



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Committee of the Whole

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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, May 13, 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 7:01 p.m. The agenda was published on May 10, 2024. All members were present for the meeting.

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Vice President Weaver announced that under "Items from Council Office," two additional resolution items would be added. One resolution is to recognize and honor small businesses, and the other is for CPR & AED awareness.

C. DISCUSSIONS:

1. Community Choice Aggregation

[2024-0094](#)

Power a Clean Future Ohio (PCFO) Recommendations for Implementing Community Choice Aggregation

Senior Deputy Director of Administrative Services Corey Wybensing provided an update on the city's involvement with Power a Clean Future Ohio (PCFO). He noted that a resolution was approved on March 18th, authorizing the city to participate in PCFO, and Joe Flarida from PCFO was present at the meeting to answer any questions. The resolution committed the city to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% of 2010 levels by 2030 and to develop a roadmap to proactively seek community input for a plan that includes 100% renewable energy choice aggregation options for residents. Wybensing reported that since the resolution's passage, PCFO has been working on recommendations for implementing Community Choice Aggregation, which is part of the record and soon to be released in a Community Choice Aggregation toolkit. He mentioned that the city has met with the PCFO team to discuss these recommendations and potential next steps. Currently, PCFO is working on data analysis of the 2010 and current

greenhouse gas levels to create a baseline to measure the success of the city's commitment. He further explained that the city has begun the process of assessing potential providers and will start working on a Request for Information (RFI), similar to the process recently undertaken by the City of Upper Arlington. The creation of the RFI is expected to be completed within the next three weeks and will then be provided to PCFO for review and recommended adjustments before issuing it to prospective respondents. Wybensinger anticipated a three-week turnaround for the respondents to ensure comprehensive responses and noted that there may be a need for a question-and-answer period or ongoing interviews depending on the responses received. Once an aggregator is selected, all terms and conditions will require an administrative and legal review prior to authorization. During this period, the City should also gain a better understanding of the community engagement notification, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio recertification process timeline, and the anticipated demands on internal staff. He estimated that it would take about four to six weeks to finalize these items, with an overall goal of a 10 to 12-week window to have a successfully implemented aggregation program.

Councilmember Renner expressed gratitude to Joe Florida for completing the report and to the administration for reviewing it. He stated his opposition to the projected 10 to 12-week timeline for the endeavor, suggesting that it could be accomplished in a shorter time frame and indicated readiness to discuss this further whenever the chair wished.

Vice President Weaver thanked Councilmember Renner and suggested going around to see if there were any additional questions before proceeding.

Councilmember McGregor inquired about the proposal for ensuring the energy aggregation would provide 100% renewable options.

Deputy Director Wybensinger responded, clarifying that like Upper Arlington, having 100% renewable energy was an option, but not the only one. He emphasized the importance of understanding the available options through the Request for Information (RFI) process.

Councilmember McGregor stated her preference against a 100% renewable option, expressing favor for a mix.

Senior Director of Operations Kevin Schultz addressed the need for Council feedback on the goals and objectives of the aggregation program, particularly regarding 100% renewable options and cost savings. He highlighted the potential conflict between achieving 100% renewable energy and cost savings, underscoring the importance of receiving Council feedback swiftly to shape the RFI accordingly.

Councilmember McGregor reiterated her stance, confirming she would not favor a plan that was 100% renewable.

President Bowers emphasized the importance of community education in implementing Community Choice Aggregation, as recommended by PCFO.

She highlighted that an effective policy to achieve emission reduction goals, as outlined in the PCFO report, involved moving to 100% renewable energy programs while also saving money for residents. President Bowers noted that aggregation, available to Ohio municipalities since 1999 and adopted by voters in Gahanna in the early 2000s, was not a new concept, but had not been utilized in recent years due to past issues. However, she mentioned that these problems are now surmountable, and current retail electricity costs could allow significant savings for homeowners while achieving sustainability goals. She also pointed out the broader financial implications of not reducing emissions, such as increased insurance premiums due to climate change effects. President Bowers expressed strong support for advancing a modern aggregation program that ensures cost savings and meets emission reduction targets, showing enthusiasm for exploring these options with community support.

Councilmember McGregor inquired about the types of insurance increases being discussed. President Bowers explained that insurance premiums are rising largely due to more catastrophic events, which impact all types of insurance due to reinsurance processes affecting large entities worldwide, including Property and Casualty and liability insurances. She emphasized that the costs are already being borne by residents through increased premiums as a result of heightened emissions and severe weather impacts. President Bowers stressed the necessity of reducing carbon emissions to mitigate these costs and lessen the environmental damage, thereby preventing further financial impacts on residents.

Councilmember Schnetzer expressed concerns about the future implications of energy choice aggregation, given the variability in base rates offered by utility providers such as AEP. He highlighted that while aggregation might currently offer savings compared to the recent increase in AEP's base rates, there could be situations where the base rate falls below the aggregation rate, potentially making it a more costly option for residents. He emphasized the importance of not locking residents into a higher cost.

Deputy Director Wybensinger responded, explaining that the outcome would depend on the type of agreement—fixed or variable—that is chosen through the Request for Information (RFI) process. He mentioned that renegotiations, similar to those done by NOPEC, could potentially adjust rates to ensure competitiveness.

Councilmember Schnetzer further elaborated on his perspective, stating that his primary concern is saving residents money. He voiced his preference for options that would continue to offer savings and cautioned against any agreements that might result in higher costs for residents, indicating that such decisions would be challenging for the Council to support.

Councilmember Renner expressed strong support for implementing 100% renewable energy through Community Choice Aggregation, emphasizing that it offers a choice for residents to opt-in or opt-out at their convenience. He argued that while some may perceive renewable energy as more expensive compared to traditional sources like coal and natural gas, it ultimately would

be cheaper and thus a better alternative. Renner stressed the importance of moving swiftly with the Request for Information (RFI) process to avoid delays and meet the city's emissions targets, advocating for a Council of Governments type aggregator as the preferred model.

Senior Director Schultz responded, clarifying that the administration is not opposed to aggregation but emphasized the need for a thorough process. He explained that drafting and responding to the RFI, combined with the legislative schedule, would realistically take about 10-12 weeks. Schultz assured that the objective was to present a well-considered proposal to the Council, enabling informed decision-making and ensuring the aggregation program's success.

Councilmember Renner clarified his earlier statements, apologizing for any implication that Director Schultz or the administration was opposed to power aggregation. He asserted that the proposed 10-week timeline was excessive. Renner highlighted that the city has contracted an organization capable of assisting with the RFI process, publishing it, and vetting the responses efficiently.

Director Schultz responded by explaining that the administration had recently discussed the process with Mr. Florida and his team, considering input from other municipalities like Upper Arlington. Schultz mentioned that NOPEC and SOPEC suggested revising some questions to ensure accurate responses. He acknowledged the possibility of adjusting the schedule to meet a more aggressive timeline and proposed revisiting the timeline for further discussion.

President Bowers expressed appreciation to Director Schultz for his efforts. She highlighted the importance of moving forward with the Community Choice Aggregation program sooner rather than later. She clarified that only two aggregators fit within the recommended proposal to use a Council of Government, which are NOPEC and SOPEC. She noted that SOPEC had presented to the Council on October 23rd of the previous year, and NOPEC had presented on September 5th of the same year. This familiarity indicated that both organizations were aware of the community's consideration of a Community Choice Aggregation program for several months. President Bowers acknowledged the time constraints and staffing challenges but emphasized the shared concern of reducing homeowners' burdens through lower electric bills while achieving an important community goal. She suggested that, given the existing model from Upper Arlington-which, though needing some tweaks, appeared to be a great template-and the awareness among potential aggregators, it might be possible to advance the schedule for implementing the program.

Mayor Jadwin clarified that the timeline identified by Mr. Wybensinger was based on conversations with PCFO. She outlined the steps that still needed to be taken by both PCFO and the city, considering the legislative calendar and the need for Council input into the RFI. Mayor Jadwin noted that if Council of Governments involvement had been previously discussed, she did not recall it. She emphasized the importance of such input for crafting an appropriate RFI and ensuring best practices, community engagement, and a

fully vetted presentation to the Council for an informed decision. She assured that the timeline was not padded but structured to incorporate all necessary steps and that efforts would be made to work as quickly as possible.

President Bowers expressed appreciation for Mayor Jadwin's clarification and acknowledged the administration's diligent work. She reiterated the Council's desire to be involved in these conversations, particularly Councilmember Renner, given his passion and expertise in this area. President Bowers brought attention to the need for community engagement, stating that it should work in parallel with the RFI process, not solely as a part of it. She emphasized the Council's willingness to collaborate with PCFO, other partners, and city staff on community engagement and education. She noted that since the community had already voted for aggregation, there was no need for another electorate process, which both provided a benefit and a challenge. The lack of a campaign opportunity necessitated alternative ways to educate and engage the community. President Bowers highlighted the availability of staff support from the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) to assist in community education efforts. She reiterated the importance of this initiative to the Council and the administration.

Vice President Weaver expressed his gratitude to Director Wybensing for his dedication and efforts on the project, acknowledging that it might not have been his initial assignment in his new role. He raised a question regarding the necessity of an RFI and whether it was legally required. Vice President Weaver noted that he supported gathering as much information as needed but questioned if a competitive bidding process was required. He asked if the previous presentations by potential Council of Governments satisfied any legal requirements.

City Attorney Tamilarasan clarified that the process of selecting an aggregator was not subject to the same competitive bidding process as selecting a vendor for city-paid services, which would require an RFP (Request for Proposal) or RFQ (Request for Qualifications) based on the cost incurred. She explained that since there was no cost incurred by the city in this scenario, an RFI was merely a mechanism for gathering information. She confirmed that there was no legal requirement for an RFI in this context.

Vice President Weaver expressed gratitude to the City Attorney for clarifying the constraints on the Request for Information process. He wanted to assure fairness to the respondents while addressing any timeline concerns.

Deputy Director Wybensing elaborated on the RFI process, emphasizing a streamlined approach tailored to Gahanna's needs. Director Schultz highlighted the importance of understanding the mechanics and operational aspects of the program offered by the Council of Governments with NOPEC SOPEC to assess its impact on staffing and resources.

Vice President Weaver acknowledged Councilmember Renner's support for transitioning to 100% renewable energy, expressed his own support, and his willingness to collaborate with organizations like Power a Clean Future Ohio for proactive communication with residents. He emphasized the need for a

strong opt-out provision and supported the Council of Government's path for aggregation. Weaver also suggested exploring eligible community sectors for the program and the possibility of incorporating mechanisms to fund additional green energy benefits in the RFI process. However, he emphasized the importance of not delaying the aggregation process due to additional inquiries, as the primary goal is to provide cost savings to residents while transitioning to renewable energy.

Councilmember Padova expressed appreciation for the progress made so far and voiced support for transitioning to 100% renewable energy. She concurred with Vice President Weaver's remarks, emphasizing that renewable energy and cost savings for residents are not mutually exclusive. Padova advocated for expediting the timeline for implementation, considering the urgency highlighted during previous presentations.

Councilmember McGregor sought clarification on the Council of Government option. Vice President Weaver explained that this route involves partnering with entities like SOPEC or NOPEC, leveraging their expertise and existing infrastructure for aggregation. McGregor also inquired about the payment process, to which Councilmember Renner explained that the Council of Government is compensated through brokering deals with energy suppliers.

Councilmember Renner supported the Council of Government option, citing its familiarity, transparency, and expertise in utility operations. He emphasized the benefits of joining a government system with open and transparent processes, highlighting the role of energy brokers like AEP Energy in facilitating agreements. Renner encouraged endorsement of this approach for aggregation.

Councilmember Padova highlighted that both NOPEC and SOPEC offer programs that can assist the city with funding green initiatives. She emphasized the potential benefits of partnering with these organizations to support such initiatives without incurring additional costs.

Vice President Weaver underscored the advantage of collaborating with entities like NOPEC and SOPEC, emphasizing their ability to negotiate and broker deals effectively due to their representation of multiple governments.

Councilmember Renner reiterated the importance of providing residents with options, explaining that they could choose to participate in the aggregation or opt out of funding, emphasizing the principle of choice.

President Bowers inquired about the need for further feedback on the questions regarding the Request for Information (RFI) outlined in the PCFO report. She sought clarification on whether additional input was necessary or if the current approach was sufficient.

Director Schultz suggested revisiting the questions in the RFI and assured the council that they would review them internally. He proposed seeking further information if needed, indicating that they would reach out to Councilmember Renner for clarification if necessary. President Bowers

expressed satisfaction with this approach, and Director Schultz affirmed their commitment to promptly addressing any outstanding issues.

D. ITEMS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

[ORD-0033-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT THE FINAL PLAT FOR CRESCENT WOODS CONSISTING OF 40.807 +/- ACRES LOCATED ON HAMILTON ROAD; PARCELS 025-017173, 025-014172, AND 025-013767; CURRENT ZONING MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (L-MFRD) AND SELECT COMMERCIAL PLANNED DISTRICT (SCPD); GRIFFIN CALDWELL, APPLICANT, FOR CP CRESCENT LLC; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Clerk VanMeter informed the council that the Planning Commission had recommended adopting the final plat. He mentioned that the applicant was present and available to address any specific questions from the Council. Additionally, he noted a letter in the file attachments that was from the applicant's legal counsel outlining the reasons for requesting a waiver and emergency declaration for this item.

Director Schultz conveyed apologies on behalf of Mr. Blackford, who was absent due to illness. He indicated that he had been asked to step in to address any queries from the Council.

Vice President Weaver requested a summary of the request for waiver and emergency from the applicant.

Griffin Caldwell, representing Casto, greeted the Council and explained that the letter provided detailed the request effectively. He provided a brief overview, highlighting that delays had impacted the progress of the roadway, crucial for Ortho One's building to meet its October deadline. Therefore, the request for an emergency declaration and waiver of the second reading was made to ensure timely completion of the project.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver of Second Reading and Emergency Adoption on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024.

E. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION:

[ORD-0038-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AMENDED AGREEMENT WITH AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT, INC. FOR DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE BIG WALNUT TRAIL SECTION 8

Director Ferrell provided an update on the progress of the Big Walnut Trail, particularly focusing on the last mile through the regional section in Gahanna. She explained that the complex design had taken considerable time due to coordination with the I-270 bridge construction. She expressed the administration's desire to study an alignment that would either improve or eliminate a crossing of the southernmost slip ramp from I-270 southbound. To facilitate this, the administration requested an ordinance authorizing the

Mayor to amend an existing agreement with American Structurepoint. The funding for this endeavor was already appropriated.

Councilmember McGregor expressed difficulty in understanding the proposed trail alignment and requested a clearer map of the area to visualize the trail's path.

Director Ferrell acknowledged McGregor's concerns and explained that the current alignment involves traveling along parkland underneath the northernmost slip ramp, across the bridge of I-270, and then studying options for the southern slip ramp crossing. She outlined the administration's intention to improve the line of sight and explore alternative crossings towards the northern portion, away from Tech Center. Additionally, she assured McGregor that a more digestible map would be presented to aid in understanding the proposed alignments.

Vice President Weaver expressed difficulty in envisioning the proposed trail alignment and suggested that the vendor provide images to aid in understanding. He noted that visual aids would be helpful for clarity.

Director Ferrell confirmed that they have a map of the current alignment, which includes Swanson Road. She explained that Swanson is a roadway located in the City of Columbus, close to the airport area. The proposed trail would tunnel underneath the northbound slip ramp of I-270. They aim to assess whether crossing over Hamilton before reaching the southbound slip ramp would be safer. Feedback indicated that an at-grade crossing at the southern slip ramp might not be ideal for all users, especially those with limited cycling experience. Therefore, they want to explore safer options to accommodate a wider range of users.

Councilmember McGregor inquired about utilizing city property along the fence at I-270 or Rocky Fork for the trail.

Director Ferrell clarified that the trail would indeed utilize city-owned property along Rocky Fork, extending into North Hamilton before reaching Pizzurro Park, where it transitions to the City of Columbus jurisdiction.

President Bowers expressed gratitude for the efforts to explore safer options for cyclists and pedestrians in the proposed trail project. She thanked the team for considering alternatives that prioritize safety, especially for users like herself who may not be confident cyclists. President Bowers shared her excitement about the prospect of connecting her neighborhood to the Big Walnut Trail and anticipated the positive impact of this development.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 6/3/2024.

F. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY:

[ORD-0036-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A FIVE-YEAR CONTRACT WITH CENTRAL SQUARE TECHNOLOGIES

LLC FOR A MULTI-AGENCY LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPUTER-AIDED DISPATCH AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM SOLUTION TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE DIVISION OF POLICE; AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATION AMENDMENTS TO ARPA FUND (2330) AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (3250); AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Chief Spence began by thanking everyone and introduced a brief PowerPoint presentation to explain the project. He highlighted that the project, fully funded by Council in both the 2023 and 2024 budget cycles, involved replacing the agency's computer-aided dispatch and records management software. This suite of software encompassed various functions crucial to the agency's operations, including property room management, field reporting modules, and systems used by officers on their mobile data terminals. Chief Spence emphasized that the current software, utilized since the early 2000s, had reached the end of its life and was no longer supported by the vendor due to outdated architecture. He mentioned that the request for proposal (RFP) process began the previous year and concluded at the beginning of the current year. Additionally, Chief Spence mentioned collaboration with neighboring agencies such as Reynoldsburg, Whitehall, Bexley, and Grandview Heights in the project. He then handed it over to Rene Carter, the IT Manager, to present a PowerPoint on the decision-making process regarding the computer-aided dispatch and records management system.

IT Manager Carter provided background information on the need for a new system to replace the department's outdated computer-aided dispatch and records management system. She emphasized the system's scalability, allowing for collaboration with other jurisdictions and providing high value to citizens. Carter then outlined the timeline of events for the process, including creating the RFP, reviewing vendor responses, and conducting demos. She highlighted the evaluation criteria used to assess vendors and shared that Central Square emerged as the preferred solution based on their comprehensive response and competitive cost. Carter noted the elimination of Motorola and Tyler from consideration due to a less satisfactory demo. She mentioned the financial benefits of consortium partnership, reducing Gahanna's costs significantly (by approximately \$900,000). Carter concluded by stating that the contract stage was next and summarized the key points of the presentation.

Chief Spence noted that the project was funded by Council over two budget cycles using ARPA dollars. The request was to remove the majority of the project from the budget and transfer it to the Capital Improvement Plan, as Gahanna would serve as the host agency. He clarified that while Gahanna would support the equipment, it would be managed entirely by the vendor, Central Square. Spence explained the cost-sharing model developed with other agencies based on population size, agency staff, and the number of mobile data terminals. He highlighted the reduced costs and emphasized that the project aimed to provide a disaster recovery mechanism rather than dispatch services. The contract had been reviewed by the City Attorney and detailed the scope of services and security compliance measures. Spence concluded by stating that the project aimed to benefit residents across central

Ohio and acknowledged the challenges of coordinating multiple agencies to see this through.

Councilmember Schnetzer sought clarification on the project's cost reduction. Chief Spence confirmed that Gahanna's portion had been reduced by \$900,000, resulting in an out-of-pocket expense of \$200,000 instead of the initially projected \$1.1 million. Schnetzer commended the effort, stating "great work."

Councilmember Jones inquired about how Gahanna was designated as the host agency for the project and whether there were additional benefits or challenges associated with this role.

Chief Spence explained that Gahanna's role as the host agency stemmed from his leadership in the project dating back to 2005. He acknowledged that while leading the initiative may have its challenges, it also presented opportunities for cost savings and revenue generation. Being the host agency positioned Gahanna as the primary driver of the project and allowed for the billing of other participating agencies to offset IT costs. Additionally, it facilitated collaboration and streamlined compliance with security protocols and requirements from state and federal agencies, resulting in overall cost savings across all involved communities.

President Bowers expressed gratitude for the cost-saving measures proposed by Chief Spence and sought clarification regarding the classification of ARPA funds and any associated restrictions on their use.

Director of Finance Joann Bury explained that as a non-entitled unit of government receiving less than \$10 million, Gahanna could utilize ARPA funds for any government purpose without restrictions.

President Bowers acknowledged the response and confirmed that her questions had been addressed.

Chief Spence emphasized the urgency of approving the contract as an emergency to align with project timelines, especially considering the impending move of facilities to 825 Tech Center Drive and the project underway in Grandview Heights.

Vice President Weaver posed questions regarding the integration of the new system with existing ones and whether it included the County GIS component.

Chief Spence clarified that the new system would integrate various software services, including pre-arrival instructions and enhanced 911 services, but would not include the County GIS component. However, it would offer enhanced map-based functionalities.

Director Schultz elaborated on the integration with the county auditor's office system, highlighting the utilization of auditor's office information and imagery in the project.

Chief Spence underscored the advantage of accessing oblique imagery through the project, a feature not currently available, which would enhance the system's capabilities.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024;
Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 6/3/2024.**

[ORD-0037-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - State Law Enforcement Trust Fund (2250) for Contract Services and Capital Equipment

Chief Spence presented the second action item, a supplemental appropriation resulting from state court actions on two seizure cases handled by the Franklin County prosecutor's office. These cases, stemming from 2018 narcotics cases, led to civil asset forfeiture filed in 2023. Gahanna was awarded \$99,844 from these cases. The supplemental appropriations were requested to facilitate the purchase of equipment and contract services related to a portion of the CAD and RMS project, specifically focusing on connectivity between agencies. Chief Spence ensured that the expenditures outlined adhered to equitable sharing guidelines mandated by the Ohio Revised Code and federal equitable sharing guidelines.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024;
Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 6/3/2024.**

G. ITEMS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

[ORD-0040-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORD-0009-2023 SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED BY ORD-0023-2024 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AMENDED AGREEMENT WITH ELFORD, INC. FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK SERVICES RELATED TO THE RENOVATION AND EXPANSION OF 825 TECH CENTER DRIVE TO INCLUDE SERVICES IN CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT 2; WAIVING SECOND READING, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Senior Director Schultz began by updating the council on Construction Contract Number Two for 825 Tech Center Drive; see presentation attached. He noted that construction had commenced, with demolition work underway and foundation preparations in progress. Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Number Two, part of the overall project, was being discussed. The bidding process for GMP Number Two involved 25 different trades, such as plumbing, electrical, carpentry, flooring, and landscaping. There were a total of 82 bids received, with all trades except two having multiple bids. In terms of diversity, the Union contract percentage by count was 36% for GMP Number Two and 45% overall for both GMPs. DEI participation percentages were based on contract value, with parentheses indicating the number of contractors qualifying for DEI. Senior Director Schultz highlighted a significant challenge: the electrical trade's bid came in considerably over the estimated budget, impacting the overall project cost. Despite this, efforts were underway to manage costs through value management initiatives. Negotiations with vendors and adjustments to project scope were part of this strategy. He also

mentioned an additional project element: the replacement of all rear windows. The estimated cost for this was \$750,000, an unforeseen expense. Despite these challenges, Senior Director Schultz expressed confidence in managing project expenses through value management efforts. The administration requested a contract amendment to execute GMP Number Two, totaling \$59,627,855, to complete the construction portion of the project. They also requested a waiver of second reading and for an emergency declaration to expedite the process. Senior Director Schultz invited questions from the councilmembers.

Councilmember Jones inquired about the discrepancy between the reported 40% diverse contractors and the 12% mentioned. Senior Director Schultz clarified that the 40% figure was based on count, whereas the 12% was based on value, which was the correct metric.

Councilmember Jones sought further clarification on how DEI participation was defined. Senior Director Schultz explained that it encompassed women-owned (3), minority-owned (9), veteran-owned (1), and Gahanna-based businesses (2). He provided details on the number of participants in each category across both GMPs. Acknowledging the importance of diversity and union representation, Councilmember Jones expressed appreciation for the focus and commitment to these aspects of the project.

President Bowers inquired about the special construction item listed as "Scalo Solar." Senior Director Schultz explained that it referred to the solar canopy arrays that would be installed at both the police department and the administrative side covered parking. He clarified that Burns and Scalo were the providers of these solar arrays. Additionally, he mentioned that Elford was serving as the construction manager for this project.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver of Second Reading and Emergency Adoption on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024.

H. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:

[ORD-0039-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - Risk Insurance Fund (9010)

Senior Deputy Director Wybensing presented an ordinance for a supplemental appropriation regarding the Risk Insurance Fund. He reminded the council of the establishment of Fund 9010 in 2024 to streamline insurance claims tracking and the creation of the Risk and Safety Administrator position. The ordinance requested \$122,288.13 in revenue generated from insurance proceeds to be allocated to the claims and judgments fund. This allocation would centralize management of property damage, such as light poles and police vehicles, under the Risk Insurance Fund, enhancing oversight by the risk and safety team. The administration respectfully sought approval for this supplemental appropriation.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 6/3/2024.

I. ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL OFFICE:**[RES-0023-2024](#) A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING JUNE 1-7, 2024, AS NATIONAL CPR AND AED AWARENESS WEEK**

Vice President Weaver took a moment to express personal interest in the resolution for CPR & AED Awareness Week and thanked the clerk for bringing it to his attention. Given the possibility of not having another committee meeting that month, he wanted to ensure the resolution's highlight for potential inclusion on the agenda for the June 3 meeting. President Bowers noted the resolution largely mirrored the 2023 version. Vice President Weaver elaborated further that there would be updates to dates and potentially new annual statistics.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 6/3/2024.

[RES-0022-2024](#) A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND HONORING SMALL BUSINESSES IN GAHANNA

Councilmember Padova noted that May is Small Business Month. She shared that she had the honor of attending the Collective Market over the weekend. Reflecting on the resolution passed two years ago in support of small businesses in Gahanna, she expressed her desire to renew this initiative. She proposed inviting the owner of Collective Home Supply to a presentation. Padova highlighted that the owner not only runs a small business but also promotes and supports other small businesses within her shop and by hosting the market. The Collective Market had taken place last year and this year, and Padova mentioned that it was a very nice event. During the event, she had the opportunity to speak with one of the organizers, who mentioned that any small business from Gahanna participating in the market did not have to pay a booth fee. Padova praised the owner's efforts in supporting local small businesses in the city where she both lives and works.

Councilmember Renner apologized and asked for the name of the business.

Councilmember Padova clarified that the business is Collective Home Supply. She noted that it is located across from the Rockwood dry cleaners on Granville Street. She confirmed her intention to have the presentation on the upcoming Monday.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 5/20/2024.

[RES-0021-2024](#) A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING JUNE 2024 AS LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA

President Bowers expressed gratitude for the fourth year of recognizing LGBTQ Pride Month in the City of Gahanna. She acknowledged the ongoing tradition and the Mayor's support through proclamation. Bowers highlighted the importance of recognizing the LGBTQ community and shared her experience from a recent webinar hosted by Ohio Women in Government on health policy. During the webinar, statistics were presented showing the health disparities and higher risks faced by LGBTQ students. However,

Bowers emphasized the importance of also showcasing the success and happiness of LGBTQ adults. She mentioned that Gahanna is home to many such individuals, including Dion Manley, a school board member who serves as a strong representation to students and young people of how LGBTQ adults can thrive, be successful, and make significant contributions to their community. With this in mind, President Bowers proposed another resolution to recognize LGBTQ Pride Month in Gahanna, focusing on celebrating thriving and successful LGBTQ adults in the community, including school board member Dion Manley.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 6/3/2024.

[2024-0093](#)

Ohio Division of Liquor Control Notice to Legislative Authority Permit TRFO 0764973 FROM RBD RESTAURANTS LLC TO BLUE A 2023 LLC 1ST FL & PATIO, 64 GRANVILLE ST

Clerk VanMeter reported receiving a notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control regarding a permit for RBD Restaurants LLC to Blue Agave or Blue A 2023 LLC, located at the first floor and patio of 64 Granville Street. He informed the Council that the Division of Police had no objections to this permit. VanMeter noted that if there were no objections from the Council, the notice would be mailed back to the Division of Liquor Control.

President Bowers asked if Blue Agave had been able to operate under the prior permit up to this point, as she had seen posts about great margarita flights over the weekend. She inquired what liquor permit they were currently operating under.

Chief Spence confirmed that Blue Agave was indeed operating under a valid permit. He explained that there was a transfer from the existing business, and this kind of transfer in and out has been seen in other locations. He did not confirm the specific activities over the weekend but assured that they were operating legally under a valid permit.

Vice President Weaver acknowledged the discussion and, hearing no objections, thanked Clerk VanMeter for the update.

J. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE:

[ORD-0034-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - Real Estate Taxes and Fees for TIF Funds and Board of Elections

Director Bury presented a couple of action items. The first item was a request for supplemental appropriations related to real estate taxes. She explained that when new properties are acquired, there is a period during which the county must determine if the property serves a public purpose before exempting it from taxes. During this period, payments must still be made. Initially, they estimated refunds for properties acquired in late 2023 and early 2024, but no refunds have been received yet. Therefore, she requested supplemental appropriations to cover the remaining taxes due for the year. The second part of her request pertained to higher-than-expected real estate tax settlements. The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds were coming in

higher than estimated, likely resulting in higher fees. Additionally, the expenses related to the 2023 primary election came in higher than anticipated because the City was the only entity holding a full primary, leading to a greater share of the costs. Consequently, she requested supplemental appropriations for the General Fund totaling \$277,785, with \$35,100 for real estate tax payments and \$242,685 for the Board of Elections expenses. She also requested \$26,850 for TIF funds appropriations across various districts to cover anticipated shortfalls in fees.

Councilmember Schnetzer sought clarification on the second portion of the request, confirming that the higher receipts led to higher auditor and treasurer fees based on a percentage of collections. He asked if these fees were independent of the Board of Elections charge, to which Director Bury confirmed they were. He reiterated his understanding that the Board of Elections charge was \$242,000, separate from the other fees. Director Bury clarified that the total cost was a bit over \$300,000 because the budget initially included approximately \$99,000, based on past primary elections.

Councilmember Schnetzer remarked that this situation might warrant consideration by the Charter Review Committee in the future. Vice President Weaver agreed. President Bowers echoed the sentiment.

Vice President Weaver then asked Director Bury when the applications for tax exemption were sent to the auditor. Director Bury responded that some applications were sent in December related to the 825 Tech Center Drive property. She mentioned that the property is now marked as exempt, which reduced the initial appropriation request since the expected refund would offset the original cost. However, no notification of the refund timeline was received. Vice President Weaver noted that the process could take up to 18 months, from the auditor to the state tax commissioner and back, before the requesting municipality receives the refund.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 6/3/2024.

[ORD-0035-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATION AMENDMENTS FOR FY 2024 AND WAIVING SECOND READING - Reducing Appropriations for Public Safety Fund (CAD Administrator) and Increasing Appropriations for General Fund (IT Support Specialist II)

Director Bury presented a second item regarding a vacancy in the IT department. She explained that whenever there is a vacancy, departments reassess the actual need rather than automatically filling the position. This review was recently conducted for the CAD Administrator vacancy. Given the advancements in technology and the increase in staff over the years, it was determined that the role of CAD Administrator is not currently imperative. Instead, the department needs an additional IT Support Specialist. As a result, she proposed defunding the CAD Administrator position, leading to a reduction in appropriations for the Public Safety Fund. She requested appropriations from the General Fund to fully fund an IT Support Specialist II position. The additional appropriations requested amounted to \$41,692. By removing the CAD Administrator position and adding the IT Support Specialist

If position, the net savings would be approximately \$45,028.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver of Second Reading and Adoption on Regular Agenda on 5/20/2024.

K. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Renner addressed the Council, acknowledging the recent tragic event where an officer was killed in Euclid, Ohio. He reflected on this incident and noted that he missed the opportunity to bring forward a resolution to recognize National Police Week, which runs from May 12th to May 18th. Renner reminded his colleagues and the audience that National Police Week was established by President John F. Kennedy in 1962 as Peace Officers Memorial Day to honor law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice and to express appreciation for those currently serving. In 1994, President Bill Clinton mandated that the U.S. flag be flown at half-staff on May 15th in honor of this day. Renner highlighted that National Police Week has become a significant event, drawing thousands of law enforcement officers from across the country and abroad to the nation's capital. Approximately 25,000 to 40,000 attendees participate in these events annually. He shared that over 24,000 fallen officers' names are engraved on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. In April 2024, 222 new names were added, representing officers who were killed in the line of duty in 2023 and previous years. Among these, over 900 names belong to Ohio officers, including one from Gahanna, Officer Charles DuVernay, whose end of watch was August 4, 1992. In the past five years, there have been over 1,800 line-of-duty deaths, and thus far in 2024, 58 officers have been killed in the line of duty, including two from Ohio. Renner emphasized the importance of recognizing this somber week, keeping officers in hearts and minds, and expressing gratitude for their service.

L. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

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

Trenton I. Weaver
Chair