



City News

July 24, 2014

It's Time To Turn Page to Life's Next Chapter

Guest Column

[*ThisWeek Community News*](#)

By Mayor Becky Stinchcomb

Recently, I made the difficult decision not to seek re-election to the office of mayor of the city of Gahanna next year. I plan to complete my current term, which ends Jan. 2, 2016. After that date, after 24 years in public office in our city, I owe it to my family, who has sacrificed much to support me in this job, to return to private life. I made the decision on this timing even before the last election, as our nation's founding fathers believed no one should hold elected office forever, even if they continue to win re-election, as I have been blessed to have done.



Why am I declaring this now? Our city's charter (our

Upcoming Events

July 25, 2014

Creekside Live

Soul Kitchn (Funk & Soul) with Pett Crow (Blues)
6:00 p.m.

July 26, 2014

Coffee with Council

9:00 a.m.

July 28, 2014

Council Committees

7:00 p.m.

**Spring/Summer
2014 Gateway
Program Guide**

Constitution) mandates a petition-filing deadline of early February 2015 for anyone interested in running for mayor for the next term. That date is only six months away, and I feel strongly that it is my duty to ascertain that any interested candidates for mayor have plenty of time to organize their upcoming campaigns.

I also feel it is imperative that citizens are fully aware of a petition that is being circulated to place an issue on the ballot this November. This petition calls for a total rewrite of our city's charter, to remove the full-time mayor and replace the position with a city manager. There are many cities that function well with a city manager or administrator, and I am not necessarily opposed to this idea. The timing to have this discussion is right, as this is the first time in over three decades that there will not be an incumbent running for mayor.

However, I have large concerns with the petition that is circulating, as it calls for the mayor and the council president to be the same person and strips the mayor of all veto power. Our founding fathers believed in the separation of powers, three branches of government and the checks and balances this democratic form of government we hold so dear provides. The city-manager form is quite parliamentary, with four or five council members holding all the power. Checks and balances inherent in good government would be eliminated.

Whether the mayor is full time or part time is not the issue, in my view. But we should have a mayor who is separately elected by all citizens, one who holds veto power and has some say over the hiring and firing of the city manager. Or the mayor could hire a city administrator that works for him or her if the desire is to have a government that is "professionally managed," which today seems to mean possessing a master's degree in public policy. Of course, I believe that our city is currently professionally managed; but putting my own resume and experience aside, we are blessed to have several directors who have the education and experience to be a city manager right now; the directors and deputy directors all are experts in their fields, and one could not wish for a better team of professionals than those we have now. It is my hope the new folks retain these people to continue to serve Gahanna for the future.



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City of Gahanna
200 South Hamilton
Gahanna, OH 43230

614.342.4000
614.342.4100 Fax

Hours of Operation
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
M-F

www.gahanna.gov

**"Get to Know
Gahanna"**

Our current charter, which has served us well for many decades, outlines the way Gahanna's early city leaders felt the charter should be changed. It calls for City Council to call the Charter Review Commission and for the individuals appointed to this commission to study any changes and recommend them to citizens for placement on the ballot. Indeed, this commission, which must be called at least every five years, several times has considered the city-manager form, and the majority repeatedly has chosen not to recommend this change to the voters. If we are to fundamentally change our entire government, a laborious and expensive undertaking, I urge my fellow citizens to only entertain this with careful consideration.

In addition, changing the charter/constitution is not a good way to simply remove elected officials whom you do not like or with whom you do not agree. That's what elections are for.

The city's financial struggles are not due to the form of government we have. If one compares us to Westerville, Dublin, New Albany, etc, the important factor that sets us apart today is the amount of revenue they have, not their form of government.

No matter the outcome, however, I am looking forward to my remaining year-and-a-half in office to continue to make Gahanna, to the best of my ability, one of the best places to live and call your hometown and to ensure an orderly and smooth transition to our next set of city leaders.



Missed some City of Gahanna Update editions?

Check out previous editions [here](#)



Community News & Events

Do Your Part to Prevent West Nile Virus



Franklin County Public Health has been receiving test results confirming mosquitoes in the county are carrying West Nile virus (WNV). The department has been actively trapping mosquitoes throughout the county since early May.

It is not unexpected to see WNV in mosquitoes in our community. WNV has been present for many years and historically begins to show up at this time of the year. It is a good reminder for residents to take precautionary steps to protect themselves and their families.

- Wear insect repellent containing DEET (follow package directions)
- Limit outdoor activity at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active
- Eliminate all standing water around your home (mosquitoes breed in water and it doesn't take much)

WNV can be transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Symptoms include mild fever, headache and body aches, often with skin rash and swollen lymph glands. Eighty percent of people bitten by an infected mosquito will not show any symptoms at all. Less than one percent of those who do have symptoms will become severely ill. Franklin County had two human cases of WNV in 2012 and none in 2013. Prior to that, there had not been a human case here since 2006.

Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) will continue their comprehensive mosquito control program throughout the mosquito season. Forty-eight mosquito traps are set weekly throughout the county to identify and monitor

disease-carrying mosquitoes. The mosquitoes in each trap are identified and grouped into pools of fifty. Based on historical data and/or high trap counts, some mosquito pools are RAMP (Rapid Analyte Measurement Platform) tested in our facility to give us quick WNV results. Additionally, staff will continue work to eliminate standing water or will treat standing water with larvicide (to prevent larvae from hatching). Spraying will be determined and scheduled based on the number of disease-carrying mosquitoes and/or the presence of WNV identified through trap data.

Detailed information about the mosquito program and a form to request service or report an area of concern is available on the FCPH web site at www.myfcph.org. You can also call the Franklin County Public Health's Mosquito Bite Line at (614) 525-BITE (2483).

To receive notifications regarding mosquitoes or spray schedule, follow [Franklin County Public Health](#) on Facebook and/or [FC PublicHealth](#) on Twitter.



Creekside Live returns this Friday, July 25 on the Rotary Stage at Creekside Plaza beginning at 6 p.m. This week Soul Kitchn (Funk & Soul) will take center stage and Pett Crow (Blues) will perform at 8 p.m. Enjoy dinner at Creekside and bring your lawn chair for an evening with friends and live music!

The Creekside Live concert series is made possible once again through partnerships with the Gahanna Parks & Recreation Foundation (GPRF), Strathmore Development

Co. and Yuengling. New partners this year include Gahanna Rotary, Funtrail Vehicle Accessories and Lew Griffin Insurance.

Click [here](#) for the full schedule.

Coffee with Council

July 26, 2014



Throughout the year, Gahanna City Council will host a series of informal public meetings to engage citizens about various issues impacting the community. These meetings provide a platform for Gahanna citizens to ask questions and/or express their concerns with members of Council. The next meeting is scheduled for:

Saturday, July 26, 2014
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Creekside Cafe
53 Granville Street (upstairs)

For more information, contact the Council Clerk's office at 614.342.4090. To view notes from previous meetings, click [here](#).

**"Get Going Gahanna"
Family Health & Fitness Expo**
August 20, 2014



The Gahanna Area Chamber will host its first Gahanna Area Chamber of Commerce Family Health & Fitness Expo in partnership with Wellness Collective, Gahanna/John E. Bickley YMCA and City of Gahanna Parks & Recreation Department. The expo will take place on Wednesday, August 20, 2014 from 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Gahanna/John E. Bickley YMCA, located at 555 YMCA Place, Gahanna, Ohio 43230.

The event is designed to provide access to senior information and resources, health screenings, nutrition and wellness education for all ages. This event is made possible by The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

The expo is free and open to the community.

Limited number of spaces are available to members in the Health & Fitness industry, so reserve your spot today! For sponsorship and exhibitor details, call 614.471.0451.