

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

February 18, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at the West Reading Fire Company on Tuesday, February 18, 2014 with the following persons present: Council President James J. Gallen, Jr., Vice President Philip C. Wert; Council Members, Carl Garman, Elizabeth L. Heckler, Nathalie R. Kulesa; Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr.; Borough Manager Richard J. Sichler; Police Chief Stephen D. Powell; Fire Lieutenant Nick Lesagonicz; Borough Solicitor Daniel P. Becker; Chief Code Enforcement Officer Tracey L. Levering; Public Works Director Dean E. Murray; Recreation Coordinator Helen Moyer; Borough Engineer Tom Unger; Administrative Assistant Cathy L. Hoffman. Council members Grace Craze and Deborah Hutcheson as well as Elm Street Manager Dean L. Rohrbach were unable to attend.

VISITORS:

Ron Bechtel	Reading Avenue	James Rogers	Reading Avenue
Cecile Bechtel	Reading Avenue	Robert Howe	S. 3 rd Avenue
Ruth Cardell	Temple	Kathy Frymoyer	Ann Street
Michael Witmyer	Tulpehocken Ave	Lore DeHart	S. 6 th Avenue
Helen Witmyer	Tulpehocken Ave	Ron Schweitzer	Oak Terrace
Carol Rentschler	N. 3 rd Ave	Judy Schweitzer	Oak Terrace
Rodney Rentschler	N. 3 rd Ave	Denise Templin	S. 3 rd Avenue
Ann Dybalski	105 Kent Way	Sherrid Northeimer	Linden Lane
Gary Upton	345 Linden Lane	Mrs. Northeimer	Linden Lane
Jeanette High	Kline Street	Linda Devlin	Wayne Avenue
Harold Kline	S. 3 rd Ave	Kimberly Jablonski	Chestnut Street
Audrey Schaeffer	Franklin Street	Steve Jones	S. 3 rd Avenue
Toby Schoedler	Chestnut Street	Barb Auchenbach	S. 3 rd Avenue
Marangelly Robinson	Sunset Road	Glenn Hawk	S. 2 nd Avenue
Jacqueline Talarico	Pine Street	Michael Lashinsky	Chestnut Street
Brian Morrissey	Pine Street	Bev Gilbert	Sunset Road
Christopher Hrezik	Ann Street	Amber Rambo	Sunset Road
Kelly Hinnershitz	Franklin Street	Elizabeth Anderson	Sunset Road
Byron Fiegel	Sunset Road	Carol Frost	Franklin Street
Ken Starky	S. 3 rd Avenue	Jason Ulrich	S 4 th Avenue
Robert Schneider	Sunset Road	Kate Ulrich	S 4 th Avenue
Chris Ernst	Summit Street	Terry Siggins	Ann Street
Susan Henry	Wayne Ave	Sandy Siggins	Ann Street
Casey Tharp	Playground Drive	Mary Adams	Sycamore Road
Jen Tharp	Playground Drive	Nathaniel Baron	Chestnut Street
Barbara Schonour	Chestnut Street	Sue Shott	Olive Street
Dianne Schonour	Chestnut Street	Michael Wentzel	Spruce Street
Michele Norman	Wayne Avenue	Joe Cacchione	Penn Avenue
Marie Grim	Playground Drive	James Brightbill	Kent Way
Mary Napoli	Summit Street	Christine Meister	Tulpehocken Avenue
Robert Powers	Sunset Road	Michelle Tomczak	Summit Street
Henry Diener	Wayne Avenue	Tony Tomczak	Summit Street
Jim Livingood	Sycamore Road	Alan Clouser	Reading Avenue
Karen Livingood	Sycamore Road	Scott Kauffman	S. 7 th Avenue
Joseph Townsend	Kent Way	Chad Vail	S. 6 th Avenue
Hedy Oldham	Sycamore Road	Rob Cardinal	Ann Street

Jason Witman	Chestnut Street	Chris Kimberlin	Chestnut Street
Anthony Tomczak	Summit Street	Frank Struble	Chestnut Street
Karin Durand	S. 2 nd Avenue	Susan Hartman	Franklin Street
Carmen Hartman	Franklin Street	Wendy Kershner	Kent Way
Sandra Romano	Wayne Avenue	Mary Olodun	Tulpehocken Avenue
Aderemi Olodun	Tulpehocken Avenue	Holly Feeny	Kent Way
Jennifer Witman	Chestnut Street	Mark Gosselin	Oak Terrace
Ashley Mangiolardo	Chestnut Street	Roger Hinsey	Kline Street
Douglas Brunner	Spruce Street	Chris Lincoln	Spruce Street
Tina Shenk	Penn Avenue	Ken Starkey	S. 3 rd Avenue
Mike Rocco	S. 6 th Avenue	Richard Dunkelberger	Reading Avenue
Bryce Matthews	S. 6 th Avenue		

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President James Gallen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

Police Chief Stephen Powell then presented department commendations to Sgt. Keith Phillips, Investigator Joseph Brown, Officers Wayne Holben, Ed Fabriziani, and Ryan Phillips for their attention to duty and their actions while apprehending a wanted and armed subject. He noted that Officer Matt Nguyen, who also received a commendation, was unable to attend. Chief Powell then read the commendation and presented a bar of recognition which is to be worn with their badge.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Solicitor Dan Becker reviewed the rules of conduct for public comment, as stipulated in Resolution 2012-10 (Public Meeting Procedures).

Tina Shenk spoke about the three snow citations she had received and said that she found it very offensive considering that they had shoveled and salted their sidewalks. She complained that plows had thrown snow back on her sidewalk after it had been cleared and stated that the roads looked awful and were icy. She also asked about the removal of snow on the 'snow emergency routes' and Mr. Sichler responded that outside contractors have been assisting with the clearing of the snow emergency routes. A portion of the cost of this may be borne by FEMA because of the state of emergency declared by the State of Pennsylvania.

Joe Caccione said that the snow fines he received were a huge insult and that he is tired of the insults from the Codes Department. He said the snow citations are emblematic of the issues with the Codes Department.

Mary Napoli complained about the snow plowing on her street because snow was pushed around her vehicle. She noted that she couldn't park in her driveway because the Borough plows it shut. She asked where the Borough would like her to park.

Ken Starkey said he has a handicapped ramp adjacent to his property which he is required to keep clear but complained about the snow that is dumped there when the snow plows come through. He also complained about landlords not shoveling the snow from their sidewalks and that they can just pay the fine and still not clear the sidewalk.

Rodney Rentschler said that he did clear his sidewalks and doesn't understand why he received the citation. He also complained about the vacant house on Reading Avenue where nothing has been done to clear the sidewalks.

Kathy Frymoyer said she had not received a citation but complained that the Borough properties have not been cleared and asked how the Borough can cite residents when they are not taking care of their own properties.

Michael Rocco spoke about his issues with the Codes department and urged Council to look at other communities who give leeway to residents during extreme weather situations. He complained about the plowing of streets and suggested that there are times when they should be salted or graveled instead of plowing in garages and driveways multiple times. He also stated that the pre-sale inspections of homes in the Borough is outrageous comparatively and that what the Borough expects over and above what is designated in standard International Codes is overzealous. He said there is a difference between enforcement and over interpretation by individual code inspectors. He also spoke about having to move pergola posts 4" even though it wasn't overhanging anyone's property.

Kelly Hinnershitz said she had received a citation but did not agree with it and noted that Codes does not have written information regarding the appeal process. She asked what the appeal process is so that everyone who wrongfully received a citation can get their money back.

Mayor Rodriguez said that it would be helpful for everyone to know what the ordinance says and read 'that the sidewalk must be kept free and clear of any ice or snow and that the ice, snow, hail or sleet within a period of 24 hours after the same shall have ceased to have fallen and keep said sidewalks clear of ice, snow, hail or sleet thereafter', also that it must be a 30" wide path. As far as the appeal process, it is stated in the ordinance that it can be appealed to the Mayor or District Justice.

Ms. Hinnershitz suggested that a committee be formed of residents, members of Council and staff from Codes to review the photographs to determine which were really violations and which were not.

Kim Jablonski said that there clearly is a problem with the ordinance as it is written and suggested that one area to consider is the maintenance of the snow-free sidewalk; that things may occur while people are at work that are beyond their control, such as kids playing in the snow on the way home from school.

Glenn Hawk stated that he was on vacation during the storm and that his neighbors did not clear his sidewalks. He was told by Codes that he should have had someone available to take care of it.

Tina Shenk said that the ordinance has been in place in 1988 and there has been a lot of bad weather since 1988 so why is this year the first year that it has been enforced. She asked Mayor Rodriguez if it was because of him being the new mayor and asked if he was the one that enforced it. Mayor Rodriguez said that he was only made aware of it after the enforcement issues came up.

Judy Schweitzer said she received a citation on the 24th and asked why some people received fines but others only warnings. She also asked why they weren't forgiven until after the Mayor received a fine. Mayor Rodriguez said that his citation was issued on 12/19 and that he has paid the fine. He also said that the ordinance does not allow for forgiveness, as there are no gray areas which is why he made the executive decision to place the moratorium which is why the residents are being given the opportunity to provide input as to how the issue should be address so that this situation won't occur again.

Denise Templin complained about snow being piled in front of her garage, as well as the alley being in poor repair, full of potholes which are not being repaired properly. She added that the alley needs to be completely repaved.

Jim Rogers asked that the minutes show that he had obtained records from the Borough that indicate that the cost for the attorney fees and the advertisement for the position of a new police chief from December 2011 to December 2013 is \$209,000. He also said he had spoken with Chief Powell about people running stop signs in the Borough and he said Chief Powell's response had been "we don't make any money on that" which was the same response received from former Chief Fabriziani in the past. Both Chief Powell and former Chief Fabriziani (who were both in attendance) vehemently denied having said that. Chief Powell explained that Mr. Rogers had asked him about making money at stop signs to which he had responded that there is a perception that police departments issue tickets as a source of revenue which is not the case in West Reading but that tickets are written where they need to be written. Mr. Rogers noted that there needs to be more tickets issued for people running stop signs but that it will take a death for anything to be done about it. Chief Powell said that tickets are written constantly, which is reflected in the report that is given to Council each month.

Jackie Talarico said she didn't get cited but that Codes needs to use common sense and not abuse their power. She spoke about the work that was required to be done before she moved into her house.

Audrey Schaeffer spoke about the handicapped ramps at street corners that have not been cleared of snow. She said she is forced to walk in the street.

Holly Feeney who was cited, said that those who put forth an effort should not be cited, that common sense should be used. She said it is ridiculous for those who made an effort to clear the sidewalk to be cited for a small amount of snow that remains. The question that needs to be asked is if the person put forth an effort.

Oswald Herbert echoed the previously stated concerns and noted that snow can come off an awning or can be walked from unshoveled areas of a blatant violator, which is unfair for the person who did clear the sidewalk. He noted that the recent snowfall was unusual, causing problems for everyone, including the Borough crew who could only work so many hours. He said there are no easy answers and everyone can't be appeased without increasing taxes. He also said that many of the businesses on Penn Avenue should be ashamed of themselves because of the condition of the sidewalks, and not just with the large storm. He indicated that some of those who got fines did not attempt to clear the sidewalks and deserved to receive the citations.

Diane Schonour said that she and her sister shoveled diligently and did not deserve the citation. She said that there shouldn't even be an appeal process, that the Borough should just send all of the money back to those who were fined.

Terry Siggins asked that Mrs. Levering explain the procedures for writing the citations, what standards she uses. Mrs. Levering responded that she doesn't use selective enforcement, that a 30' path is either clear or it isn't, and must be maintained. Mr. Siggins said that if this standard were taken before a district justice, the Borough would lose every time and it is time to change the ordinance. He said he has written to Council to ask them to assign to the Planning Commission (of which he is a member) a complete review of how the Codes Department operates. He noted that West Reading is so out of line compared to other surrounding municipalities with regard to code

enforcement in general and this ordinance in particular.

He spoke about building permits and asked if it is true that other than painting, wallpapering, carpeting and some landscaping, a building permit is required for everything else. Mrs. Levering stated that the borough ordinance does require permits for almost everything and that the pertinent information is available on the website. Mr. Siggins spoke about a scenario where he had to replace some drywall and that a permit was required because the number of drywall screws had to be counted. He said that Mrs. Levering is applying new construction standards to existing homes in the Borough which is outrageous. He said that an examination of the Codes Department, A to Z, is seriously needed.

Aderemi Olodun said that he doesn't mind being cited if he didn't clean his sidewalk, but he did clear it every time that the snow plows pushed snow back on his sidewalk. He said there was a small patch that wasn't clear which caused him to be cited and he noted that he did have a video of the plows putting snow on the sidewalk if Council wished to see it. He asked for a little common sense.

Chad Vail asked why there is no permit parking on S. 6th between Cherry and Franklin, and complained that it is almost no parking near his home. He said that he understands that the businesses need parking for customers, but residents also need to be able to park near their homes. He also complained that the alley is not clear, therefore he can't park in his off street parking space.

Michael Lashinsky said that everyone keeps speaking about alleys however he was told previously that the Borough has streets, not alleys therefore it is the streets that did not get plowed, not the alleys. Mr. Sichler explained that when the Borough plows, the snow emergency routes are done first, then secondary roads and finally alleys and sidewalks. He confirmed that alleys are treated differently than the streets.

Byron Fiegel said he was speaking on behalf of his mother who lives on Sunset Road. He said she was cited even though it had been cleared, was passable and safe. He said that on viewing the photographs, it was clear that the mail person or possibly children had crossed the snow covered lawn and brought snow onto the sidewalk. He asked if the moratorium was retroactive to the January 24th storm because his mother was not going to pay it. Mayor Rodriguez answered that the moratorium is not retroactive, and that the appeal process is with the District Justice. Mr. Fiegel asked Council not to alienate good residents, and suggested that warnings should be issued where a good faith effort has been made.

Mike Witmyer said that Tulpehocken Avenue has not been plowed curb-to-curb yet and said that it is a very busy street and should be done. Dean Murray stated that Olive Street has been posted and that Tulpehocken will be next.

Cecile Bechtel who lives at Reading Avenue and Highland and had received a citation, presented the Borough with a fine because an area on her block that she said was Borough property is covered with ice and snow. She asked if they were now even and didn't have to pay for her fine. She said that she has been cleaning her pavement for 38 years and because of 6 frozen footprints she was cited. She said there is no common sense.

Nathan Baron said that the fines are ridiculous and asked what it means for other codes in the Borough. He said that he has had problems with Codes because they are too strict and noted the problems that he had to repair when he purchased his house.

Elizabeth Anderson complained about the Borough Crew dumping snow on her sidewalk with the bobcat and asked not to be cited for something she didn't do.

Richard Dunkleberger asked why the moratorium can't be retroactive to cover all 332 fines considering that it has already been stated that there is a problem. Mayor Rodriguez said that once any law is enacted, it can't be made retroactive. In this case it is a moratorium but the same principles have been used.

Michael Rocco said that just as there is no set criteria for warnings as opposed to fines but some people did get warnings, this alone is proof of selective enforcement. He said that everyone should get a warning the first time, and in cases of extreme weather where certain situations exist, a second warning should be given and finally on the third offence, a citation is given.

James Gallen stated that he received a warning and it shocked him because he shoveled after each storm. He said he was very disturbed about the situation and that virtually everyone in the room made an effort to clear their walks.

Mr. Gallen asked for a motion from Council to waive the fines for those who made an effort, but not those property owners who did nothing. **Carl Garman made the motion**, but asked how to determine who made an effort. He also said that he got cited and paid his fine and noted that a neighbor cleared almost all of his 200' of sidewalk, however 8' did not get cleared but he takes full responsibility for it. He also noted that the 10' of sidewalk in front of a Borough parking lot (adjacent to his property) did not get cleared. He said it is important that the Borough take care of its own responsibilities before other residents are cited.

Mayor Rodriguez addressed Council by stating that if Council sees it as wise to dismiss all of the citations, he has no objection. **Mr. Wert seconded the motion.**

Mrs. Heckler commented that of the 1500 properties in the Borough, 332 were fined which means that 1175 property owners cleared their sidewalks.

Bryce Matthews said that he and his neighbors got cited even though they shoveled each others sidewalks and noted that sometimes it's impossible to get all of it.

Mr. Gallen called for the vote. **The motion was passed unanimously.**

Holly Feeney asked what the next step was for those that didn't pay and Mr. Becker said that they will have to look into it, but probably a letter will be sent out. Council also noted that they will decide how to proceed for those who did pay the fines.

There were some questions about trash removal and it was noted that the trash trucks were having difficulty safely travelling through the alleys, and that the alleys should soon be passable.

Robert Schneier complained about his car being towed because he had parked on a snow emergency route. He was unaware that a snow emergency had been issued.

Jeanette High asked if residents can park in hospital garages when a snow emergency is in effect and Chief Powell said that the Reading Hospital no longer allows this. Jim Rogers suggested that they may be able to park in the VF parking lot because in the past snow parking was permitted there on a temporary basis.

Ron Schweitzer commended the road crew for keeping his street clear. He also commented that West Reading is a small borough with good people who help their neighbors, therefore codes are not necessary.

Terry Siggins said that residents have been told that if the concrete isn't cleared, the Borough can be sued but Mr. Becker replied that if someone felt that the Borough was not enforcing its ordinances, the Borough could be named in a liable suit because they failed to require the shoveling. In that case the suit may not withstand some challenges but the Borough would probably incur costs in defending its actions.

Mary Olodun said that they are a military family and as such appreciate what people do for each other in the community. She said that she is from Chicago where people don't shovel even though it snows a lot, so she appreciates the efforts that are made here.

3. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Moved by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the Council meeting minutes of January 21, 2014. **Motion carried.**

4. **ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. Ordinance 1025 – Establishing Water Rates for 2014 – Mr. Sichler stated that the ordinance had been advertised and that it reflects a 1.5% increase in water rates which offsets the increase in wholesale water rates from Western Berks Water Authority.

Moved by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Carl Garman to approve Ordinance 1025. **Motion carried.**

- b. Resolution 2014-1 – Fee Schedule for 2014 – The resolution ratifies the fee schedule that Council approved at the January meeting.

Moved by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to approve Resolution 2014-1. **Motion carried.**

5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. Rental Inspections – There was no new information to present, therefore the issue was tabled.

- b. Fifth Avenue Sidewalk Project – Final Payment Approval – Mr. Sichler said that inspections have been done but it is not up to bid specifications therefore it is not ready for approval.

- c. Zoning Ordinance Amendments Review - Mr. Becker said that he is doing the legal review of the proposed amendments and will have his opinion to the Planning Commission within the next week.

- d. Lease Agreement with Pioneer Crossing Landfill - Mr. Sichler said that the agreement was ratified in November however since it wasn't signed it was reviewed legally prior to execution.

Moved by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to ratify the lease extension agreement with Pioneer Crossing Landfill. **Motion carried.**

6. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

- a. Solicitor's Report – The County radios are being distributed and the System User Agreement has been reviewed and is ready for execution. The agreement sets the terms and conditions for the radios, and agreements need to be signed for both the Fire Company and Police

Department. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Carl Garman to authorize the execution of the System User Agreement for the County radios. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Becker reported regarding the Belovich property and noted that some issues have arisen concerning snow plowing. He said that under the Municipal Services Agreement that is in place, there is a provision that if they fail to plow, the Borough may plow and assess them a 20% surcharge. If they fail to pay, it can be deducted from the escrow amount.

Mayor Rodriguez asked about the owner responsibility considering that the streets do not belong to the Borough. Mr. Becker said that he would have to look at it but believes they would have an obligation to clear their sidewalks.

Regarding the Belovich development, Mr. Rogers reported that an individual has been parking by the fire hydrant in the undeveloped area and Chief Powell stated that the department is looking into it because there may be a state law that covers hydrants in this situation.

Moved by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to approve the Solicitor's report. **Motion carried.**

- b. Engineer's Report – Mr. Unger referred to his written report and as there were no questions, it was **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Engineer's report. **Motion carried.**

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

- a. Sample Blighted Property Ordinance – Mr. Sichler said that the potential to use a 2010 state law to address potentially blighted properties has been discussed therefore he has obtained some sample ordinances for information purposes. Mr. Wert added that he had asked Mr. Sichler to do some research about Act 90 which allows municipalities to go after landlords which are out of state and who neglect their properties. This is potentially something that the Borough can use to assist with the blighted properties in the Borough. Mr. Becker noted that Act 90 can be used as it is written but there may be an advantage to enact a Borough ordinance that will work in conjunction with the other Borough ordinances. Several of these ordinances from other municipalities have been included in Council's packet. Mr. Wert said that it was discussed at the Economic Development Committee meeting and Mr. Becker thought that developing of a list of properties would be an appropriate starting point.
- b. Teamsters' Contract – Mr. Sichler said that Council had agreed to the basic pieces of the contract and referred it to Mr. Becker for a legal review. Mr. Becker said that he has done the review however there is a section dealing with healthcare that requires some additional review, and should be completed soon. It was noted that the contract was approved at the last Council meeting, therefore no further approval is needed at this point.
- c. S & P Rating - Mr. Sichler reported that the annual review of the Borough by Standard and Poor has been completed but the written document has not been received as yet. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.
- d. Dallas Data Invoice - Mr. Sichler said that Council budgeted to update the accounting system through Caselle which requires two things; the renewal of the software package which is done annually (\$5618.) as well as the annual software assurance agreement (\$6750) which is the upgrade to the next level of Caselle. This is necessary because the current software version is

- d. outdated and Dallas Data will no longer be supporting this version. An additional cost will be incurred next year to complete the upgrade. This exceeds his approval level, but was budgeted for 2014.

Moved by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the payment of the Dallas Data Systems invoice. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Borough Manager's Report. **Motion carried.**

8. **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Valentin Rodriguez asked to defer his report.

9. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. **Code Enforcement** – Mrs. Levering referred to her written report. There were no questions.

Mrs. Levering then asked for some direction, given that Council had approved the refunding of fines for snow removal. She said the department is still working on citations for the ice storm during the week of February 3rd and asked if she should disregard them or continue to fine. It was noted that the moratorium was issued on February 9th, therefore anything after that date has not been cited.

There was much discussion again concerning citations being issued for sidewalk snow removal, particularly with regard to the period between January 24th and February 9th. It was also noted that there have been people who have taken advantage of the moratorium by not clearing their sidewalks at all.

Mayor Rodriguez said he also wished to have it on the record concerning the portion of the ordinance that states "upon conviction by the Mayor or Magisterial District Judge". He said that this is old language and that he is not a judicial officer and cannot convict anyone of anything therefore it must be changed.

Mr. Garman asked how many people received citations from the February 7th storm and Mrs. Levering said there were about 40. Discussion ensued about whether those who made an effort should receive citations. Mr. Gallen said that the photographs would clearly show those who made an effort but Mayor Rodriguez said that it still required a decision to be made.

Moved by Carl Garman and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to forgive all 332 fines from January 24th as well as the additional 40, before the moratorium was established. All violations from January 24th to February 8th are expunged.

Voting yes – Mrs. Kulesa, Mr. Gallen, Mr. Wert, Carl Garman

Voting no – Mrs. Heckler

Motion carried.

Mr. Garman also noted that Council needs to meet to discuss the ordinance and ratify a new ordinance so that the moratorium can be ended.

Moved by Mr. Wert and seconded by Carl Garman to approve the Code Enforcement Officer's Report. **Motion carried.**

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

- Reminded everyone to check out the Department's Facebook page which includes

information regarding snow emergencies. Other forms of electronic media are used as well to keep everyone informed. Chief Powell encouraged Council to link to that page.

- The average response time (for January) to dispatch a West Reading Police Officer was under two minutes. The officer arrives on scene within two minutes (on average) of being dispatched.
- Increased concentration of patrols has been made on the 400 block of Penn Avenue. Mr. Wert commended Chief Powell on that decision.
- Foot patrols have been decreased because of the weather, but will be active again once the weather improves.
- Commended the road crew for the long hours they worked during the snow storms.

Moved by Mr. Garman and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to approve the Police Department Report.
Motion carried.

- c. Public Works – Mr. Murray spoke about his written report and noted the difficulties they faced with the back to back storms. He said that due to equipment being down and the timing of the storms, they were unable to open up the alleys as they would have liked. He said they will be concentrating on clearing them within the coming week.

There was a question about pot holes and Mr. Murray said that the hole needs to be free of ice and snow in order to fill it properly. They are doing the best they can to repair them.

Mr. Murray spoke about the snow removal process, about clearing the snow routes first, then secondary roads as well as trucking the snow away when possible. He said that they will try to get information regarding the posting of streets put on the Borough's website. He also encouraged everyone to sign up for CodeRED notifications.

There was a question about the paving of Parkside Drive and Mr. Murray said that Parkside Drive will not be paved until after the Hospital's project is complete.

Moved by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mr. Garman to approve the Public Works Director's Report. **Motion carried.**

- d. Fire Department – Lieutenant Nick Lesagonicz was in attendance to present the Chief's report. He said that the number of fire calls were up substantially in January and February. He also noted that the Department is on Facebook and Twitter and that they try to post everything pertinent to the community. He thanked the residents who keep the fire hydrants clear.

Moved by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Fire Department Report.
Motion carried.

- e. Elm Street – Mr. Rohrbach was not in attendance therefore no report was given.

10. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

- a. Recreation Commission – Helen Moyer referred to her minutes and indicated that there was a list of applicants that they are recommending for employment as lifeguards.

Moved by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the list of lifeguards en bloc.
Motion carried.

- b. Environmental Advisory Council – There were no questions for Mr. Wert.

Moved by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Garman to approve the Environmental Advisory Council minutes. **Motion carried.**

- c. Safety Committee – Mr. Sichler referred to the written report.

Moved by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Safety Committee Report. **Motion carried.**

- d. Economic Development Committee – It was noted that the Committee had met, however there were no minutes as yet. They will be presented at the next meeting.

11. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Garman to approve the Revenues with Comparison to Budget Report for the 1 month ending 1/31/2013 and to approve the Payment Approval Report for 1/22/2014 – 2/11/2014 and 2/12/2014 – 2/18/2014. **Motion carried.**

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Doug Brunner asked about permit parking on the 600 and 700 blocks of Spruce Street. He complained that there are contractors working at the hospital who are parking on those blocks. Mr. Murray explained that permit parking is limited in the Borough but that if hospital security is made aware of the situation, it will be taken care of. He suggested that Mr. Brunner attend the next Traffic Committee meeting. Mr. Becker also noted that hospital employees are written up and possibly terminated for repeatedly parking on Borough streets. Mayor Rodriguez said that he and Chief Powell would send a letter to the hospital to notify them of the situation.

Oswald Herbert suggested that a warning be issued before residents are fined for not shoveling their sidewalks. He recommended a door hanger giving them 24 or 48 hours to rectify the situation. Mr. Gallen said that while they are reviewing the ordinance, they will take this into consideration.

Bill Murray, member of the Western Berks Water Authority Board was on hand to answer any questions. There were none.

Amber Rambo asked if the list of parking permits is reviewed on a regular basis to determine if the people who have them still live in the Borough. It was also suggested that the newsletter include information about the new permit parking stickers being available.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to Executive Session at 10:00 p.m. to discuss personnel. When the meeting reconvened at 10:55 p.m., no action was taken.

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Moved by Mr. Wert and seconded by Carl Garman to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant