



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes Committee of the Whole

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

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, November 13, 2023

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda was published on November 10, 2023. Councilmember Bowers was absent. All other members were present. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. DISCUSSIONS:

1. **Public Arts Policy - Status Update and Discussion**

Mayor Jadwin shared that the Public Arts Committee met last week and are meeting again on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at the Senior Center. Councilman Weaver asked if Columbus Academy students are painting the snowplows. Mayor Jadwin said the snowplows were dropped off at Columbus Academy and Gahanna Lincoln High School. They were asked to submit designs and artwork following what has been done in the past. Gahanna Jefferson schools decided not to paint yet. They want to wait until the policy is adopted. She believes Columbus Academy has decided to begin painting them. They will not be displayed until the policy is adopted.

C. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:

[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

Senior Director of Administrative Services Miranda Vollmer said the request is for an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into contract with the Board of Health of the Franklin County General Health District for the 2024 Public Health Services contract.

The city contracts with Franklin County Public Health to provide Health Services for the city and to function as the city's Public Health Department. The services include administrative services, data services, environmental health, emergency preparedness, epidemiology health promotion, health systems planning, immunization and a variety of many other services to the city. The cost for the 2024 program is \$349,450 which is \$9.89 per capita. This represents approximately a 3% increase from the 2023 contract. The request is for emergency so that the contract is affected on January 1, 2024. Administration received the contract from Franklin County Public Health on November 6, 2023, and that is the reason for the request for emergency.

Vice President Weaver asked if the city attorney's office had reviewed the contract. Assistant City Attorney Matt Roth has not reviewed the contract and did not know if City Attorney Mularski had. Roth asked the administration if the contract is different from the previous years. Mayor Jadwin shared the terms are the same, except for the amount. Weaver said it is worth noting that this would be a separate contract from anything that is being considered in terms of tobacco retail licensing that would be a separate contract in a separate agreement. Mayor Jadwin said there is no reference to the tobacco retail issue within this contract.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 11/20/2023; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/4/2023.

D. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

[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

Director of Economic Development Shannon Hamons said the request is for an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into an agreement with the Gahanna Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) for 2024 through 2028 to promote tourism and attracting visitors to the city. CVB Director Lori Kappes and some board members were in attendance. The sharing of bed tax revenue is required by ORC and this agreement does extend it for 5 years through 2028, with a continuation of sharing 66.7% of the bed tax for the CVB purposes. There are some minor changes to section four. The CVB had asked for clarification of responsibilities as it relates to any type of termination language. Also, in the scope of services, in the addendum it outlines and specifies that for certain circumstances beyond their control they will not be held responsible, such as street closures, utility work, and things that might prevent them from hosting events. It also has continuation of events such as the Creekside Blues & Jazz Fest and the Holiday Lights. In 2022, there was a sharing of about \$248,000 and we are running just about the same for 2023.

Councilmember Padova asked for clarification on the contract. The contract says for four years but Hamons said five years. Hamons said it needed changed to five years. The contract is through 2028. Some communities go into perpetuity and do not have end dates. He thinks it is judicial on the city's part to look at the contract every five years. Padova said it would increase from three years to five years. Hamons

confirmed that is correct. Padova said she believes there are some misconceptions in the community about the CVB, and it is her understanding that it is not different from others. She asked Director Kappes to give a brief overview of how this works in other communities if Gahanna is the same or different.

Director Kappes said most communities all over Ohio and the nation have a convention and visitors bureau. Specific to the Columbus area, the Gahanna CVB is a member of the Capital Area Tourism Alliance, which is CVB directors from all over Central Ohio. Most of the communities around Columbus have a CVB. To stay relevant and competitive, she believed Gahanna needed to have a CVB and do the promotion work and the events and things that the CVB does. Padova asked if it is typical for the CVB to get the bed tax dollars and if that was the typical funding method. Kappes said that is correct.

Councilmember McGregor asked if the city did not have a CVB, where would the bed tax dollars go? Kappes said it is her understanding that the dollars would go back to the county. Hamons said if Gahanna did not have a CVB, Franklin County would receive the money and we would not be able to utilize it locally.

Vice President Weaver said the agreement is for two-thirds of the bed tax dollars. Hamons said it is correct, 66.7%. Weaver clarified that without a CVB, all 100% would go back to the county. Hamons said that is correct. Weaver asked where the remaining third goes. Hamons said that will be addressed in the next item.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 11/20/2023; Further Discussion in Committee of the Whole on 11/27/2023; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/4/2023.

[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)

Director Hamons said the request is for an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter an agreement with the Gahanna CVB for the years 2024 through 2028 for the management operation of The Herb Center. This is a five-year continuation of sharing 16.67% of what is collected in bed tax. It would be approximately \$62,000, which is about the same as last year. With respect to the remaining 16.66%, approximately \$62,000, the city can retain.

Vice President Weaver said these are all dollars that stay here in the City of Gahanna and used to promote the City of Gahanna. Weaver said he had a request for both items to come back to committee. However, he had no problem moving it forward with the first reading and then on the consent agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 11/20/2023; Further Discussion in Committee of the Whole on 11/27/2023; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/4/2023.

Amendment Requested - Exhibit A:

[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 Hamons said that this ordinance was heard at a previous meeting. This ordinance is to allow the mayor to enter into an infrastructure construction agreement with CP Crescent LLC. This is for the developer to take on the improvements to Tech Center Drive and also to do the utilities at Crescent and Central Park.

Administration wanted to make amendment to that original document to allow the developer to also take on the management and construction of a traffic signal in that location. This was recommended by the city engineering department. They will be out there doing the work in that area and the city wanted to add this to the list of items that would be comprehensively done at the same time. The traffic signal was an obligation from 2010. They were getting ready to undertake that and we thought that this would be more efficient to allow them to undertake this and then pay them for the design and the construction of the traffic signal at that location.

Councilmember Schnetzer wanted to confirm what is in front of council is just the addition of the traffic signal to an already existing authorized project. Hamons said that is correct. It is just adding the traffic signal and nothing else to the improvements that were already talked about. There is a little more than \$4.3 million of improvements in the contract that the developer would pay initially. Those improvements would be paid back through the SIB loan of \$2 million and about \$2.3 million in the TIF payments.

Vice President Weaver said his understanding is that the ordinance has had a first reading but this would have to be an amendment to that ordinance to include the scope of the traffic signal as part of the legislation. As a matter of process, Council would need an amendment at the regular council meeting.

President Renner said he is in support of the addition of traffic signals because they are traffic calming. He asked where exactly this will be. Mayor Jadwin clarified that Mayor Stinchcomb agreed to the traffic signal in 2010 as part of the Buckles property and Tech Center Drive construction. This is a fulfillment of an obligation that was made almost 13 years ago. Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc said the traffic signal would be east of Hamilton Road along Tech Center Drive at the proposed Crescent Boulevard, servicing the multi-family site and a host of other developments.

Recommendation: Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 11/20/2023; Amendment needed for the substitute Exhibit A prior to adoption on 11/20/2023.

E. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE:

[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

Vice President Weaver said there was a request to bring this one back as there were questions about the incomplete bid that had been received among the three. Weaver had some follow up questions. He just wanted to make it clear that it is included in the bid package that is published that bids must be complete to be considered. There is not an option to say they will provide information later. Weaver asked if that information is clearly presented in the bid package. Mayor Jadwin said that is correct. President Renner said it is a very standard thing and it happens all the time.

Recommendation: Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 11/20/2023.

[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

Senior Deputy Director of Administrative Services Corey Wybensinger presented the item on behalf of the Department of Public Service. Wybensinger said every year the department reviews Gahanna code and fee schedules looking for necessary updates and revisions to ensure that the city remains current and that the rates are applicable. Code changes requested for this year are routine annual changes and are minor nature. In consultation with Baker Tilly, a rate study has been done that has led some additional adjustments to some of the connection fees, frontage fees, and other minor revenue producing services for water and sewer. Council was given an outline and redline version of the proposed code changes. These changes are being brought forth due to the timing of the City of Columbus Department of Public Utilities rate recommendation to their Sewer and Water Advisory Board, which occurs annually around the third week of October. That is when the city knows what Columbus will be charging Gahanna for services. Gahanna then to adjust its rates for residents. The City of Columbus Sewer and Water Advisory Board is recommending in their 2024 budget to raise sewer rates by 6% and water rates by 5% for all their customers. President Renner said the correct rates for sewer are 5%, water by 5%, and storm by 1%. Wybensinger said this would include the master meter. Over the next few years, the projected sewer increases are said to peak around 6% through 2026 and remain around a 6% annual increase. Water increases are to peak around 8% between 2027 and 2030. These rate increases are result of many factors, such as increased prices and materials, chemicals, EPA requirements and increase in debt repayment with capital related projects. To cover the City of Columbus rate increases for the water, sanitary and the Columbus Consent Order (CCO), operation expense, and to make sure the city is minimizing future rate spikes for residents, which may be caused by some of the city's capital projects, the proposal is for a 7% overall rate

increase for all utilities. This would include water, sanitary, storm, the CCO and refuse. This rate increase equates to \$7.63 increase per month based on an average consumption of 4,000 gallons. Typically, that is a family of four average usage. Anybody using less than that would not see that \$7.63 increase. This is inclusive of water, sanitary, storm water, the CCO and refuse fees. Roughly 80% of the fees collected for water and sewer is essentially a pass through to the City of Columbus to pay for the consumption. The City of Gahanna water and sewer keeps around 20% to maintain operations. For refuse, approximately 95% goes to the provider. The City of Gahanna retains around 5% for administration of the contract. Even with the proposed increases, the city's 2024 rates will remain competitive and will fall mid-range compared to neighboring communities. No rate increase is being recommended for refuse services. The Utility Billing division will continue offering discount programs for eligible seniors on refuse and as long as the City of Columbus honors the water and sewer for low income, the city will continue that as well. Administration is respectfully requesting that city council pass the ordinance to authorize the proposed code changes and the fee schedule updates to ensure that the code and fee schedules are active and eligible for billing by January 1, 2024. Administration is requesting the ordinance be passed with an emergency.

President Renner asked if there was any review of the City of Columbus, and the Columbus Sewer and Water Advisory Board (SWAB), who recently published their projected sewer and water rates into the future. He stressed that water and sewer are getting ready to be very expensive in Central Ohio. In order to protect the Gahanna citizens, was there any modeling done to understand that behavior versus what we need, and if we can have some kind of supplemental or subsidization from the General Fund? He said the information needs broadcasted what the city of Columbus is telling communities. Gahanna needs to get in front of that and help try to tell the story about how expensive water and sewer is getting. Wybensinger said part of the Baker Tilly study was to forecast out of what we are able to attain from the City of Columbus. He said it is not always easy to get in writing what their plan is. The city attends the SWAB board meetings in order to depict their conversations as to what they are anticipating through those conversations. They build in the projection module with Baker Tilly where they think these are going to go. The \$7.63 increase for consumption is a heavier shift to city capital projects than that has been in the past. There are a lot of capital projects identified under the CIP that we've been working through that has helped the city understand a lot of the projects that are going to be coming on board. With having a Senior Utility Resource Engineer and Director Komlanc, they are helping the city with that path and plan. What is being recommended helps the city on the capital side. The administration wants to avoid to the best of its ability taking on extra debt. Whether it is a loan from the General Fund or a Water loan, they are exploring grant opportunities. They are trying to minimize any impact that they can on the rates that directly affect residents and business in the community. Renner asked if they have access to the SWAB presentation they presented. Wybensinger confirmed he has the presentation. Renner said the sooner we can talk to residents and get the information to them, the better they will understand the value. They are going to hear 7%, but we need to help them understand what it is that they are getting.

Mayor Jadwin thanked Renner for pointing that out. She thinks a lot of people in the community do not realize that essentially most of what they pay is pass through. The City of Gahanna must pay the City of Columbus for the water. This is a conversation we need have with our residents. She appreciates his recommendation and maybe they can have a conversation and some suggestions as to how we can frame that given his experience. Renner said the city's sustainability committee is also another point that the City needs to promote awareness of.

Councilmember McGregor said most of the increases are sort of minimal. The water capital improvement rate went up three times. Why was that? Wybensinger said that is projecting out what the city has for waterline maintenance and projects coming on board. That rate was substantially lower than some of the neighboring communities as well and understanding what type of revenue we need to bring in to be able to build beyond not just our maintenance program but to prepare for some of these projects that are coming up. The city's infrastructure is aging and in certain areas highly aged. The city does not want to wait until we have major projects and have a large spike in what we have to charge for the funding for the water and sewer projects. This helps get more than just the maintaining side but start working on some of these larger projects.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 11/20/2023; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/4/2023.

F. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION:

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

Director of Parks & Recreation Stephanie Ferrell said the city was awarded a Refresh grant in the amount of \$20,000 from the National Recreational Parks Association (NRPA) and partnered with Niagara Bottling. The city was eligible due to a grant that was received in 2019 through NRPA for the construction of the two basketball courts at Sunpoint Park. There was not a match requirement for this grant. There was a stipulation that the grant was to be applied to the same location as the original award. The grant funds will be used to design a human sundial at Sunpoint Park. Administration is respectfully requesting an ordinance to increase the Capital Improvement Fund from the unappropriated and unencumbered balance in the amount of \$20,000.

President Renner said he was on the naming committee for the park and the sundial was part of the vision. He thanked the department.

Vice President Weaver said it is always appreciated when the city can win grants and bring those dollars to the city.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 11/20/2023; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 12/4/2023.

G. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

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

Trenton I. Weaver
Chair

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