



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes Committee of the Whole

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, March 11, 2024

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The agenda was published on March 8, 2024. Michael Schnetzer was absent from the meeting. All other members were present. Vice President Weaver noted that the discussion on the motion regarding Council Rules of Procedure would occur as the last item on the agenda.

B. ITEMS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY:

[RES-0008-2024](#)

A RESOLUTION FINDING THAT THE CREATION OF THE GAHANNA NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY DISTRICT WILL BE CONDUCTIVE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, CONVENIENCE AND WELFARE AND IS INTENDED TO RESULT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW COMMUNITY, DECLARING THE NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY TO BE ORGANIZED AND A BODY POLITIC AND CORPORATE, DEFINING THE BOUNDARY FOR THE NEW COMMUNITY AUTHORITY, AND FIXING THE SURETY FOR THE TRUSTEES' BONDS

City Attorney Tamilarasan brought forward a resolution prepared in collaboration with Mr. Sean McCarter from Albers and Albers to create the Gahanna New Community Authority (NCA) board. She explained that this resolution marked the second stage of the process following the approval of the petition, which had already been granted, pending a hearing scheduled for the following week.

Mr. McCarter elaborated on the purpose of the resolution, clarifying that the previous approval of the petition was primarily regarding its form. The resolution, set for consideration next week, aimed to formally approve the NCA, which was initially outlined in the development agreement associated with the Crescent project. He explained that the NCA served as a development incentive and was integral to the repayment of the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) loan, also on the agenda for the evening. Highlighting the function of an NCA, Mr. McCarter described it as a

self-imposed tax on the development, akin to real property taxes. This tax would generate income dedicated to repaying the SIB loan. He noted that the developer had committed to implementing up to five mills on the property once approved. Mr. McCarter expressed his preference for an NCA over other mechanisms, citing its potential for stability in revenue generation, especially in comparison to employment-based taxes. He emphasized the NCA's ability to provide a reliable return on investment as promised.

Councilmember McGregor sought clarification regarding the time limit associated with the NCA. Mr. McCarter responded, explaining that while the NCA does have an ultimate time limit linked to the resolution of the debt, it extends beyond solely debt repayment. He noted that it also encompasses the reimbursement of certain expenses fronted by the developer. As these obligations are fulfilled, the NCA would naturally phase out. He confirmed that Council likely encountered this information in the petition.

President Bowers directed a question to Mr. McCarter, seeking clarification on the obligation to allocate property tax dollars generated through the NCA millage towards the SIB loan repayment and how this obligation would be enforced. Mr. McCarter explained that the obligation was initially established in the agreement between the City and the developer, which outlined the roles of each party regarding the SIB, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and NCA. He emphasized that the NCA board would play a crucial role in ensuring compliance with this obligation. The board would have the authority to vote on the allocation of funds, particularly towards loan repayment. Mr. McCarter highlighted that the developer would be highly motivated to uphold this obligation, as it was a contractual commitment.

President Bowers sought further confirmation regarding the fiduciary duty of the NCA board trustees to prioritize the SIB loan repayment with the tax revenue generated by the NCA. Mr. McCarter affirmed, stating that the trustees of the NCA board indeed have a fiduciary duty to ensure that the tax revenue generated by the NCA satisfies the SIB loan first. He elaborated that once the NCA is operational, its main responsibility would be to oversee the accounting and distribution of funds, primarily focusing on loan repayment.

President Bowers asked for clarification regarding the responsibility for the SIB loan payments in the event of a default by the NCA. Mr. McCarter explained that while the developer's guarantee would be relieved after crossing a certain threshold, the obligations of the NCA would remain enforceable. He emphasized that the NCA board members would be contractually bound to fulfill these obligations, and any deviation from this commitment would be subject to legal action, possibly including a mandamus claim.

President Bowers inquired about the composition of the NCA board and the city council's role in appointing its members. Mr. McCarter clarified that the city council appoints four members to the NCA board, with three being public members and one representing the city government. He noted that there are seven total board members, with three appointed by the developer.

Vice President Weaver added that a public hearing on this matter is scheduled for March 18th.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 3/18/2024.

C. ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL OFFICE:

[RES-0006-2024](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GAHANNA TO BECOME A POWER A CLEAN FUTURE OHIO COMMUNITY AND ADOPTING A GOAL TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA

Councilmember Renner reintroduced the topic of the resolution regarding joining PCFO (Power a Clean Future Ohio). He highlighted the organization's mission to equip local leaders with tools and resources for creating and implementing carbon reduction plans, emphasizing the importance of sustainability and resiliency for Gahanna. The resolution aimed to join PCFO and initiate two actions: a power aggregation plan and a strategic energy plan. Councilmember Renner expressed gratitude for the feedback received from colleagues and the mayor's office, stating that the resolution represented a collaborative effort. He invited colleagues to ask any questions about the resolution before opening the floor for discussion.

Vice President Weaver thanked Councilmember Renner for his efforts and invited Mr. Joe Florida to speak about the resolution, or alternatively, to open the discussion to colleagues.

Mr. Florida began by expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to address the council and emphasized his desire to be concise. He acknowledged the role of Donny Murray, a resident of Gahanna, in facilitating their connection with the community. Florida highlighted the importance of collaboration with various communities and mentioned their extensive experience working with 48 different communities, including several in central Ohio such as Columbus, Bexley, Reynoldsburg, Upper Arlington, Worthington, and Lancaster. He emphasized their role as advisors and expressed their commitment to supporting Council's priorities and decisions. Florida stressed the importance of providing necessary resources and tools for local governments to undertake their work effectively, including access to consultants and partners in the relevant fields. Councilmember Renner's earlier remarks regarding potential areas of focus, such as Community Choice Aggregation and long-term energy planning, were acknowledged, with Florida offering to address any questions or concerns the Council might have on these topics. He concluded his remarks by opening the floor for questions and further discussion.

Councilmember McGregor inquired about the funding structure of PCFO. Mr. Florida responded, stating that PCFO is primarily funded through philanthropy. He explained that they receive support from in-state funders such as the Cleveland Foundation and Gund Foundation, who have been long-term supporters of their work. Additionally, Florida mentioned that PCFO has received funding from federal grants, although philanthropy remains their

main source of funding. He emphasized the importance of their funding model in enabling local-level work, stating that they have made the case to both state and national funders that without their support, resources for this type of work would not be readily available. Florida highlighted their efforts to address the funding gap identified in their work.

Councilmember McGregor raised a question regarding how PCFO ensures that residents will receive the lowest price through aggregation. Mr. Florida responded by emphasizing that aggregation does not guarantee the lowest price. He advised Council to consider this aspect carefully, noting that while PCFO provides recommendations to maximize flexibility and secure the best price, there are no guarantees. Florida suggested that Council take advantage of the current moment, as rates for AEP's auction are expected to be clear soon, allowing for an educated decision. He recommended that if the rates projected for June are lower than those offered through an aggregation program, Council should have the flexibility to pause the program. Florida stressed the importance of ensuring that residents receive the best possible price. He highlighted the current advantage of aggregation programs in beating the standard service offer provided by utilities, although he cautioned that this advantage might not persist indefinitely. Florida expressed confidence that with the right structure and partners, aggregation programs could continue to offer residents cheaper rates.

Councilmember McGregor sought clarification on whether PCFO exclusively deals with renewable energies in aggregation. Mr. Florida confirmed that PCFO's mission focuses on advising local governments on clean energy initiatives aimed at reducing emissions. He outlined several areas of emphasis, including renewable energy, transportation electrification, land use, and energy efficiency. While PCFO does advocate for aggregation programs that prioritize renewable energy, Florida clarified that their counsel encompasses a broader spectrum of clean energy initiatives. He underscored the importance of considering the emissions aspect of such initiatives, emphasizing the collective responsibility in addressing climate change. Additionally, Florida highlighted the competitive advantage and economic opportunities associated with renewable energy, including the potential for job creation within Ohio. He suggested that leveraging renewable energy could benefit not only Gahanna residents but also the broader population of Ohioans.

Councilmember McGregor referenced discussions with other aggregators who did not necessarily guarantee that all energy would come from renewables. Mr. Florida acknowledged this variation among aggregators, noting that each may approach energy aggregation differently. He mentioned SOPEC, stating that while they offer a default 100% renewable energy option, they also provide the possibility of opting for a brown power scenario for those who prefer it. Florida explained that SOPEC's standard offer is for 100% renewables, but alternative options are available. Regarding NOPEC, Florida clarified that their default offer does not consist of renewable energy, but residents can opt into their green purchasing program if they desire. He also mentioned the existence of other brokers and consultants who can tailor energy options to meet specific preferences regarding the type and source of

energy.

Councilmember Jones raised a question regarding success stories from other communities involved with PCFO. Mr. Flarida responded by highlighting various success stories, ranging from small wins to significant achievements. He cited examples such as assisting communities in hiring sustainability coordinators or directors, guiding them through the process of purchasing electric vehicles, and facilitating their involvement in federal grant programs. Flarida mentioned Cleveland Heights' purchase of electric vehicles as a tangible outcome of their collaboration. He also mentioned PCFO's role in helping communities navigate the complexities of working with federal agencies, such as the Department of Energy, to secure grants. Flarida highlighted the City of Toledo's establishment of a 1% for the environment fund, which allocates a portion of capital budgets to environmental projects. PCFO provided guidance on structuring the program and involving stakeholders in decision-making. Flarida emphasized that many successes involve capacity building and long-term planning, noting that it takes time for communities to develop and implement climate action plans. However, he expressed satisfaction in seeing communities progress from initial engagement with PCFO to the point of presenting climate action plans to their city councils for ratification.

President Bowers expressed interest in exploring the ongoing conversation with the administration regarding building capacity and implementing plans with PCFO. She invited the administration to share their perspective. Senior Director of Operations Kevin Schultz stated that the administration has had initial discussions with Mr. Renner and Mr. Flarida about engaging with PCFO. They discussed the resources PCFO brings to the table and the importance of having a city representative to interact with regularly. Schultz emphasized the need for buy-in from both the administration and council for the plans to move forward effectively. He mentioned recent conversations regarding a resolution reflecting the relationship between the administration and PCFO, expressing comfort with the proposed resolution. President Bowers thanked Schultz for his update and expressed excitement about the potential relationship with PCFO.

Councilmember Renner thanked Schultz for his contributions to the resolution, and President Bowers thanked Renner for his dedication to sustainability efforts.

Councilmember Padova expressed her support for the resolution and excitement about making progress on aggregation. She asked if PCFO could assist in expediting the process and easing the workload on the administration. Mr. Flarida responded, stating that PCFO could potentially alleviate some of the workload, depending on the chosen pathway for aggregation. He explained that there are different scenarios to consider, such as issuing a request for proposals (RFP) or joining a council of governments like NOPEC or SOPEC. Flarida mentioned that PCFO has experience advising on RFPs and can assist in navigating such processes, as they recently did for the City of Cleveland. He also noted that joining a council of governments might be a quicker route, as they already have approved plans

and governance structures. Florida assured Council that PCFO is willing to assist in whichever scenario they choose, providing advice on the pros and cons of each approach to help Council make an informed decision.

Mayor Jadwin emphasized the need to work with Mr. Florida and understand the impact of PCFO's organization on staffing before making any definitive decisions. She expressed uncertainty about the potential impacts and stressed the importance of having a thorough understanding before proceeding. Mayor Jadwin indicated that further discussions and potentially returning to Council with more information might be necessary.

Vice President Weaver acknowledged the mayor's point and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to fill in the gaps in knowledge through collaboration with PCFO. Mayor Jadwin reiterated that the resolution signifies an agreement to explore opportunities with PCFO while being aware of what may or may not be feasible.

Councilmember Renner added a clarification regarding power aggregation, emphasizing that it is about energy choice rather than being mandatory. He aimed to alleviate any potential anxiety by reiterating that aggregation plans today are voluntary. Residents have the freedom to opt in or out of the program on a monthly basis, providing flexibility and ensuring that individuals are not bound to any particular arrangement. Renner underscored that participation in aggregation is purely optional and solely a matter of individual choice.

Councilmember Jones expressed uncertainty about the resolution's commitments and the availability of resources to fulfill them. She raised concerns about potentially committing to goals without ensuring that the necessary resources are in place. Mayor Jadwin acknowledged the potential for overcommitment. Councilmember Jones verbalized the importance of acknowledging these uncertainties.

President Bowers acknowledged Councilmember Jones' concerns and responded that the resolution is aspirational and reflects the Council's desire to make progress. She noted that the resolution allows for flexibility, particularly in terms of seeking community input on plans and recognizing that completion may not occur within the current fiscal year. President Bowers thanked the administration, Councilmember Renner, and Mr. Florida for their contributions to the discussion and emphasized the importance of prioritizing energy choice aggregation as a means to make a positive impact on residents' budgets and reduce emissions. She emphasized the importance of balancing aspiration with practical considerations.

Councilmember McGregor shared her recent experience of switching energy suppliers using the "Apples to Apples" comparison tool. She highlighted the ease of the process and noted that individuals can change suppliers independently, even without aggregation.

Vice President Weaver acknowledged McGregor's point and expressed appreciation for the efforts of Councilmember Renner, the administration, and

Mr. Florida in advancing the initiative. He reiterated that while the resolution is aspirational, transitioning to energy choice alone could largely fulfill the resolution's objectives. Expanding on this, Mr. Florida explained that PCFO would conduct an analysis to assess greenhouse gas emissions based on a baseline year, such as 2010. This analysis would provide confidence in setting and working towards emission reduction goals. He agreed that the initiative is aspirational and highlighted the need to consider various factors, including energy market dynamics, technological advancements, and capacity challenges. Florida emphasized PCFO's role in assessing these factors and providing guidance on pathways to achieve goals, including the potential impact of an aggregation program.

Councilmember Padova directed her question to Councilmember Renner, inquiring about the choice of using 2010 as a comparative year for emissions. Councilmember Renner deferred the question to Mr. Florida. Mr. Florida explained that the selection of 2010 as a baseline year was based on common practice in emissions analysis. He mentioned that 2005 is another commonly used baseline year, particularly due to its alignment with national agreements such as the UN agreement. However, PCFO recommends using 2010 as a baseline year across all the communities they work with.

Councilmember McGregor then asked about the process for determining the emissions levels for the 2010 baseline. Mr. Florida responded that the data estimates are primarily obtained from utilities and national databases. He mentioned their senior energy policy adviser's role in conducting data analysis, which includes looking at factors like car registrations to estimate emissions levels. Florida acknowledged that the process involves a degree of estimation but noted that their estimates have shown a high degree of accuracy in previous years. He emphasized the importance of using estimates when precise data is not readily available, though there's always a chance of some level of inaccuracy.

Councilmember McGregor shared her experience of tracking kilowatt hours for her home since 2001, excluding prices due to their fluctuation. She noted that despite changes in occupancy and upgrades to appliances such as a new water heater, furnace, and LED lighting, her household's kilowatt usage has decreased by half over time. McGregor found it intriguing to observe the impact of purchasing energy-efficient products on reducing kilowatt usage over the years. She described her tracking method as "geeky," with data color-coded to highlight highs and lows of usage across different years and months. Overall, McGregor found it satisfying to witness the positive impact of these changes on her household's energy consumption.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 3/18/2024.

D. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

[ORD-0019-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO STATE INFRASTRUCTURE BANK LOAN AND PROMISSORY NOTE AGREEMENTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,000,000 WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO SUPPORT THE

CRESCENT BOULEVARD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Director of Economic Development Shannon Hamons presented the first item, which concerned authorizing the mayor to enter into loan and promissory note agreements with ODOT or the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) for infrastructure improvements. He explained that this step was the final one in a series of approvals by Council regarding this topic. The previous approvals outlined the payment method for \$4.4 million in improvements for the 41 acres known as the Crescent. According to the agreement, the developer would make upfront payments for these improvements, and the city would seek a \$2 million SIB loan to support the work. This loan, along with the remaining infrastructure costs, would be reimbursed to the developer from the non-school tax increment financing system. Hamons stated that entering into agreements with ODOT was the final step in the process.

Vice President Weaver acknowledged that there had been several presentations and discussions on this topic since last year. He expressed satisfaction to see the progress being made on this matter.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 3/18/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 4/1/2024.

[ORD-0020-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA INCENTIVE AGREEMENT WITH BURNS AND SCALO OHIO LLC TO FACILITATE RELOCATION OF ITS CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS TO A NEW FACILITY ON TECH CENTER DRIVE, PART OF COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA #3

Director Hamons presented the second item, which involved authorizing the mayor to enter into a Community Reinvestment Agreement (CRA) with Burns and Scalo Ohio Incorporated to facilitate the relocation of their Ohio corporate headquarters to Gahanna in CRA number three. He expressed his delight in announcing that the company had chosen Gahanna over Delaware for their relocation. The company planned to build an approximately 34,500 square foot building, with 10,000 square feet dedicated to office space. Burns and Scalo, founded in 1956 in the Pittsburgh area, specializes in commercial and industrial roofing, commercial siding, and solar energy solutions. Hamons detailed that if a 12-year 80% abatement on the improvements was approved, the company would purchase 8.4 acres to construct its building. The relocation was expected to bring 34 employees to the city immediately, with a payroll of \$2.28 million, generating approximately \$56,000 annually in income tax. The company anticipated growing to 52 employees within the first six years, which would increase annual income tax revenue to approximately \$85,000. Hamons then provided a slide presentation to demonstrate the financial implications of the project. He highlighted that even with the incentive, the project would result in significant increases in land taxes for the school district and new building taxes for the city. Over the 12-year period, the school district would receive approximately \$813,000, while the city would generate almost \$490,000 in revenue. He invited questions from the council and mentioned the presence of John Scalo Jr, Senior Vice President of the company, and Brian Exline, Vice President and General Manager of Burns and Scalo Ohio, who were available to provide information on hiring practices

and employee benefits. Hamons concluded by expressing his readiness to address any inquiries from the council.

Councilmember McGregor sought clarification on the term "new building taxes" mentioned in Director Hamons' presentation. McGregor asked if it referred to an increase in property taxes due to the presence of a new building. Director Hamons explained that the increase in land taxes was not abated, so the abatement applied only to the building taxes, which were newly generated due to the construction of the building. He clarified that the school district would receive over \$250,000 in new revenue from these building taxes, in addition to the shared income tax. Hamons confirmed that McGregor's understanding was correct, stating that the increase in property tax was indeed due to the presence of the new building. McGregor expressed gratitude for the clarification, mentioning that the term had initially seemed a bit unusual to her.

Director Hamons acknowledged the complexity of property taxes, despite efforts to simplify explanations. Vice President Weaver concurred, noting the intricacies of property tax matters in both his professional and Council roles.

Councilmember Jones inquired about the location in CRA number three, the same as the Grote project that previously came before Council. Director Hamons confirmed that the discussed project was indeed in Community Reinvestment Area number three, the same as the one related to the Grote project. He mentioned that there were only a few remaining parcels in that area, emphasizing the importance of maximizing returns on such projects. He highlighted the likelihood of future projects involving reinvestment by existing companies to create jobs or enhance infrastructure due to limited available land. Mayor Jadwin added that encouraging companies to utilize vacant spaces for their operations, such as Romanoff's move into a vacant space with subsequent renovations, could be another avenue for development. Director Hamons provided further examples, including a recent project involving a new 291,000 square foot building on Deffenbaugh Court, illustrating the ongoing pursuit of similar opportunities.

President Bowers expressed excitement about potential job creation in Gahanna and thanked Burns and Scalo for considering the city, highlighting the strong workforce and quality of life in the area. However, she expressed concerns about the impact of the CRA on the school district's tax revenue. Director Hamons clarified that the abated portion of the tax revenue for the school district over the 12-year period would be just over \$1 million. He emphasized that even with the abatement, the district would receive approximately \$813,000 during that period, compared to the \$16,000 it would receive annually without the company's investment. He also noted that the company's tax obligations would return to normal after the abatement period.

President Bowers inquired about the inclusion of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) in the project. Director Hamons confirmed that the area was subject to a TIF, but only for non-school-related purposes. Regarding the ask on whether there was discussion on incentive reduction, Director Hamons explained that after negotiations, the company felt that the incentives were necessary to

facilitate their multi-million-dollar investment and relocation. He mentioned that the company valued the factors that President Bowers had highlighted as reasons for moving to Gahanna.

Vice President Weaver inquired about necessary infrastructure improvements related to the development and whether any of these would fall outside the responsibility of the company.

Director Hamons responded that most of the necessary infrastructure improvements would be on the company's site along Tech Center Drive, and they would be responsible for implementing these improvements.

President Bowers asked Director Hamons to address the employee benefits and compensation package offered by the company, inviting Mr. Scalo to provide further details. Mr. Scalo expressed his excitement about the possibility of moving the company to Gahanna and highlighted the positive reputation of the city. He mentioned Brian Exline, the General Manager and Vice President of their Ohio office, who grew up in Gahanna, as a testament to the community's qualities.

President Bowers inquired about the company's employee compensation, benefits, training, and diversity initiatives. Mr. Scalo and Mr. Exline provided details on the company's efforts in these areas:

- 1) Training and Development: Burns and Scalo prioritizes learning and development culture, reinvesting in their team members through various training programs and initiatives to improve their workforce continually.
- 2) Wages and Benefits: The average salary for their 34 full-time employees is approximately \$65,000. They offer full health insurance, dental coverage, and a 401(k)-retirement plan with a company match of half a percent up to 6%.
- 3) Additional Benefits: They provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which has been beneficial for their employees. Additionally, they offer diversity and inclusion programs, actively seeking candidates from diverse backgrounds to promote inclusivity in their workforce, especially in traditionally male-dominated industries like construction.

President Bowers further inquired about the company's health insurance premium contributions, to which the company representatives pledged to provide more detailed information. Mr. Scalo indicated there were four or five different levels based on family and individual plans.

Councilmember Renner pointed out a potential typo in the chart presented by Director Hamons. The years six and seven were labeled as "2030," while year eight was labeled as "2031." Director Hamons acknowledged the error, confirming it as a typo.

Councilmember Renner expressed curiosity about the substantial increase in staff projected for year eight to year nine, doubling from 52 to 120 employees. Mr. Scalo explained that the growth is anticipated due to the increasing

construction projects in the Central Ohio area. Director Hamons clarified that they kept the employment projections steady at 52 for financial estimations but acknowledged the hope for significant growth. Councilmember Renner expressed appreciation for the potential growth and its benefits for everyone involved.

Vice President Weaver sought clarification on the reporting process to the Tax Incentive Review Council (TIRC) and the commitment to employee benchmarks. Director Hamons explained that they would report the first six to seven years of employment numbers to the TIRC, and once the company reaches the minimum commitment of 52 employees, any additional growth would be considered excess to the agreement. He emphasized the importance of conservative estimations and natural growth over overstating projections.

President Bowers sought clarification on the discrepancy between the projected doubling of staff within one year and the payroll numbers provided by Director Hamons, which only reflect the commitment to maintain 52 employees. Director Hamons confirmed that the payroll numbers presented in the report are based on the commitment to 52 employees, with a conservative 3% annual increase in salary. He emphasized the importance of avoiding overpromising and ensuring that the numbers provided are accurate.

Councilmember Padova sought clarification regarding the employment figures outlined in the proposal, specifically focusing on years 9 through 12, where it was noted as having 120 jobs, but the actual figures seemed to remain at 52. Director Hamons confirmed Padova's understanding, explaining that despite the hope for growth, they were maintaining a conservative approach, projecting a 3% annual increase in payroll based on the current 52 employees. Mayor Jadwin inquired if this was essentially establishing a baseline, which Director Hamons affirmed, noting it as a requirement for tax incentive review. Vice President Weaver expressed understanding of the difficulty in projecting employee numbers beyond a few years and raised concerns about the discrepancy between the stated 120 jobs and the calculations based on 52. Director Hamons reassured Weaver that they were incentivizing the current 52 jobs with an annual 3% increase and emphasized that the Tax Incentive Review Council (TIRC) typically favored commitments to more jobs rather than less.

Councilmember Renner raised a question to Director Hamons regarding the status of the chart in relation to the agreement. Hamons explained that once the agreement was finalized, it would dictate the commitments and timelines, and these agreements were referred to by the TIRC. Mayor Jadwin clarified that the Excel spreadsheet was not part of the formal agreement but served as a reference for the project's value. Councilmember Renner acknowledged this clarification and referred to section two of the CRA, highlighting a provision specifying a requirement for 42 permanent job growth by 2028. Director Hamons confirmed this understanding, noting the significance of the three-year projection as preferred by the state of Ohio and the TIRC. He emphasized that while projections beyond three years were less reliable, the minimum commitment would be enforced consistently.

President Bowers expressed concern about the implications of maintaining a job threshold of 42, noting that it could significantly impact the generated payroll tax. Director Hamons acknowledged the draft nature of the agreement and suggested the possibility of adjusting the threshold to 52 jobs, albeit over a longer timeframe. President Bowers reiterated the concern, emphasizing that the current calculations based on 52 jobs seemed insufficient, especially when compared to the potential for 120 jobs. Director Hamons clarified that the agreement stipulated reaching 42 jobs within 36 months, but adjustments could be made to the timeframe or the job count. President Bowers raised doubts about the feasibility of the current agreement, particularly if the job count remained at 42. Director Hamons reiterated the standard three-year projection required by the TIRC and assured that the company would be held accountable not to fall below the agreed-upon job count. Director Hamons proposed discussing potential adjustments with the company, such as increasing the job threshold to 52, although this might not align with the TIRC's focus on the initial three-year period. President Bowers expressed a need for further discussion with the director offline regarding the current situation.

Councilmember Padova requested a simplified chart illustrating the job responsibilities, particularly focusing on maintaining 42 jobs from year 4 through year 12. Director Hamons agreed to provide such a chart.

Vice President Weaver sought clarification on the process regarding the agreement's 36-month term for reaching 42 jobs and its implications for the subsequent 12-year abatement period. Director Hamons explained that while the TIRC would assess the company's compliance with the minimum job threshold, they would also consider any positive growth beyond that point. Weaver sought clarification on how the TIRC would respond if a company failed to meet its original projections but still met the minimum job requirement. Director Hamons confirmed that the TIRC had the flexibility to make recommendations based on the company's performance relative to its projections. Weaver expressed gratitude for the clarification, and Director Hamons assured that the necessary numbers would be provided.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 3/18/2024; Further Discussion scheduled in Committee of the Whole 3/25/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 4/1/2024.

E. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:

[ORD-0021-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS; WAIVING SECOND READING - Workers Compensation Fund

Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services, addressed the council, presenting a request for a supplemental appropriation to the workers' compensation fund. The request amounted to \$17,730 from the unencumbered and unappropriated workers' compensation fund balance, allocated to workers' comp contract services. Vollmer explained that the request was to cover excess compensation insurance for workers' comp,

which was a requirement for their self-funded plan. She elaborated on how the excess comp insurance worked, stating that the budget was based on predicted payroll with their vendor. However, due to a convoluted calculation method used by the insurance provider, there was a shortfall of \$12,732 for the 2024 policy year, attributed to an increase in 2023 payroll. Additionally, Vollmer disclosed that at the end of each year, they were required to submit their annual payroll contributions based on the provider's calculation. For 2023, this resulted in a shortfall of about \$5,000, which needed to be paid to the company for last year's insurance. Therefore, the request for the supplemental appropriation was to cover these outstanding amounts. Vollmer requested a waiver of the second reading to expedite the payment of the owed \$5,000 for the 2023 insurance.

Vice President Weaver sought clarification on the process of adjusting insurance billing if additional staffing were approved mid-year. Senior Director Vollmer affirmed the complexity of the process, noting differences between police and non-police policies.

Councilmember Jones expressed gratitude for the explanation, seeking further clarity on the estimation process. Vollmer confirmed that they projected payroll using the provider's formula, adjusting for current staff, and applying a percentage increase. She explained that for the 2024 budget, they projected an 11% increase but experienced a 13% increase in reality, attributing the discrepancy to mathematical calculations rather than additional staff. Councilmember Jones inquired about the frequency of such shortages, to which Vollmer responded that they were infrequent and clarified that the funds involved were from the Workers' Comp Fund, not the General Fund. She elaborated on the funding mechanism, explaining that money was deducted from employees' paychecks to fund the workers' comp program, with an annual fee owed to workers' comp. She likened the Workers' Comp Fund to a reserve fund within the General Fund.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver and Adoption on Regular Agenda on 3/18/2024.

F. ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL OFFICE:

[MT-0007-2024](#)

A MOTION TO AMEND VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA (EXHIBIT A)

Clerk VanMeter presented on a motion regarding amendments to the council's rules of procedure, aiming to align them with the Charter requirements and current practices. He highlighted the need for cleanup, including language changes, punctuation adjustments, reordering, and relocating certain sections. Addressing specific sections, VanMeter discussed 5.10 and 5.20, noting a discrepancy regarding the timing of the organizational meeting. Vice President Weaver acknowledged the annual challenge of scheduling the meeting around Ohio State University's football games.

Councilmember McGregor humorously remarked on previous considerations

with respect to the Buckeyes' Bowl game schedule when setting the meeting time. Vice President Weaver emphasized the need for flexibility in the rules to accommodate such events. VanMeter proposed eliminating the second sentence of 5.10 and allowing the Council to set the meeting time in December. Vice President Weaver agreed to strike the second sentence, resolving the issue.

Clerk VanMeter also expressed gratitude to Councilmembers McGregor, Padova, and Jones for their input during a feedback session on Council rules.

VanMeter explained the need to amend Section 5.35 to allow the Council President to set committee meeting dates as needed, enabling the cancellation of Committees of the Whole on certain weeks and the possibility of holding them on alternate weeks if necessary.

Additionally, VanMeter proposed adding a presentation section to the agenda template to accommodate presentations from external organizations, proclamations from the mayor, and guest speakers invited by Council. He emphasized the importance of aligning the rules with currently accepted practices.

Clerk VanMeter provided a brief overview of the legislative process, likening it to Schoolhouse Rock's "How a Bill Becomes a Law." He emphasized the importance of understanding the procedural shift in how legislation reaches the council. VanMeter explained that items from various sources, such as the administration or fellow council members, are discussed in Committee of the Whole meetings before being recommended to the full council for a formal first reading. He noted that this process sometimes involves items returning to committee between readings. He highlighted the need for cleanup in the council's rules to align with current practices, referencing past committee structures and the evolution of the legislative process. VanMeter referred to the Charter's requirements for legislative action, emphasizing that all resolutions or ordinances must be introduced in written or printed form, containing only one clearly expressed subject in the title. Clerk VanMeter delved into the various forms of legislation handled by the council, beginning with ordinances, which he described as substantive and permanent enactments encompassing contracts, agreements, leases, annexation agreements, and other similar documents. He then moved on to resolutions, noting that they could be honorary or prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code. Additionally, VanMeter explained the concept of motions, which relate to procedural matters considered by the council. He mentioned past classifications such as "motion resolutions" and "statutory resolutions" but highlighted the lack of definition for these terms in the Charter. Therefore, he proposed striking the language referring to these classifications from the rules, as they were no longer in practice. He clarified that resolutions would follow the standard process of one reading, without the need for a separate classification as "statutory resolutions," in which current rules required two unless waived. VanMeter again emphasized the importance of ensuring that the council's rules also aligned with the Charter's provisions.

Clerk VanMeter raised a question regarding the definition of "read" in the

context of Council procedures, noting that ordinances are typically read aloud by title as required by the Charter. He explained a proposed change to the rules that would reintroduce a two-vote process for items with waivers of the second reading, providing clarity and rationale for members' votes.

President Bowers posed a hypothetical scenario regarding placing a motion for waiver and adoption of an ordinance on the consent agenda simultaneously. VanMeter and the City Attorney discussed the implications, clarifying that while the waiver could be listed on the consent agenda, the ordinance would still need to be read by title twice unless waived. After further discussion, it was concluded that splitting the process in this manner would be unnecessary and potentially confusing. President Bowers acknowledged the point and expressed satisfaction with the clarification.

The City Attorney also mentioned having a point to address about the first slide at a later time, to which VanMeter agreed to revisit at the end of the discussion.

Clerk VanMeter addressed proposed changes to public hearings, aiming to streamline the process and make it more inclusive. He suggested adopting a format similar to the Planning Commission's rules, allowing individuals three minutes to provide general comments on the topic at hand.

The City Attorney later raised a point regarding the organizational meeting, clarifying that according to the Charter, the rules must prescribe a time for the January 2nd meeting. VanMeter proposed adjusting the proposed amendment accordingly, incorporating suggestions from Councilmember McGregor and the City Attorney.

President Bowers expressed gratitude to the members and Clerk VanMeter for their work on the amendments, acknowledging the importance of advancing this effort. Councilmember McGregor also thanked VanMeter for his organization and guidance throughout the process. VanMeter mentioned creating a flowchart detailing the legislative process, intending to incorporate it into onboarding and training for new members.

Vice President Weaver suggested adding the flowchart to the Council's website, with VanMeter confirming its feasibility. Councilmember Padova noted the need for the President's approval for website updates. Vice President Weaver concluded by expressing appreciation to the involved members and Clerk VanMeter for their dedication.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda 3/18/2024.

G. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:41 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
day of 2024.*

Trenton I. Weaver
Chair

DRAFT