



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

Monday, April 21, 2025

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, April 21, 2025, in Council Chambers. President of Council Merisa K. Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:01 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 April 18, 2025.

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

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

None.

C. PRESENTATIONS:

**1. Paperclip Project Certificate of Recognition
Ms. Jennifer Candor & GLHS Students**

Councilmember Padova stated that most members likely heard of the project at Gahanna Lincoln High School, which began in 2014, with the goal of collecting six million paper clips to erect a monument in memory of those killed in the Holocaust. She explained that some of the students reached out to provide information about the project, and she believed it was important to bring them to the meeting to share an update. Councilmember Padova introduced Ms. Maegan Chrysler and teacher Ms. Jennifer Candor, who were present to speak about the project. She invited them to come forward to take a picture, receive a certificate of recognition, and then address the Council.

Ms. Candor thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak and expressed that it was an honor, especially as a resident of Gahanna, to know that the Council stood behind their cause. She reported that the project collected 2.4 million paper clips, so far, with an additional 100,000 paper clips awaiting

counting. She noted that counting would resume after the current testing period concluded on May 1, 2025. Ms. Candor emphasized that each paper clip collected came with a story and introduced Maegan Chrysler to share an example.

Ms. Chrysler explained that while she received many paper clip donations, one donation stood out. Deputy Chief Greg Bodker of the Columbus Police Department donated paper clips because he understood what it meant to have one's life on the line and to protect the freedoms of others.

President Bowers thanked Ms. Candor and Ms. Chrysler for attending and for their efforts to reflect on and remember all the lives lost in the Holocaust.

2. Mifflin Township's Proposed Tax Levy for Fire - Issue 20 on May 6th Ballot Fire Chief Brian Dunlevy, Asst. Chief Scott Davis, Deputy Chief Tom Lee

[2025-0093](#)

Mifflin Township's Proposed Tax Levy for Fire - Informational Materials Received 4.21.2025

President Bowers introduced the next item concerning the upcoming levy on the May 6 ballot and invited Fire Chief Brian Dunlevy, Assistant Chief Scott Davis, and Deputy Chief Tom Lee to address Council.

Fire Chief Dunlevy thanked President Bowers, the Mayor, and City Council for the opportunity to speak. He explained that Issue 20, the proposed levy, was crucial for the community and the Division of Fire's ability to maintain services. He noted that Mifflin Township Trustee Cavener was unable to attend due to a minor medical situation. Chief Dunlevy highlighted the Division's broad range of responsibilities, including fire suppression, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) services, tiller operations, heavy and technical rescue, rope rescue, trench rescue, hazmat response, confined space rescue, and tactical EMS operations in partnership with the Gahanna Police Department. He noted that the Division operated one of only two heavy technical rescue units east of Interstate 71. Chief Dunlevy identified three major challenges facing the fire service: retention and recruitment, funding limitations, and inflation and rising material costs. He reported that candidate pools significantly decreased over the years and that firefighter cancer rates and other job-related dangers increased. He discussed the Division's efforts to address workforce challenges through a lateral transfer program and an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) basic program.

Regarding funding, Chief Dunlevy explained that over 94% of the Division's revenue came from property tax levies, which remained fixed despite rising property values and costs. He emphasized the financial strain caused by inflation and described the proposed 1.95-mill levy, equating to approximately \$68 annually per \$100,000 of auditor appraised property value, or about 56 cents per day for a typical homeowner. He clarified that a separate Mifflin Township police levy would not affect Gahanna residents.

Assistant Chief Scott Davis then addressed Council, describing several behind-the-scenes operations managed by the Community Risk Reduction section, including the Metropolitan Emergency Communications Center (MECC) 911 center, fire prevention, community paramedic program, and community education efforts. He highlighted the success of the 911 center shared among several east side entities, the hiring of an internal fleet maintenance mechanic to reduce costs and service delays, and the severe rise in apparatus costs. He also described efforts to extend the life of ambulances through refurbishment rather than replacement and discussed the community paramedic program's work to support residents without necessarily transporting them to hospitals.

Deputy Chief Lee spoke about operational impacts, noting that Medic 131 at 475 Rocky Fork had been out of full-time service for several years. He stated that with the levy's approval, the Division planned to fill vacant full-time positions and restore Medic 131 to full-time service for Gahanna residents. He emphasized the importance of this operational improvement to the community.

Chief Dunlevy concluded by reaffirming the Division's commitment to cost-cutting measures that would not jeopardize emergency response capabilities. He announced a public levy information session to be held on Monday, April 28, at 6:00 p.m. at 155 Old Ridenour Road and encouraged all community members to attend. He thanked Council for their time and attention.

Questions/Comments from Council

President Bowers thanked Chief Dunlevy, Assistant Chief Davis, and Deputy Chief Lee for their time and for providing a detailed overview of the reasons behind the levy request and the services provided by the Mifflin Township Division of Fire. She opened the floor to questions from Councilmembers, noting that the Chiefs had welcomed a Q&A session.

President Bowers expressed appreciation for Deputy Chief Lee's comments, stating that knowing there were definitive plans to operationalize Medic 131 with full-time staff provided a tangible connection to the levy request. She asked whether there were any other anticipated outcomes, such as additional services if the levy passed or service reductions if it failed.

Deputy Chief Lee responded that, under current staffing models, there were days when cross-staffing was necessary due to injuries or scheduled leave. He explained that cross-staffing meant fewer personnel assigned to specific trucks, which was not ideal for service delivery. He emphasized that fully staffing all trucks consistently would provide greater operational effectiveness and better service to the public.

President Bowers thanked Deputy Chief Lee for the explanation and asked if

there were any further questions. Hearing none, she thanked the Chiefs again for attending and reminded the public about the levy information session scheduled for the following Monday, on April 28, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

3. Our Gahanna Strategic Plan/Comprehensive Transportation & Mobility Plan
Sarah C. Bongiorno and Bailey Morlan (Planning NEXT)
Shannon Fergus (Burgess & Niple, Inc.)

[2025-0094](#)

Our Gahanna Strategic Plan & Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan - Presentation Slides Received 4.21.2025

Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services, addressed Council and introduced representatives present to provide updates on planning initiatives underway within the city. She explained that the evening's agenda would include an update on the *Our Gahanna* strategic plan from Planning NEXT, followed by an update on the Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan from Burgess & Niple. Vollmer outlined the agenda, stating that Planning NEXT would first discuss the benefits of planning across the city and its impact on residents, followed by a presentation on the *Our Gahanna* plan framework, process, and overview. She stated that Shannon Fergus from Burgess & Niple would then provide an update on the Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan. Vollmer concluded by noting that the session would end with a discussion about upcoming public engagement opportunities for both plans scheduled for May of 2025.

Our Gahanna Strategic Plan

Sarah Bongiorno of Planning NEXT addressed Council and provided an update on the *Our Gahanna* Strategic Plan. She began by offering a broader overview of the importance of planning, emphasizing that effective planning serves as good stewardship of land, resources, and tax dollars. Ms. Bongiorno explained that having a clear, intentional roadmap benefits communities by guiding programs, policies, and projects, and that plans should be considered living documents, referenced and updated regularly rather than placed on a shelf. She outlined the different types of planning processes a city may undertake, including strategic plans, comprehensive plans, area plans, transportation plans, and others such as sustainability or economic development plans. She noted that the strategic plan sits at the highest level, setting a broad framework that informs more detailed efforts like the transportation plan or active transportation plan.

Ms. Bongiorno described the *Our Gahanna* Strategic Plan as a long-term framework to guide decision-making and help the city chart its future over the next 10 years. She emphasized that this was a pivotal moment for Gahanna, given the ongoing regional developments such as the airport expansion, LinkUS corridor planning, and the Intel project. She explained that the Plan Framework was developed based on input gathered during the first round of public engagement from December 2024 through February 2025. Planning NEXT drafted the initial framework, sought feedback from the steering

committee and city staff, and refined it further. The framework would be tested with the public during a second round of engagement in May of 2025.

Bailey Morlan of Planning NEXT then presented the components of the drafted Plan Framework. She explained that the framework included three levels: the Vision Statement, Community Values, and Strategic Focus Areas.

- **Vision Statement:** Gahanna aspires to connect people and places that foster opportunities for all to thrive.
- **Community Values:**
 - Vibrancy: Robust amenities, programs, and services that enrich residents' lives.
 - Connections: Convenient connectivity to local and regional services and amenities.
 - Stewardship: Balancing development with conservation and preservation of green spaces.
 - Community: A welcoming, supportive, and safe environment fostering mutual respect and belonging.
- **Strategic Focus Areas:**
 - Elevating Unique Places (e.g., Creekside, parks, trails, neighborhoods)
 - Fostering Economic Development (e.g., redevelopment, small business support)
 - Serving the Community (e.g., government operations, safety services, infrastructure)
 - Celebrating Identity (e.g., sense of place, regional identity, communication)
 - Connecting the Community (e.g., mobility, partnerships, events)

Ms. Morlan explained that these focus areas would be further developed into specific goal statements in the next phase.

Ms. Bongiorno then outlined the upcoming second round of public engagement efforts planned for May of 2025. She explained that Planning NEXT was intentional in designing a broader, more inclusive engagement strategy to better reach underrepresented populations. Planned events included high school outreach, participation at the Gahanna Bananas game, a family festival, a senior lunch, a young professionals' happy hour, a small business networking coffee, and online engagement opportunities. Ms. Bongiorno noted that while the first week of May would feature concentrated activities, public engagement would continue throughout the month via online tools. She invited questions and comments from Council, offering to return to any of the slides presented.

Questions/Comments from Council

President Bowers noted that Council had not received the presentation on their devices. Ms. Bongiorno of Planning NEXT offered to return to any slides

Council wished to review. At President Bowers' request, Ms. Bongiorno reviewed the strategic focus areas of the *Our Gahanna* Strategic Plan.

Ms. Bongiorno explained that the strategic focus areas were derived directly from public input. She outlined the focus areas as follows: elevating Gahanna's unique places, such as Creekside, parks, trails, and neighborhoods; fostering economic development, which would include strategic redevelopment areas, small business cultivation, and housing considerations; serving the community, focusing on internal government operations, safety services, and stewardship of infrastructure and utilities; celebrating identity, emphasizing sense of place, wayfinding, and broader regional identity; and connecting the community, emphasizing people, partnerships, events, and unity. She emphasized that connections were not limited to mobility but included community building and collaboration.

President Bowers asked Ms. Bongiorno to elaborate on the inclusion of housing as part of the economic development component. Ms. Bongiorno explained that Planning NEXT's economists advised that balancing land uses for both jobs and housing was critical for long-term community stability. She stated that while housing could fit under multiple focus areas, it was important to ensure that space remained for employment opportunities while addressing housing pressures.

Councilmember Jones asked what residents could expect from the upcoming Vision Festival engagement events and whether the format would be structured similarly to the earlier table talks. Ms. Bongiorno responded that the events were designed to be welcoming and social, with self-paced engagement stations where participants could review and provide feedback on the vision, values, and strategic focus areas. She noted that the stations would allow residents to dive deeper into each topic area and share ideas. Ms. Bongiorno encouraged both new participants and those who participated in the earlier table talks to attend, stating it was an opportunity to validate and refine earlier feedback.

President Bowers asked how Councilmembers could direct any follow-up questions after the meeting. Senior Director Miranda Vollmer stated that Councilmembers should send any questions regarding the Planning NEXT or Burgess & Niple presentations directly to her, and she would facilitate getting the answers.

Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan

Shannon Fergus, Project Manager with Burgess & Niple, addressed Council to provide an overview of the Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan. She explained that this was the first presentation to Council on the plan and began by outlining its purpose and scope. Ms. Fergus stated that the plan updated the City's required Thoroughfare Plan and also expanded beyond it, modernizing access management and traffic impact study requirements, and

enhancing the City's Complete Streets policy. She clarified that the plan would not focus on an intersection-by-intersection review or on widening roads for capacity alone, but rather on creating a comprehensive, multimodal transportation environment that supports walking, biking, and transit, in addition to vehicular travel. She described how the Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan aligned with concurrent city planning initiatives, including the *Our Gahanna* Strategic Plan and the Economic Development Strategy, and how it incorporated previous efforts such as the 2019 Land Use Plan, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the Active Transportation Plan.

Ms. Fergus explained the planning process timeline, noting that work began in June 2024 with an existing conditions analysis. She highlighted the visit by national walkability expert Jeff Speck in October 2024, which included stakeholder engagement and a public talk attended by over 100 people. She outlined the plan's goal to modernize the Thoroughfare Plan by considering future regional changes, including the LinkUS corridor study. She reviewed the focus of the existing conditions assessment, including roadway classifications, high-crash locations, disconnected and underserved communities, active transportation networks, and public transportation systems. She emphasized that national best practices and land use context were being incorporated to ensure roadways aligned with Gahanna's broader land use and economic development goals.

Ms. Fergus described the components of the updated Thoroughfare Plan, including functional classifications, future land use context, and recommended roadway cross-sections showing sidewalk widths, bike lanes, and shared-use paths. She explained that accompanying policy documents would regulate access management and traffic impacts from new developments and support implementation of the Complete Streets approach. Ms. Fergus reported that staff workshops were conducted to develop preliminary roadway design concepts and that further public engagement events would be held in May of 2025. She noted that the team aimed to finalize recommendations by late summer of 2025, and return to Planning Commission and Council with a completed plan for review by September of 2025. Finally, Ms. Fergus directed attendees to the project website for more information, public comment opportunities, and access to an online survey open through the month of May of 2025. She concluded her presentation and invited questions from Council.

Questions/Comments from Council

President Bowers followed up by complimenting Burgess & Niple on their progressive and thoughtful approach to community engagement, noting a recent presentation by one of their colleagues. She asked Ms. Fergus to elaborate on the stakeholder events held during the Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan process, specifically who participated, the goals of the engagement, and how the feedback was incorporated into the

plan.

Ms. Fergus responded that stakeholder events were conducted over two days in October of 2024. The engagement began with a city tour led by staff, Mayor Jadwin, and Jeff Speck to provide a lay of the land and highlight existing issues. The second day included meetings with economic development stakeholders to discuss how the transportation system could support or hinder business growth, including topics such as parking and major development. Additional sessions were held with school and community service representatives to address school safety and related transportation concerns. Ms. Fergus noted that the steering committee and city department directors also participated in detailed exercises focused on walkability, road capacity, and potential improvements. She estimated that approximately 40 stakeholders were engaged during the two days. She also referenced a community lecture by Jeff Speck, during which attendees provided additional feedback.

President Bowers asked what informed the plan's land use and economic development goals. Ms. Fergus explained that the team reviewed the 2019 Land Use Plan and incorporated feedback from stakeholders and staff regarding anticipated and desired development locations. She noted particular emphasis on supporting mixed-use development along major corridors, such as Granville Street and Hamilton Road, and highlighted the desire for safer, more walkable roadway environments.

President Bowers asked whether additional opportunities for broader public engagement would be offered. Ms. Fergus confirmed that ongoing engagement efforts included the current survey available online, public feedback stations at upcoming community events, and robust online engagement where residents could review proposed thoroughfare classifications and roadway cross-sections.

President Bowers thanked the presenters and invited any additional questions from Council. Hearing none, she reminded Council that any further questions could be directed to Senior Director Vollmer.

Senior Director Vollmer provided a recap of upcoming public engagement opportunities, highlighting the Gahanna Vision Fest starting May 6, 2025, which would feature free tacos for the first 100 attendees, bounce houses, face painting, cotton candy, and giveaways in partnership with Director Ferrell's Parks & Recreation team. She also outlined additional events, including a small business morning coffee networking session, a senior lunch at the Senior Center, a young professionals happy hour at Edison, and an online survey available throughout May. She noted that engagement opportunities would also be available at the annual Economic Development event on May 15, 2025, and the Gahanna Bananas baseball game. Senior Director Vollmer emphasized that Planning NEXT and Burgess & Niple coordinated to avoid engagement fatigue and that both the Our Gahanna plan and the Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan would be

represented at these events.

D. HEARING OF VISITORS:

Ms. Kathy McCorkle, Gahanna, Ohio spoke on Council Comments from April 7, 2025.

Ms. McCorkle addressed Council and stated that two weeks earlier, Councilwoman Bowers declined to advance a resolution recognizing Natural Families. Ms. McCorkle contrasted this with Council's past support of a Pride resolution honoring the Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ) community. She asserted that such actions reflected partiality, referenced the City's non-discrimination clause, and reminded Council of their obligation under their oath of office to impartially discharge their duties. She concluded by encouraging equal recognition and respect for all families.

E. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2025-0088](#)

Council Regular Minutes 4.7.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2025-0089](#)

Committee of the Whole Minutes 4.14.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Resolutions:

[RES-0018-2025](#)

A JOINT PROCLAMATION AND RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 3-10, 2025 AS HERB WEEK IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

3. Ordinances for Second Reading and Adoption:

[ORD-0010-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0011-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT WITH COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0012-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN ACCESS AND GENERAL UTILITY EASEMENT WITH COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0013-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT THE DEDICATION OF 0.057 ACRES OF RIGHT-OF-WAY EXTENSION FROM PARCEL NO. 025-012951 LOCATED OFF OF CLIFFVIEW DRIVE FOR THE PURPOSE OF FACILITATING A FUTURE LOT SPLIT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A REGULATOR STATION BY COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0014-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT THE DEDICATION OF 0.071 ACRES OF RIGHT-OF-WAY FROM PROPERTY LOCATED AT 4720 SHULL ROAD TO COMPLY WITH THE CITY'S 2019 THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0015-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO AWARD AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH DECKER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY FOR THE 2025 STREET AND SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM (ST-1114)

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[ORD-0016-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - Clerk of Court Computer Fund (2290) for Capital Equipment

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

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

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

F. RESOLUTIONS:

Recommended to Postpone Indefinitely:

[RES-0015-2025](#) A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE CITY OF GAHANNA'S INTENT TO PARTICIPATE FINANCIALLY IN THE WYNNE RIDGE COURT BRIDGE

REPLACEMENT PROJECT (ODOT PROJECT NO. 116417) AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A PARTICIPATORY AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

President Bowers stated that this resolution was brought before Council two weeks prior. She explained that, due to procedural questions and inquiries from the City Attorney, the resolution was referred back to Committee and now needed to be brought forward to a date-specific meeting. President Bowers stated her understanding that there was now a recommendation to postpone the resolution indefinitely because it would be replaced by Ordinance 0017-2025, listed under Section H. She confirmed this understanding with City Attorney Tamilarasan, who affirmed that it was correct.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Renner, that the Resolution be postponed indefinitely. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

G. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:

[ORD-0018-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH FISHBECK FOR UTILITY ENGINEERING SERVICES; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

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

H. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION, WAIVER & ADOPTION:

[ORD-0017-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE 0058-2024 AND TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO PROVIDE CONSENT AND ENTER PARTICIPATORY AGREEMENTS, ANY NECESSARY AMENDMENTS WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR BRIDGE REPLACEMENT ON WYNNE RIDGE COURT, AND AN LPA CONTRACT IN THE FORM ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBIT A; AND WAIVING SECOND READING

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

President Bowers stated that the ordinance under consideration replaced the resolution that was postponed indefinitely regarding the Wynne Ridge Bridge contract.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Waived for Second Reading. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

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

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

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

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

J. REPRESENTATIVES:**1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) - Renner, Padova**

Councilmember Padova stated she would have a full report at the May 5, 2025, regular Council meeting.

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

[2025-0092](#)

Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 4.21.2025

Vice President Weaver thanked the Council Office for their assistance in preparing the report and encouraged his colleagues to review the full report, noting that it contained valuable information. He announced that the next meeting would be held on May 8, 2025. He reported that the commission met on April 10, 2025, and shared several key updates. Vice President Weaver reported that the Ohio State Highway Patrol recently released a report on the impact of distracted driving legislation, noting that crashes were down 8%, injuries were down 3%, and fatalities were down 4%, even as total miles driven increased. He stated that the City of Columbus was transitioning the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging to an independent agency due to changes in Medicaid's structure. He reminded everyone that the Franklin County sales tax increase approved by voters in November of 2024, went into effect on April 1, 2025, to support the LinkUS initiative and that residents might notice the additional tax on their receipts. He noted that the legislative update contained numerous items and encouraged members to review it. He highlighted a specific provision included in the House budget approved by the Ohio House that could impact municipalities' ability to use eminent domain for shared use paths. Finally, Vice President Weaver mentioned that the upcoming "Money Mondays" session would cover public finance investment banking, a topic he suggested would be of particular interest to Councilmember Schnetzer.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova announced that Herb Day would be held on Saturday, May 3, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Creekside Plaza. She noted that volunteers were still needed for the event and directed those interested to visit ohioherbcenter.org and click on the Herb Day section for volunteer opportunities. Councilmember Padova also announced that Herb'n

Restaurant Week would take place from May 3 through May 9, 2025, with several participating restaurants, including 101 Beer Kitchen, Barrel and Boar, Lola & Giuseppe's Restaurant, Lola & Giuseppe's Bakery, and Three Creeks. She encouraged residents to check the Visit Gahanna Instagram and Facebook pages for a complete list of participating restaurants.

4. School Board (SB) - Jones

Councilmember Jones provided a brief update regarding the monthly school board meeting held the previous Thursday. She described the meeting as very robust and encouraged everyone to review the discussion topics online. She highlighted one particular update from the meeting, noting that the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, following direction from the federal government, issued instructions for school districts nationwide. As a result, the district updated a policy originally written in 2020 concerning its core values. Councilmember Jones explained that the revised resolution continued to affirm the district's commitment to supporting all students, families, and staff and emphasized maintaining an inclusive and safe learning environment. She encouraged residents to review the full text of the resolution and the meeting minutes available on the school board website. She announced that the next school board meeting would be a workshop scheduled for May 1, 2025, with the location to be announced and posted on the website.

K. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin reported that over the past two weeks, the city hosted The Ohio State University's Fisher Center for Operational Excellence Summit. She explained that it was a three-day event held at Ohio State dedicated to connecting diverse industries and organizations to best practices in leadership and problem-solving. Thanks to the efforts of the Gahanna's construction partners, Elford, the new Civic Center at 825 Tech Center Drive was featured as a site during the summit. Mayor Jadwin shared that the city welcomed close to a dozen executives from companies across the country, as well as representatives from The Ohio State University. She noted her personal connection to Fisher, as her children attended the college.

Mayor Jadwin stated that the city was able to share the impetus for the project, which was the immediate need to address a failing police headquarters, and the city's ability to find a solution utilizing an existing vacated building to meet three facility needs in a sustainable and cost-effective manner. Construction partners from Elford and members of the architectural design team from MSA participated in the summit, speaking about communication strategies and their approaches to the construction project. She reported that late last week, officials from the Fisher Center shared that participant feedback from the Civic Center tour received an unprecedented 100% overall satisfaction rating, the first in the history of the

Center of Excellence Summit. They attributed the rating to the collaborative and communicative spirit between Senior Director of Operations Kevin Schultz, the city's team, Elford, and MSA. Mayor Jadwin encouraged those interested to view the 825 project update recently posted on the City's YouTube page. She announced that the next project update would take place during the first Committee of the Whole meeting in May, scheduled for May 12, 2025.

Mayor Jadwin noted two recent ribbon-cutting events for projects supported by the 2024 Community Grants Program funded by ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Dollars. She described the grand opening of the Plant Library at Creative Options, a collaboration with an organization that serves individuals with disabilities and the Gahanna Plant Library, which she noted was very meaningful to the community. She praised the turnout and expressed excitement for the project's future growth in its new location. Mayor Jadwin also described the ribbon-cutting event for Gahanna Residents in Need's (GRIN's) new temperature-regulated food lockers, funded in part by the Community Grants Program, the Columbus Foundation, the Kroger Foundation, and the Rotary. She shared that Assistant Director Beth Bentley demonstrated how the lockers work, highlighting their role in providing 24/7 access to essential food items and removing barriers and stigma associated with food assistance. Mayor Jadwin stated that both projects embodied the heart of the Community Grants Program's purpose: empowering local organizations to improve quality of life and address real needs.

Mayor Jadwin thanked Make Gahanna Yours, Donna Simmons, Carrin Wester, and all volunteers who participated in the Community Litter Cleanup event over the past weekend. She apologized for missing the event due to traveling to Pittsburgh to visit her mother, sharing that she looked forward to participating in the fall cleanup.

Mayor Jadwin announced that she was selected as a new fellow in the 2025 class of Leadership Ohio, joining 34 leaders from across the state in an eight-and-a-half-month program focused on intensive training and civil dialogue on pressing issues facing Ohio and its communities. She reflected on the growth of previous staff members who participated in the program and expressed excitement to bring back opportunities to Gahanna.

Mayor Jadwin provided a news alert regarding a traffic project, announcing that beginning Friday evening, April 25, 2025, at 8:00 p.m., the northbound ramp to I-270 from southbound Hamilton Road would be closed for roadway work impacting a bridge over Big Walnut Creek. The ramp closure was scheduled to reopen on Tuesday morning, April 29, 2025, at 5:00 a.m. She advised that the city was working with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to determine detour routes and would post updates on the City's website and social media pages.

Mayor Jadwin outlined upcoming events, including:

- The MORPC Sustainability Advisory Committee's one-hour virtual

webinar on the Regional Sustainability Agenda, scheduled for Wednesday, April 23, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

- The Shred and E-Recycle event at Gahanna City Hall on Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with GRIN accepting food and cash donations.
- The Franklin County Sheriff's Office Prescription Drug Take-Back Day at the Kroger parking lot on Saturday, April 26, 2025.
- The Gahanna Lincoln High School Community Art Party at Friendship Park on Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., where the 2025 Story Trail would also be unveiled in collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Department and the Gahanna Branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library.

Mayor Jadwin announced that on Thursday, May 1, 2025, the city would host its first-ever Gahanna Mind and Wellness Fair at City Hall from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., featuring approximately 14 providers offering resources related to mental health, wellness, and substance abuse. She encouraged attendees to share information about the event as the city prepared to kick off Mental Health Awareness Month in May.

2. City Attorney

City Attorney Tamilarasan reported that on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, the Ohio Supreme Court declined jurisdiction over the Speed Way appeal. She explained that this decision exhausted all appeal routes for the case, which originated in 2018, and that the case was now completely and finally concluded. She stated that she had no further updates.

L. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember McGregor announced her return after missing several weeks due to a total knee replacement on April 1, 2025. She noted that it was not an April Fool's joke. She described the significant demand for orthopedic surgeons in the area, sharing that when she initially requested surgery in December, 2024, the earliest available date was April, 2025. She advised residents needing orthopedic procedures to schedule well in advance. She expressed her gratitude for the skilled doctors and the quality of medical care available locally, and she reported that her physical therapy was progressing well.

Councilmember Padova reflected on several recent community events. She expressed her happiness at seeing the reopening of the Plant Library, emphasizing the community's appreciation for the resource, particularly its role in helping families teach gardening and support postpartum wellness. She also attended the GRIN ribbon cutting alongside Councilmembers Jones, Weaver, and Council President Bowers. She shared her appreciation for the volunteers and businesses supporting GRIN, highlighting the ongoing egg donations from Trillium Egg Farm despite rising egg prices. She described the experience as heartwarming. Councilmember Padova also mentioned

participating in constituent hours at the library with Council President Bowers, where they hosted a "stuffy swap" for children. She noted that resident Ms. McCorkle, despite being present outside, chose not to come inside and speak with Councilmembers.

Councilmember Renner reported participating in the Community Litter Cleanup organized by Make Gahanna Yours. Assigned to work along Route 62, he focused on a drainage ditch and filled a trash bag with litter. He emphasized the importance of protecting water systems and reflected on the environmental impact of such efforts. Councilmember Renner congratulated Mayor Jadwin on her Leadership Ohio appointment and shared his own news of being invited to join the advisory board of Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service. He recounted his past experience obtaining a gubernatorial proclamation for National Chemistry Week and expressed his enthusiasm for continuing civic engagement through his new role.

Councilmember Schnetzer also thanked Make Gahanna Yours for organizing the litter cleanup. He recounted taking his two young sons to pick up trash along Cafe Creekside, noting the encouraging turnout of volunteers in neon yellow shirts. However, he expressed dismay at the volume of trash, especially in one logjam he described as a "flotilla" of debris. He welcomed Councilmember McGregor back and concluded his remarks.

Vice President Weaver thanked all guests and participants, particularly Ms. Maegan Chrysler for presenting about the Paperclip Project. He stressed the importance of remembering the individual lives represented by each paperclip. Vice President Weaver also participated in the litter cleanup, stationed along Route 62 between Heartland Bank and Cherry Bottom. He described quickly filling several trash bags and encouraged proper trash disposal to preserve a cleaner Gahanna. He thanked Make Gahanna Yours for the record-breaking volunteer turnout and noted an upcoming cleanup on June 7, 2025, focused on freeway entrances. Vice President Weaver also praised the ribbon cutting at GRIN, describing the new temperature-controlled food lockers as a "game changer" for food accessibility. He congratulated Councilmember Renner and Mayor Jadwin on their new leadership opportunities and welcomed back Councilmember McGregor.

President Bowers thanked Make Gahanna Yours for fostering the spirit of volunteerism and emphasized the positive ripple effect community events can have. She announced that her neighborhood would host a beautification and litter cleanup event on May 10, 2025. President Bowers thanked Councilmember Padova for co-hosting the recent constituent hours at the library and explained the open, welcoming format of these events. She reflected on the value of discussing a wide range of resident concerns. President Bowers congratulated Mayor Jadwin on her Leadership Ohio fellowship and announced that she had completed her own fellowship with the Ohio State Bar Foundation, where she focused on issues related to re-entry for incarcerated individuals. President Bowers concluded by recognizing the

students in attendance and commending their passion for helping unhoused individuals. She shared a recent story of two Gahanna students who sought councilmember assistance to address homelessness, expressing hope for nurturing the spirit of compassion and justice within the community.

M. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
day of 2025.*

Merisa K. Bowers