

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING**

**November 19, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.**

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 with the following persons present: Council President Philip Wert; Council Vice President Christopher Lincoln; Council Members Patrick Kaag, Jennifer Bressler, Jack Gombach and Nicholas Gardecki; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Solicitor Charles Haws; Police Chief Stephen Powell; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Director Helen Moyer; Code Department Manager Cathy Hoffman; Engineer Tom Unger; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

<b>VISITORS:</b>	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	James Rogers	Resident
	Karen Livingood	Resident
	Chad Moyer	Resident
	Andrew Moletress	Resident
	Samantha Kaag	Resident
	Christina Shenk	Property/Business Owner
	Mark Dougherty	Property/Business Owner
	Tim Gallagher	Business Owner
	Anthony Tucci	Western Berks Ambulance
	Andrew Casey	Eagle Disposal of PA, Inc.
	Robert Hugh	Edgar Holland Trash Removal, Inc.
	Scott & Susan Banasiewicz	Non-Residents

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Philip Wert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no public comments.
3. **WESTERN BERKS AMBULANCE:** Anthony Tucci provided an overview of activity for the month: there were 249 calls for service; of those calls 236 were transported; year-to-date there were 2,413 calls within the Borough, which covers a number of transports from Reading Hospital. The average response time for October was one minute, six seconds, which remains below the goal of one minute, thirty seconds. Donation letters have been mailed to residents for free membership subscriptions. Also, Western Berks Ambulance is one of three organizations within the County to receive the Berks County United Way Venture grant in the amount of \$25,000 to offset the cost of purchasing wheelchair transport vans.
4. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:** Motion to approve the October 16, 2019 Conditional Use Hearing minutes, the October 16, 2019 regular Council meeting minutes, the October 22, 2019 and November 9, 2019 Budget meeting minutes as stated. **Moved** by Mr. Gombach and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**
5. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:**
  - a. **Ordinance 1117 – Noise Amendment** – This is a minor change to the existing ordinance and has been duly advertised.  
  
Motion to adopt Ordinance 1117 amending the Noise Ordinance. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Ordinance – Adoption of the 2015 International Code Council Codes (ICC)** – An ordinance amendment that would update the adoption of the Uniform Construction Code edition from 2009 to 2015.

Motion to advertise an amendment to adopt the 2015 International Code Council Codes. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Ordinance – Rental Property Amendment** – An ordinance amendment that has been reviewed at length by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has recommended Council to approve a legal review of the proposed revisions.

Motion to approve a legal review of the Rental Property Ordinance proposed revisions. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- d. **Resolution 2019-12 Berks County Tax Collection Committee** – Mr. Imbesi explained that an update was needed to the appointed individuals representing the Wyomissing Area School District on the Berks County Tax Collection Executive Committee. Wyomissing Borough recently updated the primary delegate, and Resolution 2019-12 would update the alternate delegate from West Reading Borough.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-12 Berks County Tax Collection Committee alternate delegate, Nicholas Imbesi. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- e. **Resolution 2019-15 Fee Schedule Amendment** – An amendment to the rental housing occupancy fees on page 3 and the hourly rate for Police services on page 5 were recommended.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-15 Fee Schedule Amendment to revise the rental occupancy fees and Police service fees. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

## 6. **CONSULTANT’S REPORTS:**

- a. **Solicitor’s Report** - Mr. Haws provided a verbal report of activity this past month and noted the recent submission of the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Decision pertaining to the Conditional Use Hearings held for public right-of-way use by AT&T to locate wireless communication facilities adjacent to 201 Walnut Street and 300 S. Seventh Avenue. Mr. Haws stated that Council has sixty days to review this document and take action. Council agreed to allow additional time to review the document and the intent to take action during the November 26, 2019 Budget meeting.

Mr. Imbesi reported items for executive session that would need to be discussed with the solicitor.

Motion to approve the Solicitor’s report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Engineer’s Report** – Mr. Unger noted receipt of Payment Application No. 2 from Wexcon, Inc. in the amount of \$113,660.50 for the completed Pine Street Water Line Replacement project. The total project cost is \$33,975 below the budgeted amount. Dean Murray stated the reduced project cost was due in part to the number of service lines that needed to be replaced. Mr. Lincoln asked if the total project cost included sinkhole repair expenses; Mr. Unger indicated that the total cost did include sinkhole repairs.

Motion to approve Payment Application No.2 to Wexcon, Inc. for the Pine Street Water Line Replacement project in the amount of \$113,660.50. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Unger also reported that plans are currently being reviewed for land development at 428 Penn Avenue, comments will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the December 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Motion to approve the Engineer's report. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Unger departed the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

7. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Council recessed to executive session at 7:14 p.m. to discuss personnel and potential litigation items. Council reconvened at 7:46 p.m. and Mr. Wert noted an action item:

Motion to extend a conditional offer of employment of an entry level Police Officer to Mr. Christopher Stephen Fortin. **Moved** by Mr. Gombach and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Haws departed the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

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

- a. **Trash/Recycling Bids** – Mr. Imbesi requested a motion to accept the bids of Option 1 for bi-weekly collection and transportation of municipal solid waste.

Motion to accept the bids of Option 1 for bi-weekly collection and transportation of municipal solid waste. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

It was recommended to award Option 1 for the bi-weekly collection and transportation of municipal solid waste to the lowest qualified bidder, Edgar Holland Trash Removal, Inc. for a three-year total cost of \$493,981.

Motion to award the bi-weekly collection and transportation of municipal solid waste to the Edgar Holland Trash Removal, Inc. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Imbesi requested a motion to accept the bids of Option 2 for the weekly collection, transportation and marketing of recyclable materials.

Motion to accept the bids of Option 2 for the weekly collection, transportation and marketing of recyclable materials. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

It was recommended to award Option 2 for the weekly collection, transportation and marketing of recyclable materials to the lowest qualified bidder, Edgar Holland Trash Removal, Inc. for a three-year total cost of \$232,440.

Motion to award the weekly collection, transportation and marketing of recyclable materials to Edgar Holland Trash Removal, Inc. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Information received for weekly collection, transportation and processing of yard waste, though preferable to provide this curbside collection convenience to residents, exceeded a feasible amount to be budgeted.

Motion to reject the bids for Option 3 – weekly collection, transportation and processing of yard waste. **Moved** by Mr. Gombach and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Western Berks Water Authority (WBWA) Service Agreement** – Mr. Imbesi noted WBWA's plans to restructure their existing debt and the lender's requirement to extend the service agreement through April 1, 2045, the current service agreement would expire on November 30, 2038.

Motion to enter into a fourth supplemental service agreement to extend the Western Berks Water Authority Service Agreement through April 1, 2045. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Armed Forces Day Parade** – The Berks County Armed Forces Advisory Committee has requested Saturday, May 16, 2020 for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Berks County Armed Forces Day Parade. Chief Stephen Powell requested Council's permission to waive fees again that are associated with this event.

Motion to approve the annual Armed Forces Day Parade date of May 16, 2020 and waive fees associated with this event. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- f. **Environmental Advisory Council Letter of Resignation** – A letter of resignation from the Environmental Advisory Council has been received from Karin Long.

Motion to accept the resignation of Karin Long from the Environmental Advisory Council. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- g. **2020 Meeting Schedule** – A list of 2020 meeting dates were provided to Council for informational purposes.
- h. **UGI Update** – Mr. Imbesi shared information recently received from a representative of UGI as to funding assistance of a Parkview Road Pedestrian Bridge. Full funding of the bridge is unlikely, however, 50% may be a more realistic consideration. Additional information will be provided when it becomes available.
- i. **Animal Control Services** – The new director of the Animal Rescue League has failed to respond to email or voicemail requests to attend a Council meeting to answer questions. A sample agreement was provided from Safety Net Sanctuary located in the Fleetwood area and was requested to be reviewed for further discussion during next week's budget meeting. Mr. Lincoln requested further information as to the transportation of animals, and noted Safety Net Sanctuary's inability to handle aggressive animals, provide spaying/neutering services and provide investigation of animal cruelty or abuse claims.
- j. **Western Berks Refuse Authority** – Mr. Imbesi stated that the most recent audit is available to view at the Administration office.
- k. **Assistant Treasurer** – Mr. Imbesi noted receipt of a letter of resignation from Montana Ganster indicating her last day would be Friday, November 22, 2019. Mr. Imbesi requested that Council accept the letter of resignation.

Motion to accept Montana Ganster's letter of resignation. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Imbesi requested permission to advertise the position of an Administrative Support individual that would be divided between the Police and Administration Departments.

Motion to advertise the full-time Administrative Support position at a rate of \$15 per hour.  
**Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- I. **Commercial Fire Safety Inspection** – Troy Hatt provided an email update since he was unable to attend the meeting tonight, the update was provided to Council this evening.

Motion to approve the Borough Manager's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

9. **MAYOR'S REPORT:** The Mayor stated that he had nothing new to report.

Motion to approve the Mayor's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

10. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. **Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report and noted attendance to the Berks County Chief of Police meeting earlier today where Sergeant Wayne Holben and Officers Edward Delozier and Jesse Stock were recognized by the Friends of Reading Hospital Heart Safe Committee for the CPR/AED rescue at the Tulpehocken and Penn Avenue intersection, which saved a 45-year old gentleman's life, the survivor was present during the recognition earlier today. Formal recognition of these officers will take place during the December Council meeting.

Motion to approve the Police Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to the written report and stated that he had nothing new to report. Mr. Wert requested clarification as to the end of leaf collection. Mr. Murray stated that as long as the weather cooperates, they would collect through the month of December.

Motion to approve the Public Works Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Fire Department** – Chief Burkholder referred to the written report and there were no questions.

Motion to approve the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Code Enforcement Department** – Mrs. Hoffman referred to the information provided and offered to answer any questions, she also stated that the number of permits issued has decreased, which is typical for this time of year. Mr. Lincoln thanked Mrs. Hoffman again for including the property maintenance officer's reports.

Motion to approve the Code Enforcement Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- d. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation** – Mark Ratcliffe referred to the written report and noted the following:

- Small Business Saturday event is scheduled on November 30<sup>th</sup>
- The carriage rides have been sold out
- There will be Christmas Carolers performing along Penn Avenue on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weekends of December
- The paid parking program is going well with plans to offer additional public/private partnerships after the first of the year. In an effort to promote more use of the Mobile

Now App, Mobile Now will be waiving fees and the owner of the parking lot has agreed to waive fees for three-hours during the Small Business Saturday event. Use of the parking kiosks would incur a paid parking fee.

It was recommended to install signage on the parking kiosks to alert visitors to the fees being waived through the Mobile Now App.

Chief Powell asked if Council wishes to refrain from enforcing the 2-hour parking limit along Penn Avenue on Small Business Saturday. Council agreed to refrain from enforcing the two-hour parking limit, however this would not be promoted or advertised to avoid residents from parking there all day.

Motion to suspend the two-hour parking enforcement along Penn Avenue on Saturday, November 30, 2019. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- The five-year plan is moving forward with Derck & Edson, following an additional meeting in December a final report should be received after the New Year.

Motion to approve the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

#### 11. COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to the written report and noted the 91<sup>st</sup> Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony that will take place on Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, and the Home Decorating Contest that will take place on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Moyer shared the Recreation Commissions recommendation to appoint Kristina Singleton to the Recreation Commission. Mr. Wert stated that during the “Lame Duck” timeframe, between election and reorganization, that Council may not appoint committee members.

The Recreation Commission reviewed and made a recommendation to amend the Chapter 92 Recreation Commission enabling ordinance. Mr. Wert requested additional time to review and a clearer copy of the existing ordinance and recommended revisions prior to taking action. It was agreed to table this action until the November 26<sup>th</sup> Budget meeting.

Mayor Kearney recommended that everyone attend the Haunted House event, which rivals other local attractions.

Motion to approve the Recreation Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert stated that a number of items were discussed earlier this evening and noted discussions regarding Verizon’s proposed wireless communication facilities throughout the Borough.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Imbesi stated that the minutes provided tonight would be corrected to list the appropriate meeting date of November 14, 2019 for the record.

Motion to approve the Economic Development report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – Mr. Kaag recapped the earlier acceptance of a letter of resignation; the community garden land use agreement that has been accepted by the land owner and the end of season cleanup of the community garden that took place last weekend. Also, the International Coastal Cleanup resulted in 400 pounds of trash being collected Borough wide, including the cloverleaf area.

Motion to approve the Environmental Advisory Council report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- e. **Traffic & Infrastructure Committee** – Mr. Lincoln shared a recommendation from the Committee to provide a fifteen-minute paid parking interval to satisfy Penn Avenue business owner requests for twenty-minute parking spaces. It was unclear as to whether the Mobile Now App would support twenty-five cent paid parking, Mr. Imbesi would provide an answer to this question during next week's Budget meeting.

Motion to approve a fifteen-minute paid parking interval within the shopping center parking lot. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

The Committee discussed the Mobile Now App's initial \$20 deposit requirement and an option to pay as you go, which would incur an increased convenience fee. Additional information/options are being gathered and will be shared when the information becomes available.

A designated bike route map connecting routes to the Borough of Wyomissing was provided to Council for review. Mr. Lincoln stated these lanes would be shared with motorists and marked with roadside signage and sharrows to alert drivers to the bike lane designation. The most direct route connection would be via Seventh Avenue, connecting the Vanity Fair and Narrow Fabrics area to parklands and Reading Avenue would connect to the City via the Buttonwood Street Bridge. Wyomissing Borough secured grant funding to create bike lane designations in both Wyomissing and West Reading Boroughs. The only cost to the Borough associated with these designations would be long-term maintenance of the signs and sharrows. The purchase of a sharrow stencil is being reviewed. Spacing of on-street markings varies based on block length, obstacles, driveways, etc. and would be refreshed along with the normal street markings.

Motion to approve the designated bicycle trails as presented. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** – The Shade Tree Commission meeting was cancelled.
- g. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray referred to the minutes and there were no questions.

Motion to approve the Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Gombach and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- h. **Finance Committee** – Mr. Gombach referred to the minutes and requested clarification as to the owner/operator of the paid parking program. Mr. Imbesi stated that the WRCRF purchased the kiosks through grant funds; however, the WRCRF did not apply for a grant to purchase the kiosks. All of the monies collected are deposited into the General Fund of the Borough.

Oswald Herbert requested an amendment to Chapter 37 regarding membership of the Finance Committee. The ordinance allows up to three residents on the Committee and there are currently

four residents. Mr. Herbert stated that this is an oversight similar to that of the Planning Commission a few months ago. Mr. Imbesi will prepare a potential amendment.

Motion to approve the Finance Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Ratcliffe departed the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

**12. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Financial Statement Ending 10/31/19** – Mr. Lincoln inquired as to the quarterly 75% fund balance transfers to determine if an additional transfer would be needed this year. Mrs. Rentschler indicated that an additional transfer would be needed.

Motion to approve the Financial Statement ending 10/31/19. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gombach. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Payment Approval Report 10/22/19 to 11/14/19 & 11/15/19 to 11/19/19** – There were no comments.

Motion to approve Payment Approval report 10/22/19 to 11/14/19 & 11/15/19 to 11/19/19. **Moved** by Mr. Gombach and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**13. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

James Rogers asked if consideration was given to provide additional funds from paid parking revenues to cover the cost of parking enforcement. Mr. Lincoln stated that levied fines, retained by the Borough, offset the cost of parking enforcement officers.

Mr. Rogers asked for a status update on the Lofts at Narrow garage violation and his recent submission of a Right-to-Know Request, which indicated that in February of this year there was no sprinkler or ventilation system and wondered how long this violation will exist before it is corrected. Mr. Wert stated that Council is not part of the investigation or enforcement and potentially Mr. Hatt could provide an update.

**14. ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary