

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

December 21, 2010 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, December 21, 2010 with the following persons present: Council President Kevin Conrad; Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members James Gallen, Amy Good-Ashman, Elizabeth Heckler, Nathalie Kulesa, Deborah Hutcheson; Mayor Shane Keller; Borough Manager Richard Sichler; Police Chief Edward Fabriziani; Socrates Georgeadis, Kozloff Stoudt; Chief Code Enforcement Officer Tracey Levering; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Coordinator Daphne Klahr; Administrative Assistant Cathy Hoffman; Darryl Jenkins, Borough Engineer. Absent: Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach.

<u>VISITORS:</u>	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Michael Morrill	Resident
	Ruth Cardell	Fire Police
	Tina Shenk	Business/Property Owner
	Nick Gardecki	Resident
	Steve & Eileen Jones	Resident
	Kerry McAllister	Resident
	Belinda McAllister	Resident
	Reporter	Reading Eagle

Council President Kevin Conrad called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A moment of silence in memory of Staff Sgt. Sean Flannery was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

APPOINTMENT OF TAX COLLECTOR

Mr. Conrad stated that at the November Council meeting the Tax Collector submitted a letter of resignation effective November 30th. He added that a new Tax Collector must be appointed within 30 days therefore an advertisement was placed in the newspaper. Former Council member Michael Morrill has volunteered for the position with the understanding that the Deputy Tax Collector will continue her duties as usual. **Moved** by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson to appoint Michael Morrill as Tax Collector. **Motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Nicholas Guarddecki spoke about the permit parking zone that was recently extended to the 400 block of South Fourth Avenue. He read a statement about the hardship that it has created, and asked that Council approve parking permits for all residents.

Mr. Conrad explained the purpose of the permit parking areas and noted the role that PennDOT plays in the matter. He noted that the area in question had originally been a permit parking area, however was changed through the influence of a former Council member about 12 years ago. Mr. Guarddecki was asked to attend the next Traffic Committee meeting, to discuss the issue further.

Resident Kerry McAllister also spoke about his frustration with the permit parking area, as did Eileen Jones of 332 Spruce Street, who stated that the parking change has become a great inconvenience. They were also asked to attend the Traffic meeting in order to find a possible solution.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the minutes of November 16, 2010. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the budget meeting minutes of November 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th and December 13th. **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Zoning Ordinance pertaining to fences – No recommendations have been made as yet.

Playground Solutions - Recreation – Ms. Klahr stated that anyone who is eligible for a resident rate pool membership will be offered a 5% reduction in the pool membership fee if they purchase the membership prior to April 30th of each year. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Ms. Good-Ashman to approve a 5% reduction in the resident rate pool membership fee to anyone who is eligible for that rate. **Motion carried.** It was noted that a notice will be placed on the water bills for residents who may want to take advantage of this rate, and for others who are not residents, a letter will be sent.

Water and Sewer Rates – Mr. Jenkins stated that he had reviewed the information and completed the study which has been presented in two sections, the revenue requirements and to determine if the rates need to be changed. He noted that rates from surrounding municipalities were also included in the report.

Streetscape Improvements – Mayor Keller updated Council regarding the grant funds and stated that if the grant funds are used by the Borough, no percentage of it is owed to the former Main Street Manager. Mr. Sichler stated that he contacted three potential designers for the streetscape but added that Council needs to agree on a design before the project can proceed.

Recreation Commission Vacancy – **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Ms. Good-Ashman to appoint Bev Gilbert (304 Sunset Road) to the Recreation Commission. **Motion carried.**

CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:

Engineer's Report – Mr. Jenkins said he had two action items as a close out for the last two construction projects. He recommended release of final retainage for the Sunset Road reconstruction and Cherry Street repaving to Windsor Service in the amount \$24,862.86. He noted that they will back in the spring to take care of any grass areas that aren't doing well. Mr. Sichler said that there were some drainage issues as well that may require some work, therefore it was decided to keep a portion of the retainage in the solicitor's escrow account. **Moved** by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Mr. Gallen to authorize the payment of the retainage to Windsor Service in the amount of \$24,862.86, however direct the solicitor to hold \$4000 of the funds in an escrow account. **Motion carried.**

Regarding the Yarnell and Grape Streets reconstruction, Mr. Jenkins recommended release of the final retainage. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to release the retainage amount of \$8,368.83 to EJB Paving and Materials. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Mr. Wert to accept the Engineer's report. **Motion carried.**

Solicitor's Report - Mr. Georgeadis had nothing to report.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Sichler presented a resolution requesting the Berks County Tax Collection Committee to contract for the collection of tax. Mr. Georgeadis further explained that Mr. Sichler represents the Borough as part of the county-wide tax collection committee which will centralize the collection of taxes. The resolution is being circulated to all municipalities, which is the final piece of housekeeping. **Moved** by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve Resolution 2010-10. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Good-Ashman to accept the Borough Manager's report. **Motion carried.**

MAYOR'S REPORT AND MAIN STREET REPORT:

Mayor Keller read a letter from Sandy Graffius, Berks County Controller who praised the Citizens Police Academy and encouraged its continuation. Mayor Keller also thanked everyone who helped out with the Christmas Tree Lighting. **Moved** by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to accept the Mayor's report. **Motion carried.**

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Code Enforcement – Mrs. Levering reported that John Wascavage started his employment as the Assistant Code Enforcement Officer on December 6th. She noted that he would be attending the January Council Meeting. **Moved** by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Ms. Good-Ashman to accept the Chief Code Enforcement Officer's report. **Motion carried.**

Police Department – Chief Fabrizio stated that the sergeant examinations have been completed with the results pending. He said that there would be a schedule change as well as a platoon change that will come into effect in January.

Regarding activity in the Borough, he noted that the diner remains a concern, and that Luk Oil had an armed robbery that has been resolved thanks to other local departments and Detective Joe Brown. There were also two burglaries as well as a pickpocket incident on a Barta Bus.

The consortium testing went well with over 280 people being tested for potential police work county-wide. Chief Fabrizio noted that this will assist greatly when it comes time to hire a new officer.

Chief Fabrizio also briefly spoke about Berks County radio and the proposed changes that will be imposed over the next two years. He spoke about the financial burdens that will be incurred by all municipalities and noted that there has been discussion among some municipalities to see if a 'no confidence' scenario exists.

Mayor Keller provided information concerning the 'Code Red' operation which was being run from the Wyomissing Police dispatch center. Now that the center is being shut down, Code Red will be run out of the Western Berks Water Authority because someone is there 100% of the time. There was a question as to whether Code Red would continue to cover all emergency situations or just water emergencies and Chief Fabrizio noted that he will be meeting with Tom Bausher concerning the changes.

As a final note, Chief Fabrizio stated that the Borough will be receiving 7 AEDs (automated external defibrillator) for our police vehicles; training will be held in January. He added that the units are being donated through the hospital.

Moved by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Ms. Good-Ashman to accept the Police Chief's Report. **Motion carried.**

Public Works – Mr. Murray presented his written report. He noted that a recent sewer main blockage was able to be resolved with Borough equipment. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Wert to accept the Public Works Director's report. **Motion carried.**

Fire Department – Chief Burkholder presented his written report. It was noted that the children's Christmas party at the fire company had been a great success. **Moved** by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson to accept the Fire Chief's report. **Motion carried.**

Elm Street – Mr. Rohrbach was not attendance therefore no report was given.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

Safety Committee – **Moved** by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson to accept the Safety Committee report. **Motion carried.**

Recreation Commission – Ms. Klahr announced the winners for the decorating contest – Stewart McDonough of Pine Street won for both door decorating and overall house decorating. Mark Burkholder and Chad Moyer tied for the employee overall house decorating contest. She also thanked everyone involved with the Christmas Tree lighting, particularly the "Last Level" and "Café Harmony" for their assistance.

Planning Commission – Mr. Wert presented the written report. Ms. Good-Ashman asked about the fence ordinance and Mr. Jenkins explained that as it is currently written, it doesn't encompass corner properties that may be able to accommodate a fence in the front portion of the property. Mr. Jenkins noted that a zoning ordinance is a living document – as soon as it is complete, something else will come along that doesn't fit. **Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Ms. Good-Ashman to accept the Planning Commission Report. **Motion carried.**

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Moved by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the revenue report for the 11 months ending November 30, 2010. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the Payment Approval Report for 11/17/10 to 12/14/10 and 12/15/10 to 12/21/10. **Motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Conrad requested a date for a budget meeting and it was decided that Council would meet on Tuesday, December 28th at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Wert said he attended a meeting concerning grants and EACs. He state that in order to establish an EAC, it would require 3 people and be passed by an ordinance. Mr. Conrad asked Mr. Wert to provide Council with more information.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council recessed to Executive Session at 8:07 p.m. to discuss personnel and contractual issues. When Council reconvened at 8:13 p.m. no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mr. Gallen to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant