



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

City Council

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, November 20, 2023

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

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

Gahanna City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, November 20, 2023, in Council Chambers. President of Council Stephen A. Renner 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 November 17, 2023.

Present 7 - Karen J. Angelou, Merisa K. Bowers, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

None.

C. HEARING OF VISITORS:

None.

D. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2023-0203](#)

CN Minutes 11.6.2023

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2023-0204](#)

COTW Minutes 11.13.2023

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2023-0205](#)

FIN Minutes 11.13.2023

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Ordinances for Second Reading / Adoption:

[ORD-0072-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO AWARD AND ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH DIRT DAWG EXCAVATING LLC FOR THE CLAYCRAFT ROAD WATERLINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT (ST-1089)

The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0073-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO AWARD AND THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH COMPLETE GENERAL CONSTRUCTION FOR STREETLIGHT AND TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0074-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - Water Meter Fees

The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0075-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - Sewer Capital Fund, Street Fund, Parks & Recreation Fund, and TIF Fund

The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0076-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A STATE INFRASTRUCTURE BANK (SIB) LOAN APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2 MILLION FOR A TERM OF 20 YEARS TO SUPPORT RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS IN THE PROJECT AREA KNOWN AS THE CRESCENT AT CENTRAL PARK

The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

Councilmember Bowers commented for the record ORD-0073-2023 there was some conversation at committee, and she wanted to thank Director Schultz for speaking with council about it. She expressed her frustration with potentially losing out on a cost savings, particularly related to an incomplete bid. However, she understood that they need to have a hands-off approach once the bid process opens to maintain fairness. Bowers noted that it was unfortunate for the city that they were unable to evaluate the lowest bid because it was incomplete.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Angelou, to Pass the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Angelou, Bowers, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

E. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:

[ORD-0078-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH THE BOARD OF HEALTH OF THE FRANKLIN COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT (FRANKLIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH) FOR 2024 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0079-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - Capital Improvement Fund for Grant Award

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0081-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING UTILITY RATES AND AMENDING GAHANNA CODIFIED ORDINANCES TITLE THREE PUBLIC UTILITIES - CHAPTER 921 SANITARY SEWER CONNECTIONS AND RENTAL RATES, CHAPTER 927 STORM SEWERS, CHAPTER 929 WATER CONNECTIONS AND RATES; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0082-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GAHANNA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU (CVB) FOR THE YEARS 2024-2028 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING TOURISM AND ATTRACTING VISITORS TO THE CITY

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0083-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENT WITH THE GAHANNA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU (CVB) FOR THE YEARS 2024-2028 FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS OF THE OHIO HERB CENTER (OHC)

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

F. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING / ADOPTION:

[ORD-0077-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION AGREEMENT WITH CP CRESCENT, LLC, TO ENGAGE THE DEVELOPER AS THE CONTRACTOR FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW STREET AND RELATED UTILITIES AT THE CRESCENT AT CENTRAL PARK; AND TO ACCEPT A SIB LOAN SHORTFALL GUARANTY FROM THE DEVELOPER

Director of Economic Development Shannon Hamons clarified that the requested amendment is to add responsibility for the developer to take on the construction and installation of a traffic signal at Tech Center Drive going into the new drive area. Everything else is completely the same as it was last year when the measure was approved for the development agreement. The signal is not costing the city any additional funds, it was already planned for. Instead of the city managing it, the developer is being asked to manage it as part of the overall development.

Councilmember McGregor asked if there is a name for the street. Hamons said there is not a name for the street yet except for Tech Center Drive and Crescent Boulevard at Tech Center Drive.

AMENDMENT DISCUSSION

President Renner asked Assistant City Attorney Roth what the title for the amendment should be. Roth said amended to include traffic signal installation at the intersection of Crescent Boulevard and Tech Center Drive. Schnetzer asked if they could move to amend the ordinance and incorporate Exhibit A clean version as attached.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Amended to incorporate the proposed updates for the traffic signal in the agreement marked as Exhibit A. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Angelou, Bowers, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

A motion was made by Weaver, seconded by McGregor, that the Ordinance be Adopted as Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Angelou, Bowers, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

G. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk - None.
2. Council - None.

H. REPRESENTATIVES:

1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) - Renner, Weaver

President Renner announced the next meeting of the Community Improvement Corporation would be held November 21, 2023, at 8:00 a.m.

2. Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) - Angelou

[2023-0206](#)

Councilmember Angelou's MORPC Report to City Council 11.17.2023

Councilmember Angelou thanked the Clerk VanMeter for working with her on a MORPC informational packet for council. Jennifer Noll, associate director of community development, has left MORPC. The MORPC local government summer intern program is accepting requests for summer interns. There are 86 communities that are members of MORPC, and it continues to grow. MORPC might find out about the passenger rail in December. The Regional Water Collaboration and Planning is going to be a study partnership with Ohio.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova shared that Holiday Lights was on November 19, 2023. Many have said it is the biggest crowd that they've ever seen at that event. The weather helped. The restaurants were full, even well after the event, and there were a lot of CORA cups being carried around during the event. The CVB had asked the Creekside establishments to offer some special drinks for the holiday lights. There were 24 non-profit community organizations that participated this year. They were all given free booth space with the opportunity to build some awareness within the community and interact with residents. The Santa Race is on December 2, 2023. The registrations numbers are higher than last year. Packet pickup is going to be the Thursday before the race at Worthy Total Fitness at their new location in the old Gahanna Hardware location. Saturday is small business Saturday. You can go to visitgahanna.com to see some of the local stores in Gahanna.

4. School Board (SB) - Bowers

Councilmember Bowers shared that the school district is moving forward with revising and addressing the school start time project. The district announced they are rolling out a new texting tool that will help families better connect with schools and teachers. It is called Talking Points. Parents with students in the district will be receiving information about the Talking Points app to be able to communicate more directly with teachers and staff. More information for both is on the GJPS website. The district announced a new Heart and Pride award and announced two recent winners. Christine Tolliver, a Blacklick Interventions Specialist, and Tony Keels, a Gahanna Lincoln High School Campus Supervisor, were recent recipients. Bowers congratulated both for being recognized with the Heart and Pride

awards. The district continues to evaluate K5 literacy and the science of reading. As mentioned at a previous meeting, there was a presentation from Tia Hollman, Director of Curriculum and Aaron Schmidt, Curriculum Coordinator. If people have more questions, they can reach out to those staff members or board members.

I. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin thanked Councilmember Padova for mentioning the Holiday Lights Celebration. Thousands of people filled the streets. The event was capped off by the arrival of Santa Claus. There were wonderful events all day long, which included lighting of the tree in the Creekside Park. She said traditions and treasured memories are ties that bind us together as a community and certainly the holiday light celebration is one of those traditions. Some of the board members of Visit Gahanna were in attendance tonight. She thanked them for all their work in presenting another wonderful memory for our community. She thanked the sponsors and the volunteers, the organizations that helped to make it happen, and of course our incredible City team. This included the Police and Public Service Department that helped to keep everybody safe during the event and then our incredible Parks and Recreation team. There are approximately 300,000 lights up at Creekside Park. There are two months for everyone to go enjoy the lights. As mentioned, Saturday is small business Saturday. There is a full list of about 20 businesses participating in small business Saturday. Approximately 92% of our economy in Gahanna is from small business. Those mom-and-pop stores who invest blood, sweat and tears in our community. Mayor Jadwin congratulated Gahanna Lincoln High School on the wonderful Veteran's Day ceremony they had. It is always inspiring and informative when the students get to hear from people who have served and what that service has meant to them. Then, they take the rose in honor of every high school alumnus who lost their life in the line of duty. Mayor Jadwin mentioned the Veteran's Memorial Committee and the brick dedication ceremony. The theme of their event was the Purple Heart. In 2012, Gahanna was designated a Purple Heart City. Thanks to the efforts by the late Brigadier General James Abraham, the city got that designation and then really didn't do anything to celebrate that. At the ceremony on Veteran's Day, new Purple Heart City signs were unveiled. They are being installed at the park and in prominent locations along roadways in Gahanna. That will serve as a visual reminder of what we do as a community to lift up and encourage our veterans. Jadwin stressed that we need to be there for our veterans, and hopefully those signs will remind us of that obligation.

The events of the past week, last Tuesday, she believes everyone knows and she believes the governor used the words, "worst nightmare come true with a horrific accident on I-70." Several of our Gahanna Police Officers were travel along I-70 that morning on their way to a training session in Zanesville when they happened upon the crash. Mayor Jadwin invited Chief Spence to make a few comments given the extreme actions and extreme events of last week.

Chief Spence said last Tuesday a group of Gahanna officers were traveling to Zanesville for training when they came upon that crash, within about a minute or two of it occurring. They immediately deployed from their vehicle and moved into both a rescue and a life-saving mode. A lot of people have asked who was involved. The officers have wanted to remain quiet and to themselves. They have all expressed that they want the effort and focus to be on the families and the healing and a grieving process. The highway patrol who is the lead investigating agency and the NTSB interviewed our officers over the last couple days. Today, there was a debriefing that the highway patrol held. They were heroes that day. He does not think we'll know what their true impact was, but it was a horrific scene. They risked their lives. The scene was very active and was caught on some of our dash cam. There will be one day that we will publicly praise them. He has received calls from Council, the Mayor, City staff and a lot of community members as that news got out. He passed that on to the officers. One of the things that is true to the character of the organization is that they really wanted the focus to be on the families in that process. For all those who called and reached out, the Chief said he had passed on those sentiments to the officers. Everybody from the Superintendent of Highway Patrol, Sheriff Thorp, and Licking County, they all have expressed their desire to come and praise those officers. There will be a time in the future when their healing process is far enough along. Chief Spence thanked everyone, the training, the equipment, the time, and the effort that put into everything behind the scenes. This is an example of where it pays off.

Mayor Jadwin said Chief is being modest because there was another event last night. While there were thousands of people in the Creekside District enjoying what was a lovely, safe event, we had several officers that were dispatched to deal with another tragic incident that occurred just on the outskirts of Gahanna. It was in the city of Columbus, but right on the border. It culminated in a Gahanna neighborhood. Our officers were the first ones on the scene. They secured the area, secured the neighbors who were in the vicinity to make sure that they were safe. That incident was a tragedy as well but it is one that ended safely. They kept our neighborhoods safe. The training, the money spent on training our officers and making sure they have the equipment they need, making sure we are following

processes to recruit and hire and retain the best officers who really truly are serving this community, this was reflected in their actions and in the outcomes over the past week. They are a source of pride for this community. She is very grateful for them. We have many things to be thankful for in our community and she encourages all of us to take time out to thank those around you, but to also to really take the time to see those who are around you. People like our police, our Parks and Rec staff, public service department, your next-door neighbors who take your trash can up for you when you are not home, all those people who do little things for you that sometimes we just get so involved in our day day-to-day that we don't notice the niceties that people do for us and be thankful for them. She hopes that we can all reflect on our strength as a community. We have together faced many triumphs and we have also faced many challenges, but we overcome them. By always working together. May this holiday be a time for gratitude of unity and of joy. On behalf of the team at the city, she wishes all a warm and wonderful Thanksgiving.

2. City Attorney - None.

J. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember Angelou said the Veteran's Day ceremony was the best one she has ever seen. There were lots of people there and it was so perfectly done. She thanked the mayor for doing what she needed to do to get things together. Thanksgiving is coming very quickly. She thinks we should be thankful that we have such a wonderful place to live. She always thinks of Thanksgiving as one of her very favorite things. She reflected warmly on going to church the evening before and singing songs of thanksgiving and that carrying on through Christmas. She thought the Holiday Lights was next Sunday. She knows how good it was because it always has been a wonderful event. She remembered the first one and thanked the organizers, volunteers, and staff for being so good at all those things that they do.

Councilmember McGregor thanked Visit Gahanna for the great festival. She was unable to attend. The weather had to be a factor in having so many people in attendance. On December 2, 2023, from 12:00 - 4:00 p.m., the Historical Society is having a Victorian holiday. There will be an old time Santa (Jason Ruark) in the log house. There will be cookies and cider in the bed and breakfast, and crafts in the basement of the Clark House. She is making gingerbread cookies, so come and have some cookies and cider. Regarding the crash on I-70, McGregor noted that we pay and send officers to trainings. The fire and police radios used to be on different frequencies and so we upgraded them all to the same frequency. You can see in an incident like this why that would be important. Everybody could talk to each

other. They sent 20 kids to the hospital; that's 20 ambulances, and then you have fire equipment taking out the fire of explosions. Who is in charge, there has to be somebody in charge to direct it. It seemed like a real effort by so many people. There were many heroes that day. There were people that just stopped on the road and helped out when they could until the First Responders could get there. It was just so many people working together to have as good outcome as it turned out. She knows there were many tragedies, but there were also many heroic efforts put into that event. She is thankful for that especially this year at Thanksgiving.

Councilmember Bowers thanked everyone for a great holiday lights event. We are very fortunate for the seamless collaboration between Visit Gahanna, Parks and Rec Department and other community partners to put on a very fun and popular event for our community. Bowers shared a constituent report highlighting activities for October and constituent communications. If anyone has any questions about an item in the report, please feel free to reach out. She is working on a December 8th constituent hour. She has been working with Clerk VanMeter about potentially seeing if there is a way to make it so that a quorum potentially of council members could attend. However, she noted there may be restrictions by Charter for that. This is still being reviewed. She wanted to echo her gratitude and respect to our First Responders who run toward danger. She stopped in City Hall over the weekend and noticed the cruiser with the phrase Gahanna's Guardians on the back of it. She reiterates it is one of the reasons why she has always respected Chief Spence and his approach to community-oriented policing. She is very proud of the department and the officers that we have who see their work in themselves as guardians over every one of our residents and members of our community and beyond. She also mentioned that this week has been Transgender Awareness Week, culminating in today's Transgender Day of Remembrance. This day honors and reflects on lives lost due to gender-based violence against people whose gender identity does not necessarily align with social expectations. We in Gahanna pride ourselves on being an inclusive community where all are respected and safe, and that includes transgender Gahanna residents. As we enter the holiday season, she reminded everyone that 988 is The Suicide Prevention Hotline. Anyone who is suffering from mental health crisis or considering self-harm can call 988 for immediate support. She wishes everyone a very safe and Happy Thanksgiving and keeping in mind those who may not have all of their family members present this year.

Councilmember Padova said Ms. Angelou reminded her as she was talking that when she first moved to Gahanna, she brought two little kids that she babysat for to Creekside to see the lights one Christmas.

She remembers coming and right when we they got to the bridge, they looked out the window and one of the children said, "it's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen." It was just such a cute moment, and she will always remember that. She is sure that there have been tons of kids over the years who have thought those same things. She thanked Visit Gahanna for the festival and parks and rec for all the hard work. She saw them getting it all set up this week. It is reflected in the eyes of little ones. She thanked Chief Spence and asked to send her gratitude to all of the officers, especially the ones that need it most right now.

Councilmember Schnetzer wished everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving. As he has mentioned in years past, Thanksgiving is one of his favorite holidays. He thinks because it is uniquely American and of course it centers around food. Also because of what it calls us to do, which is reflect on all that we have to be grateful for. This past week has been a bittersweet one for Schnetzer and his family following the loss of a beloved family member. However, they are very thankful for the outpouring of support they have received. What they have experienced in the past week is in his view the very definition of community. Help and love and support from others without any expectation of receiving anything in return. Two examples of how this was demonstrated or experienced by the family was during the visitation. The receiving line ran over by more than one hour of the scheduled time that they had allotted. Not only relatives from far away but many friends, colleagues, and neighbors, several of which call Gahanna home. He noted that if you have ever had a terminally ill family member, you know how time consuming it can be. Just the day-to-day things that need to get crossed off the to-do list, that get pushed to the back burner. Things like laundry, grocery store and so forth. As recently as Monday night, they were getting critically low on chicken nuggets, frozen pizzas, etc. to feed his two young boys. So much so that when Schnetzer picked them up from school, he ran to the grocery store and had them pick out their own dinner. But by Tuesday, they had neighbors, colleagues, and friends from the community, members of the boys' youth league baseball teams, everyone dropping off home-cooked meals, honey baked hams. By the end of the day Tuesday, they were out of room in their refrigerator with all of the food. They were just incredibly blessed. He wishes the circumstances were different but the outpouring of support in this community has been nothing short of overwhelming, and he means that in the best way possible. He thanked everyone and wished everybody a very happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Vice President Weaver echoed some of the comments that colleagues have made and expressed his gratitude to Chief Spence for his leadership, but also to all of our officers and First Responders for all

that they do every day. The horrific images in the news last week: he is fortunate to say that he can only imagine the nerve that it would take for our First Responders. He is grateful for them every day. He is grateful for the wonderful City staff that we have as well as the many wonderful organizations who do wonderful work in the community. He thanked them very much for all that they do. As we approach Thanksgiving, Weaver said if you are heading out on the roads or heading into the skies to be safe in travels. As he mentioned a couple weeks ago, he is a first generation American. They don't have Thanksgiving in Denmark where his mom is from. They do Thanksgiving in Canada where his dad is from. It is not quite the same. He is looking forward to gathering with family this week but recognizing that it may be a difficult day for some as well. He hoped that the day landed gently for those who needed it to and wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

President Renner said he thinks his colleagues all hit the great points and it is a credit to each one of them and who they are. He added he is very grateful, thankful and wishes everybody a very happy and safe Thanksgiving. He is thankful for the community, our Police Department, Chief Spence. He has been around long enough that he has watched Chief Spence grow up through the ranks. He is very grateful for the Police Department and all that they do, providing the order to everything that we take for granted in our community. He is thankful for our community and our small businesses, our festivals and our Historical Society and everything else that goes in between. He is very grateful to be an American and brings that up only again because he is very scared of what is going on. We have too much rancor and too much disorder that is happening. We need to stand up collectively to it and put an end to this if we want to save our American democracy.

He attended the Holiday Lights with family and watched his son march in the band. It was a little bittersweet for all the seniors in the marching band because this was their last time in the marching in the band. It was a very crowded event. He thanked Visit Gahanna for everything they do. It was a very nice event, and they had a lot of fun. It was elbow to elbow. He has been around long enough, and somebody mentioned the lights and little buildings down at the trace area. He recalled that at one time you could walk around, and the kids could walk inside them and play and everything. He is not criticizing, but now that they are up on the Creekside area, it is narrow walkthroughs and people with strollers and people with other carts it creates so much traffic jams. He does not know if there is any other way to figure this out. He enjoyed the inflated tunnel that was fun to go through several different times and the fake snow, the shaved ice that was being thrown around. They acted silly and danced around in that. He is

thankful for all of that. He is thankful for everybody in City Hall.

[2023-0207](#)

Councilmember Merisa K. Bowers' Constituent Report - October 2023

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Schnetzer, to go into Executive Session under authority of Section 5.40(a) of the Council Rules of Procedure to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Angelou, Bowers, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

President Renner announced that Council would meet in the Law Library for executive session with no action to follow.

Council rose to report to executive session at 7:45 p.m. Clerk VanMeter was invited to attend part of the executive session.

Council rose to report from executive session at 8:27 p.m. with no further action.

L. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Renner adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

**Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council**

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
day of 2023.*

Stephen A. Renner