

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

November 21, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, November 21, 2017 with the following persons present: Council President Carl G. Garman; Council Vice President Nathalie Kulesa; Council Members Christopher C. Lincoln, Philip Wert, Grace M. Craze, Suzanne Thompson, Nicholas Imbesi; Solicitor Charles Haws; Police Chief Stephen D. Powell; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Director Helen Moyer; Engineer Tom Unger; Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Borough Manager Cathy L. Hoffman and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr. was unable to attend.

VISITORS:	Karen Livingood	Resident
	James T. Rogers	Resident
	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Andrew Kearney	Resident
	Terry Siggins	Resident
	Andrew Kearney	Resident
	Terry Siggins	Resident
	David Amato	Resident
	Melanie Zeiber	Resident
	Douglas Zeeger	Resident
	Jennifer Brown	Resident
	Janell Wolf	Resident
	Tom Dietrich	Business Owner
	Ashley Dietrich	Business Owner
	Thomas Byerly	Business Owner
	Bridget Byerly	Business Owner
	Kacey Lloyd	Reading Radsport
	Gabe Lloyd	Reading Radsport
	Peter Barbey	Reading Radsport
	Alicia & Savannah Pagerly	

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Carl G. Garman called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

Mr. Garman stated that a conditional use hearing convened at 6:30 p.m. for Mobilitie to install a wireless communication facility near the Spruce Street parking garage at the intersection of Spruce Street and South Sixth Avenue. Council granted permission.

2. **K-9 RECOGNITION:**

Chief Powell presented a Certificate of Honorable Retirement to K-9 Officer Fox for his seven years of service with the West Reading Police Department. Chief Powell also recognized Officer Wayne Holben for being instrumental in creating and preserving this program.

Chief Powell introduced K-9 Officer Falco who is a Dutch Shepherd that began service with Officer Chad Marks on November 11, 2017. Chief Powell recognized and presented a Proclamation to King's Auto and Superior Oxygen in recognition of their generous donations, which will allow continuation of the K-9 program in the Borough. Mr. Byerly of Superior Oxygen also donated funds for food and health care for retired Officer Fox.

Chief Powell presented a Proclamation to Alicia and Savannah Pagerly who represent the Kyle Pagerly Memorial Fund recognizing their donation to the K-9 program as well as their generosity to all first responders.

3. **5th ANNUAL FASHIONISTA 5K:**

Janell Wolf requested permission to hold the 5th Annual Fashionista 5K on May 6, 2018 beginning at 9:00 a.m. The route remains unchanged and volunteers will be provided to assist at intersections.

Motion to approve the 5th Annual Fashionista 5K on May 6, 2018. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

4. **2018 TWILIGHT CRITERIUM:**

Ms. Lloyd thanked the community for their efforts during the successful Criterium event held on September 9, 2017. Improvements that would be made for potential future events would entail more volunteer refreshments and rest area as well as parking for visitors and residents. Ms. Lloyd requested permission to hold another event on Saturday, August 4, 2018.

Mr. Garman stated Council would consider Ms. Lloyd's request during executive session and respond within one week.

5. **WESTERN BERKS WATER ASSOCIATION:**

Chip Bilger of Western Berks Water Association requested Council's participation in a study coordinated with Shillington and Wyomissing Borough to accommodate new regulations promulgated by DRBC and DEP.

Mr. Garman stated the two Council members that would participate in the study should be decided during the reorganization meeting in January 2018.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Rogers inquired as to results from the Walker Parking Consultants study. Mr. Lincoln stated additional information was requested from the Police Department and Main Street Manager to complete their study; results should be available during the January meeting.

7. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Mr. Imbesi noted that his attendance be added to the October 14, 2017 budget minutes and Mr. Garman noted an error with regard to the Mayor's line item, which was stated in the minutes at \$1000, however was actually \$500.

Motion to approve the October 14, 2017 Budget Workshop minutes with noted revisions. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve the October 17, 2017 Council minutes. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve the October 24, 2017 Budget Workshop minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve the November 11, 2017 Budget Workshop minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

8. **ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:**

Ordinance 1074 – Snow & Ice Removal from Sidewalks – There were no comments.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 1074 Snow & Ice Removal from Sidewalks. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. **Land Acquisition from RDC Realco, LLC:** Mr. Haws noted deeds have been executed and recorded.

10. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Haws suggested a meeting with the Wyomissing Area School District to discuss proposed revisions to the business privilege tax ordinance. Neither classification nor rates can be amended to this ordinance, only the manner in how the tax is collected.

Mr. Wert suggested the meeting take place prior to next Tuesday's budget meeting.

Motion to approve the Solicitor's report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **Engineer/Code Enforcement Report** – Mr. Unger referred to his report and noted the following:

- **Parkview Road Bridge** – The contractor would be responsible for the environmentally safe removal and disposal of the painted steel bridge.
- **7th & Walnut Intersection** – Met with the owner of All About Children to discuss options, a sketch of proposed improvements has been provided to the Infrastructure Committee.
- **Park & Recreation** – A revised Frisbee golf layout has been completed. Costs for prefabricated pedestrian bridge have been researched and Council discussed the following options:
 - The current bridge spans 110'; a shorter option of 80' is an available option to cross the waterway. The 80' option was favorable by Council.
 - Three types of bridge material were discussed: the timber option being the most expensive; the aluminum or steel options that are comparably priced. Council favored the self-weathering steel option, which would allow simpler removal of graffiti, etc.
 - Width options of 6' or 8' were discussed. Council agreed to an 8' width to safely allow bicyclists to navigate the bridge.

Council will review all options including railing and deck materials to render a decision during the December Council meeting.

Council also discussed use of Liquid Fuel funds to demolish the existing Parkview Road Bridge and close the road.

Motion to authorize Systems Design Engineering to obtain bids for demolition of the Parkview Road Bridge. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Craze. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- **Sewer Line Cleaning & Televising** – A preconstruction meeting is being scheduled.

- **Alley Sewer & Paving** – Funds are being held for the Sunset/Sycamore Road Sewer and Paving project until paving repairs are completed for a portion of the alley that was ponding.

Motion to approve Contract “A” Payment Application No. 3 to A.H. Moyer in the amount of \$169,308.29. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve Contract “B” Payment Application No. 1 to H&K Group in the amount of \$59,588.87. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- **Water Line Replacement Projects** – Water line and valve replacement are complete. Base paving was completed today and Spruce Street should be reopened on Friday.

Motion to approve Payment Application No. 1 to Barrasso Excavating, Inc. in the amount of \$195,016.00. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 7-0.**

The October Code Enforcement report will be provided for the December Council meeting.

Ms. Craze noted while campaigning on the 400 block of Chestnut Street a number of homes had unsecure railings. Mr. Unger will request the Code Department to review this area closely.

Mr. Garman suggested Code Department personnel request contractors to avoid parking at corners near intersections.

Motion to approve the Engineer/Code Enforcement report. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

11. **BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT:**

- a. **Ragnar Relay** – A representative of Ragnar Relay has requested permission to hold a portion of their annual relay through the Borough. The requested date is June 15 & 16, 2017 along the same route.

Mr. Wert noted a conflict with the Art on the Avenue event. Mrs. Hoffman will request an alteration of their course onto Franklin Street to Park Road to avoid Penn Avenue.

- b. **2018 Meeting Schedule** – Mrs. Hoffman requested review of the meeting schedule dates to take action in December.
- c. **PA Gaming Control Board** – Mrs. Hoffman noted an opportunity to opt-out of allowing Category 4 Casinos to be located within the Borough via resolution, which must be passed by December 31, 2017.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2017-7 to prohibit Category 4 Casinos within the Borough. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve the Manager’s report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

12. **MAYOR’S REPORT:**

No report had been provided. Mrs. Hoffman will inquire with the Mayor as to the status of the Wyomissing School District crossing guard progress.

13. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

a. **Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report and noted the following:

- A donation was also received from District Attorney John Adams office for the K-9 program.

Motion to approve the Police Department report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to the written report and noted they are still awaiting payment of the street sweeper.

Motion to approve the Public Works Department report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

c. **Fire Department** – Chief Burkholder referred to the written report for the usually busy month of October. Ms. Craze inquired about the ongoing roof leak. Mr. Murray stated the contractor is working on repairs to the roof, which is still under warranty.

Motion to approve the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

d. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation**

- **Elm Street** – Mr. Rohrbach provided three options to utilize the remaining \$94,065 DCED funds from the Sixth Avenue Streetscape Project for streetscape improvements to the North side of the 400 block of Chestnut Street:
 - Option 1 – full width of sidewalk replacement with curvilinear brick lined grass median would cost the Borough \$55,225; without curvilinear brick this cost would be reduced to \$41,800.
 - Option 2 – partial sidewalk replacement with curvilinear brick lined grass median would cost the Borough \$22,174; without curvilinear brick this cost would be reduced to approximately \$9000.
 - Option 3 – utilize \$50,000 for façade program and return \$44,065 to the state.Mr. Rohrbach will provide budget information that will be submitted to DCED to confirm amounts. Also, Mr. Rohrbach noted the annual Pennsylvania Downtown Center evaluation and requested Council's participation one hour prior to the January 16, 2018 Council meeting. Center Point Neighborhood investment information was provided for the first three quarters of 2017 showing an actual investment with volunteer labor of \$382,875.

Motion to approve the Elm Street Manager's report. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- **Main Street** – Mr. Ratcliffe referred to his report and noted the following:
 - A scarecrow contest, which tied into the City of Reading contest, elicited 10 participants while the City had 12 participants.

- Small Business Saturday will kickoff at Benchwarmers with the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce.
- A new midnight madness event will be held on December 16th where merchants remain open until midnight.
- West Reading business sponsored holiday banners are to be installed along the 400 through 700 blocks of Penn Avenue.

Motion to approve Main Street Manager's report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

14. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to her written report and noted the following:

- A Christmas Globe making event will take place on November 26th.
- An online survey has been created to obtain feedback. To date 51 responses have been received.
- Action Items:

- Request Council's acceptance of Carmen Olivo's letter of interest to be a member of the Recreation Committee.

Motion to accept Ms. Olivo as a member of the Recreation Committee. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- Request Council's acceptance of Karen Livingood's resignation letter from the Recreation Committee.

Motion to accept Mrs. Livingood's letter of resignation, with regret, from the Recreation Committee. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Lincoln.

Motion carried 7-0.

- Request Council's approval of 2018 Recreation events and meeting dates.

Motion to accept the Recreation Committee's 2018 event and meeting dates.

Moved by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- Due to a number of requests for a family pool pass this will be offered on a trial basis at \$300 for a family of 2 adults and 2 children. Request Council's approval of the 2018 Recreation fee schedule.

Motion to accept the 2018 Recreation fee schedule. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- In order for volunteers to also be provided pool passes for their family members additional volunteer hours would be required. Request Council's acceptance of the proposed list of volunteer hours.

Motion to accept proposed volunteer hours. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve the Recreation Director's report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert referred to the minutes of November 1, 2017 and noted the following:

- Ongoing review of zoning changes continued.

- The committee favorably discussed the option of a Board of Appeals as a midway point between the Borough and District Justice. Should the board rule in favor of the appellant their fee would be returned.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- c. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert referred to the minutes of November 13, 2017 with an updated list of foreclosed or vacant properties. Mr. Wert noted inventory of available commercial spaces is almost nonexistent.

Motion to approve the Economic Development Report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – Mr. Wert noted a quorum was unavailable for the October 23rd meeting.
- e. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committees** – Mr. Lincoln referred to the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of November 8, 2017 and noted a meeting with All About Children to discuss revisions to the 7th & Walnut intersection. Potential modifications include the removal of paving between All About Children and Narrow Fabric buildings to extend the grass area to define the street/intersection; also the installation of a rock garden with mountable curbing to allow the rare oversized vehicle to access the All About Children building. Temporary construction/access easements may be required. The Committee plans to speak with the owner of Gage to discuss potentially moving the curb line to widen this intersection. Christmas wreaths have been delivered and installed on Penn Avenue.

Mr. Wert inquired as to a survey of the fishing dock area to delineate enforcement by the Police Department. Mr. Unger will provide a cost for the survey to obtain Council's approval.

Mr. Wert noted the lengthy process to obtain municipal annexation of land. Mr. Haws will provide information regarding enforcement of Police matters upon land owned by another municipality.

Motion to approve the Traffic & Infrastructure Committee reports. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** – Mr. Murray referred to the minutes of the November 14, 2017 meeting and noted tree trimming will continue through the winter by Borough Crew members. The contractor that will be removing trees should begin work within the next few weeks.

Mr. Wert commented favorably to potential revisions of the Shade Tree Ordinance to expand the number of commission members.

Motion to approve the Shade Tree Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- g. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray referred to minutes of the October 24, 2017 meeting. Chief Powell noted a safety trainer from Susquehanna Municipal Trust would be speaking during the November meeting.

Mr. Garman inquired as to the status of the firefighter injured during hydrant flushing. Chief Burkholder noted the volunteer firefighter is doing well.

Motion to approve the Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- h. **Finance Committee** – Ms. Thompson referred to the payment approval report of October 18 – November 17, 2017, there were 18 items that were questioned and have been answered.

Notable items for Council:

- 01-409-373 Maintenance & Repairs fees pertained to the annual inspection of the alarm systems.
- 06-400-370 System Maintenance & Repairs pertained to unforeseen expenses relating to the Spruce Street water project. The \$7,715 charge were for additional materials needed outside of the original anticipated scope of work.

Motion to approve the Finance Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

15. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Revenues with Comparison to Budget** – Mrs. Rentschler referred to the report. Mr. Lincoln stated overall 2017 revenues are looking good. Mr. Wert noted an increase in collection of the business privilege tax. Mrs. Rentschler stated a representative of Berks EIT informed her that two large delinquent accounts have recently been paid.

Motion to approve the Revenues with Comparison to Budget report of 10/31/17. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **Payment Approval Report 10/18/17 to 11/17/17 & 11/18/17 to 11/20/17** - Mrs. Rentschler referred to the reports. There were no comments.

Motion to approve the Payment Approval reports of 10/18/17 to 11/17/17 & 11/18/17 to 11/20/17. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 7-0.**

15. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to an executive session at 10:01 p.m. to discuss potential complaints/issues regarding the 2018 Criterium event. When Council reconvened at 10:30 p.m. a motion was made to approve the August 4, 2018 Criterium event. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

16. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Rogers inquired as to the outcome of the Zoning Hearing for an expansion to the gas station located at 501 Penn Avenue. Mrs. Hoffman stated the board approved the expansion, which was substantially reduced from the original plan submission. However, written decision has not yet been received. Mr. Wert noted that land development approval would be required through the Planning Commission.

Mr. Rogers noted a Reading Eagle editorial regarding municipal financial ratings within Berks County where West Reading received a poor rating. Mr. Imbesi stated there are problems within the study

with comparisons of larger versus smaller tax bases. Reasons for a poor rating pertain to an increased number of services offered to West Reading residents as well as the lack of room to expand the tax base.

17. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:37 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln.

Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager