



# City of Gahanna

## Meeting Minutes

### Finance Committee

200 South Hamilton Road  
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

*Michael Schnetzer, Chair*  
*Karen Angelou*  
*Merisa Bowers*  
*Brian Larick*  
*Jamie Leeseberg*  
*Nancy McGregor*  
*Stephen Renner*

*Krystal Gonchar, MPA, Clerk of Council*

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Monday, November 22, 2021

Council Chambers

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**\* Immediately Following Committee of the Whole**

**A. CALL TO ORDER.**

Chair Michael Schnetzer called the meeting to order at 8:31 p.m.

**B. DISCUSSIONS:**

1. [ORD-0072-2021](#) TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, OHIO DURING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022.

Schnetzer stated that questions were gathered by Council ahead of the meeting and attached to the file. Due to there being a consultant present this evening, those questions surrounding the salary compensation study will move first on the list of items.

Vollmer stated that Brian Butcher and Heidi Miller, from Clemans Nelson & Associates were here tonight for a presentation on the salary compensation study, presentation attached. Miller stated that their firm specializes in the public sector; they began their review earlier this year; many firms doing this throughout the year; last time this was reviewed was in 2016; changes since 2016 include turbulent market, wage indices, and inflation. Recommendations include a shift to wage scale, certain types of collective bargaining driven adjustments occur to fill jobs, market survey and internal adjustments, and job audits. They proposed shifting wage scale by 10%; last adjustment was in 2016 and not significant. Would recommend a rank differential for collective bargaining units. Miller stated that the total cost associated with the recommended changes comes to \$196,353; just the cost of bringing staff to the minimum will be just over \$61k; suggests a phased-in approach over two years. The reason year one is more, is that any employee getting \$1 or

less per hour, would receive the full amount in year one. Miller reviewed the market study survey results and wage results. Butcher stated that they are putting the City in a position with this information, to recruit and retain employees against comparable employers within Central-Ohio.

Larick asked if there are other contributing factors with regard to turnover, hiring rates, time to hire, etc. Butcher said in the public sector, it's comparing apples to apples as far as dollar figure goes; regarding turnover, if looking at staff with 10 years of service, was only about 30% in 2019; looking at tenure, staff roster is young; that's not the case in public employment elsewhere; we are seeing people work longer for the same employer, in part due to PERS requirements changing; onboarding was not part of the process though. Renner asked what the market rate is; is it the mid-point. Butcher said they try to capture the bottom-entry level rate, and then the top; usually it's 30-50%; depends on the compensation philosophy; some cities want to be a percentage above the average or in the top 3, for example; mid-point is probably closer to the market. Renner asked about the job audit, when they were looked at internally, did the firm also look at other municipalities for comparison. Miller said it depends on if the positions that were looked at were targeted as a benchmark position, but many job functions were included in the market rate. Renner stated that the average worker is being asked to perform more today than before, understands this process; asked if MORPC data was referenced during this process; feels it is not always standardized, but curious how it compares. Butcher said they did reference the MORPC pay scales.

Schnetzer moved on to question 1 under the General Government section. Bury stated that they would follow a similar process for that of the CARES funding; there will be applications, justifications required for use of grant dollars; required by federal government to do sub-recipient monitoring; awards would have to be made by end of program year 2024. Schnetzer asked if the federal government has some outline about what types of non-profit or industry/sectors would be eligible. Bury said they would have to fall in line with those organizations that were most deeply impacted by the pandemic.

Response to question 2 from Bury was that pg. 27 is an all fund summary and pg. 40 looks at the general fund; the biggest change you will see is a dip in 2021, which was for reclassification of the public service general administrative services to the special fund, and they are planning to bring that back to the general fund in 2022.

Response to question 3 from Bury was that we don't know what post-pandemic trends will be; will probably see those play out more in

2023; in 2020, we lost \$3.9M, which was very close to what was predicted; moving into 2021, there were still so many uncertainties; when getting through the third quarter, appears we are going to have gains; have asked Strum to provide some information about Economic Development and Planning. Strum presented the attached Planning and Development document. There has been over \$170M in capital investments in the city this year; still seeing momentum through end of year and beginning of next year; still so much uncertainty in the office sector due to work from home options; survey states that many offices will remain flexible. Using 2019 as a comparable "traditional year" we are ahead of those numbers in 2021. The diversity in workforce in the city is one of our best assets. Angelou asked about inflation. Strum said there is so much uncertainty with supply-chain. Bowers asked what percentage of residents in Gahanna work in Gahanna. Strum said he would locate that information. Larick asked about the capital investments, what portion is abated. Strum said he would locate the information and get back with them.

For question 4, response from Bury was that in 2021, it was the first year of the income tax increase; budgeted at a reduced level; had to cancel programs and events; did not spend as much as planned; for income tax, at compliance at that point; knew in 2021 that programming would be scaled back; were still looking at a large restricted unreserved balance; best practice is to look at those balances first and see if there are strings attached; identified some activities that could be pushed into those special funds; 2022 will have full programming.

For question 1 under the Mayor's Office section, Jadwin's response was that in recent years, it has been general practice to centralize expenses and projects that impact multiple departments under one department; allows for better tracking of costs, efficiencies, and project management. A good example of that is the way city phones were handled; each department handled the cell phone invoices and management separately; when compiled, we're able to get a bulk rate. Another example is professional development; each department had their own line item, but it has been moved to the HR Department which can better plan for training opportunities and track certifications and licensing. Office supplies is another example; all are purchased under the Service Department now. For projects that require Mayor's approval, they have been moved to Mayor's Office; can be more consistent with budgeting; all come from the general fund, but makes sense to have those items live in the Mayor's Office; city-wide initiatives are a great example of that. Larick stated that he does not believe it makes sense to have way-finding in the Mayor's Office. Jadwin stated that it will require extensive marketing and communications efforts; will affect multiple departments. Bowers thanked

Jadwin for the clarification.

For question 2, Jadwin provided an outlined history of how the department evolved over the past few years. Under prior administrations, communication was handled by various departments; Service did water bill inserts; Parks did their own work for events; message of the city was not consistent and the look of the messaging was not consistent; has been a lack of public engagement; we have been bad at telling our story. All communications should be under one house and streamlined in order to be consistent. Jadwin shared the lengthy list of items that Marketing and Communications completes for each department. There's a lot of work to do be done, as marketing and communications has expanded, and there is a need for more staff to do the work. The ask is to move the employee who currently works 35 hours to full time; would be responsible for video and digital communications. Current Marketing Manager would be responsible for all marketing needs throughout the city; brand implementation; advertising events and programming, etc. Jadwin stated that last year there was an ask, which was approved by Council, to create a position for a part-time community liaison; the position was not filled because there were other pressing issues. Having one point of contact in the city alleviates inconsistent answers. When gearing up for extensive capital needs projects, we need more staff, which is in line with how other municipalities operate. Jadwin stated that rather than fill the part-time community liaison position, the request is to have another full-time staff member. Bowers asked if the Communications Manager is the position that would be changed to the Community Relations Manager. Jadwin said the title would change, with the added function of being the community liaison; the PIO position would support communications in issuing press releases and getting the story out; communications manager would still handle crisis communication and media inquiries.

For question 1 under the Public Safety section, Bury responded that it comes from the general fund. For question 2, Bury responded that those are the same. Chief Jeff Spence stated that in 2017, when work first began, the building had been designated as the operation center; is referred to in both ways; have exchanged working documents on an agreement for overall operations with the Township; cost share is related to utilities, housekeeping, and maintenance items; will maintain contracts and licensing independently; since 2009, the operation of 9-1-1 system has been transitioned to a software as a service model (SAAS); have shared costs with the Township and will continue doing so; costs will increase due to network and fiber expenses. Renner asked about the operations center, is it parsed out anywhere in the budget detail about the center itself. Spence said they are exchanging a document now on the cost share and it will be minimal; based on overall square footage of

occupancy; city provides TIF dollars for the center; presented in the previous budget, was equipment costs for consoles, and technology; when the agreement is finalized, will have all included in contract services line item. Bury confirmed that there are estimates in there; TIF is part of Johnstown Rd. TIF. For question 3, Bury said Police Pension cost is an operational cost that supports the entire department; determined that there was capacity in the special fund to provide that support; will continue in 2022.

For question 1 under the Parks & Recreation section, Bury stated that this refers to the movement of recreation back into the general fund from the special fund. The increase is due to the master plan refresh for parks; return to full year of programming, and additional communications costs.

For question 1 under the Capital Improvements section, Ferrell presented a document (attached) detailing the park and year the equipment was installed; based off an 18-year life cycle. For question 2, Strum stated that there is no baseline yet, due to them being relatively new. For the second point, Whitehall is working with MORPC on a multi-jurisdictional grant opportunity, which would include Gahanna; we appropriated for a 20% match as part of that grant application. Angelou asked if the current chargers are being used. Strum reiterated that there is not yet a good base line for comparison. Larick asked if they could receive hours of usage and total kw hours. Crawford confirmed. For question 3, Bury stated that it's not legal to move from the capital fund to the operating fund due to the ballot language. For question 4, Bury stated that she did not list the capital improvements for the Capital Improvement fund, and only mentioned the maintenance side. Larick stated that he is not following the numbers; is a \$5M gap. Bury stated that the capital maintenance for the Capital Improvement Fund was not listed; if you refer back to pg. 116, if you look at capital improvement pieces for that fund, those are not specifically listed in that section, rather she referenced the reader to the capital section to look at that detail; if you add up all those tables on pg. 116, they come to \$18M. Schnetzer said pg. 116 lists capital maintenance, pg. 117 lists capital improvements; the table on pg. 117 that shows nearly \$5M is not included in that.

For question 5, Ferrell stated that there is a draft community multi-use trail plan; a MORPC Easton Fellow assisted with the project this past year; was meant to evaluate disparities and set priorities; there is a sub-committee of the Parks & Rec Board, the Bicycle and Trails Committee (BTAC), and they are working through recommendations based off historical data; will be included in the Master Plan and ultimately part of the long term capital maintenance plan. Angelou stated that she hopes we can continue to utilize MORPC interns through the

Fellowship program. Jadwin stated that the intern who completed this work will be presenting at the MORPC State of the Region.

Schnetzer stated that he had remaining questions about the Price Road House and the timing and sequence of having the Master Plan come first followed by renovations, or the other way around, but not concerns about the project itself. Ferrell stated that a requirement of the Land and Water Conservation is to hold off on any construction until there's an actual award, which we should know about by March.

Angelou asked if the recommendations of the compensation study, discussed earlier, have been accounted for in the budget request. Vollmer confirmed that the year-one costs were, but the wage scale changes would be brought forward as part of the salary ordinance.

Schnetzer asked Council to provide him with further questions or suggested cuts and would coordinate with the Administration for the next Committee meeting.

## **2. Quarterly Finance Report: Q3 (2021)**

Bury stated during the Committee of the Whole meeting, held prior to the Finance Committee meeting, that the Department of Finance is continuing to work on the Q3 update. No further discussion during the Finance Committee this evening.

## **C. ADJOURNMENT.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.