

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP/COUNCIL MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 27, 2018**

West Reading Borough Council held a Budget Workshop and Council Meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 with the following persons present: Council President Nicholas Imbesi; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Suzanne Thompson and David Amato; Police Chief Stephen Powell; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Recreation Director Helen Moyer; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman; and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Council Members Kirk Mullen, Nicholas Gardecki and Christopher Lincoln were unable to attend.

**VISITORS PRESENT:** There were no visitors.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Council President Nicholas Imbesi called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were no public comments.

**PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE:**

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has notified Mr. Imbesi that the Borough has not been selected to receive a grant award this year to install a pedestrian bridge. A meeting has been scheduled with UGI representatives to discuss the potential installation of a gas line across the proposed pedestrian bridge.

**ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE 2019 CONTRACT:**

Mrs. Hoffman noted a meeting being held at the Center for Excellence in Local Government on Wednesday, November 28, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the proposed 2019 Animal Rescue League Contract and requested a member from West Reading attend this meeting. Mayor Andrew Kearney volunteered to attend the meeting. Council members discussed at length the actual services performed and the costly contract during a difficult budget season.

Motion to deny the \$2 per capita annual fee based on the 2010 U.S. Census data that would be billed on a quarterly basis to provide animal control services in the Borough. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

**NARROW FABRIC SUBDIVISION:**

Mrs. Hoffman noted a recommendation received from the Borough Solicitor to release the eighteen-month maintenance agreement in the amount of \$146,071.13 to Fulton Bank that was retained from the dedication of Barnhardt Way, Silk Drive and Chiffon Way within this subdivision.

Motion to authorize the Borough Manager to release the line of credit to Fulton Bank in the amount of \$146,071.13. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 4-0.**

**2019 DRAFT BUDGET**

Mr. Imbesi presented the proposed 2019 budget.

- 01-310-800 Business Privilege Tax – Council members discussed recent losses and current year-to-date revenues and decided to raise the amount from \$250,000 to \$270,000 for the 2019 proposed budget.
- 01-310-200 Earned Income Tax – Council members reviewed the history of revenues and decided to raise the proposed 2019 budget \$10,000 to \$550,000. Review of this line item was suggested following receipt of the December 5<sup>th</sup> payment.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT:**

Mrs. Hoffman noted a meeting held earlier today with representatives from Tower Health and the continued experience of project delays due to the length of time to complete commercial plan reviews. Council members authorized Mrs. Hoffman to obtain quotes from other engineering firms to perform commercial plan review and inspections. Also, the hiring of a Code Department Manager for the last half of 2019 was kept within the proposed budget.

**SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS:**

Funding of the school crossing guard program was discussed at length. Due to the lack of an agreement and a desire to fund the school crossing guard program within school taxes, a motion was made to deny funding of this program by Mr. Amato and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **In favor of the motion:** Ms. Thompson, Mr. Imbesi and Mr. Amato. **Against the motion:** Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 3-1.**

**PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR SALARY:**

Mrs. Hoffman requested a marginal increase to the Public Works Director salary to balance the wages earned while working alongside crew members earning overtime. Council members agreed to raise the Public Works Director salary to \$70,000.

**PARKING KIOSK:**

The unknown expense to purchase a parking kiosk following the trial period was not included within the 2019 proposed budget. However, the Wyomissing Foundation has offered a low-interest loan to purchase the kiosk.

**RATE INCREASES:**

Council members discussed the cost per household or business to raise taxes, water and sewer rates for 2019. The revisions noted above provided an updated budget surplus of \$13,723 with a 0.75 mil general fund tax rate increase, a 7 ½% residential water rate increase, 5% residential sewer rate increase, 12% commercial water rate increase and 10% commercial sewer rate increase.

Motion to advertise the budget as presented with a 0.75 mil increase to the Borough General Fund tax rate.

**Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Amato. **In favor of the motion:** Mr. Wert, Mr. Imbesi and Mr. Amato. **Against the motion:** Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 3-1.**

Motion to increase the residential water rate 7 ½% and sewer rate 5%. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Motion to increase the commercial water rate 12% and sewer rate 10%. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 4-0.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman  
Borough Manager