



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, February 17, 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, February 17, 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 February 14, 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:

President Bowers announced an addition to the evening's agenda, acknowledging Mayor Jadwin for bringing forward a presentation to recognize School Resource Officer (SRO) Appreciation Day.

C. PRESENTATIONS:

1. Joint Recognition by Council & Mayor - School Resource Officers

Mayor Jadwin introduced the recognition of National School Resource Officer Appreciation Day, which was observed on Saturday, February 15, 2025. She noted that with no school in session on the preceding Friday and Monday, there had been no prior opportunity to publicly acknowledge the contributions of the School Resource Officers (SROs). Mayor Jadwin expressed gratitude for the four officers from the Gahanna Division of Police who serve as SROs. She emphasized that these officers dedicate their time daily, throughout the school year, ensuring the safety of students and staff. Three of the officers are assigned to Gahanna Lincoln High School, while the fourth rotates among

the other schools in the district. She shared personal reflections on the long-standing impact of SROs, including the continued influence of retired Officer Blamer, who still receives messages from former students now living abroad. The Mayor thanked Superintendent Dr. Tracy Deagle for publicly recognizing the SROs through Gahanna Jefferson Schools' social media channels. She expressed appreciation for the strong partnership between the school district and the Police Department. She noted that SROs serve not only as security personnel, but also as mentors, guides, and trusted figures for students.

Chief Spence then provided remarks, commending Sergeant Kyle Parrish, the first-line supervisor for the SROs and Community Liaison Officers. He acknowledged the evolution of the program, highlighting the expansion of police presence into middle schools following the addition of a fourth SRO in last year's budget. Chief Spence reiterated the importance of the SROs' role, emphasizing their impact both as protectors and mentors. He noted the positive feedback received from current and former students, recognizing the SRO program as a vital component of community-oriented policing.

President Bowers thanked Chief Spence for his remarks and acknowledged Superintendent Deagle's presence at the meeting. She praised the community-oriented approach of the Gahanna Division of Police and highlighted the department's broader support for students beyond the SRO program, specifically mentioning Officer Kaylea Pertz's new initiative aimed at student support services.

With thanks from the Mayor and Council, to conclude the recognition, Sergeant Parrish and Officer James "JD" Gillespie were invited forward to receive a Certificate of Recognition. Chief Spence also joined the presentation, acknowledging their dedicated service in ensuring student safety and fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the school community.

2. Sustainable 2050 Update

[2025-0041](#)

Sustainable 2050 Presentation to City Council 2.17.2025

Mayor Jadwin provided an overview of Sustainable2050, a program established by MORPC (Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission) in 2016-2017 to support member community sustainability initiatives. She explained that the program assists communities through technical support, collaboration, recognition, and benchmarking to measure and enhance sustainability efforts. She noted that the City of Gahanna was one of the first Sustainable2050 communities, having passed a resolution in 2017 to join the program. The city was awarded Silver Status in 2018. Over the past year, her

administration worked with MORPC to reassess Gahanna's sustainability efforts with the goal of advancing to the next certification level. After nearly a year of effort, the city was recognized last week by MORPC with Gold Plus Equity Champion Status as a member of Sustainable2050. Mayor Jadwin extended special recognition to several members of the city staff who dedicated significant time and effort to this initiative. She acknowledged Senior Deputy Director Corey Wybensing for leading the project, along with Management Analyst II and Grants Administrator Mara Hunter, who played a critical role in compiling documentation and finalizing the submission. She also recognized Matt Goodhart, a MORPC intern who worked on the project during the summer and is set to graduate soon with a focus on planning and sustainability. She expressed gratitude to Director of Sustainability at MORPC, Brandi Whetstone, for her guidance and leadership throughout the process, highlighting the significant role she plays in regional sustainability efforts.

Mayor Jadwin emphasized that achieving Gold Plus certification was not the result of a single project but rather a reflection of an ongoing commitment to sustainability in daily operations. She cited examples such as transitioning from gas-powered equipment to electric battery-powered equipment and air quality monitoring as initiatives that demonstrate Gahanna's commitment to a cleaner, greener future. She then invited Director Wybensing to present details on the certification process, including the requirements, documentation, and sustainability initiatives that contributed to Gahanna's advancement to Gold Plus Equity Champion Status.

Senior Deputy Director Corey Wybensing provided an update on the city's sustainability milestone. He began by acknowledging former MORPC intern Matt Goodhart and Grants Analyst Mara Hunter, both of whom played significant roles in completing the extensive Sustainable2050 recertification workbook. He noted that the submission and review process began in November and concluded with official recognition in February 2025. Sustainable2050 is a voluntary certification program through MORPC that helps local governments implement sustainability policies and practices. The program aligns with the Regional Sustainability Agenda, focusing on key environmental and economic goals. In 2017, the City of Gahanna committed to Sustainable2050, and in 2018, it became one of the first five governmental entities to earn Silver Status. The city's Silver certification sign is displayed on Route 62, just west of the Veterans Memorial. As of this month, Gahanna has officially advanced to Gold Plus Certification, marking a significant milestone in the city's sustainability journey. The certification process required scoring on a 145-point scale, covering multiple sustainability categories. It was a rigorous and extensive evaluation, which began with the efforts of intern Matt Goodhart over the summer and was finalized by Mara Hunter in the fall. The

certification process took several months, including a December presentation to MORPC's Sustainability Advisory Committee before final approval in January. The workbook detailing Gahanna's sustainability initiatives will be available on the city's website to showcase progress and future goals.

The four core goals of Sustainable2050 are:

- 1) Improving air quality and reducing climate change impacts
- 2) Protecting and preserving natural resources
- 3) Enhancing quality of life through equitable and sustainable communities
- 4) Promoting inclusive, sustainable growth and development

Rather than focusing on a single project to achieve Gold Plus status, the city implemented a series of long-term initiatives. MORPC highlighted several key projects that contributed to this milestone, including:

Community Choice Aggregation & Gahanna Energy Plus - In 2024, Gahanna joined SOPEC (Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council) and launched its first community aggregation program. As of early February, over 9,000 customers are enrolled, with fewer than 500 opting out. The program provides sustainable energy options, reducing the city's carbon footprint.

Expanding Public Recycling & Waste Management - With support from SWACO grants, Gahanna added 30 new recycling bins at Creekside and 17 parks. Temporary event containers and a solar compactor were introduced to improve waste management efficiency.

Sustainable Development & Municipal Complex Reuse - The reimagining of 825 Tech Center Drive transformed an existing building into a new municipal complex, significantly reducing the environmental impact of new construction.

Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Initiatives - The city received a Department of Energy "Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant" to fund Light-emitting diode (LED) lighting retrofits at the municipal complex.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals - Gahanna's partnership with Power a Clean Future Ohio (PCFO) facilitated a greenhouse gas inventory to measure and reduce emissions. The 2023 data showed Gahanna was already 12% below 2010 emission levels. At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, emissions dropped 27% below baseline. The Community Choice Aggregation program is projected to reduce emissions by an additional 10-25% once fully implemented. The city aims for a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Expanding Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure & Fleet Conversion -

The city completed an EV infrastructure assessment and is expanding public EV charging stations. The first electric vehicle was recently introduced into the city's fleet, accompanied by the installation of a charging station in the secured fleet garage. Fleet technicians are now undergoing EV certification training to support future electrification efforts.

Sustainable Traffic & Transportation Improvements - The city continues to expand smart traffic signals and roundabouts to reduce vehicle idling and emissions. The recently installed smart signal at State Route 62 and Stygler Road helps improve traffic flow and air quality.

Other ongoing sustainability efforts include: urban beekeeping and pollinator protection; food waste composting and urban tree canopy expansion; water conservation and smart metering through utility billing; and LED streetlight conversions. Wybensinger concluded by stating that achieving Gold Plus certification is a major milestone but not the final step. The city will continue to expand sustainability efforts, seek funding opportunities, and integrate sustainable practices into municipal operations. He welcomed any questions from the Council.

Councilmember Schnetzer congratulated Deputy Director Wybensinger and the team for their efforts and inquired whether MORPC's scoring system includes considerations for sustainable finance strategies. He referenced examples such as the LED light conversion project, which demonstrated financial savings, and the repurposing of 825 Tech Center Drive, which saved money compared to new construction. Deputy Director Wybensinger confirmed that financial sustainability is a subcomponent of MORPC's scoring categories. He noted that the city's aggressiveness in pursuing external funding for sustainable initiatives played a significant role in earning the Gold Plus certification. He and Grants Analyst Mara Hunter continuously seek funding opportunities for sustainability-related projects, especially in areas like EV infrastructure and renewable energy.

Vice President Weaver expressed gratitude to the administration for their ongoing work and commitment to sustainability. He emphasized that the Gold Plus certification reflects the city's dedication to making meaningful environmental progress and expressed excitement for future sustainability initiatives.

Councilmember Jones asked about the next steps toward achieving Platinum certification and whether the city has a plan to reach that level. Deputy Director Wybensinger explained that the city currently has about 90 points but would need 109 points for Platinum status. Future sustainability initiatives,

particularly related to solar and wind power, could help bridge that gap. He noted that the 825 Tech Center project offers significant opportunities to incorporate renewable energy and improve efficiency, which could contribute to earning additional points. The city has explored funding opportunities, including MORPC's solar co-op program and an Advanced Energy Fund grant, to offset solar project costs. Councilmember Jones also inquired whether the city needs to recertify annually to maintain Gold status. Deputy Director Wybensing clarified that recertification is only required when the city seeks to advance to a higher certification level. The Gold certification remains valid unless the city pursues Platinum status, at which point it would need to undergo a full reevaluation.

President Bowers requested that the updated Sustainable2050 workbook be presented to City Council once finalized. She noted that the existing workbook on the city's website is from 2019 and only reflects Silver status. Deputy Director Wybensing confirmed that the Gold Plus workbook will be uploaded once finalized and noted that Gahanna is one of two cities recognized as an Equity Champion under MORPC's Sustainable2050 framework. He added that MORPC has asked Gahanna to help shape the next iteration of the sustainability certification program as they revise their framework. President Bowers emphasized that having a detailed sustainability roadmap will help inform policy and budget decisions moving forward. She expressed enthusiasm for the city's progress on EV infrastructure and the continued integration of sustainability into city operations.

Councilmember Padova reiterated the importance of integrating sustainability into all city processes rather than treating it as an isolated project. She also inquired whether the city's green aggregation program contributed to earning Gold Plus certification. Deputy Director Wybensing clarified that while the aggregation program was factored into the certification scoring, its full greenhouse gas reduction impact is not yet reflected in the emissions inventory. Once fully implemented, aggregation could reduce community-wide emissions by an additional 10-25%, helping the city approach its goal of a 50% reduction by 2030. Mayor Jadwin confirmed that community aggregation was one of the highlighted projects when MORPC awarded the Gold Plus Equity Champion certification. However, the greenhouse gas inventory will be updated in the future to reflect the full impact of aggregation on emissions reductions.

Councilmember Renner congratulated the team on achieving Gold Plus certification and expressed interest in future sustainability initiatives. He noted that he has publicly advocated for additional environmental initiatives and looks forward to hearing the administration's plans moving forward.

President Bowers concluded by commending the administration and staff for their hard work in earning Gold Plus certification. She highlighted the significance of Gahanna's leadership in sustainability at the regional level and thanked everyone involved for their contributions.

D. HEARING OF VISITORS:

Patricia Kovacs, 527 Haversham Drive, Gahanna, OH addressed City Council regarding the proposed zoning changes concerning pedestrian accessibility.

Ms. Kovacs shared an experience from a Gahanna resident who lives on East Johnstown Road who encountered challenges while attempting to build a carport. She said the resident was informed that she would need to dedicate up to 20 feet of right-of-way from her front yard due to a planned bike path along Johnstown Road. Additionally, she was told that she would need to pay for the engineering study for the sidewalk construction. Ms. Kovacs expressed concern about residential property owners being required to pay for new sidewalks. She noted that past sidewalk and bike path projects, such as those on Flint Ridge, Shull, Hamilton Road, and Johnstown Road, were funded through grants, Safe Routes to School programs, or capital improvement funding. She stated that while she supports expanding pedestrian infrastructure, she did not believe that individual homeowners should be responsible for the cost. She also referenced past sidewalk commitments related to the Everett Apartments on Johnstown Road, noting that despite assurances from the Planning Commission, sidewalks were ultimately not constructed; instead, trees were planted. The explanation given at the time was that Johnstown Road was planned for widening in the future, but she expressed concern that without action, needed sidewalk infrastructure would continue to be delayed indefinitely.

President Bowers acknowledged Ms. Kovacs' concerns and stated that Council had her contact information to follow up on the matter.

Brenda Hoffman, 279 High Meadow Drive, Gahanna, OH spoke about issues regarding trash and recycling bin storage.

Ms. Hoffman referenced a contract with Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) for larger recycling bins and the city's transition to larger refuse bins, which require a monthly fee for maintenance and repairs. While she supported these initiatives, she noted that many residents lack garage space to store the bins properly. To address this issue, she built a cubby next to her house to store her trash and recycling bins. However, when a neighbor attempted to do the same, she realized that the contractor was building it in

front of the property's build line, which she knew would not comply with city regulations. She contacted code enforcement before any issues arose, but the response she received was unexpected-the city informed her that a fence permit was required to build a small enclosure for trash bins. Ms. Hoffman expressed frustration that a permit was necessary for something as minor as a trash bin cubby, particularly when residents are trying to keep trash secure and prevent it from getting into storm drains and attracting animals. She questioned why the city required additional permits and stated that this policy works against the shared goal of keeping the city clean and attractive. She requested that City Council review the permitting process to make it less burdensome for residents who want to properly store their trash and recycling bins.

E. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2025-0036](#)

Council Regular Minutes 2.3.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2025-0037](#)

Council Special Minutes 2.10.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2025-0038](#)

Committee of the Whole Minutes 2.10.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

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

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

F. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:

[ORD-0001-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY OF GAHANNA CODE PART ELEVEN ZONING CHAPTER SECTION 1117.10(e)(1)A - REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

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

President Bowers noted for the record that a Public Hearing on the ordinance is scheduled for March 3, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. Since the ordinance involves a change to the zoning code, the administration advised that companion

engineering code amendments will also be forthcoming. She acknowledged that these amendments are expected to address the concerns raised by Ms. Kovacs during the Hearing of Visitors.

G. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk - None.

2. Council

Vice President Weaver followed up on the previous week's Committee of the Whole conversation regarding municipal bonds tax exemption status. He reported that he reached out to Kent Scarrett with the Ohio Municipal League, who confirmed that the organization is monitoring the issue closely and is working in coordination with the National League of Cities. Weaver provided this update to ensure that his colleagues were aware of ongoing efforts at the state and national levels.

Sign up for City Council Newsletter here: <https://www.gahanna.gov/list.aspx>

[2025-0039](#)

City Council Newsletter - November-December 2024

President Bowers noted that the first City Council newsletter was published last week. The newsletter is available to residents, and individuals can sign up to receive it, just as they do for other city newsletters. This initiative provides greater in-depth information about City Council activities and individual members. Second, she mentioned that Council Office received an inquiry last week regarding renaming a street. The request was referred to Council Office by the administrative department, and she is currently in the process of gathering more information about the request and the legislative process involved. She assured that follow-ups with the administration and legal department would continue.

H. REPRESENTATIVES:

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

Councilmember Padova announced that the next Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) meeting was scheduled for the following day. However, Mayor Jadwin informed her that the meeting was canceled due to a lack of quorum. President Collins notified members via email that afternoon, indicating that several members, including herself, were unavailable. With the cancellation, Padova shared that the next CIC meeting is now scheduled for March 18, 2025.

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

[2025-0034](#)

Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 2.17.2025

Vice President Weaver expressed appreciation to the Council Office for their assistance with the report. He noted that substantial discussion about MORPC's activities had already been addressed during the meeting and provided updates from the commission's meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2025. He informed the Council that if anyone had not yet expressed interest in attending the State of the Region event on March 21, 2025, the table was now full, and there would be future opportunities to participate in similar events. Additionally, Weaver highlighted the inclusion of a link to the Central Ohio Regional Housing Survey from the Regional Housing Coalition and encouraged colleagues to participate, noting that the survey takes approximately five minutes to complete. Vice President Weaver also noted that MORPC and the Regional Policy Roundtable released their 2025-2026 Public Policy Agenda. The agenda focuses on four key goal areas: regionalism, mobility, sustainability (a topic covered extensively during the evening's discussions), and prosperity and opportunity.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova announced that the Visit Gahanna Annual Meeting would be held on March 18, 2025, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at La Navona. The event will feature guest speaker Roy Hall Jr., a motivational speaker and former National Football League (NFL) and Ohio State wide receiver. Tickets for the event are available for purchase through Visit Gahanna, with individual tickets priced at \$35 and table sponsorships for eight people available for \$350. She also shared her experience attending the Creekside Charity Chocolate Walk on Saturday, noting that it was her first time participating. She remarked that it was an enjoyable event where she saw Mayor Jadwin, met some neighbors, and had the opportunity to connect with new residents of the community. Despite typical February weather in Ohio-gray and damp-she highly recommended the event, emphasizing that the frequent stops along the walk allowed participants to stay warm and enjoy the experience. She encouraged others to consider attending in the future.

4. School Board (SB) - Jones

Councilmember Jones highlighted several events from the past week. She attended the Classroom to Career presentation, a collaboration between the school district, One Columbus, and the City. She found the event informative, particularly in showcasing the growing industries in the region that provide alternative post-high school career paths for students who may not choose

college. She encouraged everyone to explore the available information, noting that it would likely be posted on the district's website later this week. She also mentioned a Board Workshop held on February 6, which provided valuable insights into mental health resources available for students. She emphasized the importance of mental health discussions, noting that the topic was recently brought up in Chambers, including during Black History Month presentations with Jewel Woods. The workshop provided both regional statistics and specific information about the services available in the district, highlighting that over 11,000 students had individual contacts with the district's mental health team last year. She encouraged continued focus on supporting mental health initiatives in the community. Looking ahead, she shared details about upcoming meetings. The next regular school board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 20, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at Clark Hall. Additionally, the Gahanna Gala, the annual fundraiser hosted by the Gahanna-Jefferson Education Foundation, will take place this Saturday, February 22, 2025. While ticket availability is limited, she noted that the silent auction is now live online and open to everyone for free participation. Those interested can register at GJEF.org.

I. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin provided several updates, beginning with the recent announcement that eight Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) were installed in multiple Gahanna parks, with a ninth installation forthcoming. She emphasized that the safety of residents remains a priority and that these installations will provide immediate access to emergency medical assistance when needed most. The AED installations are a direct outcome of the creation of the Risk and Safety Administrator position in January 2023. Since assuming that role, Melissa Jackson has worked diligently to identify safety improvements across city facilities and parks. The Mayor also credited IT Director Rene Carter for extensive research on AED technology, infrastructure needs, and implementation feasibility. The Parks team is currently working to complete the installations, and while the cabinets are in place, they are not yet operational. Once the AEDs are fully functional, the city will make an official announcement. When activated, the devices will automatically connect users to dispatch and first responders.

Mayor Jadwin then announced that registration for the 2025 Gahanna Citizens Academy was open. Last year's program received positive feedback, and the city is looking forward to welcoming another cohort. Class size is limited to 20 participants, and applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Registration remains open through February 25, 2025, or until all spots are filled. She also highlighted National Engineers Week, which recognizes the contributions of

engineers and technicians while promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) careers for K-12 students. Gahanna's nine-member engineering team plays a crucial role in infrastructure projects, including street and sidewalk improvements, capital improvements, sewer and water projects, and traffic cabinet replacements. Mayor Jadwin shared that a new event, Bike Repairman Day, was scheduled for Sunday, March 2, 2025, at Hannah Park. The event, held in memory of longtime resident Denny Oswald, honors his dedication to bicycle safety and repair. Oswald, who would have turned 80 that weekend, was passionate about ensuring that children's bikes were safe to ride. The event, organized in collaboration with his wife Carol, community members, and city officials, will offer free bike safety checks and repairs. Bicycle One and other local vendors will provide services, and community liaison officers will be present for additional engagement. She also shared an update on the city's upcoming Procurement Fair, scheduled for Thursday, February 27, 2025. The event is fully booked, with over 100 businesses registered to participate. However, small businesses still have an opportunity to attend a Resource Summit, which will offer free workshops on marketing, business certifications, and state loan programs. Networking opportunities and guidance on obtaining minority-owned business certification will also be available.

Lastly, Mayor Jadwin addressed seasonal recruitment efforts for the city's summer programs. Positions are available in camps, paddleboat operations, and event staffing. Many teens from last year's seasonal workforce are returning, indicating the positive experience the city offers. The Mayor encouraged additional recruitment efforts, directing interested applicants to the city's website for more information.

2. City Attorney

City Attorney Tamilarasan provided an update on the tobacco preemption litigation, stating that oral arguments are scheduled for tomorrow, Tuesday February 18, 2025, at 10:45 a.m. with the 10th District Court of Appeals. The arguments will be live streamed on YouTube, and she encouraged anyone interested to reach out for the link. President Bowers noted that Governor DeWine's proposed budget contains many of the same components included in the local tobacco legislation. She expressed interest in seeing how the issue develops, particularly whether the state assumes responsibility for some of the tobacco enforcement considerations that the city pursued.

J. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember Jones noted that her December-January constituent report was attached to the agenda. She announced that her next constituent hour would be held on Saturday, March 8, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at the library.

Councilmember Schnetzer expressed appreciation for the city's installation of AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators) in parks and public spaces. He recalled his experience as a Gahanna Lions Youth Football League coach, where USA Football requires certification in safety protocols, including AED use. He suggested exploring opportunities for AED training in collaboration with local sports leagues such as Gahanna Soccer Association (GSA), Gahanna Junior League Sports (GJLS), Gahanna Football League, and Gahanna Lacrosse.

Vice President Weaver thanked all speakers and contributors at the meeting. He also recognized the work of school resource officers (SROs), particularly highlighting Officer Blamer, who had a lasting impact on students by handing out his personal business card to foster strong relationships. He reiterated appreciation for the city's AED initiative, noting that a Gahanna resident's life was recently saved due to quick action and public access to an AED.

President Bowers shared several updates and reflections. She highlighted the partnership between Gahanna-Jefferson Schools, Eastland-Fairfield, and One Columbus, which aims to create diverse career pathways for students. One key takeaway was that the regional median hourly wage for manufacturing jobs is now \$32 per hour, translating to an annual salary of approximately \$66,000, indicating the growing importance of manufacturing in the local economy. She attended MORPC's Data Day event, which provided insights into policy development and data-driven decision-making. She encouraged fellow elected officials to consider attending future sessions, as the event included tracks for both policy leadership and technical data analysis. She was particularly impressed by Burgess & Niple's presentation on using community engagement, diversity, and equity to evaluate infrastructure projects. Bowers shared statistics from a recent Columbus Metropolitan Club forum on Shrinking Safety-Nets, noting that 18,000 people in central Ohio are employed in the social services and nonprofit sector. She warned that proposed federal funding cuts could remove approximately \$150 million from the local economy, emphasizing the critical role of social services in supporting the region's well-being. She expressed gratitude to Rene Carter, Melissa Jackson, the Parks and Recreation Department, and all involved in installing AEDs in parks. She acknowledged that this initiative holds great significance for the community and enhances public safety. In honor of President's Day, Bowers read a passage from Thomas Jefferson's 1784 "Notes on the State of Virginia," emphasizing the importance of checks and balances in government. She urged community members to reflect on Jeffersonian principles of civil rights, the protection of free elections, and the need to guard against the concentration of power.

2024-January 2025

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Padova, to go into Executive Session under authority of Section 5.40(a) of the Council Rules of Procedure to consider the appointment of a public employee or official.

President Bowers noted the purpose of the Executive Session was to discuss both Community Grant Review Panel and Gahanna New Community Authority appointments, with no legislative action anticipated to follow for the evening. Council would meet in the Law Library for the Executive Session.

Council rose to report to Executive Session at 8:10 p.m.

Council rose to report from Executive Session at 8:36 p.m., with no further action.

L. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

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

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

Merisa K. Bowers