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**West Reading Environmental Advisory  
Council**

**500 Chestnut Street  
West Reading, PA 19611**

**610-374-8273**

**E-mail: [eac@westreadingborough.org](mailto:eac@westreadingborough.org)**



**MEETING MINUTES  
September 24, 2018**

**Members Present**

Chairperson Jenna Hiester; Council Member Philip Wert; Residents Karin Long, Ryan Lineaweaver and Patrick Kaag, and Assistant to the Borough Manager Cynthia Madeira.

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Jenna Hiester called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

**Public Comment**

There was no comment.

**Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Ms. Long and seconded by Mr. Kaag to approve the minutes of August 27, 2018.

**New Business**

- a) Food Pantry Program – During a recent visit to Bethany Lutheran Church as a volunteer to distribute food pantry items, Ms. Long noted the church purchases food for these events to distribute to a list of recipients and reports frozen and canned foods were the only available items. EAC Members discussed the acceptance of WIC by certain vendors of the West Reading Farmers' Market to provide access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Mr. Wert noted the manager of the Farmers' Market efforts to encourage WIC acceptance by all vendors. Ms. Long suggested sponsorship of a set of plots within the Community Garden to grow crops to be donated to the food pantry.
- b) Mosquito Spray – The Berks County Conservation District mistakenly deployed a truck spraying the insecticide, DeltaGard through parts of the Borough last week, which were intended for the City of Reading and Borough of Wyomissing in an effort to control the high number of adult mosquitoes capable of transmitting the West Nile virus. Announcement of pesticide control applications are required to allow residents the opportunity to avoid the areas/activities within a specified time frame. Mr. Wert recommended making a request to Council to seek correspondence from the Conservation District.

**Old Business**

- a) Yard Waste Disposal – The first Saturday of the month yard waste drop-off was held on September 1<sup>st</sup> resulting in minimal visitors during this event. A log will be provided for the October and November trial events to record the number of visitors and material brought to be disposed. EAC Members discussed methods of advertisement for these trial events

and requested the information be shared on the Borough Hall Facebook page in addition to the Borough website and EAC Facebook page.

- b) Harvest Festival – Ms. Hiester noted cancellation of the Harvest Festival event due to repairs needed at the Pavilion. Plans/ideas discussed for this year's event can be implemented for the 2019 event.
- c) Met-Ed Energy Audit – The final energy audit information was received today and provided to EAC members to review and comment during next month's meeting to potentially make recommendation(s) to Council.

The public meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m. to continue the working session on the PA Sustainable Communities Certification.

EAC Members continued review of the following online topics and questions to determine sustainability within the Borough along with compiling a list of areas to focus on improving sustainability status in the future:

- Step 15 Community Energy Use – Review of the recently adopted Suburban Berks West Joint Comprehensive Plan confirmed inclusion of an energy conservation element, which encourages developers to utilize certified design and/or plan for solar access or shading. Improvements are needed to create a public program to conserve energy and promote renewable energy sources as well expansion of greenhouse gas inventory to develop a mitigation plan.
- Step 27 Material Use, Waste & Recycling – Regulations are currently in place that pertain to a municipal recycling program with curbside collection; municipal contracts for solid waste collection; reduction of waste by providing yard waste drop-off and leaf collection; an active public information program through the Borough website and EAC Facebook page; municipal buildings that exercise an active recycling program; active litter prevention through the Earth Day program with ongoing discussions to expand; a prescription drop box that is available in the Police Department lobby; electronic waste recycling available through the county, including hazardous waste disposal event information, which is available on the Borough website. Areas in need of improvement include: training of municipal employees to reduce waste; implementation of an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Program to identify environmentally preferred products and services. Also, review of percentages is needed for the community-wide recycling program to discern whether recyclable materials are maintained above the state stipulated goal of 35%.
- Step 18 Wateruse, Conservation and Quality - Drinking water and sanitary sewer rates were discussed, which are based on the cost of water and maintenance of the system to determine a real cost for providing these services. Mr. Wert noted investments are budgeted and completed annually for the water, sewer and stormwater systems, which include a 5-year plan of implementation.
- Step 28 Additional Initiative - Mr. Wert noted the animal ordinance, which provides provisions for bee keeping, bat boxes, including encouragement to utilize rain barrels, and discussions regarding creation of easements to utilize larger more efficient geothermal systems across a number of properties.

### **Adjournment**

The workshop adjourned at 9:13 PM.

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**Next Meeting: Monday, October 22, 2018 at 7:00PM at  
West Reading Borough Hall**