

## BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

June 23, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, June 23, 2015 with the following persons present: Council President Philip C. Wert; Vice President Carl G. Garman; Council Members Elizabeth L. Heckler, Grace M. Craze, Christopher C. Lincoln, Suzanne Thompson; Borough Manager Richard J. Sichler; Police Chief Stephen D. Powell; Fire Chief Mark D. Burkholder; Borough Solicitor Daniel P. Becker; Recreation Coordinator Helen Moyer; Public Works Director Dean E. Murray; Elm Street Manager Dean L. Rohrbach; Engineer Tom Unger; Administrative Assistant Cathy L. Hoffman. Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr., Council Member Nathalie R. Kulesa and Main Street Manager Christin Kelley were unable to attend.

<b>VISITORS:</b>	Jim & Karen Livingood	Residents
	Robin & Dan Horman	Residents
	Jennifer Capone-Brown	Resident
	James T. Rogers	Resident
	Craig Peiffer	Reading 120 Bicycle Race

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Philip C. Wert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.
2. **POLICE AWARDS:** Chief Powell presented Department Commendations to Officer Wayne Holben and Officer Nick Karetas for their actions during an incident on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2015 on Route 422 concerning a distressed individual. Chief Powell also announced that Officer Holben had successfully obtained a \$5000 grant from the Darrell and Gloria Rank K9 Corps Fund.
3. **THE READING 120 PROFESSIONAL BICYCLE RACE:** Craig Peiffer, executive producer of the Reading 120 Bicycle Race was on hand to provide information concerning the race that will be held on September 12<sup>th</sup> throughout Berks County, including the Borough of West Reading. He noted that he will be working with all 26 municipalities involved prior to going to PennDOT for their approval. In West Reading, Penn Avenue will be closed for no more than 15 minutes, as mandated by PennDOT. The following was also noted:
  - Our police presence is not necessary – it will be at our own discretion
  - The rolling road blocks are proposed to be handled by PSP however conformation has not yet been received.
  - The Reading Health System is a major sponsor and it has been determined that in the event of a major emergency, the race would be closed down.
  - The County's Emergency Management department is fully aware of the event.
  - Insurance will be provided for each municipality involved.
  - Penn Avenue will most likely need to be cleared of all vehicles, curb to curb however it will be up to the Borough to do so. Fire Police may need to assist.
  - The cloverleaf at 422 will also need to be shut down which is of particular concern given that the Buttonwood Street Bridge will also be closed by that time. This will be overseen by PennDOT.

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson to authorize the race contingent upon proof of insurance being received as well as adequate police coverage. **Motion carried.**

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Jennifer Capone-Brown** was on hand to request a new route for the run that will be held on September 6<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. She indicated that it will begin at the RHS parking garage on S. 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and will require

S. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue to be closed twice during the course of the race. She noted that the change requires the closure of Spruce Street instead of Chestnut as originally proposed. Chief Powell indicated that he had no problem with the necessary closures and that there were no issues at last years' event. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln to approve the new route, conditional on the proof of insurance being met. **Motion carried.**

**Robin Horman** thanked the Fire Chief, Police Chief and Borough Crew for their work at the 'Art on the Avenue' event. Some discussion ensued concerning the drinking of alcohol not being contained within the drinking establishments/areas however Chief Powell indicated that there is no state law or municipal law to prohibit this from occurring and that the individual licensee is responsible for what transpires.

5. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the minutes of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015. **Motion carried.**

6. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS TO BE ADOPTED:**

a. **Resolution 2015 - 3** – Each year the Joint Municipal Authority of Wyomissing Valley calculates their rates to treat overly strong wastewater, based on a sampling from the one industry in the Borough that generates strong wastewater. This resolution fixes those rates for July 1, 2015. **Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Ms. Craze to approve Resolution 2015-3. **Motion carried.**

7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

a. **Belovich Development** – Mr. Unger has met with McCarthy Engineering concerning the remaining punch list items that need to be addressed and they will continue to work with Fulton Bank. Another issue has arisen however – the as-built plans indicate that six of the garages on Chiffon Way are encroaching on the Borough's right-of-way – from about 6" to 8". Mr. Becker said that a call has been placed to the Bank's solicitor providing the information, and more will be forthcoming at the July meeting. This is not only an issue for the Bank but also for the property owners and will have to be corrected in some way.

b. **Abandoned Properties** – All of the fees, liens etc are being compiled for the three abandoned properties and will be sent to the County for their consideration.

c. **WRCRF Cooperation Agreement** – It was noted that the agreement was approved by the CRF at their last meeting. As well, Lynn Burns has been appointed to the Board however her residency status remains to be confirmed. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Garman to confirm Lynn Burns contingent upon proof of residency and upon verification that she is in good standing with the Borough (no outstanding water bills, code violations, etc). **Motion carried.**

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Garman to enter into the Cooperation Agreement that was approved at the CRF meeting of June 18<sup>th</sup>. **Motion carried.**

d. **Recycling Grant** – Mr. Sichler indicated that the anticipated documentation has not been received from the State as yet therefore this will be revisited at the July meeting. It was also noted that nothing further has been received concerning the ARLE grant.

e. **Finance Committee** – A draft ordinance to formally establish a Finance Committee was distributed in the May Council packet, and it was recommended that the Finance Committee review the

document. As the Committee has not met since the appointments of Mr. Sichler, Mrs. Rentschler, Ms. Thompson and Ms. Craze, Mr. Sichler said he would contact everyone to schedule a meeting.

8. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Becker said that he had nothing further to report.

b. **Engineer/Code Enforcement Report** – Mr. Unger reviewed the following:

- A payment application has been presented for the Retaining Wall project in the amount of \$129,465.05. At this point over 5% retainage is being held and the punch list has been addressed at least once. There was some discussion concerning the conduit and cable repair which has been rectified. The Borough made the repair at a cost of \$320 and the contractor will be completing the site work. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve Payment Application #1 to Miller Brothers Construction in the amount of \$129,465.05. **Motion carried**
- The Borough Hall and Fire Company hail damage specifications are essentially complete and ready to be advertised. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and Mr. Garman to authorize the bidding of the Borough Hall and Fire Company hail damage repairs. **Motion carried.** There are other repairs to be made but these two buildings are the largest projects. Mr. Sichler indicated that the insurance company has updated the claim significantly to the \$500,000 level after a year of working with them.
- Bids were received for the Oak Terrace Water Line Replacement Project. The lowest of the three bidders was M & A Excavating in the amount of \$273,389.27 which is below the engineering estimate. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln to accept the three qualifying bids for review. **Motion carried.** **Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Ms. Thompson to award the project to low bidder M & A Excavating in the amount of \$273,389.27. **Motion carried.**
- With regard to the Code Enforcement Department Report, Mr. Unger stated that the grease trap inspections are 90% complete with only a few violations being found.

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln to accept the Engineer's Report. **Motion carried.**

9. **BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:**

a. **Joint Municipal Authority of Wyomissing Valley Audit Report** – Mr. Sichler noted that the findings in the audit are related to the size of the organization concerning the segregation of duties which is the same finding each each year. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln to acknowledge receipt of the audit report. **Motion carried.**

b. **Pension Committee Appointments** – Mr. Sichler indicated that two residents have volunteered to serve on the Pension Committees; Jim Livingood on the Non-Uniform Pension Committee and Robin Horman for the Police Pension Committee. The Committees will be looking at finding one administrator to monitor the performance of both funds and will present a recommendation to Council by budget season. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to appoint Jim Livingood to the Non-Uniform Pension Committee and Robin Horman to the Police Pension Committee. **Motion carried.**

c. **Tax Collector Audit** – Mr. Sichler stated that Maillie LLP has performed the Borough's audit and now that the Tax Collector audit needs to be completed, authorization is needed to appoint Maillie to that task as well. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to authorize the Borough

Manager to enter into an agreement with Maillie LLP to perform the Tax Collector audit. **Motion carried.**

- d. **Buttonwood Bridge Closure** – It has just been announced that the bridge will be closing on Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. As well, it was noted that Barta Bus will be running shuttles from the VF parking lot to downtown Reading. Chief Powell noted that PennDOT has requested officers to be scheduled during peak hours at 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues however he has not received specific information. The contractor will be responsible for these costs. He noted that the Borough may not have sufficient manpower to handle this and outside resources may be necessary.
- e. **Vehicle Sales** – There are six excess vehicles that need to be sold and Mr. Sichler said that two of them are ready to be advertised. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Garman to authorize the advertising of the vehicles for sale. **Motion carried.** A direct link to the online sale site will be advertised in the newspaper in order to meet state law requirements.

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Borough Manager's Report. **Motion carried.**

10. **MAYOR'S REPORT & WEST READING COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION FOUNDATION:**

Mayor Rodriguez was unable to attend the meeting however his report was included in the Council packet.

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Thompson to accept the Mayor's Report. **Motion carried.**

11. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. **Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report and noted that he had two items for Executive Session. He also recommended that because of the upcoming Buttonwood Bridge closure, that left turns be prohibited from southbound 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue onto Cherry Street. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln to advertise an ordinance to prevent the left turn from S. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue onto Cherry Street. **Motion carried.** It was also noted that although the ordinance will not be enacted in time, the signage can still be put in place but fines will not be issued.

**Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Ms. Thompson to approve the Police Department Report. **Motion carried.**

- b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to his written report and added the following:
  - The County Community Service program is going well with the painting of curbs. The north side of the Borough has been completed and they will continue by painting two days per week. The Borough must provide the materials but the labor is free.
  - The Council room chairs will be sent out for covering immediately following the July Council meeting.
  - The two traffic signs at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Penn have been replaced.
  - It was noted that there are now four light poles out on Penn Avenue. Mr. Sichler will check to see when these custom lights will be available.

**Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Public Works Director's Report. **Motion carried.**

- c. **Fire Department** – In addition to his written report, Chief Burkholder stated that the new truck has arrived and is ready for service. He noted that the new vehicle will make it easier to transport their equipment and additional personnel.

**Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Fire Chief's Report. **Motion carried.**

- d. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation**

**Elm Street and Main Street Manager' Report** – Mr. Rohrbach referred to his written report, and noted that that minutes from the Main Street Promotions Committee and the NAC have been included. He also distributed a report detailing the current grant writing activity, which includes five grants that have already been submitted. One grant that has not yet been submitted is the 2015 DCED Streetscape Improvements grant for the first and 100 blocks of S. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the north side of the 400 block of Chestnut Street. The request is for \$250,000 and is being submitted under the Borough's name which will require a 10% match.

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson to submit the application to the State for the \$250,000 2015 Streetscape Improvements. **Motion carried.**

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson to set aside \$25,000 as the 10% match.

**Motion carried.**

It was noted that there is no commitment unless the grant is approved and the Borough agrees to go forward with the work. Mr. Rohrbach also indicated that he would continue to try to raise the matching funds in the interim.

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Craze approve the Elm Street and Main Street Manager's Report. **Motion carried.**

12. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to her written report and noted two action items:
- **Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to hire lifeguard Nathan Strausburger at a rate of \$7.25/hr and playground leader Christina Shecktor at \$7.25/hr. **Motion carried.**
  - The Borough will be hosting Ed Kuhn's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the Summer Basketball League at the basketball courts on July 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. The dedication will take place at 8:00 p.m.

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Recreation Commission Report. **Motion carried.**

- b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert noted that the Commission continues to work on the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and as well as reviewing the UCC regulations in comparison to what the Borough currently requires concerning permitting.

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Planning Commission minutes. **Motion carried.**

- c. **Environmental Advisory Committee** – There were no questions concerning the minutes.

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Craze to accept the Environmental Advisory Committee minutes. **Motion carried.**

- d. **Safety Committee** – There were no questions concerning the minutes.  
**Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Safety Committee minutes.  
**Motion carried.**

13. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

a. **Revenues with Comparison to Budget:**

Mr. Sichler indicated that at the July meeting he would provide a comprehensive look at the budget for first half of the year.

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Garman to approve the Revenues with Comparison to Budget Report for the five months ending 5/31/2015. **Motion carried.**

b. **Payment Approval Report:**

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Garman to approve Payment Approval Report for 5/22/2015 - 6/10/2015 and 6/11/2015 – 6/23/2015. **Motion carried.**

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to Executive Session at 9:08 p.m. to discuss personnel. When the meeting reconvened at 10:00 p.m., the following action was taken:

- **Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Ms. Thompson to extend a conditional contract of employment to Jesse Stock to become a West Reading Police Officer. **Motion carried.**

15. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**James T. Rogers** asked about the hiring of the police officer and Mr. Wert indicated that he would be replacing retired Officer Fabriziani and that the decision was based on a recommendation from the Civil Service Commission.

16. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Moved** by Mr. Garman and seconded by Ms. Craze to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Hoffman  
Administrative Assistant