

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

July 19, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, July 19, 2011 with the following persons present: Council President Kevin Conrad; Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Elizabeth Heckler, Nathalie Kulesa, Deborah Hutcheson, James Gallen, Amy Good-Ashman; Borough Manager Richard Sichler; Police Chief Edward Fabriziani; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Dan Becker, Kozloff Stoudt; Chief Code Enforcement Officer Tracey Levering; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Coordinator Daphne Klahr; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach; Administrative Assistant Cathy Hoffman; Terry Naugle, Great Valley Consultants. Mayor Shane Keller was out of town and unable to attend.

<u>VISITORS:</u>	Tina Shenk	Property/Business Owner
	Ruth Cardell	Temple
	Audrey Schaeffer	Resident
	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	James T. Rogers	Resident
	Thomas C. Miller	Resident
	Jason Witman	Resident
	Christian R. Murray	West Reading Fire Company
	Jamie Keith	West Reading Fire Company
	Diane Price	Armed Forces Day Parade
	Terry Siggins	Resident
	Joseph M. Brown	Fraternal Order of Police
	Chad Marks	West Reading Police Department
	Lauren Applegate	
	Amber Rambo	Resident
	Bridget Simmons	
	James Simmons	
	Spencer Barbera	
	Christian Doyle	Resident
	Jennifer Witman	Resident
	Donna Ladd	
	Robin Horman	Resident
	Jeremy Drey	Reading Eagle

Council President Kevin Conrad called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tina Shenk asked about the handicapped parking space on Penn Avenue near S. Fourth Avenue and asked why the space isn't in front of the resident's home. She noted that the vehicle that parks there is a truck which obstructs the view of the front of the store at that location. She also asked if the handicapped space is considered commercial or residential. Chief Fabriziani explained that the request came from an upstairs tenant however that Council determines where the space is placed. He was not certain if a two hour zone would apply to a handicapped space and asked Mr. Becker to research it. Because the Traffic Committee doesn't meet until September, it was decided to set up a meeting with Ms. Shenk, the business owner and the tenant to look for a solution.

Diane Price (Armed Forces Day Parade) thanked Council again for allowing the parade to be held in West Reading. She presented certificates of appreciation to all those who had assisted in the event. She noted that next years' parade will be on May 19th and said she hoped it would be held in the Borough again.

Joseph Brown (Fraternal Oder of Police) said that he was not speaking as a detective with the West Reading Police Department but as President of the Fraternal Order of Police and read a lengthy prepared statement. He said he was speaking specifically about issues relating to the West Reading Police Department, in particular the management of the department. He noted that there is no guidance, no updated policies and no fairness in the department, and that morale is at its lowest. He noted incidents that have occurred that are currently under investigation.

Mr. Becker explained that an investigation is ongoing and that it must be given due process. It was noted that the entire report will not be released.

Resident James Rogers complained about the minimum billing amount not being shown on the new water bill and asked if water and sewer funds are being allocated for other uses.

Resident Thomas Miller asked if the \$75.00 rental fee could be waived because the property has not been lived in since 2005. He also asked if the trash billing could be waived as well and noted that he has been paying the minimum billing for water and sewer while the property has been vacant. Mr. Conrad asked Mr. Miller to put the request in writing and once it is received, Mr. Sichler will look into the trash request and Mrs. Levering will look at the rental fee. In the meantime, the \$75.00 rental fee will not need to be paid until the issue is resolved at the next Council meeting.

Resident Amber Rambo said that she had attended a "Citizens' Police Academy" two years ago and had found the classes very enlightening. She added she also rode along with an officer and as a result can't thank the police officers enough for the work that they do. She said she was disappointed to read about the West Reading Police Department in the newspaper because it causes citizens to have low morale too. She spoke about the 'Crime Watch' group she is attempting to form and noted that people just aren't interested in being involved.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the minutes of June 21th, 2011.
Motion carried.

ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2011 – 5 (JMA Industrial Waste Surcharge) – **Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson to approve Resolution 2011-5, a resolution fixing the charges for industrial wastes. **Motion carried.**

Resolution 2011 – 6 (Codes Department Inspection Fees) – **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson to approve Resolution 2011-6, a resolution fixing the fees for Certificate of Occupancy inspections and re-inspections, and for plumbing re-inspection fees, as amended. (The resolution number was incorrect on the Certification page.) **Motion carried.**

CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:

Solicitor's Report – Mr. Becker stated that he had spoken with Scott Landis regarding the Belovich property and noted that the grass is being maintained. He added that he has submitted dates to Mr. Landis to meet on site to discuss fencing and other issues.

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson to approve the Solicitor's Report. **Motion carried.**

Engineer's Report – Mr. Naugle said that he had no action items in his written report. It was noted that a traffic study has been submitted to PennDOT regarding the traffic signal at Museum Road and Parkside Drive North.

Regarding the Wyomissing Creek Watershed group mentioned in the GVC report, Mr. Wert asked if all members of Council were comfortable with the \$7500.00 per municipality for the costs associated with Phase 1 of the Wyomissing Creek Watershed project and they indicated they were.

Moved by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Engineer's report. **Motion carried.**

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Sichler provided a brief update regarding the curb ramp grant and the cable contract agreement. He then spoke about the necessity to move capital reserve funds and liquid fuel funds from Berkshire Bank because of regulations that have made it difficult for small banks to handle large sums. He noted that some of the funds have temporarily been moved to Sovereign Bank. The Finance Committee will look at interested banks and present their recommendation to Council at the next meeting. It was suggested that PSAB or PLGIT be consulted for recommendations.

Moved by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mr. Gallen to authorize the Finance Committee to transfer the funds to the bank that is deemed appropriate and in the best interest of the Borough. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Sichler updated Council regarding the West Reading Elementary Center and noted that the project will be substantially completed by the end of July. Finishes and exterior improvements are currently being completed. The parking area on Chestnut Street is being stamped to look like brickwork and neighbors are happy with the outcome. Landscaping for that area will be completed in the fall.

Moved by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mr. Wert to accept the Borough Manager's report. **Motion carried.**

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Code Enforcement – Chief Code Enforcement Officer Tracey Levering presented her written report for consideration. **Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Ms. Good-Ashman to accept the Chief Code Enforcement Officer's report. **Motion carried.**

Police Department – Chief Fabriziani stated the new police vehicles will be in service soon, the Fire Police policy is complete, and the handicapped space for the 100 block of S. 2nd Avenue has not yet been advertised. He also listed 7 handicapped spaces that will be removed this year due to the residents no longer needing the spaces.

Chief Fabrizio also spoke about the reassignment of a space on Tulpehocken Avenue to another location. Mr. Wert asked if the space could be moved around the corner on the half block of Walnut which is one way and has much less traffic on it. Chief Fabrizio asked for authorization to advertise, however in order to save advertising funds, it was suggested that the reassignment on Tulpehocken be researched and included for advertising after the next Council meeting.

Chief Fabrizio also spoke about the mowing of the cloverleaf and reported that he had spoken with Representative Caltagirone's office and he, along with Mr. Sichler will be meeting with Rep. Caltagirone in the near future. Mrs. Kulesa and Mr. Conrad asked to be included in that meeting as well.

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mr. Wert to accept the Police Chief's Report. **Motion carried.**

Public Works – In addition to his written report, Public Works Director Dean Murray spoke about the purchase of the 2011 pick-up truck. He noted that several bids were requested and the lowest to be received so far is \$9000 under budget because it is a 2011 leftover. He noted that the expenditure is being taken from 3 line items (\$13,333 from each). **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the purchase of the 2011 pick-up truck with accessories as presented by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to accept the Public Works Director's report. **Motion carried.**

Elm Street – Mr. Rohrbach referred to his written report and noted the "Let's Paint the Town" event scheduled for September 14th on the 1st block of S. 6th Avenue. He also noted the introduction of the P.A.R.R. program (property acquisition, rehabilitation and resale) which will be partially funded through a line of credit with Vist Bank. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Elm Street Manager's report. **Motion carried.**

Fire Department – Chief Burkholder presented his written report, then introduced representatives from Crimson Fire and Campbell Supply who were in attendance. He distributed documentation from Campbell Supply concerning the purchase of the ladder truck which provided leasing and financing information. Chief Burkholder reminded Council that the vehicle would not be ready for 330 days and that payment would not be required until the ladder truck has been delivered.

Financing of the vehicle was then discussed at length, including the possibility of receiving some funding from the hospital. It was also noted that based on projections, \$197,000 will have been set aside by the end of 2011, and a \$200,000 loan is also available at 2% from PA Emergency Management. Mr. Sirna of Campbell Supply explained that of the 330 days, the first 200 days of the process is for getting information and parts ready, not ordering the chassis so there is no real spending up to that point.

Moved by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Conrad to move forward with the purchase of the aerial ladder truck contingent upon acquiring satisfactory financing, with a review of it by the solicitor before any contracts are signed. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson to authorize Chief Burkholder to list the current aerial ladder truck for sale. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to accept the Fire Chief's report. **Motion carried.**

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

Environmental Advisory Council – Mr. Sichler reported that the Environmental Advisory Council had met to discuss the Farmers’ Market information for presentations that they hope to start soon. Also discussed was the yard waste program and ways to improve it.

Mr. Conrad asked about attendance at these meetings and noted that there are many people interested in being part of this group. He noted that a stipulation had been made that two consecutive missed meetings without due cause would require replacement of the member. This will be reviewed further for the next meeting.

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to accept the Environmental Advisory Council report. **Motion carried.**

Recreation Commission – Ms. Klahr presented the Recreation report and thanked the Borough departments who assisted with the 4th of July celebration. She also spoke about the letter that had been distributed to residents in the park area requesting their assistance by calling police if they see any suspicious activity. Ms. Klahr said that it is important that everyone keeps their eyes open to help stop vandalism. She also added that some of the new security cameras are recording, and when the system is complete Council will be invited to a demonstration. She also announced the upcoming Moonlight Swim and National Night Out.

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Recreation Commission report. **Motion carried.**

Traffic and Infrastructure Committees – Mr. Conrad stated that the Committee met on July 11th but had no action items. He noted that the Committee has been working on a solution for the accidents and traffic issues at Cherry and 5th Avenue, and after visiting the site, the Committee has determined that making Cherry Street a one way alley really wouldn’t help. The Committee had decided that creating an island with yellow striping on 5th Avenue northbound, between Franklin and Cherry Streets. This will stop drivers from creating two lanes of traffic instead of one. He noted that all other options for this area were not deemed to be feasible.

Much discussion ensued regarding other options, as suggested by Council members and some residents. Mr. Conrad said that although all options have been discussed at Traffic, they will have a look at it again. It was noted that this proposed change doesn’t require a traffic study so even if it doesn’t work, little money will have been expended.

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mr. Wert to accept the Traffic Committee report. **Motion carried.**

Regarding the Infrastructure meeting, it was noted that the Committee will be looking to the hospital for assistance with some paving issues, and possibly a traffic signal, in conjunction with their expansion of ‘N’ building. The Committee will be looking at various projects for the next budget year.

Moved by Ms. Good-Ashman and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to accept the Infrastructure Committee report. **Motion carried.**

Shade Tree Commission – Mr. Sichler provided a brief overview of the minutes of the July 14th meeting, as presented. It was noted that a date error existed on the first page. **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Shade Tree Commission report, as amended. **Motion carried.**

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Moved by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to approve the revenue report for the six months ending June 30, 2011. **Motion carried.**

Moved by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to approve the Payment Approval Report for 6/18/11 to 7/14/11 and 7/16/11 to 7/19/11. **Motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Gallen said that he wished to introduce a motion to have the park named for Ed and Lynda Kuhn. He went on to explain how much they have done for the Borough and why it should be named for them. Ms. Klahr noted that the park was formally named the “West Reading Playground” in 1929 and felt it would be inappropriate to rename it. She instead suggested that the basketball courts be named for them.

Everyone was in agreement that the Kuhns should in some way be recognized for their many years of service to the Borough, therefore it was decided to give the suggestion further consideration and that it would be discussed at the next Council meeting. It was also suggested that any presentation should be done in front of the basketball teams that Mr. Kuhn has worked with and supported for so many years. It was also noted that Mr. Gallen would be in charge of the arrangements.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council recessed to Executive Session at 9:22 p.m. to discuss litigation and personnel matters. When the meeting reconvened at 10:09 p.m., no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant