

Mayor's Report & Comments
City of Gahanna
Regular Council Meeting – October 5, 2020
Mayor Laurie A. Jadwin

The following report is respectfully submitted on behalf of the Mayor's Office for Monday, October 5, 2020:

General Information

- Halloween/Trick or Treat
 - Based on MORPC's recommended guidelines and the request of Franklin County Public Health for Central Ohio municipalities to collaborate and hold "Trick or Treat" on the same evening, we have announced that "Trick or Treat" night will be held on Thursday, October 29, from 6 to 8 p.m.
 - FCPH has issued safety protocols to follow that evening, which currently are posted on the City's website (www.gahanna.gov) and which have been shared on the City's social media pages.

Staffing Updates

- An offer of employment has been extended to a candidate for the position of Management Analyst in the Finance Department (a role previously held by Chance Shannan, who left the City in June).
- Joann Bury, Director of Finance, received the Distinguished Service Award from the Ohio Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for her years of service as an Ohio GFOA Board Member.

Department Updates

- *Gahanna Division of Police*
 - Deputy Chief Jeff Lawless held a mandatory training session for city employees on the subjects of conflict management, situational awareness, drug awareness and human trafficking awareness.
 - Chief Spence held his monthly Civic Association meeting by conference call on Thursday, September 24.
 - Chief Spence, Lt. Moffitt and Mayor Jadwin held a meeting on Thursday, October 1, with the representatives of the Creekside District Alliance and the establishments that will be participating in the Creekside Outdoor Refreshment Area, to review responsibilities and operational details for the CORA.

- The Division is working with the Parks & Recreation Department to finalize logistical operations for the Great Gahanna Goblin Trail, to ensure safety of attendees and traffic management on Cherry Bottom Rd.

- *Parks & Recreation*
 - The Parks & Rec team will continue its “drive in movie” series at Sunpoint Park through October.

 - The Great Gahanna Goblin Trail
 - Given current COVID-19-related restrictions, the Parks and Recreation team has transitioned the annual Creepside Festival into a safe and socially distant event. “The Great Gahanna Goblin Trail,” a new, drive-thru experience, will be held on October 22 and October 23, from 6 to 9pm at Academy Park. Guests will remain in their cars throughout their time at the park while they drive through a half mile trail that includes over 15 different performers, attractions and candy stations. Candy will be distributed via a Halloween shoot that will deliver the candy from 6’ away. Safety protocols will be in force for all staff and performers, including wearing masks at all times.

 - Senior Center: The Senior Center has a tentative opening date of November 5. Staff are working collectively with the Ohio Department of Aging as well as the Franklin County Department of Health to confirm operating requirements and protocols for creating safe opportunities for our senior members.

 - Paddleboats and kayaks have closed for the season. Due to COVID-19 protocols, the program operated at reduced capacity in order to safely clean and sanitize equipment. Even with these protocols in place, the program was still able to serve 1,926 participants in the summer months.

 - September 2020 Numbers:
 - To date, 1,755 meals have been served to Gahanna seniors through the Gahanna Senior Buddy Program.
 - 285 seniors have participated in Drive-in Bingo.
 - The Gahanna Golf Course experienced a 65% increase in September compared to September 2019, with 4,109 rounds of golf.

- *Public Service & Engineering*
 - 2020 Street Program Update
 - Columbia Gas has completed relocations on Walnut Street and is finishing work on Shephard St. Once Columbia Gas has cleared the site, Straver Paving will begin the street rebuild.
 - The rebuild of Research and Blatt Blvds. continues to progress and is on schedule. It is expected to be completed by mid October.

- 2020 CCTV
 - This project is substantially complete.
 - Nearly 80,000 feet of sanitary sewer and 400 manholes were cleaned and inspected. Inspection footage will be reviewed over the coming months to determine whether any improvements are necessary and, if so, what improvements need to be made.
 - One initial “takeaway” of the project is that the flushing of wet wipes caused multiple blockages in the system.
 - As part of this project, utility crews raised numerous buried manholes, totaling over 15’ worth of manhole risers.
- 2020 Sewer Improvement Project
 - Staff is finalizing contract documents and scheduling a start date, following Council’s authorization on 9/21/20 to award this project.
- Engineering Review/Private Development
 - 10 development projects are undergoing final engineering design and review.
 - 19 projects are in the active construction stage.
- School Zone 20mph Replacement and Upgrades
 - All but two flashers have been replaced by street crews. The remaining two lights will be completed shortly.
- City of Columbus Widening of Hamilton and Morse Roads
 - Utility conflicts are still being resolved. A fiber optic conduit carrying a portion of Gahanna’s GNET is being lowered to accommodate the widening.
 - Although a baseline schedule has not been approved yet, the expected substantial completion date will be Summer 2023.
- Western Gahanna SSES Phase 1
 - Flow monitors and rain gauges are installed and connected online. With this instrumentation in place, we are prepared to track and document the responsiveness of the sewer to wet weather events.
- General:
 - Utility crews will lower a water line on Amfield Ct. in order to complete a storm sewer extension. The extension will alleviate a long-standing drainage issue affecting multiple properties.
 - The Ohio EPA has reclassified Gahanna’s water distribution system as a Class 2 system, based on population. This change will require that our operator of record(s) hold a Class 2 water distribution license and will increase our minimum staffing requirements. All of our operators of record possess a Class 2 water distribution license and our current staffing enables us to meet requirements, which will make for a seamless transition.

- *Economic Development*
 - Conversations are currently underway with four companies potentially interested in locating their businesses in Gahanna.
 - The Development team, Director of Public Service & Engineering, City Engineer and Mayor again met with representatives from Metropolitan Holdings to continue discussions and negotiations regarding the proposed Mill St. project.
 - Participated in the COTA Advisory Panel meeting on September 29. Discussion included COTA's current state of services, and strategic plan and reinvention of future services.
 - Working with City Attorney and outside counsel to evaluate steps needed for the City to become a member of the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District (ESID). This is an important first step in creating new incentives for development that also enhance sustainability initiatives at no cost to the City.
 - Continuing research and data gathering for ongoing discussions with GJPS regarding reevaluation of school compensation agreement in an effort to better position schools and city for development success
- *Planning, Building & Zoning*
 - Working with consultant to prepare for community engagement phase of Design Code review and rewrite, expected to occur in next several weeks
 - In period from 9/17 – 9/30:
 - 86 building permits issued
 - 13 zoning permits issued
 - 231 code enforcement inspections performed
 - 9 citations issued
- *Human Resources*
 - Began work with outside consultant (Clemans, Nelson & Associates, Inc.) to conduct benchmark updates to the Compensation Plan. This will continue into 2021 and will include job audits, FLSA audits, wage compression and benchmark of pay scales.
 - Continued planning for Employee Recognition and Health Fair
 - Continued transition to the new MUNIS HRIS system in preparation for open enrollment
 - Completed interviews and extended offer of employment for the Management Analyst position for the Department of Finance.
- *Finance*

- 2021 Budget – Individual department meetings are being held with directors to review their proposed budgets for 2021.
- CARES Program – The Gahanna CARES Assistance Program Review Committee has begun reviewing applications received for financial assistance.
- Working with City Attorney to confirm final arrangements for issuance of 1099 Forms related to the tax settlement.
- Completed two phases of implementation of new accounting system. Working with HR and IT to resolve challenges regarding implementation of third phase, which impacts HR, payroll and timekeeping. Challenges will push back full implementation date.
- *Information Technology*
 - Worked with Finance Department and consultant regarding implementation of the Gahanna CARES Assistance Program, including defining review process for online applications and the secure exchange of information, implementing software to track applications through the process and addressing technical issues to ensure that process works smoothly.
 - Researched platforms for video and image management and Identified an overall cost savings of \$11,500 by eliminating redundant services.
 - Met with outside vendor to discuss functionality and implementation of phone system.
 - Addressed issues with phishing emails and educated staff on identifying emails, addressed nationwide service issues on platforms that impacted city service, and worked with Finance and HR to address issues arising in implementation of MUNIS
- *Communications & Marketing*
 - Developed additional communications for the Gahanna CARES Assistance Program, including:
 - Revisions to webpage to promote Program and provide information: <https://www.gahanna.gov/gahanna-cares-assistance-program/>
 - Mailed postcards to 14,000+ households in Gahanna
 - Created video to promote Program via social media
 - Developed promotional materials for The Great Gahanna Goblin Trail
 - Worked with GPD to update monthly civic association reports

- Held separate meetings with the Gahanna Division of Police and leadership of the Parks & Recreation Department to formalize overall communications plans for each department
- Provided ongoing responses to resident concerns and questions on social media
- Continued to update website regarding COVID-19 information
- Worked with IT Department to identify new platforms for digital management that maintain efficiency while being more cost effective
- *Mayor's Office*
 - Continuing facilitation discussions with senior leadership team to create internal roadmap for project prioritization.
 - Budget meetings for 2021 are underway with every department.
 - The Gahanna CARES Assistance Program
 - Developed communications to send to Gahanna business owners to encourage participation in program
 - Working with local organizations to share information regarding the Program and assistance available
 - *We encourage all Council members to please share information about the CARES Program within the community. The easiest way to share information and direct interested persons is to simply share the City's social media posts on your own social media accounts. Thank you in advance for your help!*
 - Worked with Chief Spence and Lt. Moffitt in arranging and preparing for training meeting with the Creekside District Alliance regarding operational requirements for the DORA; worked with representatives of the CDA to finalize plans for implementation of the DORA. Anticipated launch is mid-October.
 - Continued internal meetings to discuss development and implementation of a formal event policy for special events held in the community
 - Worked with consultant and CIC to plan and prepare for CIC strategic planning session (scheduled for Saturday, October 3)
 - Finalizing contracts for Visit Gahanna and Gahanna CIC for presentation to Council