



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

City Council

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Merisa K. Bowers, President
Trenton I. Weaver, Vice President
Jamille Jones
Nancy R. McGregor
Kaylee Padova
Stephen A. Renner
Michael Schnetzer

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, December 16, 2024

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER: Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

Gahanna City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, December 16, 2024, in Council Chambers. President of Council Merisa K. Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver delivered an Invocation and led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda was published on December 13, 2024.

Present 7 - Merisa K. Bowers, Jamille Jones, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

President Bowers noted a correction regarding the Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC) update. The presentation on the aggregation program was postponed and would not be included under Presentations for the evening.

C. PRESENTATIONS:

1. Resolution Presentation by Council - Recognizing Stephen A. Renner

President Bowers announced a special resolution presentation to honor Councilmember Stephen Renner for his long-standing commitment to leadership, service, and sustainability efforts in the City of Gahanna. She highlighted Mr. Renner's dedication as a proud Gahanna resident for over 26 years and an elected City Councilmember since 2012. Professionally, Mr. Renner serves as the Director of the Franklin County Department of Sanitary Engineering, focusing on improving water quality, abating sewer nuisances, and enhancing public health throughout Central Ohio. President Bowers further noted Mr. Renner's academic and professional achievements. Over the past two years, he completed the Master of Sustainability, Security, and

Resilience (MSSR) program at Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service. This program expanded his knowledge of climate change, human systems, sustainable development, and resiliency. Mr. Renner graduated this past weekend and was recognized as an outstanding graduate by his faculty. President Bowers commended Mr. Renner for leveraging his expertise to benefit the City of Gahanna, particularly through his development of a Climate Urban Resilience Plan. This plan includes strategies to promote green infrastructure, address local environmental challenges, and engage the community in planning for green initiatives. His leadership extends beyond Gahanna, with contributions to the Central Ohio Climate Action Plan Working Group and as a featured speaker at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) 2024 Summit on Sustainability. To recognize his accomplishments, President Bowers presented a resolution to Mr. Renner and his family, congratulating him on his milestone achievement. Following a standing ovation by attendees, Mr. Renner joined his family, Council colleagues, Mayor Jadwin, and City Attorney Tamilarasan for a commemorative photo.

Councilmember Renner expressed his gratitude, stating, "Twelve years is a long time. Thank you deeply. I really don't know what to say except for thank you, and I would do it all over again."

President Bowers thanked Mr. Renner and his family for attending the meeting and shared the Council's pleasure in recognizing his achievements. She announced that the resolution would be added to the regular agenda under Section G for a formal vote later in the meeting.

2. Blood Donation Awareness Presentation - GLHS Students

[2024-0265](#)

Blood Donation - City Council Slides Presentation 12.16.2024

Ms. Soniya Adhikari, Ms. Sarah Steele, and Ms. Delina Sium, students from Gahanna Lincoln High School's Bioscience Program, presented on their community awareness project focused on the importance of blood donation.

Ms. Adhikari provided an overview of blood donation, explaining that it is a voluntary procedure to help others in need. She described different types of donation, including whole blood donation and apheresis, which separates blood into components such as platelets, double red cells, and plasma.

Ms. Sium discussed the reasons for advocating for blood donation, emphasizing the national blood shortage in the United States. She noted that blood donation is critical for various medical needs, including childbirth complications, trauma care, and cancer treatments. She also highlighted the community-building aspect of blood donation, sharing that one blood donation can save up to three lives.

Ms. Steele shared details from their recent blood drive held on November 22, 2024, at Peace Lutheran Church. The drive collected 18 units of blood, including two double red cell donations and 16 whole blood donations. While their goal was 20 units, the team expressed pride in their accomplishments

and optimism for their next drive.

Ms. Sium shared health benefits of regular blood donation, such as lowering high iron levels and potentially reducing the risk of heart disease.

Ms. Adhikari explained the shelf life of blood components: red blood cells can be stored for up to 42 days, platelets for 5-7 days, and plasma for up to one year when frozen, making plasma the most versatile blood component for long-term use.

Ms. Steele provided information about their upcoming blood drive, scheduled for January 10th at the Eldon Ward Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). While official sign-ups were not yet available, she shared contact information for those interested in participating or seeking more details.

President Bowers thanked the students for their presentation, commending their efforts to raise awareness about the importance of blood donation and providing residents with an opportunity to participate in their next drive.

3. Strategic Plan Progress Update

[2024-0266](#)

"Our Gahanna" Strategic Plan Update - 12.16.2024 Presentation to Council

Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services, provided an update on the City's Strategic Plan, "Our Gahanna," which serves as a long-term framework for the City's future. She explained that the plan involves collaboration between elected officials, City staff, and community members, and it acts as a guide for decision-making in Gahanna. The Strategic Plan emphasizes community input as an essential component, ensuring that residents have a voice in shaping the City's future as a thriving, successful, and prosperous place. Vollmer provided the following overview of the Strategic Plan:

Timeline: The Strategic Plan is expected to be completed by the fall of 2025.

Community Engagement: Three rounds of public engagement are scheduled:
January 2025, April 2025, August 2025.

Key Participants: Core Project Team: A small group of City staff who coordinate the plan's efforts; Consultant Team: Planning Next, responsible for facilitating the process; City Directors: Serve as technical advisers; Steering Committee: A diverse group of 27 community members, along with President Bowers, Councilmember Schnetzer, and Mayor Jadwin, who provide guidance and act as advocates; City Council: Champions the process, reviewing and monitoring progress; and City Boards and Commissions: Provide expert insights.

Reasons for Community Participation: 1) Embrace Tradition and Shape the Future: Recognize and honor Gahanna's traditions while planning for the road ahead; 2) Community Expertise: Residents are experts on Gahanna and their input is invaluable; and 3) Good Stewardship: Planning fosters a framework for collaborative decision-making to maintain Gahanna's status as one of Ohio's finest communities.

Engagement Opportunities: 1) January Table Talks: Four open-call sessions will occur on January 7th, 16th, 25th, and 29th, of 2025, with limited attendance (20-40 participants per session); 2) Online Survey: Available on ourgahanna.com for residents who cannot attend the table talks; and 3) Website Resources: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), steering committee member introductions, and the "Get Involved" tab for newsletter sign-ups and table talk registrations.

Publicity: The City will promote these opportunities through social media platforms and other outreach efforts.

Councilmember Padova asked when sign-ups for the open-call table talks and online survey would be available. Director Vollmer clarified that these would be live on the website starting the following day, with updates managed by Planning Next.

Councilmember Jones inquired about the months for community involvement. Director Vollmer reiterated that engagement rounds are planned for January, April, and August of 2025, utilizing multiple formats to include diverse community perspectives.

President Bowers expressed enthusiasm for the upcoming table talks, noting the creativity and value of the exercises piloted by the steering committee. She commended the process for its potential to gather meaningful community feedback.

D. HEARING OF VISITORS:

Brenda Hoffman of Gahanna, OH, spoke on removing not-for-profit dollars from the budget.

Ms. Hoffman addressed the Council regarding the community grants program and its inclusion in the City budget. She began by congratulating Councilmember Stephen Renner on his recent recognition and thanked Councilmember Padova for her phone call the previous week. Ms. Hoffman raised concerns about the decision to include the community grants program in the delineated state of the budget rather than setting it apart as a separate ordinance. She questioned why, given the suggestion to remove the program from the budget for separate consideration, the Council did not act on this recommendation. She expressed disapproval of the rationale provided to her, which indicated a lack of trust that the program would be revisited in January. She highlighted the potential risks of co-mingling funds, including the possibility of legal action against the City. Ms. Hoffman requested the Council reconsider its approach to the program to ensure the funds are kept separate

from tax dollars. She also raised several additional points for consideration including whether all grant recipients are verified as 501(c)(3) organizations, what measures the City plans to implement to ensure recipients meet their commitments, and what redress would be pursued if a recipient fails to meet their obligations, noting that it would likely require City resources and legal action to enforce. Ms. Hoffman emphasized the need for more transparency regarding the grant program's processes and the City's plans for oversight and enforcement. She also cautioned the Council to consider the long-term implications of maintaining such a program, particularly during times when the City may face financial constraints. She urged the Council to reflect on these points and requested detailed information about how the City plans to address these concerns. Ms. Hoffman concluded her comments by asking the Council to reconsider removing the program from the budget and thanked them for their time.

E. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2024-0256](#) Council Special Minutes 12.2.2024
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0257](#) Council Regular Minutes 12.2.2024
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0258](#) Finance Committee Minutes 12.2.2024
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0259](#) Council Special Minutes 12.9.2024
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0260](#) Committee of the Whole Minutes 12.9.2024
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2024-0261](#) Finance Committee Minutes 12.9.2024
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Resolutions:

[RES-0046-2024](#) A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION 2025 PRICING POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

[RES-0047-2024](#) A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2025 COMPREHENSIVE LANDSCAPE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF GAHANNA

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

3. Ordinances for Second Reading and Adoption:

[ORD-0092-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO TRAFFIC CODE SECTIONS OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA; TO PROVIDE FOR PENALTIES; TO PROVIDE FOR CODIFICATION; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Weaver, to Pass the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

F. MOTIONS:

[MT-0019-2024](#) A MOTION TO APPOINT WILLIAM VAN TYLE TO THE COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA HOUSING COUNCIL, SEAT 3, FOR A TERM OF THREE YEARS BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2027

President Bowers provided background on the Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council (CRA Housing Council) and its functions. The CRA Housing Council works with the City's Economic Development Department and is authorized under Ohio Revised Code 3735.69. The duties of the CRA Housing Council include conducting annual housing property inspections or reviewing inspection reports, acting as an appellate board for tax abatement disputes, and recommending approval of the annual tax abatement report filed with the state. The CRA Housing Council typically meets one to two times per year and is composed of seven members: two Council-appointed seats, two Mayor-appointed seats, one Planning Commission-appointed seat, and two seats appointed by the CRA Housing Council itself. Currently, there are two vacant CRA Housing Council-appointed seats. Council interviewed three candidates who submitted applications and resumés for the vacant seat: William Van Tyle - Vice President of Quality Assurance in Home Lending at JP Morgan Chase; Brian Graney - Affordable Housing Finance Professional and Charles Coutellier - Retired Fiscal Officer from The Ohio State University. President Bowers highlighted the professionalism, interest,

and commitment to Gahanna demonstrated by all three candidates. She provided this overview to familiarize the public with the Council's role and the process of selecting candidates.

Councilmember Schnetzer moved to appoint William Van Tyle to the Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council, Seat 3, for a term of three years beginning January 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2027. Councilmember McGregor seconded the motion. During the discussion, Councilmember Schnetzer stated that all three candidates were highly qualified and capable of executing the position well. However, he noted that the role is primarily compliance focused. He explained that William Van Tyle's professional background in quality assurance, compliance, and audit made him the most qualified candidate for this role.

President Bowers concurred with Councilmember Schnetzer's assessment of William Van Tyle's qualifications and expressed her support for his appointment. She also encouraged the Economic Development Department and the CRA Housing Council to consider the other qualified applicants, particularly Brian Graney, whose expertise in housing finance could also be valuable to the board in the future.

With no further discussion, the motion to appoint William Van Tyle to Seat 3 of the CRA Housing Council was put to a vote.

The motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by McGregor. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

No: 1 - Padova

G. RESOLUTIONS:

[RES-0048-2024](#) A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING STEPHEN A. RENNER FOR HIS ENDURING COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, AND SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS IN THE CITY OF GAHANNA

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

[RES-0049-2024](#) A JOINT RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, STATE OF OHIO, SUPPORTING THE OHIO COMMISSION FOR THE UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL (AMERICA250-OH)

Mayor Jadwin addressed the Council regarding the America 250 celebratory committee, which is preparing for the United States' 250th birthday in 2026. She expressed appreciation for the inclusion of a resolution on the agenda and thanked Councilmember McGregor for joining her in this "proclamation." Mayor Jadwin explained that the Ohio Revised Code established the America

250 Ohio Commission in March 2022. The purpose of the commission is to highlight Ohio's contributions to the nation's history. She noted that Gahanna has played a significant role in Ohio's history, citing the Big Walnut Country Club as an example. Mayor Jadwin emphasized that the resolution being considered was a required step for Gahanna to officially participate in the commission and the planned activities leading up to the 250th celebration.

Councilmember McGregor commented that Gahanna's recent celebration of its 175th anniversary was a fitting prelude to the America 250 Ohio activities and the broader celebration planned for 2026.

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by McGregor, that the Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

H. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:

[ORD-0095-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GAHANNA COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION (CIC) FOR A TERM BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025, TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY FOR THE CITY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

Discussion: President Bowers noted the item would proceed to second reading on January 2, 2025. Her understanding was that because the revised agreement had been attached for introduction/first reading, an amendment would not be required during second reading and adoption.

I. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING / ADOPTION:

[ORD-0065-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA DURING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title.

President Bowers noted the need to amend Ordinance 0065-2024 by substituting the proposed Exhibit A, identified as item number 19 on Legistar. President Bowers requested a motion to amend the ordinance.

Councilmember Renner moved to amend Ordinance 0065-2024 by substituting the proposed Exhibit A as specified. Councilmember Weaver seconded the motion.

Discussion on the Amended Substitute Exhibit A:

None.

A motion was made that the Ordinance be Amended by Substitution of Exhibit A. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

Discussion on Proposed Amendment to General Fund Allocation offered by Councilmember Schnetzer:

Councilmember Schnetzer raised a Point of Order, referencing previous discussions about the funding for the Community Grants Program. He proposed a motion to reduce the General Fund appropriation under the General Government Department of Finance Contract Services by \$100,000, with the expectation that the item would be revisited in January, 2025, to explore non-tax revenue sources for the program.

President Bowers called for a second to the motion. Councilmember McGregor seconded the motion.

Vice President Weaver expressed appreciation for the concerns raised by Councilmember Schnetzer and for the public input received. He reiterated his willingness to revisit the matter in the future and to collaborate with Deputy Director Wybensing to enhance the program and provide additional safeguards. However, he stated that he did not support reducing the General Fund revenues at this time.

Councilmember Padova echoed Vice President Weaver's comments, noting that the discussion had already taken place during a prior budget meeting. She expressed confidence that the funds could be found, particularly given the contribution of bed tax revenues to the General Fund. She clarified her understanding that the funding was not sourced from Issue 12 and stated her opposition to removing the allocation from the budget.

Councilmember Renner reiterated his view that the debate on this issue had already been extensive and healthy. He expressed concern about revisiting the discussion and suggested that doing so could lead to the reopening of the entire budget for debate. He supported the Administration's efforts to identify alternative dollars linked to the program and opposed the proposed amendment.

Councilmember Schnetzer added that his primary concern was the authorization of the use of tax dollars for the program, emphasizing that this was the source of his hesitation.

President Bowers acknowledged the thoughtful debate on the matter and the validity of the points raised. She then called for a vote on the motion to amend the budget by removing \$100,000 allocated in the General Fund for the community grant program.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by McGregor, that the Ordinance be Amended to remove \$100,000 allocated in the General Fund for the community grant program. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - McGregor and Schnetzer

No: 5 - Bowers, Jones, Padova, Renner and Weaver

Discussion on the main motion to adopt as amended:

President Bowers opened the floor for final discussion on the motion to adopt the 2025 budget, as amended, with proposed substitute Exhibit A, identified as Item 19 on Legistar.

Councilmember Schnetzer expressed his gratitude to the City Administration, staff, and fellow Councilmembers for their efforts in crafting the budget. He acknowledged the extensive hours spent and the input received from residents who shared their priorities. While he highlighted several commendable items funded in the budget, including additional staffing for public safety, parks improvements, and street maintenance, he voiced concerns over the allocation of City tax dollars to nonprofits.

Councilmember Schnetzer noted his commitment to fiscal stewardship, emphasizing his role in helping improve the City's financial position over the past decade. He referenced promises made to residents during challenging financial times, which included dedicated use of funds for core services and infrastructure. He expressed his belief that authorizing the use of tax dollars for nonprofits contradicted those promises and, as a result, stated he could not support the ordinance.

President Bowers responded by expressing appreciation to the Administration for their efforts in organizing the department-by-department presentations. She commended their preparation and noted that the process improved understanding of how operational and capital budgets worked together, benefiting both the Council and the community. President Bowers highlighted the significant progress made over the past year, including strides on the new municipal complex at 825 Tech Center Drive, under the leadership of Senior Director Schultz. She also praised advancements in public safety and parks, including increased staffing, robust training programs, and efforts in the street tree program presented by Mr. Guthrie and Ms. Predieri. Acknowledging Councilmember Schnetzer's principled position, President Bowers defended the inclusion of the Community Grant Program in the budget. She emphasized its impact over the past two years when it was funded through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act dollars. She noted the program's success in benefiting residents and nonprofits and expressed confidence in the staff administering the program. President Bowers concluded by expressing pride in the balance achieved in the proposed budget, which reflected fiscal stewardship while addressing diverse community needs. She thanked the staff for their hard work and reiterated her support for the 2025 budget.

The discussion concluded, and the motion proceeded to a vote.

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Jones, that the Ordinance be Adopted as Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Bowers, Jones, Padova, Renner and Weaver

No: 2 - McGregor and Schnetzer

J. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING / EMERGENCY ADOPTION:

[ORD-0090-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE SALARIES FOR PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2025, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

The Clerk read the ordinance by title.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Adopted as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

[ORD-0091-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE BENEFITS FOR PERSONNEL OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

The Clerk read the ordinance by title.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Adopted as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

K. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION, WAIVER & EMERGENCY ADOPTION:

[ORD-0093-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ACCEPT AND EXECUTE PROPOSAL FOR ANCILLARY EMPLOYEE BENEFITS THROUGH METLIFE; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Waived for Second Reading. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Adopted as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

[ORD-0094-2024](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A BARGAINING UNIT AGREEMENT FOR THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE, CAPITAL CITY LODGE NO. 9 FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2025, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2027; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Waived for Second Reading. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Jones, that the Ordinance be Adopted as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

[ORD-0096-2024](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE (FOP) - OHIO LABOR COUNCIL (OLC) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNIT CONTRACT FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2025 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2027; WAIVING SECOND READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Bowers introduced the Ordinance and the Clerk read it by title.

President Bowers inquired if there was a presentation from the Administration regarding the item.

Director Vollmer provided an overview of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Ohio Labor Council (OLC), representing communications technicians. On behalf of Mayor Jadwin, the Division of Police, and Administrative Services, Director Vollmer requested an ordinance for the Mayor to sign the agreement. She also requested that the ordinance be passed on an emergency basis to meet State Employment Relations Board (SERB) filing deadlines and to ensure that salary and benefit changes would take effect on January 1, 2025.

Key changes to the agreement include:

Grievance, Arbitration, and Discipline: Minor modifications were made to the language in these sections.

Seventh-Day Pay: Removed compensation for working a seventh consecutive day.

General Wage Increases: A 5% increase for 2025, followed by 4.5% increases in both 2026 and 2027, totaling an additional \$235,000 over three years.

Personal Leave: Employees can now carry over 16 hours of personal leave into the next year.

Uniforms: Uniform requirements were removed, replaced with an annual allowance for branded clothing at designated vendors.

Resiliency Reboot Program: In alignment with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) agreement, employees completing the program will receive 16 hours of personal time.

Sick Leave: Sick leave tier accruals were removed, standardizing accrual to 120 hours per year for all employees, regardless of tenure.

Short-Term Disability and Paid Parental Leave: Added these benefits to the agreement.

Director Vollmer concluded by stating she was available to answer any questions from Council members regarding the agreement. There were no additional questions by Council. Following the vote, President Bowers congratulated the Human Resources and Administrative Services departments and the bargaining unit for their work on the agreement.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Waived for Second Reading. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Adopted as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

L. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk - None.

2. Council - None.

M. REPRESENTATIVES:

1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) - Renner, Weaver

Councilmember Renner noted that the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) would meet in the Committee Room at 8:00 AM on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, for its regular meeting.

2. Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) - Weaver

[2024-0262](#)

Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 12.16.2024

Vice President Weaver provided an update on the activities of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) following its final meeting of the year on December 12, 2024. During the meeting, MORPC officially welcomed the Village of Alexandria and the City of Marion as its 89th and 90th members, respectively, and adopted the 2025 MORPC budget. Vice President Weaver highlighted several key items, including the recent "Money Monday" session, which focused on updates regarding the lame duck session at the Ohio General Assembly. He noted that the archive of the session is available online, with access details provided in the report. Weaver also reminded Councilmembers of upcoming MORPC events, including the third annual Data Day on February 5, 2025, and the State of the Region event on March 21, 2025.

Vice President Weaver invited an update from Mayor Jadwin regarding her

efforts with the Sustainability Committee through MORPC.

Mayor Jadwin provided an update on the Sustainable 2050 program, noting that Gahanna has maintained a silver status for several years. However, the City has submitted an application to advance to gold status. She commended Director Wybensinger, Grants Manager Mara Hunter-who has been with the City for about 100 days-and MORPC intern Matt Goodhart for their collaborative work in compiling the necessary documentation for the application. The application will be reviewed by the Sustainability Advisory Committee during a meeting hosted by Mayor Kessler in Bexley. If recommended for adoption, the application will be presented to MORPC's commission in February for final approval. Mayor Jadwin expressed enthusiasm for the progress and indicated the City would aim for Platinum Status following the anticipated gold-level recognition.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova informed the Council that Visit Gahanna has partnered with FutureCom Technologies to offer the Santa Hotline, which runs until December 25, 2024. Residents can call the hotline at 614-478-1061 to hear a daily message from Santa. She noted that the hotline has been gaining attention on Facebook, with many community members sharing the number and messages.

4. School Board (SB) - Jones

Councilmember Jones provided an update from the Superintendent Dr. Deagle's District Ambassador meeting earlier this month. A key topic of discussion was the implementation of block scheduling at the high school, along with new school start times. The school district is conducting a survey with teachers, students, and staff by the end of the year to evaluate the effectiveness of these changes. While the district is committed to maintaining the block schedule for at least three years to allow proper assessment, there are insights from teachers on this transition available in the November 22, 2024, District newsletter and via Lincoln Live. Councilmember Jones also highlighted changes to the Ohio State School Report Card, which will now measure readiness beyond college preparation, including trade school, workforce, and military readiness. To support this shift, the district is partnering with One Columbus for a presentation on workforce readiness. The event will take place on February 11, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at the Middle School West Auditorium and is designed to inform students and the community about workforce improvements. Additionally, Councilmember Jones noted that the opening of the new high school is only a year away. Plans are underway to involve the entire community, not just families with students, in this historic event. Updates will be shared on social media and through the district newsletter. Key upcoming dates include the State of Schools presentation by Dr. Deagle on January 29, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., also at Middle School West Auditorium, and a regular school board meeting this Thursday, December 19, 2024. Lastly, Councilmember Jones acknowledged the upcoming holiday break, noting that Friday, December 20, 2024, marks the last day of school until January 6, 2025. She expressed gratitude and

appreciation for teachers, students, and staff and extended holiday wishes to all.

N. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin reflected on the City's accomplishments in 2024, sharing her vision for the year ahead. She expressed gratitude to the Council, administrative staff, and residents for their collective efforts, emphasizing the importance of collaboration in achieving progress. She celebrated the passage of the 2025 budget, which she described as a blueprint for the future, building on the achievements of 2024 and positioning the City to address upcoming challenges with confidence and purpose. Mayor Jadwin highlighted significant strides made in 2024, including aggressive street and sidewalk programs, waterline replacements, the construction of a roundabout along a major industrial corridor, and the installation of two new playgrounds. These infrastructure improvements enhanced community safety and connectivity, fulfilling promises made with the passage of Issue 12. Economic development milestones included the growth of businesses like Ortho One, expansions by existing companies such as Grote, and the addition of new small businesses like Three Creeks Kitchen and Cocktails. The Mayor also detailed the expansion of community programs and services, such as new youth, family, and senior activities, a mountain bike trail, enhanced recycling and waste disposal services, and the Community Choice Aggregation program. These initiatives were supported by an expanded income tax base and reflected the City's commitment to fostering a thriving, inclusive community. Operational advancements in 2024 included the adoption of a modernized zoning code, streamlined processes for permit approvals, new customer service models, and enhanced employee programs focusing on safety, training, and wellness. The successful negotiation of two union contracts prior to expiration marked a significant achievement, underscoring the Administration's dedication to fostering a supportive work environment. Looking ahead, Mayor Jadwin outlined priorities for 2025, including the City's strategic plan, "Our Gahanna," which will involve extensive community engagement to guide future goals and investments. The year will also see continued development of a Citywide comprehensive transportation and mobility plan, aimed at enhancing safety and accessibility for all users. The City's new municipal facility (825 Tech Center Drive), "Facilities for the Future," is on track for completion by year's end, coinciding with the opening of the new high school, further strengthening the City's service capacity and infrastructure. Mayor Jadwin concluded by thanking the Council, City staff, and residents for their dedication and contributions throughout the year. She expressed optimism for the opportunities ahead and extended holiday greetings, looking forward to continuing collaboration in the new year.

2. City Attorney

City Attorney Tamilarasan expressed gratitude to the Council for their approval of the traffic code supplemental update. She announced that a full

annual report would be presented to the Council on January 2, 2025. She concluded her remarks by extending wishes for a happy and safe holiday season to all those celebrating.

O. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember McGregor thanked the young women from the bioscience program at Eastland Fairfield Career Centers who presented on the importance of blood donations. She highlighted the program's opportunities for juniors and seniors at Clark Hall, including capstone and group projects that may lead to state and national competitions. Councilmember McGregor shared her excitement for the holidays, as her family, including granddaughters returning from college and the Air Force, would be together for the first time since March. She extended wishes for a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and expressed gratitude, sharing "God bless America."

Councilmember Jones referenced her November newsletter, attached to the agenda, detailing her recent activities and accomplishments. She noted her upcoming constituent hours on January 18, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. in the Gahanna library, urging residents to reach out for the exact location. Reflecting on her first year in office, she thanked the Administration, colleagues, Council staff, and the community for their support, collaboration, and grace as she adjusted to her role. Councilmember Jones emphasized her honor in serving the City and her excitement for another year of progress and partnership. She closed by wishing everyone peace, joy, and meaningful time with loved ones during the holiday season, celebrating the overlap of Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa as a beautiful reminder of Gahanna's diverse traditions.

Councilmember Padova thanked the City staff and Administration for their dedication throughout the year, particularly during the intensive budget season. She acknowledged the hard work of colleagues and staff who worked long hours, often staying late into the evenings. Councilmember Padova congratulated Councilmember Renner on his recent achievement, commending his dedication to the City and sustainability, as well as his personal growth. She concluded with warm holiday wishes for everyone.

Councilmember Renner reflected on an eventful year, extending gratitude to Mayor Jadwin and her staff for their assistance in advancing the clean energy aggregation program. He noted the City's recognition by Power of Clean Future Ohio (PCFO) with two awards: the "Clean Energy Community" award for implementing a 100% clean energy program and the "Climate Action Community" award for its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% of 2005 levels. Councilmember Renner emphasized the significance of these initiatives, highlighting the reality of climate change and the need for continued action. He expressed appreciation for the robust discussions during the budget process, acknowledging the time, effort, and thoughtful debate involved. He commended his colleagues for their diligence and respect, even amidst differing opinions, and recognized the value of the deeper understanding gained about City programs and finances. Councilmember Renner also praised the students who presented on the

importance of blood donation, sharing his personal commitment to re-engage in regular blood donations. He thanked his colleagues for recognizing his recent achievements, expressing his gratitude for their time and acknowledgment of his dedication to climate action. In his closing remarks, Councilmember Renner reflected on the holiday season as an opportunity to pause, connect with others, and offer support to those in need. He encouraged reaching out to neighbors, friends, and residents, especially those struggling, to foster a sense of community and compassion during the season.

Councilmember Schnetzer reflected on the conclusion of another challenging yet productive year, acknowledging the hard work, late nights, and dedication of all involved. He extended his appreciation to Mayor Jadwin, City staff, and his colleagues for their efforts and patience, as well as to the City Attorney and her office for ensuring everyone stayed compliant and well-guided. He wished everyone a safe and happy holiday season, sharing his personal plan to enjoy a brief respite from sports before indoor baseball starts in January. Councilmember Schnetzer joked that he might soon need to ask for forgiveness from Director Ferrell, anticipating that his team's coach might reach out for access to baseball diamonds in March of 2025. In closing, he reiterated his holiday wishes and reminded everyone of the Council's return on Thursday, January 2, 2025.

Vice President Weaver expressed gratitude to the students who presented on blood donation, noting the importance of their message and acknowledging his own need to donate as a universal donor. He extended heartfelt congratulations to Councilmember Renner for his leadership, mentorship, and guidance, both on Council and off Council. Vice President Weaver emphasized his appreciation for Renner's wisdom and congratulated him and his family on their accomplishments. He also thanked the City Administration, Mayor Jadwin, City Attorney Tamilarasan, and all staff for their tireless work on behalf of the community, sharing his pride as a lifelong resident and homeowner in Gahanna. Weaver commended Councilmember Schnetzer for his leadership during the new budget process, noting that it fostered healthy debate and thoughtful discussion. Weaver wished everyone a happy, healthy, and joyous holiday season and shared his plans to celebrate with his family, who all live locally. He offered safe travel wishes to those journeying for the holidays.

President Bowers briefly echoed her thanks to her colleagues, the Mayor, the City Attorney, and City staff. She offered special recognition to Council Clerk VanMeter, Deputy Clerk Sophia McGuire, and Management Analyst Jessica Hilts for their dedication and service throughout the year. Bowers emphasized the importance of the residents' participation, trust, and accountability, appreciating their encouragement and understanding of the Council's efforts. She announced an upcoming constituent hour on Saturday, January 25, 2025, at 10 a.m. at the Gahanna library and shared plans for a Walk for Women event on Sunday, February 2, 2025, to honor women's contributions and promote safety in the community's parks and trails. In closing, President Bowers highlighted the community's generosity during the holiday season,

recognizing efforts to support families and individuals in need. She expressed gratitude for these acts of kindness and extended wishes for a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season to all.

[2024-0246](#)

Councilmember Jamille Jones' Constituent Report - November 2024

P. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
day of 2025.*

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

Merisa K. Bowers