

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 16, 2008 – 7:00 P.M.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, September 16, 2008 with the following persons present: Council President Nathalie Kulesa; Council Members Michael Doyle, Kevin Conrad, Michael Geddio, James Gallen Jr., Philip Wert; Mayor Shane Keller; Borough Manager George Tindall; Borough Solicitor Socrates Georgeadis; Police Chief Ed Fabriziani; Code Enforcement Officer Gerald Trate, Borough Foreman Jim Beane; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Recreation Coordinator Daphne Klahr; Main Street Executive Director Nevin Hollinger; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach; Administrative Assistant Cathy Hoffman.

VISITORS: Oswald Herbert – 314 Reading Avenue
Ruth Cardell – 728 Reading Avenue
Elizabeth Heckler – 460 Chestnut Street
Sheila Scott – 322 Chestnut Street
Amber Rambo – 307 Sunset Road
Charles Cupani – 333 S. Third Avenue
Eddie Daniels – 605 Penn Avenue
Mr. & Mrs. Heiser – 329 Sunset Road
Don Haines – 156B West Fulton Street
Darryl Jenkins – Great Valley Consultants
Doug Worley – Anderson Associates

Council President Nathalie Kulesa called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Deacon William Kase of Sacred Heart Church gave the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Elizabeth Heckler – 460 Chestnut Street

Mrs. Heckler stated that she had received a \$40 membership request form from Western Berks Ambulance and based on the last Council meeting where Anne Deiterich spoke to Council about necessary changes, wondered what Council is going to do about the situation. Mrs. Kulesa stated that a meeting has been scheduled for September 30th for all municipalities involved to discuss this issue.

Some discussion ensued about an agreement that may have been in place between Western Berks Ambulance and the Borough for the use of the Fire Company. Mr. Tindall stated that after completing some research regarding a fair lease price for the space at the Fire Company, he came up with an amount of \$1500 per month (based on \$2 per square foot, for the 768 sq ft that the Ambulance currently uses).

No decisions were made but it was noted that the Borough will continue to work toward a solution and will be represented at the meeting on the 30th.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Geddio and passed, Council approved the Council minutes of August 19th 2008.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

2009 MMO for Police and Non-Union Pension Plans – Doug Worley from Anderson Associates was on hand to explain the MMO requirements and investment. Mr. Georgeadis provided information regarding Act 205 that requires the Borough to calculate the amount for the Minimum Municipal Obligation plan for the coming year.

Mr. Worley provided handouts to show how the fund has performed in past years and explained that there are three reasons why the fund is doing poorly: 1) the investments are not doing well, 2) retirees are living longer and 3) there is no turnover with staff. It was noted that although a decision must be made regarding the amount, it can be amended up to the end of the year. It was determined that the Borough should look into other alternatives.

On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the MMO for 2009, as presented by Anderson Associates.

Open Records Act – Mr. Tindall told Council that with the legislation regarding Open Records would come into effect on January 1 2009, therefore appointments need to be made in preparation for this change. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council appointed George Tindall as Open Records Official and Kozloff Stoudt as Open Records Exemption Official.**

Wyomissing Creek – The Berks County Conservancy (through a grant) will be stabilizing the creek bed with large rock, between the Museum Road Bridge and the West Reading walking bridge by the pool. This will be completed at no cost to the Borough, and warning signs regarding swimming will be installed.

Insurance Quotes - Mr. Tindall stated that 4 packets of information had been sent to insurance companies. Quotes will be received by November 1st.

Budget Workshop – It was decided that October 2, 9 and 16, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. would be scheduled for budget workshops which will be held at the Fire Company.

Letter from Diakon Snowstoppers – A letter has been received from Diakon Snowstoppers asking people in need to register for snow removal service at no cost to them. It was suggested that local churches be notified so they can get the information to their parishioners.

Letter from County Commissioners – Correspondence was received from the County Commissioners requesting an increase in financial assistance for county libraries. Mr. Tindall stated that there are 10 municipalities in the County that contribute nothing and that West Reading is one of them. It was noted that this would be considered during the budget process.

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

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Mr. Jenkins referenced his written report and highlighted the following:

- The Main Street project is currently delayed because of PennDot. He added that the funding is still in place for the project and that the contract will be held to the bid amount. As a result of the delay, the project most likely will not begin until next year.
- The pool steps project will be completed within the next 2 weeks.
- Specs are being prepared that will be used to obtain pricing for the milling of the Parkview Road Bridge. This will be done in conjunction with the upcoming alley paving project.

Regarding the Belovich project, Mr. Jenkins said no evidence had been found of wiring being installed for street lighting. Mr. Georgeadis stated that a bond is in place and that the lender has already been

contacted. **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved moving forward with the installation of street lighting.**

After much discussion it was decided that a meeting should be held with the residents who live in the townhouses and that flyers would be distributed to them by Borough staff.

On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved the Engineer's Report.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT:

Mr. Trate told Council that with regard to the Belovich development, the Codes Department has sent letters and citations to the developer regarding various violations. **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved the Code Enforcement Officer's Report.**

JOINT MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPORT:

Mr. Gernert was not in attendance and no report was given.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Georgeadis stated that the ordinance regarding 'right turns only' at 3rd and Penn was ready for Council's approval. **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the ordinance.**

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

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

Traffic Committee – Mr. Conrad explained how the Committee has been dealing with the handicapped parking space issue over the last few years but has recently determined that more permanent measures need to be in place. Mr. Tindall explained that plan which would place two permanent handicapped spaces at each intersection throughout the borough; the spaces would not be activated until requested.

Chief Fabriziani provided more information regarding problems that arose in the past regarding these spaces and added that a more permanent solution is necessary. It was also emphasized that those handicapped spaces are public spaces, available to anyone with a placard, and not specifically available for any one person. After some discussion it was suggested that all handicapped space requests be heard only once or twice per year. The Traffic Committee will develop a policy in this regard at its meeting on the 17th.

Mayor Keller stated that the Heisers (who were in attendance) had requested a handicapped space in April and have not yet received approval and given that the issue may not be resolved for some time, he enacted his 90 day modification right as Mayor, to allow a handicapped space to be installed on the 300 block on Sunset (by the alley) which meets the ordinance requirements.

On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Geddio and passed, Council approved the Traffic Committee minutes as amended ('Heiser' was misspelled on page 2).

Infrastructure Committee – Mr. Conrad stated there was nothing to bring forward for Council's consideration. Projects for 2009 and 2010 were briefly discussed. **On motion duly made by Mr.**

Geddio, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council approved the Infrastructure Committee minutes.

Recreation Commission – Ms. Klahr provided a brief synopsis of recent and upcoming events. She highlighted that the ‘Kim Manning Award’ plaque was presented to the most improved swimmer on the West Reading Swim Team. She noted that the award was presented by the Manning family and will be a perpetual award. **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Recreation Commission report.**

Safety Committee – **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Safety Committee report.**

POLICE CHIEF’S REPORT:

Chief Fabrizio asked Council’s approval to replace the speed enforcement infrared device that is sixteen years old and has required numerous repairs. He noted that the purchase is included in the capital budget for 2008 and the cost for the replacement will be \$3995, which includes training. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Geddio and passed, Council approved the purchase of the infrared speed enforcement device.**

Chief Fabrizio provided details regarding the following:

- There were two separate accidents involving police vehicles that in each instance were caused by the other driver.
- A bank robbery occurred on the 15th at Berkshire Bank.
- The person responsible for the recent graffiti incidents has been charged.
- Several vehicles have been broken into but the suspect hasn’t been found.
- Detective Brown will be taking training to be certified for wire tapping.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Geddio and passed, Council approved the Police Chief’s Report.

MAYOR’S REPORT:

Mayor Keller announced that Halloween trick-or-treat night would be held on October 31st from 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. He also announced that at the Elm Street Block Party a proclamation was presented to Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach and the Neighborhood Advisory Committee kicking off the “Cigarettes Are Litter Too” campaign.

Mayor Keller stated that the Main Street Authority met regarding the BID request for proposals. Some items were revised and it has been re-advertised, with bid opening scheduled for October 6th. If the contract is awarded, the Authority will then be able to make a recommendation to Council regarding millage.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council approved the Mayor’s Report.

BOROUGH FOREMAN’S REPORT:

There were no items for discussion, therefore **on motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council approved the Borough Foreman’s Report.**

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

There were no items for discussion, therefore **on motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Fire Chief's Report.**

MAIN STREET EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Main Street Executive Director Nevin Hollinger outlined the time frames for public hearings, comments, etc regarding the BID, with action on the BID occurring no earlier than January 2009. He also noted the upcoming Fall Festival. **On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Main Street Executive Director's Report.**

ELM STREET MANAGER'S REPORT:

Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach highlighted the following:

- The annual state assessment went well although the final report has not been received.
- To date 23 applications have been approved through the façade program for a total of \$67,345.
- Elm Street will have a booth at the Fall Festival.

On motion duly made by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Elm Street Manager's Report.

REVENUES WITH COMPARISON TO BUDGET – ENDING 8/31/08:

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council approved the Revenues Report for the eight months ending 8/31/08.

PAYMENT APPROVAL REPORT - 8/19/08 TO 9/15/08:

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Doyle and passed, Council approved the Payment Approval Report for 8/19/08 to 9/15/08.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council adjourned to Executive Session at 9:25 p.m. to discuss personnel. The meeting reconvened at 9:55 p.m.

Mr. Tindall briefed Council on a request from UGI for permission to install a 300 psi gas main which will follow the same route as the Shillington Interceptor now being installed. Council requested that UGI and hospital representatives attend the next Council meeting and explain the project.

ADJOURNMENT:

Council was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant

Approved by George I. Tindall
Borough Manager/Secretary