



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

City Council

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

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

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, April 3, 2023

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, April 3, 2023, in Council Chambers. President of Council Stephen A. Renner 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 March 31, 2023.

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

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

None.

C. HEARING OF VISITORS:

1. Proclamation Presentation by Mayor Jadwin

[2023-0065](#)

Mayoral Proclamation - Autism Acceptance Month 2023-04

The first proclamation was for Autism Acceptance Month, which was previously known as Autism Awareness Month. It aims to create an inclusive community where autistic individuals are embraced, have jobs and housing opportunities, and can lead normal lives. The Mayor recognized the Harshaw Family, Gene, Gwen, and Zane, who are passionate advocates for autism awareness and support families to address the diverse needs of individuals with autism. The mayor presented them with a proclamation for their efforts.

The Harshaw Family launched "Band Together Central Ohio," an event that allows individuals with autism to come and share their talents, and it has grown exponentially in less than a year. Zane, their son, has released his first CD, and his band will be playing at Creekside Blues & Jazz Fest, with some performers from Gahanna. They plan to grow the event throughout the state of Ohio and beyond.

[2023-0066](#)

Mayoral Proclamation - Distracted Driving Awareness Month 2023-04

The second proclamation was for Distracted Driving Awareness Month, as distracted driving has become a deadly epidemic. Texting, cell phone use, social media, putting on makeup, eating, and drinking are all common distractions that can change a life in just a few seconds. The Mayor reported that a new law will go into effect tomorrow. She recognized Sharon Montgomery, a passionate advocate for distracted driving awareness in the community. Mrs. Montgomery is a member of the governor's council, the Ohio Traffic Safety Council, representing Gahanna. The mayor presented Montgomery with a proclamation for her efforts.

Mrs. Montgomery expressed her gratitude towards the help and support provided by Representative Lightbody and Tricia Kovacs, which enabled her to be successful in her rabble-raising. She appreciated the fact that she was not doing it alone. She acknowledged the patience shown towards her whenever she came to speak. She appreciated the inclusion of the word "effective" in the three laws but felt that they were not enough to achieve the desired outcomes. Montgomery urged the audience to keep in mind that regardless of what the law says, one should not do anything that is not worth the risk, except in an emergency.

2. Members of the Public

Rep. Mary Lightbody, District 4, Ohio House of Representatives, provided an update.

Lightbody thanked Council for the opportunity to address them and provided an update on activities at the State House. She mentioned the MORPC State of the Region event and congratulated Councilmember Karen Angelou for her years of service on the MORPC board. Lightbody appreciated Sharon Montgomery's work on the distracted driving bill, and they are still working on it. She sent along an amendment to the law that they want to put into the operating budget. Lightbody discussed the operating budget, which the Ohio House has been deliberating on with over 3,000 amendments. The budget will be voted on towards the end of April, and it must be passed by the end of June. The transportation bill, House Bill 23, directs Ohio to spend approximately \$13.5 billion in state and federal revenue over the next two years. The bill implements a series of changes to improve public safety and make Ohio a great place to do business. Lightbody highlighted some of the transportation bill's key provisions, including funding for highway safety, creating the Workforce Mobility Partnership Program, and implementing several railroad safety measures. House Bill 23 raises force account limits for road, bridge, and culvert construction and maintenance by 133% with a 5% inflation cap per year. The bill includes provisions to fix the Brent Spence Bridge and create a strategic transportation and development analysis study to look at the statewide study of Ohio's transportation system. The bill reduces the registration fee for plug-in hybrid vehicles from \$200 to \$150 and allows veterans to use county-issued veteran identification cards for proof of military service when getting a military license plate.

Kathy Strohm of 4617 Collingville Way, Columbus, OH spoke on Sheetz lessons learned and BZBA.

Ms. Strohm spoke about the issue of building a Sheetz gas station near the Morrison and Johnstown Road roundabout and how she was a key player in coordinating efforts between New Albany, Gahanna, Columbus, and Jefferson Township to fight against it. She expressed gratitude towards Mayor Jadwin for her announcement last Thursday and thanked her for the work done on the issue. However, she also pointed out that Gahanna dodged a bullet on this one and highlighted the lack of communication from

February until November. She stated that only by chance, one person found out about the BZBA meeting and what was going to happen there. Strohm then emphasized the importance of the little guy and how citizens can combine together to make a difference. She mentioned the March 8, 2023, Planning Commission meeting, where the only avenue left to cause the gas station project to not happen was to convince New Albany Company to withdraw from selling that land. She talked about the tremendous letter writing campaign that took place and mentioned that she personally wrote four letters and sent them by certified mail to ensure that they were received. She also mentioned that by March 29, they had achieved 2,000 signatures on an online petition across all various jurisdictions that were affected by it, and the number of signatures were growing by hundreds every day. Lastly, Strohm requested that the City Council look into the derogatory comments made by the BZBA against those who spoke at the January 26, 2023, meeting, and the immediate change of rules of procedure of the meeting that followed, which banned public comments from being shared in front of the BZBA. She challenged the City Council and the Mayor to follow up on this issue since they appointed these people and to see what can be done about it.

Ryan Spak of 211 Carlin Ct E, Gahanna, OH spoke on previous Committee of the Whole meetings.

Mr. Spak said he was catching up on previous Committee of the Whole meetings' videos and heard about the police department's request for a firing range underneath the new building. He supported the police but believes that the request for a firing range deserves more scrutiny. He believed that police officers should be well-trained and competent with their weapons but spending more than 5% of their time in a gun range is not efficient, and they should be interacting with the public instead. He thought that the police officers could re-qualify on their weapons once a year and spend one day a month in a firing range maintaining their skills. He found about three- or four-gun ranges within a 20-minute drive from Gahanna. He thinks that the police department building's firing range will be a hole in the ground and not open to the public, while an indoor pool, another hole in the ground, would be a public resource where residents could gather and associate face-to-face, form bonds that are the foundation of a healthy community, and have economic benefits as a selling point for the city. He asked which of these two projects, a firing range or an indoor pool, would get Gahanna Best Hometown 2023 on a welcome sign quicker.

Brenda Hoffman of 279 Highmeadow Dr, Gahanna, OH spoke on the Sidewalk Maintenance Program.

Mrs. Hoffman addressed the four older councilmembers and reminded them that she first appeared before Council on November 6 or 7, 2017. She had requested Council to review code enforcement, specifically regarding sidewalks being reported by neighbors. Hoffman stated that this request was like having a loaded gun at one's head as a homeowner. Her husband researched and found Ohio Revised Code from January 1, 1962, which specifies that a corporate municipality must have sidewalk maintenance programs, including repair scope, price, specs, an appeal board, and a deadline for repair completion. Both City Attorney Mularski and Mayor Jadwin were handed copies of this law. Hoffman stated that the sidewalk issue has been going on for years, and although mistakes were made, it is time to move forward. She requested that all residents with sidewalk code violations receive a copy of what is wrong with their place in one mailing. This request was made before and could help pick up the one, two, three, or five percent of people who will fix the sidewalk themselves. Hoffman suggested two options: use the Segway program or go straight to code enforcement.

Lastly, she requested better training for law enforcement officers in all aspects and mentioned that her family has a history of law enforcement, including her grandfather, who taught the Secret Service how to shoot guns. Hoffman stated that officers are the most vital resource in criminal justice and require better training but questions why they are being made to work so hard about having their guns and being proficient.

D. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2023-0055](#) COTW Minutes 3.13.2023
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2023-0056](#) CN Special Minutes 3.20.2023
The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Resolutions:

[RES-0013-2023](#) A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF GAHANNA TO APPLY FOR CLEAN OHIO TRAIL FUNDS AND RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

3. Ordinances for Second Reading:

[ORD-0016-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH STRAWSER PAVING COMPANY, INC., FOR THE 2023 STREET PROGRAM ST-1101
The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

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

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

E. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:

[ORD-0017-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED EASEMENTS FOR THE EVERETT APARTMENTS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT LOCATED AT 307-319 WEST JOHNSTOWN ROAD

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0018-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING TO AWARD AND ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH DIRT DAWG EXCAVATING LLC FOR CONSTRUCTION WORK FOR HAVENS CORNERS WATERLINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0019-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION - Water Capital Fund for Havens Corners Waterline Replacement

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0020-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH MIFFLIN TOWNSHIP FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS FOR THE PURPOSES OF MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN COST-SHARING

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

F. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk - None.

2. Council - None.

G. REPRESENTATIVES:

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

President Renner noted that he did not have a report ready this evening but would deliver one in two weeks.

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

[2023-0058](#) Councilmember Angelou's MORPC Report to City Council 3.31.2023

Councilmember Angelou thanked Council Clerk Jeremy VanMeter for his work on getting people to attend the State of the Region event. Gahanna was represented well at the event. Angelou reported she has upcoming meetings for the executive committee and the commission. She remarked on the beauty of the Hilton in downtown Columbus, where the State of the Region event was held. Angelou thanked all those who were able to attend and will have more to report next time.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova reported on the release of a new visitors guide for Gahanna. The guide features several themed itinerary ideas and listings for lodging, dining, shopping, and more. The guide will be distributed to local and regional hotels, restaurants, shops, trade shows, tourist information centers, and welcome packets. An online version of the guide is available at visitgahanna.com, and physical copies are available at the brochure rack inside the front doors of City Hall. Information about the Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival is also available at the brochure rack. The spring and summer herbal cocktail trail passport is now available, with eight participating establishments. The Ohio Herb Center hosted a free class called "Landscaping with Herbs" last Saturday, which was very popular. They had three time slots filled with 20 people in each class and had 30 people on the waitlist. Another class will be held on April 12th, and the information will be available soon.

4. School Board (SB) - Bowers

Councilmember Bowers reminded people to be aware and alert as students return from spring break. April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Bowers stressed the importance of paying attention to school buses and stopping when stop signs are out. There was recently a bad accident involving a student. She is keeping the family in prayers. The State of the Schools address is on April 13, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. The superintendent and school board members will be hosting a Coffee and Conversation on April 12, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. Bowers encouraged people to sign up for Gahanna Jefferson Public Schools weekly emails for more details.

H. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin thanked councilmembers, community partners, and the residents who attended the State of the City event held on March 23, 2023. The event was held at 825 Tech Center Drive and featured local restaurants and community groups sharing information about their work. The presentation was recorded and will be available on the website and social media by the end of the week. The recording will give people who were not able to attend access to the information shared during the event. Jadwin mentioned the State of the Region event that was attended by all of the city's directors. The event was about the growth in the region, particularly around transportation. There are opportunities that need to be pursued for growth and its impact on infrastructure and transportation. Jadwin thanked the New Albany Company and Sheetz for working collaboratively to find a mutual resolution regarding their business. Both companies want to be good partners with the City of Gahanna and appreciate the residents' feelings. The responsibility of sidewalk maintenance ultimately lies with homeowners, and the city will reevaluate the assessment process. The Gahanna Sidewalk Program meets every parameter identified by residents and will continue despite challenges. A construction company will begin sidewalk repairs on households within the 2021 sidewalk program tomorrow. The impacted households will receive a hand-delivered letter and no parking signs will be posted. Training for officers is crucial for their safety and the safety of the community. Officers bear a heavy burden of responsibility every day and require the best training possible. The recent incident in Nashville is an example of why training is necessary. The Council supports the Division of Police and their work going forward. April is the time for spring cleaning and Earth Day, and the city's annual shred and recycle e-recycle event will take place on April 22, 2023. The

event is an excellent opportunity to get rid of old paperwork, computers, and phones safely. GRIN will be collecting canned goods, non-perishable food, toiletries, and monetary donations throughout the event.

2. City Attorney - None.

I. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember Angelou:

Thanked everyone again who went to the MORPC State of the Region. Wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Councilmember McGregor:

Thanked Jason and Colleen Ruark for their Easter Bunny event on Saturday. Over 200 people took pictures with the Easter Bunny despite the rain and cold weather. Acknowledged the need for a local range for police officers to practice their shooting skills, as it is a perishable skill and not something that can be qualified once without practicing all the time. Time spent at the range is time not spent patrolling streets and interacting with residents. We had a local range before but had to close it down because of lead contamination.

Councilmember Bowers:

Included her constituent reports for February and March in the minutes. Thanked those who speak regularly and not so regularly at Council meetings. Welcomed all ideas on how to better communicate with residents and receive feedback. Electronic notifications for meeting agendas have been implemented, but there is always room for improvement. Thanked those who spoke out about the Sheetz project and opportunities for improving processes. Council has implemented a video option for people to submit comments. Councilmembers host regular constituent hours for residents to ask questions and talk with them individually. Administration welcomes resident engagement and often holds meetings with residents to share additional information or gain perspectives on concerns or issues.

Councilmember Padova:

Thanked the Harshaw family for raising awareness for autism. She has heard Zane, who is a talented artist, and looks forward to hearing him again at the Blues & Jazz Festival. Thanked Sharon Montgomery for working tirelessly to address distracted driving. Thanked the Ruark Family for being an asset to the community. Regretted missing the Bunny and Egg Hunt event due to a sick child but appreciated their efforts.

Councilmember Schnetzer:

Thanks everyone who came to the meeting. Wishes everyone a happy Easter and Passover.

Vice President Weaver:

Thanked guests and proclamation recipients Thanked Mayor for highlighting work of

residents and community members. Thanked Representative Lightbody for visiting Gahanna frequently and working with the city. Attended the MORPC State of the Region event and highlighted the importance of partnerships and collaboration for sustainable growth. Echoed comments made by Ms. Bowers regarding communication. Thanked community members who reached out regarding the Sheetz project and acknowledged the importance of community voices in decision-making.

President Renner:

Thanked everyone for their comments and recognized the good points made by everyone. Thanked Representative Lightbody for providing updates and for doing the work that she does. Thanked the Mayor for the proclamations to the Harshaws and Mrs. Montgomery. Commended Jason and Colleen for their event despite the challenging weather. Thanked 254 Teen Center for their tent and the coloring event. Appreciated Ms. Strohm's comments and recognized that nobody was excited about the project. Acknowledged that Council was trying to navigate their own internal and external processes to understand the project. Believed that Council needs to do a better job of helping the public understand how government works. Appreciated the input received from residents. Disagreed with the derogatory comments made about the police and supports having a firearms range. Has confidence in how the officers are going to deal with the distracted driving training and notes that there is a six-month moratorium for any citations. Believes that through the process and communication with the media and warnings, they will help people understand the new law. Noted that they will see how the law works over time.

[2023-0057](#)

Councilmember Merisa K. Bowers' Constituent Reports - February & March 2023

J. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Renner adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
day of 2023.*

Stephen A. Renner