



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes Committee of the Whole

Merisa K. Bowers, Chair
Karen J. Angelou
Nancy R. McGregor
Kaylee Padova
Stephen A. Renner
Michael Schnetzer
Trenton I. Weaver

Pam Ripley, Interim Clerk of Council

Monday, February 28, 2022

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER

Vice President of Council Merisa Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Bowers added to the agenda under Section F. Resolution - Women's History Month.

B. PRESENTATIONS

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Mission, Vision, Values

Mayor Jadwin shared that the city is working on refreshing the Go Forward Gahanna Strategic Plan. Part of the refresh is to update the mission and vision statements. Staff and Council were sent three surveys regarding the mission, vision, and values. Most entities have a mission, vision, and values statement. When you have a unified set of goals, adopted everyone understands the expectations and standards they are expected to meet.

Jadwin introduced Marie Keister from Murphy Epsilon who has been working on the updates. Keister said a vision statement is who and what you aspire to be. The vision should give the opportunity to grow and tells the community what you are all about. The prior vision was effective, but since that time society has changed, staff has changed and there is a lot more intentional communication on how inclusive and respectful the city is as a community. The mission statement surveys showed that it needed refreshed. The mission is how you are going to deliver and

operate on that. The values are where you are testing if you are being true to the community's values. City employees and Council were surveyed three different times. There were some words that resonated with people and ideas on how to make that more succinct. You want to be brief concise and get your point across very quickly. The new vision keeps the essence of what it was before but strengthened by having fewer words. The new vision is to be a vibrant and diverse city where all are welcomed, respected, and inspired. The new mission statement is to deliver exceptional, exemplary services by being responsible, accessible, and accountable. The new values are integrity, safety, respect, and service.

Mayor Jadwin asked Keister to speak to how the new vision, mission and values will play into the refresh of the strategic plan. Keister shared that the Go Forward Plan had very strong strategic priorities and there will be similar priorities going forward. There may be some change in priorities of key initiatives underneath those strategic priorities. As the priorities are being written they will be tested against does this meet the vision. Will these strategic priorities help us get there? Are we operating in a way that is consistent with our mission as we lay out our strategic priorities and actions? Mayor Jadwin commented that there is no action required tonight. This is part of an ongoing dialogue as administration continues to work on the strategic plan with council over the coming months.

Angelou shared that the first version was written in the 90's and she has grown to love them. Angelou can understand why there are more words in the original because they wanted to make things clear as to who and what the city wanted to be. We don't potentially need that much now. Keister shared that the original vision inspired the current process, it was critical then since it hadn't yet been stated.

Presentation attached.

[2022-0072](#)

Vision Mission Values Presentation 2.28.2022

C. DISCUSSIONS

1. Fair Housing Policy

[2022-0066](#)

Fair Housing Policy Information

Bowers shared that she is presenting the next item regarding a Fair

Housing Policy (presentation attached) and it is an opening for discussion among Council. Bowers shared that this has been a group project amongst all Council members and other entities and organizations. The city's relationship with MORPC has helped move some of this policy forward. Bowers thanked those involved in working on this project. The vision of a vibrant and diverse city where all are welcomed respected and inspired is the underpinning of why this legislation is important and right for Gahanna for now. Housing discrimination in the United States refers to the historical and current barriers, policies, and biases that prevent equitable access to housing. This became more pervasive following the abolition of slavery in the U.S. There was a lot of racial segregation that happened throughout our history. Redlining of mortgages prevented people of color, black and African-American families from moving into white neighborhoods. Housing discrimination did not end with the passage of the 1968 Civil Rights Act, which included the Fair Housing Act. In 2005, HUD released study showing that Hispanics are facing discrimination in their housing searches. And in a 2011 HUD article, it says one out of five Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders receive less favorable treatment than others when they seek housing. Members of the LGBTQ community are also being denied housing. There are two types of discrimination typically: exclusionary and non-exclusionary. The legislation tries to focus on what's called exclusionary discrimination where the practice would limit a person's access to get into the housing that they are looking for; versus non-exclusionary which is where they are already in the housing but are receiving bias or discrimination. Other types of discrimination are being used to unfairly discriminate against and deny house due to someone's source of income. Such as whether they receive social security disability, child support or alimony income or public vouchers. Originally the Fair Housing Act prohibited housing discrimination only based on race, color, religion, national origin. It was later expanded to include sex or gender, disability, and familial status. Currently 17 States include protection for sexual orientation and gender identity. Ohio is not one of those States. The Equal Housing and Employment Act has been proposed several times in Ohio and it is pending in the General Assembly. It is not expected to move forward with this General Assembly. Source of Income is also a current trend for additional protection around housing in Central Ohio. Council has heard some presentations from concerned residents and advocates that the City should expand housing protections based on Source of Income. The ability of someone to obtain stable housing is a critical basic need. When you have a positive and effective Fair Housing Policy, the hope is to be able to see diverse and integrated communities with quality stable housing. It would encourage job creation and employers to locate in the City. Ohio Business Competes is an organization made up of hundreds

of companies across Ohio that have come together to promote, seek, and advocate for non-discrimination policies. There are approximately 13,000 rental housing units in Gahanna. Almost 30% of those are tenant occupied. Why does this matter in Gahanna? Local government can be more responsive to needs and immediate questions from residents and can tailor policies that best reflect the requests and the needs of the community. At a local level Council can craft something that's more around a restorative justice model. Something that will help build on education and alternative dispute resolution rather than criminal consequence. It is an easier enforcement mechanism, but Bowers doesn't think it achieves desired outcomes. There is a push from a lot of organizations in the area that specialize in housing to establish proactive protections. The Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio supports the passage of Ordinances such as these. There is a value to having consistency across the region. Source of Income is being discussed and passed in communities across Central Ohio. From a strictly LGBTQ sexual orientation gender identity non-discrimination perspective the city is behind the region in passing anything regarding that. Many of the neighboring communities are passing expanded non-discrimination protections. There are protections for landlords in the process. The goal of the legislation is to make sure that qualified tenants are matched appropriately equal to landlords and that landlords would not be required to rent to somebody with illegal, unstable, or insufficient income. The model legislation that is being looked at includes a section on landlord rights. There has been a survey of local ordinances in Central Ohio and across the Country. There are some good models that are being used to start with. The City has a rental survey in progress with Gahanna Landlords. There may be some opportunities for funding enforcement that needs explored. The enforcement being discussed and considered is the creation of a Fair Housing Commission. The hope is to have a Community Fair Housing Liaison who would be trained in mediation to help mediate the potential dispute between the tenant and the landlord and could screen out claims that don't have a basis. If the mediation was unsuccessful, then it would come before the Fair Housing Commission. Discussion and feedback are important. What do we want to see? What do we not want to see? What are the thoughts so we can move forward? Once the legislation is completed community education and engagement will be needed. Since there is a Rental Registration in place this information can be used to inform and educate landlords through that process. This would all be part of the Vision of making Gahanna a welcoming and safe place for all.

Renner thanked Bowers for the presentation looks forward to the legislation.

Angelou shared she worked with people with disabilities and getting them apartments. How are we handling the houses that are rented? We started a housing rental situation where we asked for fees and it didn't work and was stopped. There isn't space to do these things. There are so many things in the presentation that she likes. We are not going to be able to build that much more. We need workforce type things also. Angelou questioned if it is necessary when we have many people coming in here. The people that have come here, stay here because they love it here. She questions the fact that it may cost a whole lot of money if you are going to hire somebody to do this. How would we get through that?

Bowers clarified that of the 3750 units approximately 600 of those are single family. Bowers is not proposing exclusions to any single-family rental units. Those tend to be owned by smaller property owners who just may not understand. One of the things that happens in discrimination cases today primarily is that the intent might be neutral, but the impact is disparate. Having a system in place where we can be educating landlords and educating people who just may not know that they should be accepting certain types of income. That they should accept SSDI as part of their calculation in qualifying a tenant. That is the real hope is to have that education component.

Bowers shared that her understanding of the Rental Registration process is in full swing and was edited significantly from the prior administration. It applies to not just apartments but also applies to rental houses. As far as costs go, it is a concern. This would be a board like the Property Appeals Board and would be an unpaid Commission. We have many residents that want to serve their community. Bowers doesn't anticipate that there would be so many complaints that it would cause a significant financial burden to the community. We can have a financial assessment of it.

Schnetzer thanked Bowers on a well-constructed presentation. Schnetzer asked moving forward could there be data or statistics. There is a survey and feedback, will that be the extent of it? To what extent does this problem exist in Gahanna? These are the questions we need to answer first. To identify and quantify the problem. There were staffing resources identified in the presentation. Schnetzer would like an opportunity for input from the Administration as we work through the process.

Angelou said she is not against all of this, but we are Central Ohio. She doesn't know if asked if we have a problem with this. Our apartments are pretty much full, and she doesn't see fights or people being kicked out. She has not heard anything on that. Is it possible that we are one of those unique communities that don't have this problem?

Bowers will see if the Ohio Housing Finance Agency can provide a breakdown by zip code if that data is available. Bowers said, she was looking at Ohio as a whole and was able to locate that data more readily. Angelou said there is HUD housing in our region.

Padova thanked Bowers for the great information and presentation. Padova feels the Source of Income discrimination is very important and it is not something that there might have been issues with in the past, but it is something that we should have in place so it is not an issue in the future. For her it is always the kids and investing in our community that way and if we are able to do something to help one mother to get a home and get the kids in a good school district it could change a lot of lives.

2. Council Rules of Procedure

Renner shared that there are two questions regarding Council Rules of Procedure. One question is how the rules get modified to handle electronic communication for the regular agenda. The Clerk was asked to research how other communities handle electronic communications. Interim Clerk of Council Ripley distributed a communication research spreadsheet (attached). The first question was whether they met in hybrid, virtual or in person. There were 18 responses received; one community has virtual meetings, three have hybrid and 14 have in person meetings. The next question asked was whether email correspondence was read into their Council minutes. There were 15 replies, eight replied they do not read the correspondence into their minutes. Seven said they do , but there are stipulations, such as if the correspondence is sent to all of Council it is read into the minutes. If it is sent to an individual Council person, it is not read into the minutes. If the person has not provided their name or address it is not read into the minutes. The other questions were whether they provided speaker slips online. There were 17 responses. Only three of the 14 have the speaker slip available online and it is emailed to the Clerk's Office. Speaker slips could be added to the City website and could be emailed to the Clerk's Office. Research was also done on the technology available through Granicus. The platform eComment is an online participation platform during public meeting. Ripley spoke to the previous Clerk Beggerow who previously researched e-Comment. She said the decision was made that is was not the direction to go. Ripley can research further for an FAQ type of program that could be added to the website for resident questions. Bowers requested cost information for the e-Comment feature from Granicus. Bowers would like to see if the City of Lima would be willing to share if they have a written policy regarding this. Ripley said she received a policy from North Ridgeville, she will send to Council.

Renner would like to have the Council Rules of Procedure completed on March 14, 2022 at Committee of the Whole and vote on March 21, 2022. Schnetzer will not be at the meeting on March 14, 2022 but will provide input prior to the meeting. Renner said Council President does not have the authority to add additional agenda categories and that it might be something that needs changed in Council Rules or Procedure. To allow a Council President to add an agenda item/category at the last regular meeting Renner said that he is searching for a way to add a category item that could say Other Committees and Outside Organizations. Bowers believes that currently in the rules it specifies the agenda outline, maybe Council just needs to amend that rule to create a new model agenda. Bowers believes that currently in the rules it specifies the agenda outline, maybe Council just needs to amend that rule to create a new model agenda.

[2022-0075](#)

Correspondence Research

D. ITEMS FROM DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

[ORD-0008-2022](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AND REPLACE PART 1 ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, CHAPTER 135 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ENGINEERING, SECTIONS 135.03 TO 135.08 AND REPLACE WITH PART 1 ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, CHAPTER 133 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, SECTION 133.02, OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA.

Director of Finance Joann Bury shared that ORD-0008-2022 needs amended. The Ordinance should just be a Repeal and not a repeal and replace. Bury shared that ORD-0009-2022 has no updates. ORD-0010-2022 there was a question of based on the thresholds Council would be approving in addition to appropriations? Bury ran a check register report using the current thresholds. There are approximately 74% of the expenditures would come before Council in addition to the approval of the appropriation ordinance. Bury asked if there were any questions from Council.

Weaver asked regarding the Federal Uniform Guidance was there a reason to go with the maximum limits provided or is there a range they give. Bury said they do not give a range; they just say this is as high as you can go. That was where the bar was set to see what the comfort level was based on the type of transactions that the city has. Weaver asked if other communities were looked at that also use the Federal

Uniform Guidance and is assuming that this guidance is standard. Bury shared that they looked at Grove City, New Albany, Reynoldsburg, Westerville, Whitehall and Worthington, the limits are all over the place and have varying approval thresholds. Meaning that not everything may go to Council. There were some policies that were silent on threshold because they had a separate purchasing committee or separate individuals who looked at those purchases rather than going to council.

Renner said that the decision tree is the key to understanding all of this and is paramount to understanding the ordinances.

Bowers asked regarding the decision tree the diamond in the second column, second row where it says is the purchase less than \$250,000 is assuming the new procurement policy limits are \$250,000. Bury said she created it based on what the current policy is. Bowers said that her thoughts on it are that the \$250,000 threshold is set by the Federal Government with a budget that is different than the budget of Gahanna. Bury said they set this for all local governments that are using federal dollars. It is not based on budget; it is based on how they are looking at communities across the United States that use funding. Bowers shared she is more comfortable with a lower threshold because it is such a significant percentage of the City budget. Bowers asked for an explanation of the check register chart. Bury said she used varying amounts, greater than ten thousand, greater than \$50,000, greater than \$250,000. Based on the thresholds that are currently in the suggested policy what percentage of that total would Council be authorizing. Everything is authorized by Council through appropriations, but this would be things that would come back to Council. It roughly equates to about 74% of the expenditures. It wasn't a detailed analysis and didn't look for items that might be exempted for one reason or another and she didn't look at smaller checks that were issued that were part of a larger project.

Schnetzer said that Bury has talked about budget appropriations as well as the size of the disbursements that would be flagged would come back before Council. He asked for comments and asked if the City is still sending its expenditures to the State of Ohio to be posted online. Bury said the City has not been using the Checkbook, due to the department being short staffed. It will be picked up again at some point. Bury is not a large fan of it, they are missing the other side of the equation, they are capturing those expenditures but are not capturing the revenue. Bury believes if they are going to try and capture information to report out, they should be capturing both sides. Schnetzer asked about the audit process and if there is a component of it that would be catching some of the items. Bury said in the audit process everything is sampled. They look specifically at compliance. If this policy were adopted this is how they would base their compliance testing. They test for proper public

purpose, is all the documentation there, accuracy and if we are complying with our policies and Ohio Revised Code.

Bowers said that the Check Registry is by total dollar amount and asked if they could get the report by total number of transactions. Bury pulled the report and shared that there were in total 3,684 transactions in 2021. The percentages by threshold are that approximately two percent or 60 transactions that would fall within those high dollar ranges of over one hundred thousand dollars. Bowers asked if there is a current threshold today. Bury said that only if it requires to be bid and there is inconsistency and un clarity as far as professional services. That is the other point of this policy, there hasn't been consistency because the current policy is not easily understandable what you are supposed to do if it falls within that exception of professional services.

Recommendation: Second Reading/Adoption with an Amendment on 3/7/2022.

[ORD-0009-2022](#) AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AND REMOVE PART 1 ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, CHAPTER 133 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, SECTION 133.02 VENDING MACHINE INCOME OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA.

Recommendation: Second Reading/Adoption on 3/7/2022.

[ORD-0010-2022](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT PART 1 ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, CHAPTER 133 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, SECTION 133.02 PURCHASING PROCEDURES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA.

Recommendation: Second Reading/Adoption on 3/7/2022

E. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL OFFICE

[2022-0056](#) Liquor Permit Requests: Bob Evans Restaurants LLC. and RBD Restaurants LLC.

Interim Clerk of Council, Pam Ripley, stated that there are two new liquor permit requests: no objections from the Police Department. No objections noted from Council.

F. RESOLUTION

[RES-0008-2022](#) A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND HONORING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Bowers shared the draft of the Resolution recognizing and honoring

Women's History Month. McGregor recommended striking the fourth whereas clause as it is redundant.

Recommendation: Regular Agenda 3/7/2022.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.