

## BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

**August 16, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.**

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, August 16, 2016 with the following persons present: Council President Carl G. Garman; Council Members Grace M. Craze, Kristin L. Kramer, Christopher C. Lincoln, Suzanne Thompson, Philip C. Wert; Acting Borough Manager Cathy L. Hoffman; Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr; Police Chief Stephen D. Powell; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Public Works Employee Kerry Grassley; Solicitor Charles Haws ; Engineer Tom Unger; Recreation Director Helen Moyer; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach, Main Street Manager Christin Kelley; Administrative Clerk Stephanie L. Burkholder and Finance Consultant Donal Renninger. Council Vice-President Nathalie Kulesa was unable to attend.

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|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>VISITORS:</b> | James Rogers     | Resident       |
|                  | Karen Livingood  | Resident       |
|                  | Amber Rambo      | Resident       |
|                  | Robin Horman     | Resident       |
|                  | Audrey Schaeffer | Resident       |
|                  | Tina Shenk       | Property Owner |
|                  | Oswald Herbert   | Resident       |
|                  | Jamie Flickinger | Employee       |
|                  | Todd Stricker    | Employee       |
|                  | Reporter         | Reading Eagle  |

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Carl G. Garman called the meeting to order at 7:00 which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

Prior to Public Comment, Public Works Crew Leader Kerry Grassley introduced Jamie Flickinger and Todd Stricker as the newest members of the Public Works Department and noted that they are working out well.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Amber Rambo** stated that during the past two months she has found three dead skunks and two cats in her yard. Ms. Rambo doesn't spray any chemicals on her lawn and isn't sure what could be causing this but just wanted to let Council know.

**James Rogers** spoke about street sweeping and parking on alternate streets. He stated that alternating sides is working in the city of Reading and said this would be a benefit to people in the borough who are trying to park. Mr. Grassley stated that when you have parking on one side of the street it makes in difficult on a windy day to keep all of the debris in one area. Mr. Garman stated that the Traffic Committee can take a look at this at their next meeting.

**Audrey Schaeffer** – Mrs. Schaeffer had some concerns with 417 Franklin and asked how everything is progressing. Mrs. Hoffman stated that the property is going through the process to declare it as a blighted property. A hearing was held on July 26<sup>th</sup> and the process is moving along. Mrs. Schaeffer stated that she found a leak in her dining room wall recently and wasn't sure what caused it. Mrs. Schaeffer asked if someone could check 417 to find out if there is a problem. Mr. Wert reported that the Berks County Redevelopment Authority had advised that the blight determination resolution was adopted which means that the owner has 30 days to remedy the blight conditions.

Mr. Lincoln asked about obtaining an administrative warrant to check the property again. Mr. Unger advised that the property had been inspected a few months ago and there was no evidence of leaking at

that time however it is possible that something has happened since then. Mrs. Hoffman stated she would have someone from the Codes Department stop by and investigate.

**Oswald Herbert** – Mr. Herbert spoke about sewage system inspections and Act 537 that requires inspections. Mr. Unger stated that the Act 537 gives a municipality power to adopt an ordinance to have tanks pumped out every 3 years. Mr. Unger didn't know if the borough already had this ordinance in place and noted that there are fewer than 10 properties in the borough that are not on the Borough's system. Mr. Wert asked if this was something Mr. Unger would recommend and he said that it's only recommended if there are existing problems.

3. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

**Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln to approve the Council minutes of July 19, 2016 and July 26, 2016. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

a. **Mid-Year Report of Revenues & Borough Financial Condition**

CPA Donal Renninger provided Council with a Mid-Year report of Revenue for the period ending June 30<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Renninger went over the revenue amounts from all sources with a comparison to the previous year. Ms. Renninger also provided a report on the Borough's Financial Condition. Mr. Garman stated that Council has discussed adding Ms. Renninger to the Finance Committee and in the coming weeks the structure of the Finance Committee will be discussed.

b. **Revenues with Comparison to Budget – 7 months ending 7/31/2016**

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Craze to approve the Revenues with Comparison to Budget Report for the seven months ending July 31<sup>st</sup>. **Motion carried 6-0.**

c. **Payment Approval Report – 7/20/2016 to 8/10/2016 and 8/11/2016 to 8/16/2016**

**Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Kramer to approve the Payment Approval Report for the periods of 7/20/2016 – 8/10/2016 and 8/11/2016 – 8/16/2016. **Motion carried 6-0.**

5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. **Bond Refunding** - Mrs. Hoffman stated that the final amounts have been calculated therefore the net saving to the Borough will be \$179,088.91 for 2016. Settlement is scheduled for August 30<sup>th</sup> and all documents will need to be signed at that time.
- b. **Belovich Development** – Mrs. Hoffman advised that the easement agreement has been revised to reflect the new language and two signatures remain to be obtained from the Silk Drive residents.
- c. **Abandoned Properties** – There is nothing new to report regarding the other two abandoned properties.
- d. **Hail Damage Repairs** – Mrs. Hoffman stated that she and Mr. Grassley have been working with John Denning from Grecco Construction to facilitate the repairs. The pavilion and bathhouse roofs are now going to be entirely replaced instead of just a section being completed.  
Mr. Haws stated that Mr. Mooney was also working with Mr. Denning in preparation of the bids. He also noted that \$133,000 has been allocated for streetlight repairs and the insurance company is allowing the Borough to use those funds to install new LED heads rather than replacing with the older style lighting.
- e. **Cumru Township Property** – The cleanup of the Cumru property has been completed by the property owner and the gate has been locked which will prevent illegal dumping in that area.

6. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – The Solicitor's report was covered by other agenda items. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson to approve the Solicitor's report. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- b. **Engineer/Code Enforcement Report** – Mr. Unger reported the following:
  - The low bid for the road paving project was Slouch Incorporated in the amount of \$124,203.90. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Kramer to award the bid to Slouch Incorporated. **Motion carried 6-0.** The work scheduled to start in September.
  - **Buttonwood Street** – Mr. Unger stated that he has prepared the existing condition plan and a cost estimate needs to be prepared for the improvements. UGI has completed work in the street, however they haven't done the final restoration. Mr. Lincoln asked if UGI calls for inspections when they go to do the restoration and Mr. Unger stated that they are now but it's taking a lot of effort to get that done.
  - **Municipal Garage Bidding** - Estimates have been received from the contractor to repair the column between the overhead doors and also to repair the chimney. The chimney is showing some wear due to age. Ms. Craze asked about PennDOT planning on taking part of the road for the expansion of RT 422. Mr. Lincoln advised that they are in the middle of the preliminary engineering and the plan is to go with three lanes in each direction. A portion of the plan will lower the roadway and there's the possibility that some of the areas that public works uses may be taken away. Mr. Grassley advised that the salt shed may be an issue in the future however the garage shouldn't be a problem.
  - **Museum Road** – Mr. Unger received the curb replacement request. Mr. Murray had budgeted for this and the cost to replace 270 feet of curbing in front of the pool near the traffic light at Parkside Drive North and Sycamore Road is estimated to be \$12,500. Mr. Unger stated that the borough's curb ordinance has a detail specification which includes a 24 inch deep curb however PennDOT's regulation is 18 inches. The portion above the ground from pavement to top of the curb will stay the same. Mr. Garman asked if it was a good time to do this now without Mr. Murray being present. Mr. Unger advised that Mr. Murray asked him to put this together and get permission from Council to put it out for bid. Mrs. Hoffman stated that we do have funds in that line item, and Mrs. Rentschler concurred. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Craze to authorize the preparation of the specs from the curb replacement on Museum Road. **Motion carried 6-0.**
  - Mr. Unger stated that Mr. Murray had sewer line cleaning in his budget and asked about the specification to receive bids for the televising and the cleaning of sewer lines. These sewer lines are located on the south side of the Borough from Spruce Street to Playground Drive; from S 5<sup>th</sup> to S 1<sup>st</sup> and budgeted for \$25,000. Mr. Unger stated that there's a program where this is done one quarter a year. Mr. Grassley stated that it's been a while since this had been done and they are looking for infiltration and cracks in the line. **Moved** by Ms. Kramer and seconded by Ms. Thompson to authorize the preparation of specs to receive the bids. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Ms. Kramer stated that she received a complaint from a resident about people not picking up after their dogs and asked what can be done. She was told that unless someone physically sees this happening, the Codes Department can't do anything as far as citing the individual unless they know who it is. Ms. Kramer stated that signage should be placed throughout the Borough because the fines are not posted anywhere. Mr. Wert noted that signs can't be placed on a person's own lawn per the sign ordinance.

**Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson to approve the Engineers Report. **Motion carried 6-0.**

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

- a. **Copper and Lead Testing** – This testing is required to be completed every three years and for 2016, must be completed by September 30<sup>th</sup>. There are twenty properties in the borough that have to be tested and although there is a cost associated with this, Mrs. Hoffman wasn't sure if it had been budgeted.
- b. **Surplus Vehicle** – There is one hail damaged vehicle remaining which has been sitting at the borough garage. Mr. Grassley stated that the 2013 vehicle has very low mileage and was used as the former C.I. vehicle. Mr. Murray had asked if he could use the vehicle as the Public Works Director's vehicle. Mrs. Hoffman asked Council to consider this so that Mr. Murray can make sure the vehicle is road worthy, and get it inspected. Council will make a decision once more information is gathered.
- c. **Personnel Committee – Job Descriptions**  
Mrs. Hoffman advised that the Personnel Committee needs to meet and job descriptions need to be created for every position on the administration side. Mr. Rodriguez will work with Mrs. Hoffman and set up some dates.
- d. **Emergency Operations Plan** – This manual was provided delivered by WSREMA with a request that all necessary personnel and Council review the document. A resolution is also required accepting the manual for the Borough's emergency planning.
- e. **Management Meetings** - Mrs. Hoffman stated that the first department head staff meeting had been held with all department heads attending. These meetings will be held every Monday morning at 10am. She noted that the first meeting was quite productive with emphasis being placed on the event that was held the previous weekend. As a result of the discussion, several recommendations will be made including the implementation of an event permit.

**Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Craze to approve the Acting Borough Manager's report. **Motion carried 6-0.**

8. **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Rodriguez – National Night Out event was held and was a success. Mayor Rodriguez commended Investigator Good on her prep work for the event and thanked all those who participated. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Craze to approve the Mayor's report. **Motion carried 6-0.**

9. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. **Police Department** –
  - Chief Powell – thanked the Fire Department for the help during National Night Out.
  - A County Law enforcement agency is housing some vehicles in the borough and are asking permission from the borough to use the borough gas tanks to fill the vehicles. This won't cost the borough anything and will come out of the police budget. That agency will receive get a bill which will be paid for the gas that is used.
  - Mr. Wert commented about the increase in parking ticket revenue that has occurred since the implementation of the new ticketing equipment.

**Moved** by Ms. Kramer and seconded by Ms. Thompson to approve the Police Department Report. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Public Works** – Mr. Grassley referred to his written report and noted that Mr. Murray had requested to purchase a jackhammer attachment for the backhoe which was expected to cost \$25,000. The caterpillar dealer had one for \$26,100 and a used one for \$15,500. Mr. Grassley asked if they have permission to go forward with the purchase of the used jackhammer attachment. Mrs. Hoffman stated that half of the funding would come from water and the other half from sewer. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Kramer to approve the purchase of the used jackhammer attachment for the backhoe for the price of \$15,500. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Grassley requested an executive session.

- c. **Fire Department** – There were no questions concerning Chief Burkholder's report. **Moved** by Ms. Kramer and seconded by Ms. Thompson to approve the Fire Department Report. **Motion carried 6-0.**
- d. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation Elm Street and Main Street Manager' Report** – Mr. Rohrbach referred to their written report and noted the following:
- Mr. Rohrbach has raised \$7000 in the last few months.
  - The Summer block party and water balloon fight will be held in the 400 block of Chestnut Street on August 27<sup>th</sup> from 2:00pm to 6:00pm.
  - The Paint the Town event will begin on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Rohrbach will be meeting with residents to finalize the colors.
  - He is in the process of writing another grant.

Mr. Rohrbach was commended on the award he had received from the police department at National Night Out.

Ms. Kelley spoke about the following:

- Provided an update on the events that are coming up.
- Mr. Rohrbach attended the last Business Association meeting and spoke about the tree grates on Penn Avenue. It was suggested that the tree grates be removed and perennials be planted instead.
- Fall Festival will be held on September 17<sup>th</sup> and volunteers are still being sought.
- Will be working on the tree lighting ceremony with the Recreation Director.

#### **Appointment to the CRF Board**

The vacancy on the CRF board was discussed, particularly concerning the wording in the by-laws and the Cooperation Agreement. Due to an incorrect deadline being published in the newspaper ad, it was decided to postpone the appointment until the August 23<sup>rd</sup> council meeting.

**Moved** by Ms. Kramer and seconded by Ms. Thompson to approve the Elm Street and Main Street Managers' Reports. **Motion carried 6-0.**

#### **10. COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to her written report and noted these items:
- Provided information on "Zagster" a Bike Share Program which can will encourage people to cycle through the borough and on the trails. Mrs. Moyer spoke to the new Wyomissing Recreation Director and he's interested in participating but must discuss this with his board and council to see if this is something they want to do.

The cost is \$9,000/year which includes 5 bikes, a bike rack and logo. 93% is given back to those funding the program and the other 7% is for the maintenance. Two stations will cost \$18,000. The funding can be sponsored by the borough.

- Mrs. Moyer reported a new event coming up, the Harvest Festival event which will be held on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Both vendors and Penn Avenue businesses will have tables there.
- Mrs. Moyer is preparing for a disc golf course which will be completely funded through donations, at a cost of \$10,000 for the installation and maintenance. It will be a 9 hole course and won't interfere with traffic. Mrs. Moyer has sent the proposed plans to the City of Reading's Planning Commission and they have indicated preliminarily that there would not be any problems moving forward. If plans change, the discs can be easily removed and the area filled in. Signage will also be placed throughout the park warning people of the "flying disc". It's recommended that the signs be put in place along with a list of rules. There is no cost for this other than the cost for borough crew to put the course in and can be done during normal working hours. \$10,000 is needed to fund the project and to move forward including engineering and legal fees if necessary. Insurance information from the insurance company has not been received yet.

**Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Kramer to approve the installation of the disc golf course subject to information provided by our insurance company and from the Planning Commission in Reading. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Craze to approve the Recreation Commission Report. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert stated that the Committee did meet and Ms. Kelley took the minutes therefore Mrs. Hoffman will follow up with her.

Ms. Thompson suggested that the remainder of the reports be given at the August 23<sup>rd</sup> Council meeting. There were some issues that required action therefore those reports were given.

- c. **Traffic Committee** – Mr. Lincoln noted the following:  
The current fine for parking against traffic is \$25 however state law sets a maximum at \$15 therefore the ordinance will have to be amended to reflect this. As well, the current handicapped parking fine is \$50 however state law allows a maximum of \$75. This will also be revised. Mr. Grassley asked about the signs and Chief Powell stated the signs would have to be changed.

**Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Kramer to advertise an amendment to the parking ordinance with regard to the fines as discussed and to adopt language where the amount can be changed from time to time. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Lincoln stated that the committee is recommending an expansion of a permit parking area in borough which would include the 100 block of Tulpehocken Avenue and the 000 block of N. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Tulpehocken Avenue is proposed for Monday-Sunday from 6:00am to 6:00pm and N. 6<sup>th</sup> is proposed from 6:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday only. Those without parking permits would be restricted to a 2 hour limit which is similar to the rest of the permit parking areas in the borough. Additional signs would need to be purchased in order to do that. This will be discussed further at the August 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Craze to approve the Traffic Committee Report.  
**Motion carried 6-0.**

These reports will be tabled for next week's meeting:  
Planning, Environmental, Infrastructure, and Safety.

d. **Combined Pension Committees**

Mrs. Hoffman said there are two resolutions that would have to be passed by council in order to transfer the funds for the pension. Those resolutions will be prepared for the meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

11. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to Executive Session at 10:47 p.m. When the regular meeting reconvened at 11:02 p.m. the following action was taken. **Moved** by Ms. Kramer and seconded by Mr. Lincoln to contract with Reading Berks HR Management to assist with the hiring of a Borough Manager in an amount not to exceed \$5000 without authorization. **Motion carried 6-0.**

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

James T. Rogers spoke about a sign at the traffic circle that needs to be removed as it is outdated.

13. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Craze to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 p.m. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Burkholder  
Administrative Clerk