



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Committee of the Whole

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, April 28, 2025

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Gahanna City Council met for Committee of the Whole on Monday, April 28, 2025, in Council Chambers. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda was published on April 25, 2025. All members were present for the meeting. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

[ORD-0021-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A PRE-ANNEXATION AGREEMENT WITH JIMMIE TONEY, DARLENE TONEY, AND TRIVIUM DEVELOPMENT, LLC FOR PARCELS 170-000068-00 AND 170-000069-00; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Nate Green of the Montrose Group stated that Council had an ordinance before them authorizing Mayor Jadwin to enter into a pre-annexation agreement with Jimmie Toney, Darlene Toney, and Trivium Development. He explained that Trivium Development partnered with the Toney's on the property in question. Representatives from Trivium Development, David Fisher and Tim Spencer, were present and available to answer any questions Council might have regarding the project. Green identified the properties involved in the pre-annexation agreement as 4722 and 4736 East Johnstown Road. He noted that the properties were located just south of The Barn at Rocky Fork, near the roundabout at Johnstown and Morse Roads. He explained that the pre-annexation agreement outlined the intended uses for the project, should the annexation and subsequent zoning approval occur.

Mr. Green informed Council that, if the annexation and zoning were approved, the property would feature a mix of commercial and multifamily uses. Trivium Development intended to pursue general commercial zoning with a limited overlay district. Green clarified that general commercial zoning would permit various retail and office uses by right and residential uses by conditional use.

He emphasized that the pre-annexation agreement did not annex the property or rezone it. Instead, the agreement served as a declaration of intent from both the developers and the City of Gahanna. It confirmed the city's willingness to provide services to the site if annexed and laid the groundwork for a formal annexation and zoning process. Green reiterated that although the current plan included commercial and multifamily development, market conditions could influence future changes. He characterized the agreement as a preliminary step that set the stage for the annexation and planning process to follow. He also outlined the annexation process, noting that the developers would need to apply to the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and obtain a service agreement from the city. Once the County Commissioners approved the annexation, there would be a 60-day waiting period before the matter returned to the city for final approval. He concluded by inviting questions from Council for himself or the Trivium Development representatives.

Councilmember McGregor raised a few concerns regarding the proposed development. She expressed apprehension about its proximity to the Morse Road roundabout and requested that a traffic signal not be installed near the site, as it could disrupt the roundabout's functionality. She cited the public's reaction to the proposed Sheetz development, which faced similar criticism. McGregor also inquired whether the developers planned to preserve the existing pond on the property, noting the site's eight-acre size. Mr. Green deferred to the development team for an answer. David Fisher responded, explaining that the pond was classified as a wetland. He noted that mitigating it would be extremely expensive. He assured Council that the current plan, shown on the last page of the agreement, left the pond intact. The developers intended to enhance the area with amenities such as walking trails to improve its visual appeal and functionality. McGregor acknowledged the response positively and emphasized the importance of maintaining open space, especially given the presence of a riparian corridor and potential floodplain. She mentioned that in past developments, similar areas were dedicated to the City of Gahanna, allowing the city to maintain them while relieving the developer of property tax liability. She asked whether that option could be considered. Fisher indicated that dedicating the space to the city was acceptable to them, but they would want it to count toward their open space requirements. Mayor Jadwin responded that the matter would require further discussion. Fisher reiterated that their plan positioned any site entrance as far southeast as possible to avoid traffic concerns near the roundabout, demonstrating their understanding of the issues previously raised during a Sheetz proposal.

Councilmember McGregor then asked about the reasoning behind the request for emergency legislation. Mr. Fisher acknowledged the sensitivity of the issue and explained that, while the contract closing was not the sole reason, the developers were seeking to advance the process due to the long delay and repeated starts and stops with the city. He noted that Jim and Darlene Toney, who operated a garden center on the property, were preparing to move on, evidenced by the lack of floral displays that spring.

Fisher clarified that nothing in the current legislation would force the Toneys to vacate soon and that the transaction would likely conclude in the first quarter of 2026. Nevertheless, he asked for Council's consideration of emergency action to help expedite the process. Mr. Green added that the lengthy annexation timeline was another reason to consider emergency status. McGregor expressed concern that emergency designation could limit public input, as it would eliminate the possibility of a referendum. Fisher clarified that the request applied only to the pre-annexation agreement, not the annexation or zoning, which would follow the standard public processes. He also noted that most central Ohio municipalities adopted such agreements via resolution, which typically required only one reading. He emphasized that the agreement was not a zoning or annexation action but a preparatory step. The core purpose of the agreement was to allow the property to be detached from the city and returned to the township if the parties could not reach final agreement on zoning. This clause protected the developers from being annexed into the city without an acceptable zoning resolution.

Vice President Weaver asked Assistant City Attorney Matt Roth to clarify the difference between an ordinance and a resolution in this context. Roth explained that while service agreements were handled by resolution, the pre-annexation agreement itself was structured as a contractual agreement and therefore required authorization by ordinance.

President Bowers then asked if the underlying legislation could potentially be adopted as a resolution instead of an ordinance. Assistant City Attorney Roth replied that, since it was essentially a contract, the city's normal process called for approval by ordinance. Fisher noted that the developers initially preferred a resolution but were open to the ordinance format if that was the city's standard. He asked again for consideration of emergency legislation but stated they would also accept waiving the second reading, which would move the process along without bypassing the public's right to referendum. Bowers suggested that, rather than pursuing emergency status, which typically required a health, safety, or welfare justification, they consider waiving the second reading to expedite the timeline by two weeks. Fisher agreed that waiving the second reading would be an acceptable compromise and appreciated the accommodation.

Councilmember Renner addressed Mr. Fisher and expressed appreciation for his past involvement in the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) property discussions, particularly referencing efforts to preserve cherry trees and resist certain residential developments. He acknowledged Fisher as an innovative leader and thanked him for his previous vocal advocacy on behalf of the community. Renner then shifted to his question, focusing on environmental concerns. He asked Fisher to speak broadly about the development's stormwater management plans, specifically how the project would protect the waters of Ohio, including the Rocky Fork Creek and the existing pond on the property. He stated his support for the proposed land use but emphasized the importance of sustainable water management. Fisher thanked Renner for his comments and affirmed his long-standing

commitment to doing what was best for the city. He shared the history of the pond, explaining that Mr. Toney's father dug it decades ago for irrigation purposes. Fisher noted that the pond's existence complicated the property's development potential but stated that they studied it carefully. He assured Council that the development's stormwater management system would fully comply with state standards and would route stormwater into both the pond and the creek without adverse impacts. Fisher then invited Tim Spencer, President of Trivium Development, to add further detail. Spencer confirmed that the pond, while originally dug for irrigation, had gained protected status. He emphasized that the development team intended to preserve and enhance the pond area with the city's permission. He shared plans to potentially incorporate trails or park elements and noted the possibility of creating connectivity to nearby retail and restaurant areas. Spencer explained that earlier versions of the development plan included significantly more commercial and residential space, but they scaled back those plans to make the project more compatible with the site.

Councilmember Renner acknowledged that the development was still in a preliminary phase and appreciated the team's openness. He urged the developers to consider innovative alternatives to traditional stormwater systems, citing the increasing frequency and intensity of storms. He emphasized the need for water infiltration over redirection, stating that runoff from the site could have serious environmental consequences if not properly managed. Spencer asked whether there were any recorded flooding issues in the area. Renner replied that he was not aware of specific incidents on the site but reiterated that storm patterns were worsening and warranted careful planning.

President Bowers expressed her appreciation for Mr. Green's comments and acknowledged that the item under consideration was a pre-annexation agreement. She emphasized that the proposal was not binding at this stage. President Bowers conveyed the importance of maintaining a mixed-use designation for the parcel and stressed the value of job creation at the site. She thanked Mr. Green for identifying potential commercial uses that could benefit the community through this proposed annexation. Mr. Fisher responded in agreement, stating that the site was excellent for mixed-use development. He highlighted the site's proximity to key intersections and affirmed that the area could support additional services. He confirmed that their plan reflected that belief.

Councilmember Jones asked for clarification on whether annexation was necessary to proceed with the normal zoning process. Mr. Green confirmed that this was correct. Mr. Fisher then asked if it was possible to proceed with the zoning process while annexation was still pending. Mr. Green replied that they would need to discuss that further. Mr. Fisher acknowledged this and mentioned that there were two potential paths forward. Mayor Jadwin noted that Michael Blackford, Director of Planning, was present and deferred to him. Director Blackford confirmed that annexation and zoning discussions could run concurrently. He explained that if the evening's proceedings went well, the

applicant's goal was to pursue both actions at the same time. He clarified that while annexation must be voted on and approved first, the aim was to have both items heard at the same City Council meeting.

Councilmember Schnetzer expressed appreciation for Trivium's interest in annexing into the City of Gahanna. Although he had no questions for the applicant, he directed an inquiry to the administration. He noted that only a few such agreements had come before Council during his tenure and asked whether there was anything in this agreement that caused concern or if it was standard. Mayor Jadwin responded that the pre-annexation agreement was fairly standard. She noted that the only clause that caused some initial concern involved the city's ability to provide services. She explained that until specific plans for the development were known, further evaluation was needed, particularly regarding sanitary and water connections. Mayor Jadwin assured Council that this evaluation would be part of the standard vetting process already underway, and that the agreement's language was adjusted to provide the necessary flexibility.

Councilmember Padova stated that she had no questions but appreciated the effort made to reduce the development's footprint and better align it with the community's character. She referred to the presence of The Barn and High Bank in the area. She also noted that Creekside held personal significance for her. She saw the proposal as a positive opportunity for the eastern side of Gahanna and believed it could help residents in neighborhoods like Harrison Pond feel more connected to the city. She expressed hope that it would encourage residents to stay local rather than travel to nearby communities.

Vice President Weaver thanked the applicants for their efforts and acknowledged the planning involved in aligning the project with the city's processes. He appreciated the executive session held a few months prior. As the ward representative for the Harrison Pond area, he inquired about any planned outreach or engagement with nearby residents to address or mitigate potential concerns. Mr. Fisher stated that no outreach had taken place but affirmed their willingness to engage with the community during the four- to six-month annexation process. He also noted the potential to explore connectivity issues, as mentioned earlier by Councilmember Padova.

Vice President Weaver agreed that such outreach would be a valuable opportunity and thanked the applicants again. He asked if there was anything further to address that evening. He then recapped that the request was to strike the emergency clause and add a waiver. Clerk VanMeter confirmed the amendment to the draft ordinance as stated.

Mr. Fisher asked for confirmation that the item would be considered at the May 5, 2025, regular council meeting, with rules waived for second reading and a 30-day referendum period beginning that night. Vice President Weaver confirmed this timeline. Mr. Fisher thanked Council for their time and consideration.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver of Second Reading

and Adoption on Regular Agenda on 5/5/2025.

C. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY:

[ORD-0019-2025](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO) CONTRACT WITH THE GAHANNA-JEFFERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

Chief of Police Jeff Spence presented two action items, beginning with the 2025-2026 School Resource Officer (SRO) agreement between the City and Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools. He noted that the agreement closely resembled the current year's contract, with nearly identical language. As a summary, Chief Spence explained that the agreement covered two SROs stationed at Gahanna Lincoln High School. The contract outlined a cost-sharing structure in which the district would pay 50% of the cost for one officer and 75% for the second. The agreement included a not-to-exceed amount of \$235,504.62, based on salary and benefit calculations. He informed Council that the school board planned to review the agreement on May 17, 2025, and requested Council's approval to move forward, which would authorize the continued provision of the two officers through the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

President Bowers asked whether there was any indication from the school district that their share of the cost might change in the future. Chief Spence responded that there were no discussions about altering the parameters for the two SROs assigned to the high school.

Vice President Weaver noted that the attached spreadsheet showed four versions of cost analyses and asked for clarification. Chief Spence explained that the cost breakdowns included small contributions from the district for officer training and some district-directed overtime. Over the years, the city and district considered different cost models, but ultimately settled on the current 50% and 75% cost-share arrangement. He added that while the city covered some training costs to maintain SRO certification, most of those training expenses were funded by the district. Vice President Weaver confirmed his understanding by referencing the first tab of the spreadsheet, which showed that the school district did not contribute financially to SROs three and four. Chief Spence affirmed this, clarifying that the third SRO was assigned to the middle schools, and the fourth served as a relief officer and covered elementary schools and private schools. He reiterated that the city bore the full cost of these two positions.

Vice President Weaver concluded his remarks by expressing personal appreciation for the presence of SROs in the schools. As a Gahanna Lincoln High School alumnus, he recalled seeing Officer Blamer during his time as a student and noted that his spouse, a current teacher at the school, continued to value the officers' presence. With no further comments, Vice President Weaver stated that the agreement would be placed on the May 5, 2025,

Regular Agenda for first reading and then on the Consent Agenda for May 19, 2025, without objection. He thanked Chief Spence for his presentation.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 5/5/2025;
Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 5/19/2025.**

[ORD-0020-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS INCORPORATED FOR THE PURPOSES OF ESSENTIAL UPGRADES OF COMMUNICATIONS CENTER RADIO SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE; AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Chief of Police Jeff Spence introduced the second action item, which related to phase two of the City's capital improvement program focused on public safety radio infrastructure. This phase specifically involved upgrading the radio console equipment located in the communications center, critical backend components that support daily operations. Chief Spence reminded Council that phase one of the project was approved during the 2021-2022 period and was recently completed. That phase included statewide-mandated authentication requirements, which the department successfully implemented despite changes and additional requirements issued by the state. He noted that the department was working toward a moving deadline, with July 1, 2025, identified as the statewide compliance date. He explained that the proposed request covered the purchase and installation of the radio console equipment, as well as a 10% contingency to account for potential fluctuations. The total request included the cost of ancillary equipment such as grounding, antenna cables, and other components necessary for full functionality. The vendor for the equipment was Motorola, in accordance with the state term schedule, as Motorola provided the infrastructure backbone for the entire state of Ohio.

Chief Spence stated that during the 2024 budget process, the City of Gahanna budgeted for this upgrade with the expectation of some cost increases in 2025. He requested a supplemental appropriation of \$169,000 to cover the full cost, including contingency and installation services provided by a certified Motorola vendor. He also requested that Council consider the item under emergency and with a rules waiver for second reading, due to anticipated tariff impacts on components manufactured by Motorola. Some of these components were produced in the European Union and Japan, where trade conditions could affect pricing and availability. He emphasized that the request was part of a broader infrastructure improvement and life cycle management strategy, with most radio components operating on a seven-year replacement schedule.

President Bowers asked if any of the upgraded equipment would be shared at the MECC (Metropolitan Emergency Communications Center). Chief Spence replied that certain components, including the radio infrastructure and 911 and data connectivity systems, would continue to be shared. President Bowers then asked whether there would be any cost sharing or contributions

from MECC partners for this particular upgrade. Chief Spence responded that there would not be cost sharing for this phase. He explained that this was due in part to compatibility differences and differing life cycle schedules among MECC member agencies. However, he added that all agencies operated on an interoperable radio system. In the event that MECC's radio backbone failed, their operations could continue seamlessly through the city's upgraded system, as all communication channels and talk groups were fully integrated.

Vice President Weaver confirmed that the request would move forward with emergency and waiver as requested, and clarified that the item would appear on the May 5, 2025, Regular Meeting Agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver of Second Reading and Emergency Adoption on Regular Agenda on 5/5/2025.

D. ITEMS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS:

Councilmember Schnetzer:

[RES-0019-2025](#) A JOINT RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING MAY 2025, AS "AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS (ALS) AWARENESS MONTH" IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA

Councilmember Schnetzer introduced Resolution 0019-2025, which recognized the month of May as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Awareness Month. He explained that he was contacted by a Gahanna resident affiliated with the ALS Association regarding the opportunity for the City to participate in the national observance. After consulting with President Bowers on the appropriate process, he worked with the Council Office to draft the resolution. Councilmember Schnetzer noted that the administration also expressed interest in partnering on the resolution, which was structured as a joint resolution and proclamation, referred to informally as a "proclamation." He informed Council that a draft was provided on their devices for review and welcomed any suggested edits prior to the first meeting in May. He added that at least one representative from the ALS Association was expected to attend the meeting to accept the resolution.

Vice President Weaver thanked Councilmember Schnetzer for bringing the item forward. With no discussion or objections raised, he confirmed that the resolution would appear on the May 5, 2025, Consent Agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 5/5/2025.

Councilmember Weaver:

[RES-0020-2025](#) A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING MAY 2025 AS "HONORING PUBLIC SERVICE MONTH" IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA

Vice President Weaver introduced a resolution to designate May 2025 as

Public Service Month in the City of Gahanna. He shared that the idea stemmed from correspondence he received several weeks earlier and expressed that it would be a meaningful way to recognize the public servants within the community. Vice President Weaver acknowledged the exceptional staff employed by the City of Gahanna, while also noting that many residents of Gahanna serve the public in other sectors. He felt the resolution would offer a thoughtful gesture of appreciation for their work. He added that Mayor Jadwin made plans to conduct her own separate recognition during the same timeframe, and this resolution would serve as a complement to those efforts. He invited any questions or feedback from Council. With no comments raised, he confirmed that the resolution would be placed on the May 5, 2025, Consent Agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 5/5/2025.

E. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
day of 2025.*

Trenton I. Weaver