

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

MARCH 18, 2008 – 7:00 P.M.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at the West Reading Fire Company, 223 Playground Drive, on Tuesday, March 18, 2008 with the following persons present: Council President Nathalie Kulesa; Council Vice-President Michael Doyle; Council Members: Michael Morrill, Kevin Conrad, Philip Wert, Michael Geddio, James Gallen; Mayor Shane Keller; Borough Manager George Tindall; Borough Solicitor Socrates Georgeadis; Police Chief Ed Fabriziani; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Code Enforcement Officer Gerald Trate; Borough Foreman Jim Beane; Recreation Coordinator Daphne Klahr; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach; Administrative Assistant Cathy Hoffman.

Council President Nathalie Kulesa called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The invocation was given by Reverend Caceras of Lighthouse Christian Center, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

VISITORS:

Terri Hicks – 230 Chestnut Street
Kerry Hicks – 230 Chestnut Street
Douglas Zeeger – 238 Sycamore Road
William Gernert – 107 N. Third Avenue
Soriya Averill – 705 Penn Avenue
Linda Day – 375 Sunset Road
Carl Garman – 661 Franklin Street
Ken Hinkson – 225 Sycamore Road
Rev. Michael Leagans – 633 Franklin Street
Rachelle Vernon – 335 Chestnut Street
Kyle Lovett – 246 Sycamore Road
Todd Daniels – 113 S. Seventh Avenue
Doug Wesner – Westside Weekly
Cecile Bechtel – 230 Reading Avenue
Patrick Scargle – 397 Sunset Road
Tricia & Jason Ganster – 334 Sycamore Road
Alan Clouser – 311 Reading Avenue
Jennifer Balas – 398 Oak Terrace
Ben Grande – 421 Penn Avenue
Henry Diener Jr. – 717 Wayne Avenue
Susan Stein – 324 Playground Drive
Cheryl Luce – 388 Sunset Road
Kathy Lashinsky – 412 Chestnut Street
David Tranquillo – 428 Oak Terrace
Tom Kupiszewski – 381 Pine Street
Tonya Conrad – 421 Pine Street
Bill Damore – Kline Street
Bev Gilbert – 304 Sunset Road
Mark Falter – 320 Sycamore Road
Marcy Wilkes – 423 Chestnut Street
Suzanne Thompson – 346 Franklin Street
John Bolig – 218 Olive Street
Shirley Bolig – 218 Olive Street
John Dykty – 725 Wayne Avenue
Jim Livingood – 211 Sycamore Road
Tom Urban – 431 Sunset Road
Joan Grady – 382 Sunset Road

Craig Huntsinger – 233 Chestnut Street
Judy Yeakley – 419 Sunset Road
Jo Boltz – 402 Sunset Road
Mary Maloy – 404 Sunset Road
Caitlin Degler – 555 Penn Avenue
Michael Lashinsky – 412 Chestnut Street
Lee Gassert – 204 Playground Drive
Robert Devlin – 326 Playground Drive
Amber Rambo – 307 Sunset Road
Russel Schollenberger – 416 Sunset Road
Phyllis Schollenberger – 416 Sunset Road
Tina Shenk – Penn Avenue
LaShawn Moss – Sunset Road
Charles Schaeffer – 419 Franklin Street
Audrey Schaeffer – 419 Franklin Street
Jeff Cullen – 630 Penn Avenue
Jeff Reif – 632 Penn Avenue
Barbara Griesemer – 3723 Lantana Ave, Reading
Rita Ditsky – 522 Penn Avenue
Gert Young – 347 Linden Lane
George Upton – 345 Linden Lane
Regina Doyle – 513 Sunset Road
Ken Kuczynski – 125 Kent Way
Stephen DeLong – 125 Kent Way
Dennis Wayne – 200 S. Sixth Avenue
Timothy Jones – 222 Olive Street
Steven Schartel – 311 Sycamore Road
Michele Schartel – 311 Sycamore Road
Patricia Nierle – 113 Kent Way
John Nierle – 113 Kent Way
Annmarie Hinkson – 225 Sycamore Road
Randall Hinsey Jr – 389 Sunset Road
Dennis Ambrosiani – 106 Kent Way
Ron Bechtel – 230 Reading Avenue
Doug Olexy – 313 Reading Avenue
Jason Schreiber – 110 Kent Way
Jennifer Long – 343 Chestnut Street

Christine Hydock – 111 Kent Way
Heather Phillips – Shillington
Sharon Wert – 214 Olive Street
Ronald Fisher – 311 Spruce Street
Lucille Tirdell – 308 Sunset Road
Elizabeth Miller – 201 Tulpehocken Avenue
G. Robert Miller – 201 Tulpehocken Avenue
Rick Quattrock – 404 Playground Drive
Mark Macrina – 213 Chestnut Street
Mike Wright – Reading Hospital
K. Fegman – Reading Hospital
Sue Gilbert – 333 Sunset Road
Don Haines – 156B West Fulton Street
Rick Allen Faust – 231 Chestnut Street
Nancy Morrissey – 604 Penn Avenue
Sandra Engle – 315 Penn Avenue
Linda Devlin – 703 Wayne Avenue
Colette Bressler – 215 S. Second Avenue
Amy L. Brown – 337 Sunset Road
Grace Craze – 226 Spruce Street
Kate Zdravecki – 216 S. Second Avenue
Maddie McGlynn – 400 Reading Avenue
Annie McGlynn – 400 Reading Avenue
Deborah Neifeld – 313 Spruce Street
Massimo Grande – 421 Penn Avenue
Doreen Johnson – 632 Penn Avenue
James T. Rogers – 414 Reading Avenue
Matthew Eltringham – 722 Penn Avenue
Erin Bowers – 318 Franklin Street
Jason Marburger – 112 Yarnell Street
Anita Marburger – 112 Yarnell Street
Barbara Ciervo – 304 Reading Avenue
Marsha Adelman – 518 Penn Avenue
Karen Knouse – 307 Sycamore Road
Terry Long, Sr. – 631 Franklin Street
Mary Jean Adams – 232 Sycamore Road
Anne Durkin – 418 Oak Terrace
Suzy Tranquillo – 428 Oak Terrace
Julia White – 349 Linden Lane
Richard Mable – Reading Hospital
Steve Wood – West Reading Tavern
Frank Struble – 226 Chestnut Street
Christina Woomer – 424 Ann Street
Chad Woomer – 424 Ann Street
Pamela Herzing – 240 Chestnut Street
Maria Gernert – 107 N. Third Avenue
Bill Murray – 320 S. Park Road
Deborah Hutcheson – 512 Penn Avenue
Marcy Orozzo – 413 S. Fifth Avenue
Rolin Sugg – Bistro 614
Marcy Dunkelberger – 309 Reading Avenue
Richard Dunkelberger – 309 Reading Avenue

James Bohn – 345 Chestnut Street
Rodney Ashman – 210 Chestnut Street
Jason West – 343 Chestnut Street
Stephanie Burkholder – 328 Franklin Street
Tracie Milbut - Oley
Sharon Morgan – Fleetwood
Betty J. & Bill Graser – 400 Playground Drive
Harry Reeser Jr. – 340 Chestnut Street
Florence Reeser – 340 Chestnut Street
Amy Good-Ashman – 400 Franklin Street
Judy Hahn – 406 Playground Drive
Becca Keller – 395 Oak Terrace
Sandra Messner – 325 Kline Street
Shaun Blank – 64 S. Fifth Avenue
Sheila Scott – 322 Chestnut Street
Pat Ritz – 435 Chestnut Street
David Weidenhammer – 237 Chestnut Street
Lori Weidenhammer – 237 Chestnut Street
Aimee Sutherland – 389 Oak Terrace
Thomas L. Coleman – 353 Chestnut Street
Angela Kupiszewski – 228 S. Third Avenue
Jay Kupiszewski – 228 S. Third Avenue
Ed McQuaid – 720 Wayne Avenue
Claire McQuaid – 720 Wayne Avenue
Hector L. Rivera – 345 Franklin Street
Ted Gabriel – 116 S. Seventh Avenue
JoAnn Gabriel – 116 S. Seventh Avenue
Karen Livingood – 211 Sycamore Road
Darren Youker – Reading Eagle
Gregg Braley – 441 Chestnut Street
John Miskell – 561 Chestnut Street
Barry Landis – 438 Chestnut Street
Summer Agosto – 216 Chestnut Street
Nancey Seghetti – 522 Penn Avenue
Robert Schneier – 390 Sunset Road
Mary Margaret Hertz – 404 Chestnut Street
Glenn Hawk – 127 S. Second Avenue
Rich Sichler – 387 Pine Street
Deborah Braid – 105 S. Fourth Avenue
Dale Miller – 387 Sunset Road
Bernice Brightbill – 123 Kent Way
Jim Brightbill – 123 Kent Way
Terry Siggins – Ann Street
W. David Johns – 221 Kent Way
Anthony Tomczak – 323 Summit Street
Michelle Tomczak – 323 Summit Street
Stan Goerner – 114 Tulpehocken Avenue
Fay Goerner – 114 Tulpehocken Avenue
Mike Vind – Financial Solutions, LLC
Kurt Bertges – 450 Penn Avenue
Patrick Westwood – 433 Sycamore Road
Rosa Westwood – 433 Sycamore Road

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

West Reading Police Officer's Association, Berks Lodge FOP

Joseph Brown, Criminal Investigator for the West Reading Police Department (and President of the Berks Lodge Fraternal Order of Police) spoke about proposed restructuring of the Police Department which had been recommended in 2007. He then spoke about the potential negative ramifications if officers are eliminated from the Department, particularly given the close proximity to the City of Reading and the crime that spills into the Borough. Detective Brown read excerpts from newspaper articles wherein certain Council members were quoted as being in favor of policing cuts. He also provided arrest information for two Council members who he said were behind the proposed cuts. He asked that Council rescind the DCED police study motion that was passed at the February meeting. He then introduced Mark Koch, President of the FOP for Pennsylvania, who spoke about the proposed cuts and its impact on the community. Mr. Koch also stated that the FOP would use all resources available to stop the attempt to decrease the department.

Council Member Michael Doyle then gave a Power-Point presentation in response to the flyers and signs that had been distributed throughout the Borough by the West Reading Police Officers Association. He stated that historically, he has been in support of the Police Department and in fact voted in favor of the hiring of 2 new officers in 2006. He emphasized that he isn't proposing cuts but looking for solutions to get the budget back in line with historical percentages with regard to the Police Department budget. He reviewed the budget figures, discussed his suggestions for restructuring the Department and in conclusion, stated that the Reading Hospital needs to take a greater financial role in the Borough to help offset the dollars that are spent by the Department to provide police coverage for the facility.

Council Member James Gallen then stated that the suggestion that he is anti-law enforcement and anti-safety is ludicrous and inaccurate. He said his concern is the financial future for the Borough and there is no plan to reduce the size of the Police Department. He stated that he is in favor of the proposed study only as a means of seeing what is needed as far as manpower is concerned.

Other Public Comment:

The following visitors spoke against possible cuts to the West Reading Police Department:

Amy Good-Ashman, Ryan Ashman, Sheila Scott, Anne Durkin, Aymee Sutherland, Rick Faust, Randy Hinsey, Richard Mable, Amy Brown, Gregory Braley, Grace Craze, Jay Kupiszewski, Russel Shollenberger, Doug Olexy, Tina Shenk, Frank Stroble, Charles Schaeffer, Alexandre Borkhoche, Michael Lashinsky, Ben Grande, Amber Rambo, Jim Rogers, Shaun Blank.

Other public comments were from:

Jeff Cullen – concerned about the cost of policing and supports the proposed study.

Bill Damore – wants to keep Section 8 people from moving into the Borough.

Kurt Bertges – felt that the information given by Detective Brown was incorrect, the personal attacks are unwarranted and that only a study is being proposed.

Chief Edward Fabriziani then spoke about his pride in his officers and the Department, the costs associated with running a Police Department, and the proposed restructuring. He said he is not opposed to the study, and will be looking at sharing services through the PERF study that is being offered through the County. He emphasized that it is all about the safety of the residents, that his department is committed to that, and as long as he is Chief it will stay that way.

Council Member Kevin Conrad pointed out that some of the figures in Mr. Doyle's presentation were incorrect. Mr. Conrad and Mr. Doyle discussed various numbers from the presentation.

Council Member Michael Morrill stated that he was sorry that he missed the February Council meeting because there were decisions made late at night that should not have been made. He said he was disappointed with how it all came about because if it were only just about the study, it could have waited. He added that the County's proposal for a study would be brought forward later in the meeting. He also commented about the budget by stating that Council had worked hard to make cuts and that Chief Fabriziani was questioned at length regarding budget issues prior to decisions being made.

Mayor Shane Keller reviewed the contents of the letter from the County regarding the proposed PERF study and stated that although he did not have a vote, he asked Council to reconsider the motion that was passed at the February meeting.

Council President Nathalie Kulesa stated that what happened at the February meeting will never be allowed to occur again. She added that Council's job is to help make West Reading a better place to live and that the proposed study needs to be done by someone who knows the area and the challenges the Borough faces.

The Public Comment portion of the agenda was closed at 9:50 p.m. Due to the late hour, it was decided that only urgent issues would be dealt with, and the remainder would be postponed until the next Council meeting.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council voted 5-2 to approve the Council minutes of February 19th, 2008.

Voting "no" were Mrs. Kulesa and Mr. Conrad.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

Reading Hospital Agreement - Mr. Tindall stated that he had worked on the agreement with Mr. Mable, and that Council had received a copy via e-mail. **On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council voted 5-2 to ratify the Reading Hospital Agreement.** Voting "no" were Mr. Doyle and Mr. Gallen.

County-wide Policing Study – **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Borough's participation in the County-wide Policing Study.**

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council voted 5-2 to rescind the DCED letter. Voting "no" were Mr. Gallen and Mr. Doyle.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved the Borough Manager's Report.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Ordinance 969 – Berks County Emergency Response Team

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council adopted Ordinance No. 969.

Ordinance 970 – Amendment to Police Pension (Subpart A)

Mr. Georgeadis stated that this was simply a housekeeping ordinance regarding the police pension as requested by the auditors, and that there are no substantial changes. After some discussion it was agreed to table the ordinance, and that it will have to be re-advertised.

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council agreed to table Ordinance No. 970 until next month.

Ordinance 971 – Schuylkill River Watershed Stormwater Management

Mr. Georgeadis stated that this request is in response to a proposal from the County to be adopted by all municipalities that have stormwater outfall in the Schuylkill River Watershed.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council adopted Ordinance No. 971, contingent upon it being reviewed by the Borough Engineer.

Ordinance 972 – General Obligation Note in the Aggregate Principal Amount of \$3,500,000.

Mr. Michael Vind (from Financial S&Lutions) was in attendance to explain the bid process. He said that documents were sent to eight institutions, and with the responses received, 3.5% from Wachovia Bank was the best rate. He said that due to recent changes in the market, he would be contacting Wachovia to see if they can do better. He anticipated that he could get the rate down to 3.42% which would save \$70,000.

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council adopted Ordinance No. 972, contingent upon receiving a lower rate from Wachovia Bank, and a reduction in fees from Financial S&Lutions and Kozloff Stoudt.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council approved the Solicitor's report.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

Recreation Commission – Ms. Klahr asked Council to approve the hiring list for summer Recreation staff that was included in the Council packets. **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Geddio and passed, Council accepted the Borough of West Reading summer employee recommendation as found in the packet. (Mr. Doyle abstained from the vote.)**

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Fabriziani told Council that the 2003 Intrepid requires transmission repair (the second time in two years). He said there were three options:

- Have a remanufactured transmission installed - \$2900 - Savage Dodge
- Rebuild the transmission - \$1600. (includes a 6 month warranty) - Arbogast Transmissions
- Hold the vehicle for 120 days and turn it over to the Borough Manager.

On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the rebuilding of the transmission, in the amount of \$1600.

REVENUES WITH COMPARISON TO BUDGET – ENDING 10/31/07:

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council approved the Revenues Report for the two months ending 2/29/08.

PAYMENT APPROVAL REPORT - 10/16/07 TO 11/15/07:

On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council approved the Payment Approval Report for 2/19/08 to 3/18/08.

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant

Approved by George I. Tindall
Borough Manager/Secretary