

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING**

August 15, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 with the following persons present: Council President Ryan Lineaweaver; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Patrick Kaag, and Denise Drobnick; Mayor Samantha Kaag; Solicitor Daniel Becker; Fire Chief and Building Code Department Manager Chad Moyer; Officer-in-Charge Chad Marks; Recreation Director Michael Esterly; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler (via Zoom); Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe; Borough Manager Dean Murray; Public Works Director Kerry Grassley; Engineer Pamela Stevens; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Council Pro-Tem Christopher Lincoln, and Council Members Jennifer Bressler and Zachary Shaver were unable to attend.

VISITORS:

Ty Gardner, Resident
Karen Livingood, Resident
Nicholas Karetas, Police Officer (via Zoom)
Tina Shenk, Resident & Business Owner
Jean Witmer, Resident
Kacie Rodriguez, Resident
Dan Moscaritolo, Visitor (via Zoom)
Tyler Weisman, Resident & New Castle Lawn & Landscape
Anthony Tucci, Western Berks Ambulance (via Zoom)

James Rogers, Resident
Lance Parmer, Fire Police (via Zoom)
Suzanne Thompson, Resident
Mike Clarke, Resident
Kayla Lipari, Resident
Rafael Torres, Resident
69 News Reporter

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Ryan Lineaweaver called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.
2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**
Mr. Lineaweaver noted executive sessions that were held on Thursday, July 20, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. to select a candidate for the Chief of Police position; and on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss employee performance, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) filings dismissed with prejudice and closed, potential acquisition of real property, and discuss emergency preparedness request from Wyomissing Borough.
3. **AGENDA AMENDMENTS:**
There were no amendments to the agenda.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**
Mr. Rogers requested to record in the minutes that the recent Art on the Avenue event cost the Borough \$17,280 and hopes that the Borough can recoup these expenses in the future. He also provided an update on the forty new rental properties within the Borough since January 1st and the lack of a standard operating procedure to register these businesses with Berksheimer Tax Innovation to pursue collection of Business Privilege Taxes.
5. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**
Motion to approve the July 18, 2023, regular meeting minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

6. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. **Ordinance – Animals Code Red / Code Blue** – Mr. Lineaweaver noted a proposed amendment to Chapter 152 to include provisions that would prohibit an animal from being left outdoors during extreme hot or cold weather conditions. Mr. Wert noted the Planning Commission's review of this amendment with the solicitor following an incident last summer where an animal was left outdoors in an extreme heat condition. The provisions specify the lawful entity to enforce these regulations as an officer or individual authorized to prosecute state law. Mr. Lineaweaver noted that the Animal Rescue League is the appointed Animal Control Officer that would enforce these provisions during wind chill temperatures of 20° or below, precipitation with temperatures below 32°, or a heat index of 95° or above.

Motion to authorize the advertisement of an amendment to Chapter 152 Animals to include provisions that would prohibit an animal from being kept outdoors during extreme hot or cold weather conditions. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- b. **Ordinance – Pension Advisory Committee** – Mr. Lineaweaver noted a committee that was mostly Ad Hoc with a former Council Member that remained on the committee for a period of time. This ordinance would establish the composition of the committee with members of Borough Council, Borough Police Bargaining Unit, Civil Service Commission, Public Works, Borough Manager, Treasurer, and Mayor with a Chairman being appointed by the committee.

Motion to authorize the advertisement of an amendment to establish an enabling ordinance for a Pension Advisory Committee. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- c. **Ordinance 1171 Wireless Communication Facilities in Rights-of-Way** – Mr. Lineaweaver requested consideration to establish standards relating to Wireless Communication Facilities (WCF) within street and sidewalk rights-of-way. There were no questions or comments.

Motion to adopt an amendment to establish standards relating to wireless communication facilities within street and sidewalk rights-of-way. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- d. **Ordinance 1172 Street Dedication** – Mr. Lineaweaver requested consideration to accept deeds of dedication of a portion of Elm Street and the northern portion of Cashmere Way. Mr. Wert inquired as to parking stall configurations to avoid placing stalls near driveway accesses. Mr. Grassley shared the configuration that is planned to be implemented tomorrow. Mr. Wert noted an adjustment period that should be allowed by parking enforcement personnel to educate the residents/visitors that parking within curb cuts will no longer be permitted.

Motion to adopt an ordinance accepting into the Borough Road System a portion of Elm Street and Cashmere Way within the Narrow Fabric Subdivision. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- e. **Resolution 2023-16 Extension of Local Disaster Emergency** – Mr. Lineaweaver requested consideration to extend the local disaster emergency until the next Borough Council meeting.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2023-16 extending the Proclamation of the Local Disaster Emergency until the September 19, 2023 Borough Council meeting. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- f. **Resolution 2023-17 Disposition of Records Procedure** – Mr. Lineaweaver noted the intent to follow procedures in the disposition of records amended version of the Municipal Records Manual. There were no questions or comments.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2023-17 Disposition of Records Procedure declaring the intent to follow the schedules and procedures for disposition of records as set forth in the March 28, 2019 amended Municipal Records Manual. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- g. **Resolution 2023-18 Junior Council Person Program** – Mr. Lineaweaver noted through the Pennsylvania Association of Boroughs (PSAB) Junior Council Person (JCP) Program an opportunity to engage high school or college students to get involved in borough government. He has been in contact with Wyomissing Area High School, Alvernia, and Albright Colleges that have Political Science courses to seek individuals that may be interested in participating in this program to mentor students that may become future leaders of our local communities. The JCP would be required to attend monthly meetings to participate in borough business. The JCPs cannot vote or participate in executive sessions. To earn a Distinguished JCP Award from PSAB the JCP should serve for a minimum of six months. Depending on the amount of time the JCP devotes to the borough the experience could be allocated towards community service or internship credits. Mr. Lineaweaver encourages borough residents to express an interest, however he intends to cast a wide net to start the program.

Motion to adopt the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Junior Council Person Program. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

7. **CONSULTANT'S REPORT:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Becker indicated that he had nothing new to report that is not otherwise covered on the agenda.
- b. **Engineer's Report** – Ms. Stevens provided the following updates:
- The 2023 Road Projects have a punch list of items to be addressed by the paving contractor.
 - The Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) Green Light-Go grant application has been awarded to improve traffic signals along Fifth Avenue and Parkside Drive North.
 - The grant-funded security camera upgrades through the Commonwealth of PA Financing Authority (CFA) have approved Berkshire Systems Group, Inc. since they are a COSTARS approved contractor in lieu of going through the bidding process.

- Another grant opportunity through CFA Local Share Account is open through November 30th for community projects. No match is required for projects between \$25,000 to \$1,000,000. Ms. Stevens offered to meet with staff or the Mayor to identify project(s) and prepare a grant application. Mr. Grassley recommended consideration to be given to replacing the bridge within the park.
- The traffic study and diagonal parking plan submitted on behalf of the Pickleball Association to the City of Reading is still awaiting comments.
- The four-fold garage door for the firehouse has been ordered with a twelve-week lead time. This should be installed before the end of the year.
- The Ann Street Multi-Model Grant application decision is not expected until November of 2023.
- Prepared cost estimates for proposed parking lots will be coordinated through the Borough Manager once the estimates are completed.
- The water line replacement project grant decision is not expected until the fall of 2023.
- Assistance was provided to the Code Department on a structural engineering investigation of a retaining wall in poor condition. A letter had been drafted and forwarded to the solicitor's office for review and comment. Mr. Becker indicated that he would like to converse with the engineer's office prior to releasing the letter.

Motion to accept the Engineer's report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag.
Motion carried 4-0.

Ms. Stevens departed the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

8. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Mr. Lineaweaver was pleased to request consideration to provide a conditional offer of employment to Richard Tornielli to fill the Chief of Police position. Mr. Tornielli brings a wealth of experience in serving the City of Reading for over two decades, and most recently as the Chief of Police. The anticipated start date for Chief Tornielli is September 5, 2023. Mayor Kaag expressed her excitement in bringing Mr. Tornielli to the West Reading community.

Motion to provide a conditional offer of full-time employment to Richard Tornielli to fill the Chief of Police position. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Mr. Lineaweaver requested consideration to appoint members to the July 4th Ad Hoc Committee. Two letters of interest were received within minutes of posting the opportunity. The number of committee members was thought to be four to six residents to begin meeting alongside of the Recreation Director, Recreation Commission Chair, and Council President to guide community-based recommendations.

Motion to appoint Kayla Lipari and Justin Choate to the July 4th Ad Hoc Committee. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

In working with the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation Mr. Lineaweaver met with Penn State Berks, and spoke with Alvernia to involve these organizations, with equivalent goals, in the upcoming Fall Fest event to potentially offer discounted bachelor's degrees or continuing education credits that could benefit staff, police, fire, and business owners.

Mr. Lineaweaver noted a recent conversation with PSAB and the possibility of himself and others presenting on the topic of crisis situations during next years' annual conference. He stated that he and the Mayor work in communications and understand how to set up a press conference, and send out press releases as was carried out during the R.M. Palmer crisis. Also, the County of Berks and 69 News plan to partner in teaching a class on crisis communications during PSABs annual conference next year.

Motion to accept the Council President's report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

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

- a. **Planning Commission Resignation** – Mr. Murray requested consideration to accept a letter of resignation from Mariella Napoli from the Planning Commission. Mr. Lineaweaver noted that Ms. Napoli has taken on a new position with her job that requires her to work during evening hours.

Motion to accept Mariella Napoli's letter of resignation from the Planning Commission.

Moved by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- b. **Wyomissing Area School District Bleacher Use** – Mr. Murray requested consideration to allow the school district to use the small portable bleachers during their upcoming football season on the visitor side of the field for the band. Last year they borrowed the bleachers during their playoff season.

Motion to authorize the Wyomissing Area School District to utilize the small portable bleachers for the upcoming football season. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- c. **Joint Municipal Authority** – Mr. Murray shared a recent request from the Joint Municipal Authority, on behalf of Fred Geiger, to accept Mr. Geiger's resignation from the board. Mr. Geiger has served in this capacity since 2010.

Motion to accept Fred Geiger's letter of resignation from the Joint Municipal Authority of Wyomissing Valley. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

A letter of commendation will hopefully be presented to Mr. Geiger in person during next month's meeting for his tenure on this obscure but important committee.

Motion to accept the Borough Manager's report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

10. **MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Kaag provided a verbal report this month noting the following:

- A successful National Night Out was chaired this year by Officer Stock, Officer DeLozier, Sergeant Holben, Mrs. Milbut and Mrs. Loder.
- Gratitude was shared with the Borough Manager and Recreation Commission Members for the beautiful remembrance of Mrs. Heckler in the park for her years of service to the community.

- Mayor Kaag and other businesses along Penn Avenue were recognized within Palo magazine this past month. She appreciated the opportunity to represent the community in a positive and respectful light.
- Mayor Kaag recognized and shared her appreciation of the time and energy resident lead committee and board members volunteer to the community.

Motion to accept the Mayor's report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

11. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

- a. **Police Department** – Sergeant Marks referred to his report and offered to answer any questions. Mr. Wert inquired as to special training that may be needed for electric bike use. Sergeant Marks indicated that the four to five officers that ride bikes are certified by the International Police Mountain Bike Association. Mayor Kaag noted the recent Friends of Reading Hospital donation of a Trek Electric Bicycle to the West Reading Police Department and last years' donation of a Trek Electric Bicycle from Performance Toyota. Sergeant Marks indicated that the Officers could stay out longer even on hot days while using the electric bicycles.

Motion to accept the Police Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- b. **Public Works Department** - Mr. Grassley thanked the Police Department for recognizing the Public Works Department during the National Night Out event. Mr. Grassley referred to his action item requesting permission to purchase a drag box paver with Liquid Fuels funds. He noted a history of being at the mercy of the Borough of Wyomissing's schedule to borrow their equipment and a bargain custom built, six to ten feet wide high grade metal asphalt paving box that would be pulled behind a truck to level the asphalt prior to rolling. The gentleman from Schuylkill County has agreed to provide this equipment at cost to the Borough in exchange for the ability to record demonstration videos of the equipment in use to market to other municipalities. The equipment will be stored in an addition being built by Crew Members at the Borough Garage. Mr. Grassley noted that catch basins are planned to be installed near the firehouse to help control stormwater in this area.

Motion to authorize the purchase of a drag box paver with Liquid Fuels funds not to exceed \$12,000. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Motion to accept the Public Works Department report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- c. **Fire Department** – Chief Moyer referred to his written report and noted that the new Rescue/Engine 64 is in service, and the old engine has been listed for sale. Two inquiries have been received on the old engine from Indiana and Pennsylvania that seemed interested in placing bids.

Mr. Lineaweaver thanked the fire department for saving the cat from a roof on Chestnut Street.

Motion to accept the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- d. **Code Department** – Mr. Moyer referred to his written report and noted an action item that would allow code department officials to access and track code compliance through Brycer, LLC to ensure commercial property/business owners maintain their fire protection systems that are tested and inspected by third-party contractors. The Code Department would receive notifications of any deficiencies at no cost to the Borough. A number of local municipalities are using the services of Brycer, LLC and seem pleased with the service. Two available options to adopt and administer the service would be through the Fire Code as the Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or through a Borough Ordinance. Mr. Becker indicated that his office is currently reviewing these options for another municipality.

Motion to enter into a three-year agreement with Brycer, LLC to utilize a life-safety compliance engine at no cost to the Borough. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Motion to accept the Code Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- e. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation** – Mr. Ratcliffe requested approval of a Sidewalk Sale event on Saturday, August 26, 2023 from Noon to 4:00 p.m. with tents that maintain a 36" walking path.

Motion to approve a revised Sidewalk Sale event date of August 26, 2023 from Noon to 4:00 p.m. with tents that maintain a 36" wide walking path. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

A second action item request was to host a Fete eu Blanc (White Party) on Saturday, October 7th on the 000 block of Tulpehocken Avenue. Tables and chairs would be available in this area with live music and delivery of food ordered from local restaurants. Mr. Lineaweaver requested the Special Event Committee to have an opportunity to review this request and communicate with GNA Restaurant prior to blocking their parking lot. Approval of this event was tabled. The next Special Event Committee meeting would be held on September 1st and could be voted upon by Borough Council during the Budget Meeting scheduled for September 9th.

Mr. Ratcliffe shared that the earlier remark of a \$17,280 cost to the Borough for the 2023 Art on the Avenue event could be considered a trade-off for the \$300,000 to replace light fixtures along Penn Avenue and refurbish the gateway railroad bridge approaching the Borough.

Mayor Kaag was pleased to see the recent façade improvements through the use of the Façade Grant Program.

Motion to accept the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Mr. Ratcliffe and Mr. Becker departed the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

12. COMMITTEE / COMMISSION REPORTS:

- a. **Equity Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce** – Mr. Lineaweaver reported that a meeting was not held this past month.

- b. **Recreation Commission** – Mr. Esterly referred to his written report and noted two action items:

1. Consideration to accept the resignation of Chlain Mocerri from the Recreation Commission. It was noted that Ms. Mocerri relocated out of the Borough. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**
2. Consideration to appoint Taryn Duncan to the Recreation Commission with a term to expire on December 31, 2024. Mr. Lineaweaver was impressed with the letter of interest and thought this opportunity would be a good gateway for Ms. Duncan, who has resided in West Reading since 2020, to become involved in the community. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Mr. Esterly noted the upcoming Concert in the Park and Karaoke Competition events. Ms. Drobnick shared the entertainment scheduled for the Concert in the Park event as a regional salsa band, known as the Hector Rosado Orchestra, and dancers from the WH Dance Academy to include a group salsa lesson.

Mr. Esterly noted that the half-day playground program ended on August 4th and plans to improve the program next year by including larger field trips. Mr. Lineaweaver recommended sending a note to the playground program parents to request feedback on this year's program.

Mr. Esterly noted a scheduling conflict with the fall events and the annual Wyomissing Area School District Homecoming Parade and Bonfire event. Therefore, the haunted house will not operate on Friday, October 13th.

Ms. Drobnick noted that the Battle of the West Reading Karaoke Stars will take place on Saturday, September 2nd at 4:00 p.m. at Third & Spruce and the Free Yoga in the Park has been extended through the end of September.

Motion to accept the Recreation Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- c. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert noted a visit from representatives of Derck & Edson, LLC to discuss Form-Based Codes and the outlined process to accomplish this goal. Funding of these services has been secured through a grant from the Wyomissing Foundation. A recommendation has been provided by the Planning Commission regarding an additional service to review sign ordinance amendments in conjunction with Form-Based Code amendments for a cost savings. This would be an additional cost for services totaling \$11,200.

Motion to fund the sign ordinance amendment review fees to Derck & Edson, LLC not to exceed \$11,200. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Motion to accept the Planning Commission report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- d. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert provided a verbal review of last night's meeting noting the monthly review of the business community and economic standpoint as far as property transfers. Property values continue to rise, and new businesses continue to move into the Borough.

Motion to accept the verbal Economic Development Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- e. **Environmental Advisory Council** – Mr. Kaag referred to the minutes and noted that resident Tyler Weisman of New Castle Lawn & Landscape would share highlights of a proposed memorial garden to be donated and installed in honor of the victims of the R.M. Palmer tragedy. The location of the garden would be near Playground Drive to the left of the pedestrian bridge. The architecture, plantings and elements would honor the seven lives lost on March 24, 2023. The seven Sky Pencil Holly Trees would stand tall and cast a shadow on a boulder beside it to reflect a period of darkness at the time of the explosion at 4:57 p.m. The boulders can be engraved to memorialize the seven victims. The afternoon shadows cast towards the east corner of the garden where there is light and brightness from the Cherry Tree, Creeping Phlox, and Helleborus which are in full bloom around March 24th. Additional structural elements include the seven existing wood barricades at the end of Parkview Road and the seven concrete planters along the walkway to the bridge. These elements are the barrier and protection of safety and support to the garden. The planters allow for color to extend out from the garden. The remainder of the plantings provide color, texture, and interest throughout all seasons so that the garden can be enjoyed year-round.

Mr. Wert recommended discussing these plans with the Department of Environmental Protection due to the garden bordering the high-quality Wyomissing Creek. Mr. Murray noted a meeting with the Borough's MS4 Engineer, Public Works Director, and Landscaper and plans to modify stormwater flows to protect the garden. Mr. Grassley met with UGI to discuss gas lines and plans to install catch basins on either side of the street. There will be no cost to the borough for the landscaping or memorial engravings that will be provided by New Castle Lawn and Landscape and the R.M. Palmer Company. It was noted that Reading Precast, Inc. will be donating the planters. Mr. Lineaweaver recalled funds allocated through the Berks County Community Foundation Disaster Recovery Fund that are to be used for a historical commemoration of the explosion, and/or the creation of a memorial. The ongoing care of the proposed primarily maintenance free garden was discussed. Mr. Wert noted a previous Garden Club that consisted of volunteers that planted flowers in various locations throughout the Borough. Mr. Kaag would bring this concept to the Environmental Advisory Council for discussion on reviving the Garden Club.

Mr. Kaag noted the following two action items:

1. Consideration to create an R.M. Palmer Memorial Garden on Playground Drive near the pedestrian bridge. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**
2. Consideration to appoint Associate Member Jay Santo Domingo as a full Member of the Environmental Advisory Council with a term to expire on December 31, 2025. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Motion to accept the Environmental Advisory Council report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- f. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committee** – Mr. Kaag referred to the minutes noting a review of motorcycle parking and permitting, as is being researched by Officer-in-Charge Marks. An action item has been recommended by the committee to retain the twice per week waste collection, and once per week recyclable collection services while continuing to refine yard waste collection methods in-house. It was noted that reducing the number of trash collections to once per week would be a savings of \$1 per week per residence, it was thought that most residents prefer the twice per week option. The four bidding options include twice per week trash collection, once per week recycling, and ticketing bulk items. The first two options include a hauler with a landfill and the second two options would require the Borough to contract with a landfill. The contract would span three years from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2026 with an option to extend the contract for up to two additional one-year terms.

Motion to authorize the advertisement of four options of Waste Collection and Processing Request for Bids. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Ms. Shenk departed the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

Motion to accept the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- g. **Shade Tree Commission** – Mr. Kaag noted a longer than normal meeting this month with resident attendance and participation to address concerns. The Public Works Director and Borough Manager were able to address most of the concerns that were expressed during the meeting. Mr. Lineaweaver described recent windstorms that caused minimal damage to the inventory of 1,200 Borough maintained trees and the 14% increase each year to fund maintenance of the tree inventory. Mr. Wert inquired as to tree removal without authorization. Mr. Murray & Mr. Grassley are attempting to connect with a Met-Ed representative to discuss their decision to remove a tree that claimed to be in the way of a pole replacement. Mr. Grassley noted abuse of the PA One Call system by utility companies that post no parking signs on a Friday, and emergency PA One Calls during weekend hours. The PA One Call system recommends that he communicate this information with the Public Utility Commission.

Mr. Rogers noted the removal of a tree in front of his home and inquired as to when the stump will be removed. Mr. Grassley noted that he would like to purchase a stump grinder, it was recommended to include this purchase within the 2024 Public Works budget.

Motion to accept the Shade Tree Commission report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- h. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray provided a verbal report of yesterday's meeting noting a training video related to ear protection that was viewed by the committee. There were discussions on finalizing the safety manual that may be ready for Council approval next month.

Motion to accept the verbal Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

13. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mrs. Rentschler referred to an overview of interest earned last month in investments and did not request any further action to be taken at this time.

- a. **2024 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) Pension Plan** – Mrs. Rentschler noted a \$93,000 increase to the police pension plan for the year 2024 due to a loss of money based on the stock market conditions this past year. She requested authorizing the minimum obligation at this time that could be increased during budget discussions should funds be available.

Motion to approve the MMO budget for 2024 for Uniform and Non-Uniformed Pension Plans. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 4-0.**

- b. **Financial Statement Ending 7/31/2023** – There were no questions or comments.
- c. **Payment Approval Report 7/19/23 to 8/10/23 and 8/11/23 to 8/15/23** – There were no questions or comments.

Motion to approve the financial statement ending 7/31/2023, and Payment Approval Reports of 7/19/23 to 8/10/23 and 8/11/23 to 8/15/23. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Mr. Murray noted that Mr. Janssen from the Center for Excellence in Local Government was away on vacation last week, therefore, next week's budget meeting may be cancelled.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Rogers requested to meet with the Council President, Borough Manager and Code Department Manager following the meeting to establish a standard operating procedure to register new businesses with Berkheimer Tax Innovation to collect Business Privilege Licensing and Taxes.

Mr. Gardner wished the Mayor a happy birthday.

- 15. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary