

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP/COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 29, 2017**

West Reading Borough Council held a Budget Workshop and Council Meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, August 29, 2017 with the following persons present: Council President Carl G. Garman; Council Vice President Nathalie Kulesa; Council Members Nicholas Imbesi, Philip Wert, Christopher Lincoln; Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr.; Police Chief Stephen Powell; Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Director Helen Moyer and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Council Members Suzanne Thompson and Grace Craze were unable to attend.

Visitors Present: Oswald Herbert

CALL TO ORDER:

Council President Carl G. Garman called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION:

Mr. Wert reported the Environmental Advisory Council is one of fifteen recipients in the country to have been awarded by the Arbor Day Foundation \$5,000 for their 2017 CSX Transportation Tree Giveaway. A minimum of 130 trees will be given away at the West Reading Pavilion during the Harvest Festival event being held on October 7, 2017. Literature and aluminum tree identification tags will also be provided to the tree recipients. Mr. Wert requested authorization be given to the Borough Manager to sign the award agreement.

Motion to authorize the Borough Manager to execute the 2017 CSX Transportation Tree Giveaway Award Agreement. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

COURIER ARTICLES:

Mr. Garman spoke about issues in the past with campaign-type Courier article content during an election year. Council reviewed the Mayor's Fall 2017 Courier article which contained parts that could be construed as a campaign pitch, and appear as tax dollars being used to fund the Mayor's campaign. Following a lengthy discussion regarding options to avoid censorship for future article content Council decided to create a resolution to remove Council and Mayor Articles during election years from the Courier publication for both primary and general elections. The Mayor agreed to allow portions of his article to be removed for the Fall 2017 Courier. Mrs. Hoffman will draft a resolution to remove Mayor and Council articles during an election year to vote upon during the next Council meeting.

COOPERATIVE POLICE SERVICE AGREEMENT:

Chief Powell stated the Cooperative Police Service Agreement with the City of Reading has been executed by the City which will allow the West Reading Police Department to enforce laws of the Commonwealth on the parcel known as 901 Old Wyomissing Road located adjacent to the Borough's recreation grounds. The agreement would become effective immediately upon the Borough's execution of the document.

Motion to authorize signature of the Cooperative Police Service Agreement. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

2018 BUDGET

Administrative Assistant:

Chief Powell and Mrs. Hoffman expressed the need for administrative assistance within the Police Department and Administration offices. In lieu of hiring a part-time assistant for the Police Department, which tends to have a higher rate of turnover, it was requested to hire a full-time cross designated employee to provide assistance to both departments. Chief Powell indicated that there were sufficient funds available in the 2017 budget to allow hiring immediately.

Motion to approve the hiring of a full-time administrative assistant. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Chief Powell noted he will include the addition of a part-time Parking Enforcement Officer within the 2018 budget should the parking study illustrate a need.

Mrs. Hoffman spoke about a recent project where Public Works staff were able to reconfigure the server cage to accommodate recent equipment changes which saved the Borough approximately \$2000.

Mechanic:

Mr. Murray requested the hiring of a full-time mechanic to assist with maintenance of the Police, Fire and Public Works vehicles and maintenance of small engine equipment. This individual could also assist in other areas of Public Works duties as needed as well as remove the need for one part-time summer employee. Council requested this be added to the Public Works budget for further consideration.

Code Department:

Mrs. Hoffman would like revisions to the staffing of the Code Department to allow full-time supervision of the department, however is unsure if it would be advantageous to hire Borough employees or retain third-party assistance. Council agreed that a minimum of one full-time individual for this department is needed. Mrs. Hoffman will request Systems Design Engineering provide a cost estimate for one and two full-time individuals for further review.

Pool Equipment:

Mr. Murray reported two filter tanks have been ordered as budgeted for 2017; however there has been a delay in shipping. He requested permission to order the remaining two tanks as discussed for the 2018 budget, to save on shipping and allow simultaneous installation. Council requested the reserve fund balance to discuss further at the next meeting.

Full-Time Fire Chief:

This item was held for discussion at the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There were no items for executive session.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager