



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, September 18, 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, September 18, 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 September 15, 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:

1. Proclamation Presentation by Mayor

[2023-0160](#)

Mayoral Proclamation - Childhood Cancer Awareness Month 2023-09

Mayor Jadwin began her presentation by highlighting the significance of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, which takes place in September. She pointed out that while many cancer awareness campaigns exist, childhood cancers are often overlooked. She shared some startling statistics, such as the fact that 46 children are diagnosed with cancer in the United States every day, with an average age of six years old. Childhood cancer is the leading cause of death in children in the country, and there are over 12 different types of childhood cancers, each with numerous subtypes. Mayor Jadwin stressed that childhood cancer is underfunded on a national level and emphasized the importance of raising awareness about the disease. The mayor also commended the strength of childhood cancer survivors and warriors, highlighting how they often remain positive and uplift those around them despite their battles with the disease. She shared personal experiences,

mentioning a nephew who had childhood cancer and a college friend who tragically lost her daughter to the disease at the age of 18. Mayor Jadwin then presented a proclamation for Childhood Cancer Awareness Month to Kelly and Roland Day, recognizing Roland as a strong warrior and a fine example. She encouraged all residents to join the fight against childhood cancer and thanked Roland and his mother, Kelly, for their presence. Finally, she offered Ms. Day the opportunity to say a few words.

Ms. Day expressed her gratitude to everyone and shared the story of her son, Roland, who was diagnosed with stage four kidney cancer two years ago. She described the challenging journey that Roland went through, including nine months of aggressive treatments. However, she also shared the positive news that Roland has been considered cancer-free for almost a year and a half, although he will continue to undergo scans. Ms. Day mentioned that while Roland is a success story, many children with cancer still face chronic medical issues throughout their lives if they survive. She shared that they feel they have a responsibility to raise awareness and advocate for childhood cancer, as many others may not have the same opportunity to speak out. She encouraged everyone to support Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in September.

2. Members of the Public

Morgan Harper of 139 E Main St, Columbus, OH spoke via video on the "Stop AEP Rate Hikes Coalition."

Ms. Morgan Harper, co-founder of the grassroots organization Columbus Stand Up, addressed the council regarding electricity prices. She informed the council about the formation of a coalition called "Stop AEP Rate Hikes" in response to AEP's recent request to increase electricity prices. She highlighted that the media had covered AEP's price increases based on auction prices in June, affecting communities in central Ohio that had not implemented community aggregation. Ms. Harper mentioned that Gahanna was one of these communities, indicating that Gahanna residents likely experienced around a 30 percent increase in their electricity bills in June due to AEP's rate hike. She further explained that AEP was also advancing an electric security plan requesting a 14 percent rate increase in 2024. The coalition's goal was to advocate for residents and small business owners who were burdened by these electricity price hikes, especially in areas without community aggregation. Ms. Harper discussed their petition drive at stopAEPratehikes.com and shared that the coalition had already delivered a batch of petitions to AEP headquarters. The petitions aimed to express the community's opposition to further rate increases and the need for transparency regarding the use of funds. She highlighted that AEP might have reached a settlement with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) and that there would be another hearing on October 10th. She urged Gahanna City Council to investigate the extent of electricity price increases and collaborate with the PUCO to prevent further hikes, ensuring affordable utilities for residents. Ms. Harper concluded by encouraging council members to reach out to the coalition for more information or contact her directly at morganharper.org.

D. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2023-0156](#) CN Minutes 9.5.2023

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Ordinances for Second Reading:

[ORD-0066-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - General Fund for Risk Insurance Renewal

The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

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

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

E. RESOLUTIONS:

[RES-0030-2023](#) A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR

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

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

[RES-0031-2023](#) A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA SEPTEMBER 15 - OCTOBER 15, 2023

Councilmember Bowers expressed her gratitude to the council president for including a resolution on the agenda, acknowledging that September 15th marked the beginning of a special month dedicated to recognizing and celebrating Hispanic and Latine culture. She shared that she had reached out to a former Gahanna resident, Meredith Mendoza, to gather insights on the topic. Ms. Mendoza had shared her thoughts, emphasizing the importance of participating in events and activities that honor and expand knowledge of Hispanic and Latine culture, including diverse cultures, languages, art, music, cuisine, and the history of these communities. Councilmember Bowers highlighted that the resolution aimed to promote cultural awareness and understanding, fostering unity among residents by supporting the well-being of all. She also noted the presence of the Ohio Hispanic Coalition in Gahanna,

specifically at 220 West Johnstown Road, where they have a cultural and education center. She provided information about the Ohio Hispanic Coalition's mission as a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the advancement of the Hispanic community in Ohio. Councilmember Bowers encouraged residents to learn more about the Ohio Hispanic Coalition by visiting their website at ohiohispaniccoalition.org.

Councilmember McGregor expressed her appreciation for the resolution and shared a personal story related to Hispanic and Puerto Rican culture. She mentioned that one of her children is married to a man from Puerto Rico. As a result, they have four grandchildren with Puerto Rican ancestry. Councilmember McGregor recounted a recent family celebration, mentioning that her grandson Alex had turned 15. She explained that the family had previously celebrated quinceañeras, but Alex's celebration was somewhat different. She wasn't sure if there was an official term for it, but they didn't call it a quinceañera. For this special occasion, cousins from Boston came to DJ, and family flew in from Puerto Rico to prepare an enormous cauldron of rice and beans. The family celebrated their own Hispanic tradition, and Councilmember McGregor expressed her delight in having a multicultural family. She concluded by thanking Councilmember Bowers for the resolution.

A motion was made by Bowers, seconded by Padova, that the Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

F. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

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

G. REPRESENTATIVES:

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

Vice President Weaver noted that the CIC regular monthly meeting has been postponed to Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 8 a.m. in the Committee Room.

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

[2023-0158](#)

Councilmember Angelou's MORPC Report to City Council 9.15.2023

Councilmember Angelou provided a summary of various activities and resolutions discussed during a recent MORPC meeting. She began by mentioning the changes in leadership within the commission, with Chris Amorose Groomes serving as the acting chair and Michelle Crandall as the

vice chair, along with Ben Kessler as secretary. She then listed several resolutions and actions passed during the meeting: 1) Resolution amending the State Fiscal Year 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program, 2) Adoption of the 2024 Technical Assistance Program Guide, 3) Acceptance of the Planning Work Program Completion Report, 4) Establishment of priorities for Central Ohio candidate projects committed in 2023 for track funding, and 5) Metropolitan Transportation Plan update, specifically the adoption of the 2050 forecast household and employment variables. Councilmember Angelou highlighted the visit of U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm to Columbus to observe the weatherization programs led by MORPC's Robert Williams. This visit provided valuable insights into energy efficiency initiatives. She also mentioned the Economic Development District's approval increases the region's likelihood for grant funding opportunities. Additionally, there were discussions about the potential for passenger rail developments connecting Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Dayton. Councilmember Angelou noted that the State of Ohio allocated \$100 million for rail safety initiatives, emphasizing the importance of rail safety measures. She briefly mentioned the upcoming visit of Washington D.C. staff for the Columbus Regional Coalition and the upcoming Summit on Sustainability on October 26th.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova provided several announcements related to upcoming events and activities in the area. She mentioned the rescheduled performance of "Honey and Blue" taking place on the back Plaza September 20, 2023, from 6 to 8 PM. This event coincides with the new Creekside cornhole league, offering attendees the chance to enjoy live music and cornhole games. The Herb Center has organized multiple classes for October, including sessions on herbal techniques: syrups and honey, growing vegetables into the winter using season extension techniques, herbal techniques: powders and pastes, and herb craft dream pillows and sacred smoke. Interested individuals can find more information and register for these classes on ohioherbcenter.org. Lastly, an exciting partnership was revealed between the Ohio Herb Center and The Graduate Hotel in Downtown Columbus. The collaboration involves offering herbal tea tastings to hotel guests, potentially attracting them to visit Gahanna.

4. School Board (SB) - Bowers

Councilmember Bowers relayed information about the Safe School Helpline, emphasizing its importance for students and parents in ensuring the safety of Gahanna-Jefferson Schools. The Safe School Helpline serves as a confidential and accessible resource for reporting concerns related to potential safety threats, including issues like drug or alcohol abuse, weapons, harassment, bullying, and threats. She shared the following contact options: Phone - individuals can call the helpline at any time, day or night, to report concerns; Online - reports can be made online through a private, confidential, and anonymous tip submission form available at gahannaschools.org/safe-school-helpline; or Text - option is also available by sending a text message to 614-426-0240 and typing "tips" when prompted. Councilmember Bowers highlighted the importance of this resource for the

community, underscoring its role in maintaining a safe and secure environment within the school district.

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin provided several updates and announcements during the council meeting. She acknowledged the recent ribbon-cutting ceremony for Gahanna Residents In Need's (GRIN's) new facility, which expanded their capacity to support the community. She praised GRIN's work and the community's generous support. Mayor Jadwin mentioned the Kyle Miller 5K event, which honors a cancer victim. The Miller family donated 350 gift cards for shoes to GRIN, demonstrating the community's support for those in need. Creekside Hops and Vines, organized by the Parks & Rec Foundation, was a successful event with about 875 tickets sold. The event's proceeds will support camp scholarships, programs, and community events throughout the year. The Mayor announced the upcoming Mill Street Market on the following Sunday, inviting residents to participate and engage with city representatives, particularly the Planning Department, to provide input on the future of Gahanna's zoning code. Gahanna received a \$20,000 grant from the National Parks and Recreation Association to construct a human sundial at Sunpoint Park. The project aims to enhance the community's recreational offerings. Mayor Jadwin addressed changes in water bill due dates, which were adjusted to provide residents with at least 30 days to pay their bills. This change aims to alleviate concerns related to mail delivery delays and ensure residents have more flexibility in paying their bills. Mayor Jadwin expected the number of disconnects to decrease as a result of the change. She asked that anyone with questions to reach out to the Utility Billing Division. She highlighted the Gahanna Division of Police's participation in the central Ohio drug task force team, which focuses on combating drug-related issues, including the distribution of dangerous narcotics like fentanyl. The team received the 2023 Ohio Distinguished Law Enforcement Group Achievement Award from the Ohio Attorney General's office for their outstanding investigative efforts. Mayor Jadwin encouraged residents to visit the Gahanna Division of Police's Facebook page to cast their votes in the "Light Ohio Blue" photo contest, where they compete with Upper Arlington for the winning spot.

2. City Attorney - None.

I. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember McGregor provided additional information about the Mill Street Market. She mentioned that the Mill Street Market, organized by the Gahanna Historical Society, was scheduled for Sunday, September 24, 2023, from 9 AM to 4 PM. Councilmember McGregor indicated that there were 120 spaces rented for the event, which was more than the previous year. She expressed hopes for good weather and a successful day.

Councilmember Bowers thanked the Mayor for acknowledging that

September is Hunger Action Month. She also mentioned that earlier in the day, they had attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for GRIN's new facility. She congratulated GRIN and acknowledged the support from the community in addressing the growing need for assistance. Councilmember Bowers pointed out that September is also National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. She mentioned her participation in a panel discussion hosted by the Wynyki Alston Foundation, where experts discussed the mental health needs of students, veterans, and first responders. She also reminded everyone of the national crisis hotline number, 988, for mental health emergencies. Councilmember Bowers congratulated the Kyle Miller First Step Foundation on their successful fundraising event, noting the perfect weather for the occasion. She expressed her excitement about attending the Mill Street Market, a quintessentially Gahanna event, and looked forward to interacting with vendors, community organizations, and neighbors.

Councilmember Padova expressed her congratulations to GRIN on their grand opening. She mentioned that it had been a long process for GRIN to find a new space, raise the necessary funds, and fulfill their dream wish list for the facility. She thanked the community for their support in helping GRIN achieve this milestone. Councilmember Padova noted that the new space, with walk-in coolers and freezers, would enable GRIN to assist more people in need. She also discussed GRIN's collaborative efforts with other food pantries in central Ohio, emphasizing their commitment to helping not only Gahanna residents but also neighboring communities. She encouraged community members to volunteer at GRIN, highlighting the fulfillment that comes with contributing to the organization.

Vice President Weaver briefly echoed the comments made by his colleagues. He expressed his gratitude to Kelly and Roland Day for their presence during the meeting, recognizing Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. He acknowledged that childhood cancer is an issue that affects many families, including his own, as he never had the opportunity to meet his sister-in-law due to her passing at a young age. Vice President Weaver also expressed appreciation for Councilmember Bowers' work on Hispanic Heritage Month and congratulated GRIN on their achievements.

President Renner made brief comments during the meeting. He provided information for residents concerned about electricity rates, mentioning that they could visit AEP Energy to find real-time rates. He specified that locking in an electrical rate of 6.99 cents per kilowatt-hour was an option. Additionally, he noted that the most competitive rate available was 6.39 cents per kilowatt-hour. President Renner concluded by mentioning that the upcoming Saturday marked the first day of fall and encouraged everyone to celebrate the changing season.

[2023-0161](#)

Councilmember Merisa K. Bowers' Constituent Report - August 2023

J. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Renner adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

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

Stephen A. Renner

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