



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, August 21, 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, August 21, 2023, in Council Chambers. President of Council Stephen A. Renner called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 August 18, 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:

Brenda Johnston, Executive Director of Gahanna Residents In Need (GRIN), of 165 Granville St, Gahanna, OH spoke on MT-0016-2023 Waiver of Permit Fees for GRIN.

Ms. Johnston expressed her gratitude for the consideration of fee waivers for their renovation project. She conveyed their challenges with the timeline, as the project was originally scheduled for completion by July 24th but has been extended to September, incurring additional costs. She thanked the council for any assistance provided and appreciated their support.

D. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

President Renner announced that he would open proceedings for both the Parks Master Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan under the same hearing.

President Renner read the rules of procedure sections 9.10 and 9.11 regarding the public hearing's structure. Pursuant to Council Rules 9.10 & 9.11: The President of Council shall give a brief statement or explanation of

the item under hearing. Prior to the opening of the public hearing, the administration may make a presentation of slides, videos, photos, staff comments, or combination thereof, regarding the application in question. The public hearing shall be opened with any proponents being allowed seven minutes, opponents ten minutes, then three minutes for rebuttal by the proponents. Such time schedule shall prevail unless extended by the President without opposition by a Council member. Everyone addressing Council will approach the lectern and state their names and addresses for the record.

President Renner first offered time to the Administration for any comments on either item. Mayor Jadwin indicated there were no initial remarks but said they would reserve for comment if needed.

1. ORD-0059-2023 - Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

President Renner opened the public hearing for public comment at 7:06 p.m., calling first for any proponents to speak on the Parks Master Plan.

Max Orsley of 691 Vivian Ct, Gahanna, OH spoke in favor of the Parks Master Plan.

Mr. Orsley expressed his support for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, highlighting the significant value that parks bring to a community. He emphasized the importance of public spaces where the community can gather and interact without ownership or cost. Orsley urged the city to consider infrastructure for non-vehicular transportation, such as walking and cycling, and emphasized the need for safe routes that are independent of cars. He suggested including engineering and route planning in discussions about walking and cycling trails, alongside recreational considerations. He concluded by thanking the council for their attention to these matters.

Patricia Kovacs of 527 Haversham Dr, Gahanna, OH spoke in favor of the Parks Master Plan (and Capital Improvement Plan).

Ms. Kovacs expressed her support for both the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan, amalgamating her comments. She indicated that although the Bicycle and Trail Advisory Committee had not reviewed the plans yet, she was speaking based on their prior discussions. Kovacs highlighted several specific projects within the plans. Kovacs first mentioned the Link to Literacy Trail as an exciting project that will connect the library to Creekside, offering cyclists an alternative route to busy Granville Street and creating a scenic trail along Rocky Fork Creek. Next, she discussed the Big Walnut Trail Extension across I-270 on Hamilton Road, which will provide a safe route for walking and cycling to Pizzurro Park. She hoped that completing this section would encourage the addition of a side path along Hamilton Road, connecting Gahanna to Whitehall. She noted the Tech Center Road Expansion from Tech Center to Taylor Station Road as another welcome connection. This expansion will benefit residents, including those living in new apartments along Taylor Station Road. Regarding a Hawk Signal, she assumed it would replace the flashing beacon near the high

school. Kovacs highlighted the safety benefits of the Hawk signal for pedestrians. Kovacs also expressed enthusiasm for various trail projects, including the side path along East Johnstown Road, improvements on Clark State Road, and the Academy Park mountain bike trail. Regarding restrooms and repairs, she praised the addition of restrooms at Lower McCorkle Park and Pizzurro Park, considering them assets to the trail system. Kovacs emphasized the importance of repairing existing trails to maintain safety. Noting equity and accessibility, Kovacs commended the prioritization of equity in transportation and public service projects, aiming to ensure safe walking and biking routes for all neighborhoods. She hoped for prioritization of the West Johnstown route and improvements in accessibility through the ADA Transition Plan. Kovacs concluded by thanking Councilman Weaver and City staff for promptly addressing a trail issue reported by a resident. She also acknowledged the efforts to work with Franklin County to resolve flooding problems under the Morse Johnstown roundabout tunnel. Her comments reflected her excitement and gratitude for the planned improvements in Gahanna.

There were no opposing speakers, and no additional proponents desiring to speak. President Renner closed the public hearing for the Parks Master Plan at 7:11 p.m.

2. ORD-0060-2023 - 2023-2027 Capital Improvement Plan

President Renner opened the public hearing for public comment at 7:11 p.m., calling first for any proponents to speak on the Capital Improvement Plan.

Anthony Carter of 318 Zander Ln, Gahanna, OH, spoke via video as a proponent of the Capital Improvement Plan, expressing his support for the skate park.

Mr. Carter expressed his support for the skate park as a valuable addition for children to have a safe place to play. He also appreciated the idea of enhancing the space, making it more contemporary and incorporating additional activities. Carter acknowledged the skate park as a positive improvement for the community and looked forward to seeing the developments unfold.

Jamie Skinner-Wolf of 967 Pinewood Ln, Gahanna, OH spoke as a proponent of the Capital Improvement Plan, expressing her support for the skate park.

Ms. Skinner-Wolf shared a personal story regarding the significance of the skate park to her family. She recounted that her son, who graduated from Gahanna High School in 2019, spent a lot of time at the skate park, forming friendships and engaging in activities like playing Pokemon Go. Tragically, her son passed away in an accident in 2019. She shared that a candlelight vigil was held at the skate park in his memory, where friends and family gathered. Ms. Skinner-Wolf emphasized the emotional connection the skate park held for her son and how it provided a space for him and his friends to bond and enjoy their time together. She addressed the idea of improving or relocating

the skate park, expressing her support for the current location due to its sentimental value for her family. She highlighted that her father still visits the park, noting her son's name written on a ramp, as a way to honor his memory on special occasions. She emphasized the park's role as a gathering place and its significance to individuals, even if they are not actively skateboarding. Ms. Skinner-Wolf concluded by expressing her gratitude for the opportunity to share her story and underscored the deep importance of the skate park for her family and the community.

Jenny Hecker of 211 Kamilah Ln, Gahanna, OH spoke as a proponent of the Capital Improvement Plan, expressing her support for the action sports park.

Ms. Hecker expressed her appreciation for the sense of community in the city. She highlighted that Gahanna's community spirit is evident in various aspects, such as schools, sports, restaurants, churches, and local businesses. Jenny emphasized the role of the three creeks in bringing the community together and recognized the efforts of the Parks & Recreation team in creating inclusive spaces. Ms. Hecker spoke about Shull, a park that has been a recreational space for children, teens, and adults for activities like skating, scootering, and biking. She noted that the skate park at Shull is currently in disrepair and has become unsafe due to its location, which has led to negative activities. As a result, families have started to travel outside the community for safer recreational options. Ms. Hecker highlighted the need for a new action sports park that would not only provide a gathering place but also offer a safer and more family-friendly environment for skating, scootering, and BMX activities. Additionally, she debunked stereotypes associated with skaters, mentioning that the sport involves various positive skills such as persistence, goal-setting, resilience, and the ability to overcome failure. She shared her 13-year-old son's involvement in advocating for the community and the new skate park. Ms. Hecker expressed her family's gratitude for the opportunity to address the council and urged the approval of the skate park in the Capital Improvement Plan. She mentioned their intention to seek grants and funding to support the project and expressed a willingness to participate in committees to ensure the project's success. Ms. Hecker concluded by emphasizing that while the project involves a significant investment, the benefits for the children and the community as a whole are invaluable.

Jack Hecker of 211 Kamilah Ln, Gahanna, OH spoke as a proponent of the Capital Improvement Plan, expressing his support for the action sports park.

Jack shared his thoughts on the skate park project. He echoed his mother's sentiments, emphasizing the significance of the skate park for him and his friends. Jack expressed that the skate park offers more than just a recreational activity - it teaches important life skills such as persistence and resilience in the face of challenges. He agreed with his mother's assessment of the current state and location of the skate park, indicating that improvements are needed. He believed that with the right funding and support, the skate park could be transformed into a valuable opportunity for the community. Jack conveyed his commitment, along with his friends, to contribute in any way possible to make the project successful.

Lyndsay Mueller of 4194 Berry Ridge Ln, Gahanna, OH spoke as a proponent of the Capital Improvement Plan, expressing support for the skate park.

Mrs. Mueller, a mother of three children, shared her perspective on the importance of an action sports park in Gahanna. She began by highlighting her experience with her own children's behavioral issues and how engaging in BMX racing had a transformative effect on them. Mrs. Mueller emphasized that 18 months of participation in an individual, self-driven sport helped her children overcome challenges and behavioral problems. She underscored the significance of physical stimulation for today's children, noting that many lack opportunities for outdoor activities like she experienced growing up in rural Ohio. She mentioned that organized sports might not be viable for every child due to busy schedules, financial constraints, or personal preferences. Mrs. Mueller advocated for an action sports park that caters to alternative sports like skateboarding and scootering, which promote skills like balance, goal-setting, and resilience. Addressing the current state of the existing park, she pointed out that broken equipment was being removed without replacements, leading to a gradual decline in the availability of such spaces. Mrs. Mueller stressed that not investing in a new action park would result in the fading away of these subcultures and their positive impacts on children's development. In conclusion, she urged the council to allocate funds to support the creation of a new action sports park. She believed that such a park would not only provide a valuable outlet for physical activity but also convey a message to children that their unique interests and talents are valued and supported by the community.

There were no opposing speakers, and no additional proponents desiring to speak. President Renner closed the public hearing for the Capital Improvement Plan at 7:26 p.m.

E. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

[2023-0144](#)

CN Minutes 8.7.2023

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2023-0145](#)

COTW Minutes 8.14.2023

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

[2023-0146](#)

FIN Minutes 8.14.2023

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Motions:

[MT-0016-2023](#) A MOTION TO WAIVE FEES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$912.07, PURSUANT TO SECTION 135.11 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, FOR GAHANNA RESIDENTS IN NEED (GRIN) RELATED TO THEIR RELOCATION AND RENOVATION

The Motion was approved on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

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

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

F. RESOLUTIONS:

[RES-0028-2023](#) A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2024 SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AREA

Vice President Weaver commended Director Komlanc, the staff, and the administration for their efforts in enhancing the sidewalk maintenance program. He expressed his appreciation for the improvements made to the program, which he believed would lead to a more favorable experience for constituents while ensuring the required enhancements to Gahanna's sidewalk infrastructure.

Councilmember Bowers sought clarification on the increase in the program area from what was previously discussed in the committee meeting. Mayor Jadwin inquired if the amendment to the program area was indeed discussed during the previous week's committee meeting. Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc confirmed that the discussion took place and explained that they had expanded the sidewalk area slightly beyond the mill and overlay projected work. This extension aimed to establish more logical termini and enhance sidewalk continuity, encompassing around half a mile of additional sidewalk.

Councilmember Bowers sought clarification on the nature of the resolution, confirming that it pertained to the first reading and adoption of the resolution. She further clarified that the exhibit A identified as the second revised program property map was being adopted. Director Komlanc confirmed the accuracy of her understanding and added that this step would enable the issuance of notices to residents within the program area regarding sidewalk defects. He explained that residents would have the option to rectify the issues themselves by obtaining right-of-way permits or to have the corrective work included in the scheduled 2024 sidewalk improvements, set to be bid in the first quarter of 2024.

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

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

[RES-0029-2023](#) A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE NECESSITY TO REPAIR AND/OR REPLACE SIDEWALKS IN THE 2024 SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AREA FOR THE CITY OF GAHANNA

Councilmember Bowers reiterated her comment under RES-0028-2023, emphasizing that the adoption here pertained to "Exhibit A" identified as the second revised version in the attachment list accompanying the resolution. She sought confirmation from the clerk to ensure the accuracy of her statement. The clerk confirmed her understanding.

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

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

G. ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING:

[ORD-0062-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PROVIDE CONSENT AND ENTER A PARTICIPATORY AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR JOINT PLANS FOR REHABILITATION OF THE HAMILTON ROAD BRIDGE OVER INTERSTATE 270

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

[ORD-0063-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TECH CENTER DRIVE EXTENSION (ST-1086)

President Renner introduced the Ordinance and read it by title.

H. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING / ADOPTION:

[ORD-0059-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY OF GAHANNA PARKS & RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

Vice President Weaver expressed his desire for a brief update on the plans for the skate park or action park from Director of Parks & Recreation Stephania Ferrell. He acknowledged the extensive discussions that had taken place regarding this matter in prior meetings and sought clarity on the current status of the plans. Director Ferrell appreciated the attention and discussions surrounding the skate park and action park. She conveyed that throughout the planning process, it had been recognized that Shull Park was in disrepair and that its current location was not ideal for the skate park. She highlighted that the Parks Master Plan had identified the need to update and improve the park. The concept of an action park emerged as an opportunity to not only modernize the existing facilities but also to create a space that could accommodate a variety of wheeled activities, such as pump tracks and BMX. Director Ferrell emphasized that the goal was to develop a special and contemporary space that would cater to individuals of all ages, from young children to adults, and provide a comprehensive learning and recreational experience for the community.

Councilmember Bowers inquired about the budget estimate included in the Capital Improvement Plan and whether it was a flexible estimate that could potentially be supplemented by foundation support or grant funding for the project. Director Ferrell confirmed that the estimate was indeed broad and not limited to tax dollars. She explained that the budget allocation was split over two years, with the first year primarily focused on evaluating the park's design and vision in collaboration with its potential users. Director Ferrell also mentioned that there were already identified grants, including those from the Tony Hawk Foundation, that could contribute to the construction of the park. She emphasized that the department would continue to explore various strategies to secure additional grant funding and support from the community, which would serve to enhance and extend the project's budgetary resources.

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

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

A motion was made by Bowers, seconded by Weaver, that ORD-0060-2023 be Amended to substitute "DOS-ATT - 2023-2027 Gahanna Capital Improvement Plan (1st Revision)" as the new EXHIBIT A.

President Renner acknowledged the need for an amendment and expressed gratitude for Councilwoman Bowers' reminder. He sought clarification regarding whether the amendment was included as part of the agenda for the meeting.

Clerk VanMeter confirmed that President Renner was referring to the addition of an additional advisory committee member (a third member of council) for the Capital Improvement Plan. He clarified that this update had been incorporated into the file attachment.

Councilmember Bowers asked if a motion to adopt the amendment was in order.

President Renner sought clarification from the city attorney to ensure a clear understanding of the procedural requirements.

Attorney Mularski advised that if the matter being discussed was not included in the initial first reading and discussion, then it should be treated as an amendment to the original proposal.

President Renner confirmed it had not been discussed during first reading.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

[ORD-0060-2023](#)

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY OF GAHANNA 2023-2027 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Vice President Weaver expressed his gratitude towards the staff for their

dedicated effort in assembling the Capital Improvement Plan, as well as for their responsiveness in addressing questions from both the community and the council. He also extended his thanks to all those who had participated in the process, whether by attending meetings, voicing their opinions, or reaching out through various channels. Vice President Weaver voiced his support for the Capital Improvement Plan, highlighting its role in establishing a framework for future planning, which has been made possible by the approval of Issue 12 and the community's generosity. He acknowledged that while the plan might not be flawless, he appreciated its adaptability and flexibility for future modifications and iterations based on changing needs and circumstances.

Councilmember McGregor shared her perspective on the Capital Improvement Plan, highlighting that the plan has been developed over an extensive period of time. She emphasized that the plan is exactly what its name suggests - a plan. It serves as a comprehensive list of identified projects that are anticipated to be undertaken in the future. However, Councilmember McGregor clarified that the plan does not include specific budget allocations for these projects. Instead, it serves as a roadmap to guide the city in strategically addressing upcoming needs. She used an analogy of household planning to illustrate how priorities can change over time, and how the plan allows for adjustments and additions based on evolving circumstances. Councilmember McGregor concluded by reiterating that, at this stage, no funds have been allocated to the projects outlined in the plan.

Councilmember Angelou expressed her support for the Capital Improvement Plan.

Councilmember Bowers expressed her gratitude to Director Schultz for his diligent efforts in addressing the concerns raised by the Council and for being responsive to those concerns. She acknowledged the value of the mechanism in place to facilitate efficient updates and improve the exchange of knowledge among the Council and city departments. Councilmember Bowers also appreciated the comments made by Councilmembers McGregor and Weaver, emphasizing that the Capital Improvement Plan serves as a tool to anticipate potential requests from various departments over the next five years. She reiterated that the plan doesn't allocate funding to specific projects but rather guides the city's anticipation of needs and priorities. Councilmember Bowers highlighted that alternative funding sources, modifications, and amendments to the plan remain possible. She also underlined the importance of ongoing resident engagement in the budget process through public hearings and recognized the commitment of Director Ferrell and other directors to involving residents in project discussions. Councilmember Bowers expressed her satisfaction with the progress being made and looked forward to moving forward with the project.

President Renner commended his fellow colleagues for effectively highlighting the key points regarding the Capital Improvement Plan. He acknowledged that discussions around this plan have spanned over a year and noted the importance of having not just a project list, but also a robust and transparent process for selecting and integrating these projects into the

city's budgetary discussions. President Renner emphasized the significance of the advisory committee, composed of three Council members and the administration, which ensures regular updates and accountability by reporting back to the public and Council quarterly on the progress made. He applauded the collaborative efforts of staff, the mayor, and his Council colleagues in shaping this comprehensive legislation and process. President Renner also recognized that while the legislation is significant, its true impact will be revealed during its implementation. He stressed the responsibility of Council to uphold the process's integrity and ensure its effective execution. Lastly, President Renner reiterated the fact that the plan does not allocate specific funding to projects and clarified that the allocation of funds takes place during appropriations discussions, as is customary.

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

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

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk

Clerk VanMeter reminded everyone about the upcoming MORPC Summit on Sustainability scheduled for Thursday, October 26th. The Council Office had arranged to purchase a table for the event, and members were requested to RSVP as soon as possible. An invitation to attend had also been extended to the Planning Commission members.

2. Council - None.

J. REPRESENTATIVES:

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

Vice President Weaver reported that the CIC had convened on August 15th at 8 am in the Committee Room. During the meeting, an update was provided by the Office of the Mayor on various development projects across the city, including the Ortho One project, which involved constructing a 60,000+ square foot facility in the Crescent area, aiming to become the largest private payroll provider in the city. From the development committee, it was shared that the Tax Incentive Review Council meeting was scheduled for August 29th. The Gahanna 175 committee had its first meeting last week, attended by 30 to 35 individuals, including representatives from the Arts Council, CVB, and other community members. The committee aimed to increase participation and held its subsequent meeting on August 30th at the Senior Center at 6:30 p.m. The CIC also entered into an executive session. The next CIC meeting was set for September 19th at 8 am in the Committee Room. Detailed information and minutes were available on the Gahannacivic.com website, although it was noted that there had been a delay in uploading recent minutes. Vice President Weaver requested that administrative staff work on

rectifying this.

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

Councilmember Angelou provided updates on various activities and discussions at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. First, she mentioned that MORPC had hosted a rail safety progress forum before the last commission meeting. The forum aimed to address efforts at local, state, and federal levels to mitigate risks associated with rail operations and minimize potential harms. Several panelists, including State Senator Bill Reineke, Bryan Gray representing Senator J.D. Vance, Homer Carlisle representing Senator Sherrod Brown, and Jeff Young, Director of Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security, participated in discussions. The focus was on steps that local governments could take to prevent and prepare for derailments, along with available resources for communities in the region. This forum was significant in the context of recent rail-related incidents, such as the one in East Palestine. Councilmember Angelou moved on to discuss the MORPC's comprehensive financial report for 2022, which had earned the Ohio Auditor of State's Award with distinction. She highlighted that this award recognized MORPC's commitment to financial reporting excellence, marking the ninth consecutive award for the organization. She touched upon the new brand adopted by MORPC, showcasing a visual representation of it. The branding aimed to build brand understanding, relevance, and redundancy, with a mission, vision, and elevator pitch describing MORPC's roles and services. Councilmember Angelou stressed the importance of sharing this information to help people understand MORPC's initiatives and impact. Councilmember Angelou proceeded to mention the passage and adoption of MORPC's 2023 and 2025 Regional Data Agenda. She also highlighted an important development involving an intergovernmental agreement with the Central Ohio Transit Authority for transit support infrastructure programs. This agreement pertained to the allocation of sales tax revenues collected by the transit authority for funding the LinkUS Transit Supportive Infrastructure Program. In her closing remarks, Councilmember Angelou noted the departure of Erik Janas, recognized Mayor Jadwin's involvement in the Summit on Sustainability, and expressed her appreciation for involvement in MORPC's events and discussions.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova shared updates regarding recent and upcoming events as part of her CVB report. She mentioned that the "Midweek at the Creek" series had concluded, although one event scheduled for July 26 had been canceled due to adverse weather conditions. The performance by "Honey and Blue," originally planned for July 26, was rescheduled. Therefore, there was one more "Midweek at the Creek" event scheduled for September 20 from 6 to 8 PM at Creekside. Councilmember Padova informed attendees about the upcoming "Herbal Cocktail Trail" set to begin in September. This new trail would offer participants the chance to explore various establishments and enjoy herbal cocktails. The trail included Nativo, a restaurant participating for the first time, bringing the total number of

participating venues to 11. She also highlighted two upcoming events for community members to mark on their calendars. The first was the "Holiday Lights Celebration" at Creekside, scheduled for November 19, from 3 to 6:30 PM. Additionally, the "Santa Race 5K" was planned for December 2 at 9:00 AM. Councilmember Padova acknowledged that discussing a Santa-themed event while the weather was warm might seem odd, but she emphasized that the event would arrive sooner than expected.

4. School Board (SB) - Bowers

Reflecting on Councilmember Padova's CVB report, Councilmember Bowers expressed her excitement about the upcoming "Santa Race," highlighting that it's never too early to start thinking about the event. She shared that the Santa race was one of her favorite events and encouraged everyone to look forward to it.

Councilmember Bowers also acknowledged the successful start of the new school year and extended a warm welcome to Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools (GJPS) students and staff. She mentioned a recent quarterly meeting where productive discussions took place. She thanked Director Hamons, Director Bury, and school Finance Officer Scott Gooding for their collaborative efforts in reviewing the return-on-investment projections for Ortho One and using them as a model to discuss the impact of economic development projects on the finances and interconnectedness of the entities involved. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to engage in productive dialogue with one of the community's critical partners. She announced that the next quarterly meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 15th, at 6 PM.

K. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin shared updates on various city matters and upcoming events. She began by expressing her gratitude for the strong attendance and the valuable comments provided during the public hearings for the Parks Master Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). She acknowledged the community's input over the past several months and even years, emphasizing the importance of public engagement in shaping these plans. The CIP, she mentioned, was constructed from several community plans, including the strategic plan, the Thoroughfare plan, and the Land Use Plan, which reflects the collective vision for the city's development. The Mayor praised the dedicated work that went into crafting the Parks Master Plan. She highlighted the extensive process involving focus groups, surveys, stakeholder discussions, and Town Hall meetings. She expressed her gratitude to Director Ferrell and her team for their diligent efforts in preparing the draft versions of the plan. Furthermore, Mayor Jadwin acknowledged Council's support for the Parks Master Plan, underscoring its role in guiding Gahanna's recreational and park programs for generations to come. Transitioning to the Capital Improvement Plan, she emphasized that the

plan's development began over a year and a half ago. She acknowledged Councilman Schnetzer's instrumental role in initiating conversations about the necessity of such a plan. Mayor Jadwin recognized Issue 12's significance in establishing a dedicated funding source for addressing long-overdue infrastructure projects. The Mayor stressed that both the Parks Master Plan and the CIP are dynamic documents meant to evolve over time. She highlighted their flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances and accommodating new projects that may emerge. She also welcomed ongoing community input as budgets are developed and projects are undertaken. Mayor Jadwin then discussed Gahanna's participation in the Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) program developed by MORPC. She expressed excitement about this opportunity, which will have a positive impact on the city's transportation infrastructure and connectivity. The Mayor proceeded to touch on several recent events, including the volunteer efforts by students from Columbus Academy in the city's parks. She mentioned that more than 200 volunteers participated in various service projects throughout the city. She also referenced a recent discussion on student mental health, which was organized in partnership with the Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools. The conversation featured panelists from organizations such as the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation and Maryhaven. The insights shared during the discussion will be integrated into both the city's recreational programs and internal staff programs. Mayor Jadwin acknowledged the Gahanna Division of Police's prompt response to a recent shooting incident on I-270. She mentioned that officers' rapid reaction was pivotal in stabilizing the victim and gathering crucial evidence, ultimately aiding in the identification and apprehension of the suspect. With the onset of hot weather, the Mayor reminded residents to take precautions, including staying hydrated and seeking shade. She noted that AEP had shared valuable tips on dealing with extreme temperatures, which were posted on the city's social media platforms. Mayor Jadwin concluded by announcing several upcoming events. These include the VFW Post 4719's first annual golf scramble, Supporting Gahanna Together Day on Saturday with various community activities, and the Taste of Gahanna event. She encouraged participation in these events and invited residents to visit the Gahanna Chamber's website for further information on upcoming activities.

2. City Attorney

Attorney Mularski expressed his apologies to the council for his slight delay, explaining that he had been addressing a security concern related to an upcoming event.

L. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember Angelou took a moment to extend her congratulations and gratitude to all the individuals working diligently for the city. She expressed her appreciation to the directors and staff for their exceptional work and accomplishments.

Councilmember McGregor expressed her gratitude towards the community members who attended the meeting to discuss various issues, particularly

acknowledging the courage of Jack Hecker for addressing the council. She also reported on the successful inaugural Founders Day event held at the Historical Society on the 12th. Despite the hot weather, the event saw a significant turnout, with attendees enjoying music and activities. She expressed appreciation for the community's support and mentioned the positive reception of the newly painted house, the Lily Stone bed and breakfast. She concluded by thanking everyone for their involvement and support.

Councilmember Bowers expressed her appreciation to Councilmember McGregor for highlighting the Lily Stone's paint color, Rosemary, which is fitting for the Herb Capital. She congratulated the Historical Society on the successful Founders Day event and acknowledged the community's engagement and participation in various topics, particularly mentioning mental health issues and holistic safety. She extended her condolences to Ms. Skinner and thanked her for sharing her son's connection to the community. Councilmember Bowers thanked the community for the exceptional voter turnout of over 50 percent in the recent special election, emphasizing the importance of exercising the right to vote. She also appreciated the Mayor's mention of the Wynyki Alston Foundation and its presentation on available resources for different populations, including youth, veterans, and First Responders. She highlighted her attendance at the Prevention Action Alliance annual meeting, where former U.S. Representative Patrick Kennedy addressed municipal leaders to prioritize people over profit and make decisions that benefit the residents. She thanked Clerk VanMeter for including her constituent report in the agenda, mentioning some of the positive events in July. Councilmember Bowers shared her plans to attend the Supporting Gahanna Together Day event and encouraged residents to sign up for volunteer activities. She also reminded everyone about the upcoming fall litter cleanup hosted by Make Gahanna Yours

Councilmember Padova thanked all the residents who participated and spoke during the meeting, emphasizing the importance of resident input. She offered a special thank you to Ms. Skinner for sharing her story, hoping that the new skate park would bring joy to the next generation as the current one did for her son. Councilmember Padova commended the Parks & Recreation team for their efforts in organizing Creekside Live, mentioning her positive experience attending one of the events. She acknowledged the team's dedication to creating enjoyable experiences for the community. She shared her recent volunteer experience with GRIN at the back-to-school fair, where over 700 backpacks were distributed to students. She praised the well-organized setup and the positive atmosphere at the event. Councilmember Padova extended her thanks to GRIN for ensuring that children have the necessary supplies for school and acknowledged the volunteers who contributed to the event's success. Lastly, Councilmember Padova expressed her gratitude to her colleagues for supporting GRIN with additional funds during the meeting, recognizing that the extra resources would be beneficial as the pantry's demand had increased in recent years.

Vice President Weaver began by sharing updates from the recent MORPC Regional Policy Roundtable meeting, which took place on Tuesday, the 15th.

Peter Marbach from Senator Vance's office provided an update on legislative efforts, and Executive Director William Murdock highlighted federal funding opportunities that localities could tap into. Vice President Weaver acknowledged the Gahanna staff for their diligence in seeking external funding opportunities. Vice President Weaver mentioned MORPC's pursuit of designation as a regional tech and innovation hub, potentially unlocking \$75 million in grant funding. Advocacy efforts were focused on the state operating budget, which was signed into law on July 3rd. He noted that the budget included over \$100 million in low-income housing tax credits per fiscal year, as well as the creation of a \$700 million strategic community investment fund for transportation and community projects. He highlighted MORPC's upcoming "Trails Advocacy Day" on October 17th and announced that the next Roundtable meeting would be held on November 14th at 1:30 PM. Expressing his gratitude, Vice President Weaver thanked everyone who attended the meeting and shared their stories. He emphasized the impact of hearing directly from residents and constituents, stating that such interactions were the most meaningful aspect of their roles as council members. He encouraged continued engagement and thanked everyone for their participation.

President Renner expressed his agreement with the previous comments, noting that the emphasis on engagement was also on his mind. He extended his thanks to everyone who spoke and engaged in the discussion, highlighting the significance of community involvement. He directly addressed Ms. Skinner and thanked her for speaking candidly about her experience. Additionally, he thanked Ms. Hecker for her outreach and kindness shown in support of Ms. Skinner during the meeting.

[2023-0148](#)

Councilmember Merisa K. Bowers' Constituent Report - July 2023

M. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Renner adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

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

Stephen A. Renner