he would use more frequently if the service were better. Graves described the current bus services as insufficient, with infrequent stops that often lack necessary amenities like seating and shade. He also criticized the long intervals between buses and the limitation of services to rush hours, which he argued made bus use impractical for most residents. Furthermore, Graves called for an increase in high-quality, frequent bus stops with expanded coverage and shorter intervals between services. He expressed optimism about the goals and initiatives of LinkUS and urged for the fuller inclusion of Gahanna in the project's next phase or sooner, to better serve its residents and enhance the overall effectiveness of the transit system.

*Stephanie Proctor-Wells of Gahanna, OH spoke on tree removal on Ridenour Road.*

Ms. Proctor-Wells addressed the Council to express her concerns about the planned removal of 39 trees on Ridenour Road. She highlighted the natural beauty of Gahanna, particularly its parks, bike paths, and picturesque tree-lined streets, which had attracted her and her husband to purchase their home nearly a decade ago. She described how the trees enhanced the seasons, from the colorful leaves of fall and snow-covered branches in winter to the cool shade in summer and the spectacular blossoms in spring. These trees not only provided aesthetic pleasure but also habitat for local wildlife, contributing significantly to the neighborhood's charm and biodiversity. Ms.

Proctor-Wells recounted the distress her family experienced upon discovering orange spray paint on the trees, indicating their removal, and the notice they received by mail. In response, her two daughters wrote letters to the City Forester, and the family initiated an online petition and conducted door-to-door canvassing in their neighborhood. While a few neighbors had experienced issues with specific trees and requested their removal, the majority were shocked and saddened by the news of the planned tree removal, with many signing the petition to preserve them. She reported that since starting the petition, 39 people had signed in support of saving the trees. Ms. Proctor-Wells emphasized that beyond their beauty, the trees played a crucial role in community safety by naturally calming traffic. She explained that field studies have shown that tree-lined streets and medians can psychologically cue drivers to slow down, similar to the effect of barrels in a construction zone. This calming effect was especially important given that many drivers used Ridenour Road as a shortcut between major roads, often exceeding the speed limit. Concluding her remarks, Ms. Proctor-Wells thanked the Council for their attention.

*Arlene Sheak of Gahanna, OH spoke in favor of aggregation.*

Ms. Sheak addressed the Council regarding the issue of climate change and its impact on natural systems like wetlands and permafrost, which are releasing more greenhouse gases as they warm. She referenced Rob Jackson, a Stanford University climate scientist and head of the Global Carbon Project, who had recently told NBC News about the exacerbating effects of fossil fuel pollution on these natural systems. Ms. Sheak posed a question about the actions citizens in Gahanna could take to mitigate the fossil fuel crisis. She suggested that the community could opt for clean, sustainable energy sources and seek the lowest possible bulk rates for these energies. She mentioned the possibility of buying credits for renewable energy generated elsewhere in the country as a viable option for reducing fossil fuel use. Highlighting her personal commitment, Ms. Sheak shared that she and her husband were already participating in a contract that promotes solar and wind energy within the American Electric Power (AEP) system. She expressed pride in living in a city that encourages, but does not coerce, businesses and residents to support energy aggregation. Ms. Sheak concluded her remarks by expressing her hope that the Council would receive strong support for proposals promoting a healthy environment, underscoring the importance of such initiatives for the well-being of current and future generations. She assured the Council of her household's readiness to transition to any renewable energy source selected by the Council.

*Donny Murray of Gahanna, OH spoke on energy aggregation.*

Mr. Murray addressed the Council regarding the importance of clean energy aggregation. He introduced himself as a resident of Rugby Lane, which he described as the best place in Gahanna, and noted his roles as an active community member, husband, and father. Mr. Murray thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak and expressed his enthusiasm for clean energy aggregation. He drew a parallel between selecting a waste hauler and



choosing an energy provider, suggesting that just as the Council would inquire about the disposal methods of a waste management company, they should also scrutinize the practices of energy providers. He pointed out that not selecting a 100% clean energy provider would be akin to allowing carbon pollution to be dumped into the atmosphere, making the community less safe and the environment less stable. Emphasizing the economic and environmental urgency, Mr. Murray argued that fossil fuel-dependent electricity is likely to become more expensive due to rising extraction costs and compliance costs associated with reducing climate change impacts. As a Certified Public Accountant, he highlighted that the financial data supports the choice of 100% clean energy, noting that other local communities who have chosen such aggregation options have managed to offer lower rates than the current AEP rate. Concluding his remarks, Mr. Murray urged the Council to select a 100% clean energy provider for the sake of community safety, environmental stability, and the future of his children and the community at large. He emphasized that the market trend towards renewable energy is inevitable, advocating for immediate action to align with these future standards.

*Lauren Koch of Gahanna, OH spoke on municipal renewable aggregation and trees.*

Ms. Koch addressed the Council, sharing that she has been a Gahanna resident for over six years, where she and her husband are raising their two daughters and plan to stay for life. This commitment to the community motivated her to provide supporting testimony in person for the upcoming consideration of municipal renewable aggregation, scheduled for June 24, 2024. Ms. Koch expressed her concern about the increasing severity of climate change headlines and the tangible impacts on the local environment, citing unusual weather patterns like the current heat dome and severe hail storms experienced in the spring. She related these issues to broader environmental challenges, reinforcing the urgency of action. She disclosed that her household has already chosen 100% renewable wind Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) and is considering solar energy, acknowledging that these options might not be viable for everyone due to cost or homeownership status. Ms. Koch praised the Council's consideration of clean electricity aggregation, highlighting its potential environmental impact akin to removing over 400,000 gas-powered cars from the road annually, as estimated by the City of Columbus. Ms. Koch voiced strong support for the proposed municipal renewable electricity aggregation, noting its potential to save residents money, enhance Gahanna's reputation as an innovative community in Central Ohio, and provide equitable access to renewable energy. Additionally, Ms. Koch touched upon another citizen's testimony about tree removal in their neighborhood, emphasizing the critical role of trees in combating climate change and mitigating urban heat. She encouraged the Council to ensure that tree removal was justified and to continue efforts in preserving and expanding urban tree coverage. Concluding her remarks, Ms. Koch relayed her husband's request for the City to consider offering street leaf pickup in the fall. She thanked the Council for their time and for considering the clean electricity aggregation proposal scheduled for discussion the following week.

*Kathy McCorkle of Gahanna, OH spoke on RES-0021-2024 presentation and vote.*

Ms. McCorkle expressed her concerns on the presentation for Resolution 0021-2024, on June 3, 2024. Referencing the Resolution presentation, she described two individuals who shared their personal experiences related to sexual orientation. Ms. McCorkle compared her experiences, detailing incidents where she felt victimized for her religious beliefs in the workplace and during public meetings. Ms. McCorkle described being followed and insulted after a school board meeting, mocked by a member of an organization, and feeling attacked by some Council members after speaking at a City Council meeting in February, 2024. According to her own beliefs, citing religious scripture, Ms. McCorkle argued that supporting what she described as sins was wrong. She said proclamations and resolutions were issued celebrating what she called deviant groups. She expressed feeling unwelcome in Gahanna, despite being a long-term resident. Concluding her statement, Ms. McCorkle proposed the idea of celebrating June 2024 as "Straight Pride Month" in Gahanna, advocating for local businesses and residents to support this initiative.

*Megan Ford of Gahanna, OH spoke via video on a City clean electricity aggregation program.*

Ms. Ford addressed the Council, sharing that she and her husband have been residents of Gahanna for approximately ten years and are parents to three children who are soon to enter the local school system. She expressed their family's intention to remain in the community for the foreseeable future. Ms. Ford conveyed her concern about climate change and her desire to positively impact the environment as she considers her children's future. She mentioned that her family installed solar panels on their home, acknowledging that not all residents have the means or opportunity to do the same. She voiced her support for the City's clean electricity aggregation program, appreciating the Council's leadership in considering such significant initiatives for the benefit of Gahanna residents.

## **E. CONSENT AGENDA:**

### **1. Minutes - To Approve:**

[2024-0108](#) Council Regular Minutes 6.3.2024

**The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.**

[2024-0114](#) Committee of the Whole Minutes 6.10.2024

**The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.**

### **2. Resolutions:**

[RES-0025-2024](#) A RESOLUTION HONORING JUNETEENTH AND RECOGNIZING KEENA SMITH, CEO OF WOMEN'S CENTER FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, FOR HER EXEMPLARY WORK AND DEDICATION TO ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

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

[ORD-0041-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORD-0088-2023 ESTABLISHING THE SALARIES FOR PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2024, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

### **End of Consent Agenda**

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

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

**Absent:** 1 - McGregor

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

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

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

[ORD-0043-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A DEED OF EASEMENT OF 0.044 +/- ACRES TO BSOH HQ LLC, A PRIVATE ENTITY ALSO KNOWN AS BURNS AND SCALO, FOR THE PURPOSES OF STORMWATER DRAINAGE ONTO CITY PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT 1070 TECH CENTER DRIVE

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

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

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

**G. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:****1. Clerk**[2024-0115](#)

Ohio Division of Liquor Control Order - New Permit Application #2393331, Class C-1-2, Eagle Academy of Columbus Inc. dba Campus & Co - Columbus, 460 Havens Corners Rd, Gahanna, OH 43230; City Council Objection Overruled; Notice of Right to Appeal

Mr. VanMeter reported on the Ohio Division of Liquor Control's order concerning the matter known as Eagle Academy of Columbus Inc., doing business as Campus & Co. Columbus, located at 460 Havens Corners Road. He noted that the Council had previously voted to request a hearing from the Division of Liquor Control, which was subsequently conducted. He informed Council that the City Attorney had attended the hearing. Mr. VanMeter concluded by directing any further questions regarding the matter to City Attorney Tamilarasan.

**2. Council - None.****H. REPRESENTATIVES:****1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) - Renner, Weaver**

Councilmember Renner mentioned that while there was nothing detailed to report at the moment, there was a scheduled meeting between the CIC and the Council. He noted that the meeting was set for the following morning, at 7:30 a.m., June 18, 2024; however, he did not recall seeing an invitation with the details. Mayor Jadwin clarified that the meeting location had been moved from the Golf Course to the Committee Room due to a scheduling conflict. Mayor Jadwin confirmed that the meeting would still take place the next day at 7:30 a.m., June 18, 2024, and that invitations had been sent out the previous week. Councilmember Renner thanked the Mayor for the clarification and informed the Council that he would be unable to attend the meeting.

**2. Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) - Weaver**[2024-0116](#)

Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 6.17.2024

Vice President Weaver mentioned that he attended the MORPC commission meeting virtually on Thursday, June 13, 2024, where he saw the Mayor in attendance in-person. Vice President Weaver provided a legislative update, noting that state lawmakers were nearing the finalization of a bill to appropriate \$700 million in one-time strategic community investment funds. He also mentioned that the capital budget and funding for the Ohio Public Works Commission were still pending issues. He suggested reading the June 2024 legislative update from MORPC for more details. Discussing upcoming

MORPC events, Vice President Weaver highlighted "Money Mondays," mentioning specific topics such as affordable housing in Lancaster on July 8, 2024, a session with the Chamber on July 15, 2024, insights from the Village of Somerset with Tom Johnson and Tracy Johnson on July 22, 2024 and a discussion with a MORPC planner and a consultant pool for members on July 29, 2024. Vice President Weaver also announced two significant upcoming events: MORPC's annual Social Media Summit on August 6, 2024, focusing on topics including misinformation and storytelling through social media, and the Safe Streets Central Ohio event on September 26, 2024 at The Wigwam Event Center in Pickerington. This annual event, hosted by MORPC in collaboration with various partners, aims to reduce traffic fatalities and severe injuries, providing a platform for decision-makers, government officials, transportation and healthcare professionals to collaborate and advocate for safer streets. He concluded by expressing appreciation for Ms. Tellez-Fowler's presence and her speech at the MORPC commission meeting. He welcomed her to both Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and the Gahanna community. Vice President Weaver shared his experience of attending multiple presentations on the LinkUS initiative, noting that he always gained new insights and encouraged his colleagues to review the material to better retain the information.

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

Councilmember Padova shared her observations from the recent Blues and Jazz Festival held over the weekend. She noted that many Council members and community residents were present at the festival, participating as volunteers. Ms. Padova mentioned that she was out of town for most of Saturday but returned around 7:00 p.m. to find cars parked all the way down her street to her driveway, which she took as a positive indicator of the festival's success. She expressed her gratitude to all the supporters and attendees of the festival, and she extended a special thanks to the volunteers and the Gahanna Police Department. Padova highlighted the commitment of those who spent their entire weekend working or volunteering at the festival, appreciating their dedication to making the event successful. She concluded her remarks by thanking everyone involved in the festival's organization and execution.

### **4. School Board (SB) - Jones**

Councilmember Jones did not have a report but anticipated an update at the next Council meeting.

## **I. OFFICIAL REPORTS:**

### **1. Mayor**

Mayor Jadwin provided a comprehensive update covering several recent and upcoming events and initiatives in Gahanna. She expressed her appreciation for MORPC's attendance at the meeting and acknowledged Vice President Weaver's reference to the recent MORPC meeting, which she attended with

three MORPC interns. At this meeting, Emily Smith from Intel provided updates on the ongoing \$28 billion project, noting an \$8 billion increase since its announcement in 2022. Mayor Jadwin mentioned the transportation of super loads from southern Ohio to Licking County, a process expected to take ten days. Mayor Jadwin then transitioned to discuss the City's Active Transportation Plan, developed with help from a grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and outside consultants. She noted that a community survey had been conducted to identify necessary improvements in trails, sidewalks, and pedestrian crossings. A list of 60 projects had been identified, and an Open House was scheduled for June 25, 2024 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. to discuss these projects. Additionally, the Mayor reflected on the 25th anniversary of the Blues and Jazz Fest, recounting its evolution from a small celebration to a major three-day event. She praised the work of the Visit Gahanna staff, planning committee, volunteers, and City departments for their efforts in organizing and managing the festival. Mayor Jadwin also mentioned the ongoing rehabilitation of the Hamilton Road Bridge, a project expected to last until the summer of 2025, and highlighted potential traffic impacts. She encouraged community members to stay informed through the City's social media updates. Looking forward, Mayor Jadwin outlined several community events, including the first annual Gahanna Community Pride Night and the Cinema under the Stars series, emphasizing the variety of activities available to residents. She concluded her remarks by noting the full schedule of events planned for the remainder of June 2024, emphasizing the community's active engagement in these initiatives.

## **2. City Attorney**

City Attorney Tamilarasan provided an update on a legal matter involving the City. She referenced a workers' compensation appeal, Cochran v. Gahanna, which she had previously reported as dismissed during her annual report to the Council. She noted that although there had been a year allowed for the case to be refiled, it was indeed refiled timely. However, she informed the Council that just last week, the party involved had voluntarily dismissed their case. Consequently, she confirmed that this litigation is now officially closed.

## **J. COUNCIL COMMENT:**

Councilmember Padova reported her visit to the splash pad, noting it was a lively and enjoyable scene. She reminded everyone that the splash pad is free to use from 8:00 a.m. to noon. Reflecting on her observations, she mentioned seeing many children actively enjoying the facility, and she quoted Maria Montessori, saying, "play is the work of children." Padova recommended the facility as a great place for children, especially given the current hot weather. Mayor Jadwin added to Councilmember Padova's comment by announcing an adjustment to the splash pad's operating hours, due to the week's high temperatures. Mayor Jadwin informed the Council that, unlike the usual practice where the splash pad closes when the pool opens, it would remain open throughout the day to provide a cooling option for residents. The Mayor noted that this change was still in the planning stages and dependent on adequate staffing. She confirmed that updates regarding the exact timing of these extended hours would be communicated through social media as soon

as they were finalized.

Councilmember Renner expressed his pleasure at seeing his good friend, Keena Smith, at the meeting and thanked Councilmember Jones for presenting a wonderful resolution in her honor. He praised Ms. Smith for her extensive contributions, noting her work with the City of Columbus and the county, and her time as a Deputy County Administrator. Councilmember Renner also shared his appreciation for the LinkUS and COTA presentation, highlighting the importance of the project in addressing Central Ohio's long-standing transportation challenges. He described LinkUS as a significant step in the right direction, integrating transportation with mobility and addressing necessary capital improvements in urbanization sectors that were overdue by decades. He further expressed his satisfaction with the decision to keep the splash pad open given the current heatwave and stressed the importance of public awareness regarding heat-related illnesses. Renner urged everyone to educate themselves about the symptoms and signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke, sharing a personal anecdote about witnessing a friend suffer from such conditions. He emphasized the need for caution in the heat, advising everyone to slow down, stay hydrated, and ensure they take necessary precautions while outdoors.

Councilmember Schnetzer commented on the recent Creekside Blues and Jazz Festival, noting its successful attendance and favorable weather conditions, which are not always guaranteed. He shared his personal experience volunteering at one of the admission gates on Friday, where he had the pleasure of watching a young neighbor perform on stage. Schnetzer expressed admiration for the young musicians, particularly his neighbor, whom he watched grow and develop musically from early lessons at Michelle Tuesday Music School, through participation in Gahanna School of Rock, and involvement in the high school music program. He highlighted this as a testament to the opportunities available to youth in the community and underscored it as one of the factors that contribute to making the community great.

Vice President Weaver shared his enjoyment of the recent Father's Day celebrations with his siblings and father, acknowledging that while it was a joyous occasion for his family, he recognized that the day could be difficult for many and extended his thoughts and love to those who may find it challenging. He reiterated his gratitude towards Visit Gahanna, the Department of Parks and Recreation, Public Service, and the Division of Police for their efforts in organizing a successful Blues and Jazz Festival. Weaver highlighted his volunteer experience during the festival on Saturday afternoon, enjoying the perfect weather and the opportunity to shuttle musicians and attendees, which he found very informative and enjoyable.

President Bowers thanked Councilmember Jones for bringing in Ms. Smith and a group of women entrepreneurs to the meeting, describing the event as empowering, uplifting, and joyful. She expressed appreciation for the evening's comments, particularly noting how Ms. Koch linked the importance of street trees to sustainability and safe, active transportation; President Bowers pointed out that these themes are interconnected with the Council's

ongoing work. President Bowers also shared her anticipation for the upcoming Gahanna Pride Festival, acknowledging the efforts of Katie McBroom and expressing excitement about the community's participation. She mentioned attending a Pride policy luncheon hosted by Columbus Council President Shannon Hardin, where discussions on opportunities to foster inclusivity at the local level took place. She found the policy considerations discussed to be insightful, especially in comparison with other community efforts to ensure a welcoming environment for all. In addition, President Bowers provided an update on her attendance at the Columbus Metropolitan Club's forum on the Civil Rights Act after 60 years, which she found uplifting and a reminder of the ongoing work required to ensure equitable voting access. She concluded her remarks by extending holiday greetings for Father's Day, Eid al-Adha, and Juneteenth, wishing well to all who celebrate these occasions.

[2024-0117](#)

Councilmember Merisa K. Bowers' Constituent Report - May 2024

**K. ADJOURNMENT:**

*With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.*

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**Jeremy A. VanMeter**  
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the City Council, this*  
*day of 2024.*

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**Trenton I. Weaver**