

Mayor's Report & Comments
City of Gahanna
Regular Council Meeting – May 18, 2020
Mayor Laurie A. Jadwin

In light of the virtual meeting aspect of tonight's Regular Council Meeting, I respectfully submit the following report from the Mayor's Office for Monday, May 18, 2020:

City Operations

- *Re-openings:*
 - The Gahanna Golf Course re-opened on Friday, May 8, with protocols in place for the protection of golfers and staff.
 - Pizzurro Dog Park was re-opened on Friday, May 15.
 - With the opening of restaurant outdoor dining, the public restrooms at Creekside also re-opened on May 15. The restrooms will be open from the hours of 8am – 8pm, with regular cleaning scheduled throughout the day per the state's protocols.
- *Creekside Project Status:* The initial phase of the Creekside project was completed last week, with minimal disruption to residents and tenants. Due to a COVID-19 related delay in shipping of equipment needed for the next phase, it is expected that the project will be completed in the next several weeks.
- *Fourth of July Festivities Postponed:* After extensive discussions with our state and county public health partners, representatives from the Governor's office and peer communities, and upon the joint recommendation of COMMA (Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association) and FCTA (Franklin County Townships Association), the decision was made to postpone the City's Fourth of July celebration festivities until Labor Day weekend. This decision was based upon the ongoing circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 crisis and the uncertainties that currently exist as to whether large scale events will be permitted to take place by July 4. Discussions are underway with the Gahanna Lions Club regarding potential dates for rescheduling the annual parade.

In the meantime, the Gahanna Parks & Rec Team is working on plans for activities for the community to celebrate Independence Day in a safe manner that will not conflict with any "gathering" prohibitions that may still be in place. The Administration invites the community to share their ideas by contacting Mayor@gahanna.gov.

- *Re-Opening Gahanna:* As Gahanna businesses begin to re-open following the last eight weeks of COVID-19 closures and restrictions, the Administration is working in collaboration with the Gahanna Area Chamber of Commerce, the Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Gahanna Community Improvement Corporation in leading an overall, collaborative plan to assist our local businesses with the resources they need to return to business.

- *City Hall Hours:* City Hall will re-open to visitors *only by appointment* on June 1. For the time being, we will continue to accept bill payments only online and via the night drop box. Public meetings will continue to be held virtually, while non-essential meetings will be suspended. As we prepare for re-opening to the public, physical adjustments will be made to the building to protect staff and to reduce the risk of spread of the virus.
- *Staff Impacts:* Given the continued limitation on public traffic within City Hall and the financial impact of COVID-19 on projected city revenues, the difficult decision was made to furlough eight (8) part-time employees. The job duties for these particular positions were heavily focused on customer interactions with the public. With the expected delay in resuming these services together with revised facility operations as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, the impacted positions and duties are not currently needed. As furloughed employees, the affected team members remain city employees, and are eligible to receive unemployment compensation during this time. We hope to be in a position to return them to work as soon as possible.
- *Pools and Day Camps:* Last Thursday, Gov. DeWine surprised many by announcing that public pools and day camps may open on May 26 and May 31, respectively. Protocols for operating both were issued over the weekend. Our staff currently is reviewing the guidelines and the feasibility of operating pools and conducting camps in compliance with these protocols. During an extended call late this afternoon with COMMA that involved multiple municipalities from the Columbus Region, the Franklin County Public Health Department announced that it expects to issue a written recommendation later this week, offering their guidance for re-opening of pools and camps. Pending the recommendation of our public health partner, we will continue to evaluate all of the variables that impact this decision.

COVID-19 Communications

It has been nine weeks since the sudden onset of COVID-19 began to impact our community with sheltering restrictions, business closures and more. During that time, the Administration has had to shift focus to responding to constantly changing circumstances around the virus and state-issued orders. This included making every effort to engage residents and keep them informed on what was happening in the City and around the state. Below is a brief summary of the Administration's communication reach since 3/12/20 (Governor's announced school closure):

- Launched special "coronavirus" page on gahanna.gov to provide up-to-date information and resources for residents and businesses (3/14/20) (updated daily)
 - Total visits to "coronavirus" page alone: 9,609
- Produced 9 PSA COVID-19 videos (3/21, 3/24, 3/26, 3/30, 4/2, 4/10, 4/21, 4/25)
- Produced State of the City video (3/31)
- Created 49 COVID-19 posts with updated information (separate from PSA videos)
- Created 69 community resource posts
- Total combined reach: 1,045,244 (how many times posts were read)

General Announcements

- The week of May 17-23, 2020 is National Public Works Day, dedicated to recognizing the workers who provide critical infrastructure, facilities and services that are of vital importance to sustainable communities.
- *Community Partnerships:*
 - Over the past two weeks, our Public Safety Team, City Attorney and Mayor's office has been working with Superintendent Steve Barrett and his team as they finalize plans for a graduation ceremonial walk for the 2020 GLHS Seniors, scheduled May 26-29.
 - To support these special members of our community, a proclamation will be issued next week to designate May 25 – 31 as "GLHS Class of 2020 Week" in Gahanna.
 - In partnership with Gahanna Hardware, the City is encouraging residents to purchase blue and yellow light bulbs at Gahanna Hardware, to shine all of next week in honor of the GLHS Class of 2020.

From our Franklin County Public Health Partners:

- African American Male Wellness Agency – MASC UP Columbus
The African American Male Wellness Agency is giving away free COVID-19 care packages, which include masks and hand sanitizer, this week!

Monday, May 18 at 5pm
Legacy Point (1245 Mt. Vernon Ave)

Tuesday, May 19
Family Missionary Baptist Church (996 Oakwood Ave) at 11am
Starting Point Family Center (2533 Lockbourne Rd) at 4pm

Wednesday, May 20 at 10am
Van Buren Village (650 Van Buren Dr.)

Thursday, May 21 at 3pm
St. Stephens Community House (1500 E 17th Ave)

Friday, May 22 at 11am
Academy for Urban Scholars (1808 E Broad St.)

- CelebrateOne - Safe Sleep Ambassador Training
Become a Safe Sleep Ambassador and help babies celebrate their first birthday! Columbus Public Health and CelebrateOne's infant safe sleep experts will teach you the ABC's of safe sleep and certify you as a Safe Sleep Ambassador. You will be ready to share your knowledge with friends, parents, and anyone caring for newborns and infants, and you'll be part of the solution to ensure our babies thrive. ALL are welcome!

All trainings are being held via WebEx. For questions or to RSVP for a training, contact Sarah Posten at SLPosten@columbus.gov.

Upcoming Dates:

Tuesday, May 26 at 10am

Thursday, June 4 at 1pm

Tuesday, June 23