



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Committee of the Whole

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, August 3, 2026

City Hall, Council Chambers

Immediately following the regular City Council meeting beginning at 7:00 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Gahanna City Council met for Committee of the Whole on Monday, August 3, 2026, in Council Chambers. Vice President of Council Jamille Jones, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:26 p.m. The agenda was published on July 31, 2026. All members were present for the meeting. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. ITEMS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

[RES-0037-2026](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN ELECTRIC SUPPLY AGREEMENT FOR CITY FACILITIES FOLLOWING TRADITION ENERGY'S PRICING ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION (OMNIA PARTNERS PROCUREMENT) AND AUTHORIZING RELATED ACTIONS TO EFFECTUATE AGREEMENT

Senior Deputy Director Corey Wybensinger explained that the resolution would authorize the Mayor to enter into a new electric supply agreement for the City's 67 electric accounts through the OMNIA Partners procurement program. Tradition Energy serves as the City's energy advisor and provides market updates throughout the year before soliciting rates when a new agreement is needed. Director Wybensinger stated that the City's electric rates are expected to change around December 6, 2026. The requested authorization would allow the City to monitor the market and secure a favorable rate during the approximately 100 days before that date. He anticipated a rate near the City's current cost of just under 7.1 cents per kilowatt-hour. The City currently purchases 100 percent renewable energy for approximately 4.2 million

kilowatt-hours of annual usage. Director Wybensinger stated that staff would obtain both renewable and traditional energy pricing for comparison and would continue pursuing renewable energy if the cost remained reasonable. He noted that the projected premium for renewable energy during the previous contract period was approximately \$11,000, while the actual difference was approximately \$9,400. He anticipated a similar difference under the next agreement. Director Wybensinger stated that the final agreement would be provided to Council after the rate is secured and the agreement completes legal review.

Vice President Jones asked if there were any questions or discussion. Hearing none, the resolution was recommended for placement on the Consent Agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/Vote on Consent Agenda on 8/17/2026.

C. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING:

[RES-0038-2026](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION (OPWC) STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (SCIP) AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (LTIP), AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED

Director of Engineering Hossein Naraghi briefly introduced himself and described his professional background as a research scientist at Iowa State University and his subsequent work at the Iowa Department of Transportation. He stated that his approach to public service is centered on using data-driven engineering decisions to reduce crashes, improve safety, and strengthen communities.

Director Naraghi explained that the City previously applied for and received partial Ohio Department of Transportation funding for the Hamilton Road Urban Paving Project. The project would repave approximately 1.1 miles of Hamilton Road, including the area from Interstate 270 toward Granville Street and Havens Corners Road. Because the award provides only partial project funding, the Administration is seeking additional assistance through the Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvement Program and Local Transportation Improvement Program to help cover the City's share of the

project.

Director Naraghi stated that the grant application requires authorizing legislation from the City's governing body. Vice President Jones asked if there were any questions or discussion. Hearing none, the resolution was recommended for placement on the Consent Agenda.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda on 8/17/2026.

[RES-0039-2026](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MORPC) MPO FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM FOR THE STYGLER ROAD, AGLER ROAD, US-62 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Director Naraghi explained that the resolution would authorize the City to seek construction funding through the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission MPO Funding for Transportation Program for improvements at Styler Road, Agler Road, and U.S. Route 62. He stated that the program combines several federal funding sources for roads, bridges, public transit, bikeways, sidewalks, and other transportation projects and requires authorizing legislation before an application may be submitted.

Councilmember Padova asked whether the grant request was connected to a recent request for proposals posted by the City. Director Naraghi explained that the request for proposals relates primarily to project design, while the MORPC application would seek larger funding for construction. He stated that the City is pursuing funding from multiple sources and prioritizes timely responses to grant opportunities because project implementation depends on securing outside funding. He also recognized staff efforts to identify opportunities and complete applications within required deadlines.

Vice President Jones asked if there were any additional questions or discussion. Hearing none, the resolution was recommended for placement on the Consent Agenda.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda on 8/17/2026.

D. ITEMS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE:

[ORD-0030-2026](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPROVE SURETY

BONDS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE 1311.311

Assistant City Attorney Matt Roth explained that the ordinance arose from a contractor dispute associated with the 825 Tech Center Drive project. A contractor requested that a lien on project funds be bonded off under the process established by Ohio Revised Code Section 1311.311. The proposed ordinance would simplify future situations by authorizing the Mayor to approve qualifying surety bonds without returning to Council for separate approval when time is limited.

Vice President Jones asked whether the ordinance would preserve the existing process while transferring approval authority to the Mayor. Assistant City Attorney Roth confirmed that the change would allow the City to respond more quickly after receiving notice of a similar request on a future project.

Councilmember Bowers asked whether the authority would apply exclusively to circumstances described in Ohio Revised Code Section 1311.311 and whether Council would receive notice. Assistant City Attorney Roth confirmed that the ordinance was limited to those circumstances and stated that Council would be notified as a matter of course. He explained that bonding off the lien allows project funds to be released while the underlying dispute or litigation continues.

Mayor Jadwin clarified that the party issuing the bond assumes the financial responsibility and that the City would not incur financial liability. Vice President Jones noted that the ordinance had received First Reading and would return for Second Reading and Adoption.

E. DISCUSSIONS:

[2026-0148](#)

Resolutions/Recognitions Policy Research Materials

Vice President Jones introduced a memorandum intended as a starting point for continued discussion regarding ceremonial resolutions, proclamations, certificates of recognition, and other forms of recognition. She stated that the objective was not to limit recognitions, but to codify existing and future practices so that Councilmembers, staff, residents, and future Councils would have written guidance regarding the types of recognitions available, how requests are initiated and reviewed, and when and how recognitions are presented. She emphasized that many

current practices are understood informally but are not documented in Council's rules.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked whether the memorandum contemplated replacing ceremonial resolutions with proclamations or certificates that could be issued by Council or by a subset of Councilmembers without a legislative vote. Vice President Jones stated that this was one concept contemplated by the memorandum as a means of simplifying the process, although further legal review would be necessary to determine whether a proclamation issued by Council would require formal action. She noted that certificates of recognition are already used by individual Councilmembers outside the formal legislative process.

Councilmember Schnetzer expressed interest in a more flexible recognition process that could allow Councilmembers to recognize residents, organizations, businesses, events, and community achievements without necessarily treating each recognition as legislation. He stated that such an approach could be faster, require less staff and administrative time, and allow participation by all or only some Councilmembers depending on interest and availability. He further stated that his concern was not limited to efficiency, but also arose from prior community concerns that ceremonial legislative actions were not always applied consistently. He expressed an interest in identifying a process that would allow Councilmembers to highlight matters of community importance without unnecessarily creating legislative action or community concern.

Councilmember Renner expressed strong reservations about any process under which one or several Councilmembers could present a recognition as an action of Council when Council as a legislative body had not formally acted. He distinguished between an individual Councilmember issuing a certificate or recognition in that member's own capacity, which he supported, and a recognition purporting to speak on behalf of Council. He stated that Council should act as a body and that any recognition issued in the name of Council should be approved by formal vote, regardless of whether it is called a resolution or proclamation.

Councilmember Schnetzer responded that ceremonial resolutions

generally do not create substantive legislative outcomes and questioned whether every ceremonial recognition therefore needed to rise to the level of a roll-call vote. He reiterated that Councilmembers could still publicly support or draw attention to an individual, organization, event, or cause through a proclamation, certificate, or similar recognition without necessarily making it a legislative act. Councilmember Renner stated that he understood and supported the availability of such individual recognitions, but maintained that no individual or subset of Council should represent that "Council" had acted unless the full body had done so formally.

Mayor Jadwin discussed the traditional distinction between proclamations and resolutions, noting that proclamations are generally issued by an executive official, while resolutions are adopted by a legislative body. She recommended maintaining the separate roles and responsibilities of the executive and legislative branches. She noted that the Mayor and Council may each recognize individuals, organizations, milestones, and achievements using their respective mechanisms and that joint recognitions remain appropriate where a unified City message is desirable and duplication can be avoided. She also suggested that, as a possible efficiency measure, ceremonial presentations could occur before a Council meeting, with any required legislative vote occurring during the regular meeting.

Vice President Jones stated that the type of recognition was only one part of the policy discussion. She emphasized the need to establish written criteria addressing what the City recognizes, who may request or initiate a recognition, and whether items to be presented during Council meetings should first be reviewed at Committee of the Whole. She stated that these procedural and policy questions were a significant reason for attempting to codify the City's practices.

Councilmember Padova supported maintaining separate processes for mayoral proclamations and Council resolutions while continuing to permit joint recognitions where appropriate. She suggested an exception to any general limitation on retirement recognitions so that significant City staff retirements could continue to be recognized. She also questioned whether a ceremonial recognition should have to be formally approved at a meeting prior to its presentation and stated that she did not believe an additional meeting cycle was necessary. Councilmember Padova stated

that any proclamation, resolution, or joint recognition that would be presented in Council Chambers as part of a Council meeting should first be presented at Committee of the Whole so Councilmembers are aware of what will occur at the meeting. She distinguished such presentations from individual Councilmember recognitions or mayoral proclamations occurring outside the Council meeting setting, which she did not believe required Committee review. Councilmember Padova also cautioned against changing the process solely for the purpose of increasing speed or reducing meeting time. She stated that ceremonial recognitions provide an opportunity to bring residents into Council Chambers, expose them to the work of City government, and potentially encourage further civic participation. She noted that residents attending to receive a recognition may remain for other portions of the meeting, review the agenda, watch proceedings later, or share information learned at the meeting with others in the community.

Councilmember Schnetzer clarified that his proposal was intended to be more permissive rather than merely faster. By way of example, he suggested that Councilmembers might collectively or individually recognize a community accomplishment shortly before a meeting without making the recognition a legislative item, provided such a process was legally permissible. He stated that Council had other means of publicizing such recognitions, including newsletters, social media, and Council comments.

Councilmember Bowers noted that Councilmembers already make use of individual certificates of recognition, social media, and other forms of communication that do not become legislative items.

Councilmember Schnetzer further referenced a prior meeting at which residents expressed strong criticism regarding a ceremonial recognition and stated that he wanted to identify a process that would reduce the likelihood of similar community concern. Councilmember Padova responded that the prior incident did not result from an excessive number of Council resolutions, but involved a mayoral proclamation that Councilmembers had not reviewed before the meeting. She stated that, in her view, requiring advance review of recognitions to be presented in Council Chambers would more directly address that concern.

Vice President Jones summarized the discussion as involving two

related but distinct issues: first, the form and timing of recognitions, including whether they are resolutions, proclamations, certificates, or other forms of acknowledgment and when presentations occur; and second, the policy governing recognitions, including eligibility criteria, who may request them, what matters should be recognized, and what advance review should occur. She stated that the prior controversy demonstrated the risks associated with an ad hoc process and reiterated that establishing a written process remained a priority.

Councilmember Renner supported developing a written policy but recommended that Council begin by documenting its current practices and then clearly identify the problem the policy is intended to solve. He stated that disagreement or strong public reaction at a Council meeting should not necessarily be viewed as evidence that the process is broken, but may instead reflect democracy in action. He supported further consideration of alternative procedures but cautioned that any process involving multiple Councilmembers would need to account for Ohio Sunshine Law and open meetings requirements.

Councilmember McGregor asked why the memorandum contemplated mayoral proclamations being presented only outside Council meetings. Vice President Jones explained that provision had been drafted within the memorandum's proposed framework of moving toward a proclamation-based system and stated that the discussion indicated Council did not support that approach as drafted.

Vice President Jones concluded that the memorandum would not advance in its current form and proposed beginning again by documenting the City's existing practices and identifying the specific problems Council wished to address before considering proposed changes. Councilmembers indicated agreement with that approach. The matter will return to a future Committee of the Whole meeting for further discussion. No action was taken.

F. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
day of 2026.*

Jamille Jones