

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

January 20, 2009 – 7:00 P.M.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 with the following persons present: Council President Nathalie Kulesa; Council Members Michael Doyle, Kevin Conrad, Michael Geddio, James Gallen Jr., Philip Wert; Mayor Shane Keller; Borough Manager George Tindall; Borough Solicitor Socrates Georgeadis; Police Chief Ed Fabriziani; Code Enforcement Officer Gerald Trate; Borough Foreman Jim Beane; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Main Street Executive Director Nevin Hollinger; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach; Administrative Assistant Cathy Hoffman.

<u>VISITORS:</u>	Kerry Hicks	Resident
	Kurt Bertges	450 Penn Avenue
	Becca Keller	Resident
	Deborah Hutcheson	Resident
	Tina Shenk	400-406 Penn Avenue
	John Woodward	3 rd and Spruce
	Amber Rambo	Resident
	Darrin Youker	Reading Eagle
	Don Haines	Ephrata
	Kelly Lonaberger	Resident
	Jim Livingood	Resident
	Elane Edgecomb	Resident
	Elizabeth Heckler	Resident
	Sheila Scott	Resident
	Gregory Blue	Reading Hospital
	John Roland	Reading Hospital
	Richard Mable	Reading Hospital
	Paul Toburan	Reading Hospital
	Ruth Cardell	Resident
	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Eddie Daniels	Resident
	Kurt Zielaskowski	UGI Utilities, Inc.

Council President Nathalie Kulesa called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Kerry Hicks gave the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Kerry Hicks read a letter he wrote concerning many issues, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Sheila Scott asked about the construction on 20 N. Sixth Avenue and Mr. Georgeadis explained the scope of the work and noted that a stop work order had been issued which they have complied with.

Kurt Bertges suggested that the email addresses for Council members be available either on-line or in the newsletter.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

Motion by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approved the minutes of December 16th 2008 and January 6th 2009. **Motion carried.**

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Darryl Jenkins requested permission to advertise the 2009 Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project which will include the televising and cleaning of the portion of the Borough which has not previously been completed. The projected cost is \$25,000. **Motion** by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Geddio to approve the advertising of the 2009 Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Jenkins stated that the cost for a water and sewer rate study (per Council's request) would not exceed \$2,900. It was noted that the study will include the evaluation of the adequacy of the rates as well as a current and projected expenses review. **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the study. **Motion carried.** Mr. Tindall also noted that the current rates have not been reviewed since 2004.

Mr. Jenkins stated that a final copy of the revised Zoning Ordinance has been distributed to Council for their comments, however Mr. Conrad requested that more time be given for review before advertising the ordinance. After some discussion it was decided that Mr. Jenkins will compile the changes that were done for the Planning Commission and send them to Council for their review. **Motion** by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Doyle that the revised Zoning Ordinance be tabled until further review is completed. **Motion carried.**

Regarding the review of the tapping fees, Mr. Doyle felt that it should be completed now. Mr. Jenkins recommended that they not be increased at this time because an increase would have to be justified with an engineering study. **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to include the tapping fees as part of the water/sewer rate study. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the Engineer's Report. **Motion carried.**

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Georgeadis stated that an ordinance has been prepared which will allow some permit fees to be amended by resolution rather than by ordinance. The fees included in the ordinance are specifically for amusement fees, water certification fees and water shut-off fees. **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the advertising of the ordinance. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Georgeadis also stated that with regard to the Belovich townhouse development, Fulton Bank has provided the following information:

- Waldman Electric has ordered the street lights for the development which will be installed as soon as they arrive (6 – 12 weeks).
- Street signs were purchased by Belovich but stored at another location; they will be installed as soon as they are found.
- Dale Walker has been contracted to plow and salt the streets in the development.
- Fulton Bank has contracted with Forino builders to secure the 12 foundations that are unfinished. They will be inspected to determine if they have been damaged, then thermal blankets will be installed, and 4'x8' sheets of plywood will be installed for safety.

Council then discussed the situation with the Tax Collector and what measures can be taken to encourage Mr. Stiber to turn those duties over to the Borough. Mr. Georgeadis noted that reducing the compensation per bill was done in the past, however Mr. Stiber still continued to collect the taxes. He said he did not recommend lowering the fee again. It was decided that no action should be taken for now but to wait and see what happens with the upcoming primaries.

Council then decided to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss the Reading Hospital & Reading Museum Zoning Decision, regarding pending litigation. Council recessed at 7:55 p.m.

Upon returning at 8:45 p.m., a **Motion** was made by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Geddio to appeal the zoning decision with regard to the Reading Hospital and instruct the solicitor, in a timely fashion, to file that appeal; as well to direct the Borough's Hospital Ad Hoc Committee to meet with Reading Hospital officials as soon as possible. **The motion was carried with a 5-1 vote (Mr. Conrad voted "no").**

Motion by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Geddio to approve the Solicitor's Report. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Georgeadis then left the meeting.

Mrs. Karen Livingood, a member of the Zoning Hearing Board asked why the issue is being appealed however Council could not provide an answer due to the pending litigation. She asked if the appeal pertained to the Reading Museum as well and was told that it would not.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

UGI Gas Line – Mr. Tindall stated that Kurt Zielaskowski was in attendance to provide further information regarding the proposed gas line that will terminate at the Reading Hospital cogeneration plant. Mr. Zielaskowski did not however know where the cogeneration plant would be located, therefore the discussion was tabled.

Cherry Street Realignment and Parking – Mr. Tindall explained that the proposed Cherry Street project has been discussed for quite some time, however no decisions have been made. Ken Pick of Berks County Redevelopment has requested that Council either give the plan serious consideration or reject it in its current form. **Motion** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Doyle to dispose of this plan in its current form. **Motion carried.**

Resolution re: 2009 Fee Schedule – **Motion** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Conrad to accept the 2009 Fee Schedule as detailed in Resolution 2009-1. **Motion carried.**

Revised Zoning Ordinance – This was discussed during the Engineer's report.

Berks County Armed Forces Day Parade – A letter indicating Council's approval must be sent to PennDOT to request permission to use Penn Avenue as part of the parade route. **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to send a letter to PennDOT requesting the use of Penn Avenue for the parade. **Motion carried.** The letter must also state that the Borough will hold PennDOT harmless.

2009 Farmers' Market – A letter must be sent to PennDOT requesting approval to alter the traffic pattern on the 500 block of Penn Avenue for use during the Farmers' Market. **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to send a letter to PennDOT with respect to the Farmers' Market. **Motion carried.**

Teamsters' Contract – Mr. Tindall stated that the Teamsters Contract will expire on December 31, 2009 and requested approval to send a letter to the Teamsters Union requesting a meeting to begin negotiations. Mrs. Kulesa appointed Mayor Keller, Mr. Conrad, Mr. Doyle and Mr. Tindall to the negotiating team. **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to send a letter to the Teamsters to begin negotiations. **Motion carried.**

Met-Ed Street Lighting Resolutions – **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve Resolution 2009-2 regarding the upgrading of street lights by MedEd, at 128 & 116 Yarnell Street. **Motion carried.**

Commission/Committee/Authority Appointments – Mrs. Kulesa said that she had only received answers from two people. **Motion** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Wert to reappoint Mr. Shaffer and Mr. Siggins to the Planning Commission for the term beginning January 1, 2009 and ending December 31, 2012. **Motion carried.**

Authorize Advertising for Swimming Pool Repair – Mr. Tindall stated that the pool repair will require the removal of the old layers of paint and application of an epoxy that will last 5 – 8 years, at an estimated cost of \$109,000. **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the advertising of the pool repair project. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the Borough Manager's Report. **Motion carried.**

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT:

In response to Mayor Keller's question, Mr. Trate stated that 65 property owners had been cited last week for not removing snow from the sidewalks. **Motion** by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Doyle to approve the Code Enforcement Officer's Report. **Motion carried.**

JOINT MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPORT:

Mr. Herbert gave a brief report regarding activities by the JMA, including the pursuit of a grant that will assist with the purchase of biosolids dryer. **Motion** by Mr. Geddio and seconded by Mr. Doyle to approve the JMA report. **Motion carried.**

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

Recreation Commission – Mrs. Kulesa stated that the meeting was not held due to the lack of a quorum.

Safety Committee – **Motion** Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Doyle to approve the Safety Committee minutes. **Motion carried.**

Traffic Committee – Mr. Conrad stated that Saint James Church had requested the moving of a handicapped space on Penn Avenue because it was not functional (tree prohibits the opening of vehicle doors). **Motion** by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the moving of the handicapped space on Penn Avenue. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Conrad reported that the Committee also approved a schedule for the process of approving handicapped parking spaces and recommended that Council adopt the schedule as shown in the Traffic Committee minutes. **Motion** by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the schedule per the January 8, 2009 Traffic minutes. **Motion carried.** (Shown below)

November 1 – January 31	Accept Applications
February Traffic Meeting	Review Applications and recommend to Council
February Council Meeting	Council votes to advertise the ordinance
March Council Meeting	Council votes to approve the ordinance

February 1 – April 30	Accept Applications
May Traffic Meeting	Review Applications and recommend to Council
May Council Meeting	Council votes to advertise the ordinance
June Council Meeting	Council votes to approve the ordinance

May 1 – July 31	Accept Applications
August Traffic Meeting	Review Applications and recommend to Council
August Council Meeting	Council votes to advertise the ordinance
September Council Meeting	Council votes to approve the ordinance

August 1 – October 31	Accept Applications
November Traffic Meeting	Review Applications and recommend to Council
November Council Meeting	Council votes to advertise the ordinance
December Council Meeting	Council votes to approve the ordinance

Motion by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Traffic Committee report. **Motion carried.**

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Fabriziani reported that several robberies have recently been reported in the surrounding areas, three of which occurred in West Reading. West Reading detectives, working in conjunction with City detectives, were successful in apprehending a suspect.

A suspect was also apprehended by West Reading Police for a theft of a GPS unit from a vehicle; one of many that have recently occurred.

Chief Fabriziani told Council that Harry Reeser, Parking Enforcement Officer, formally retired and that a staff luncheon had been held last Friday. He was presented with a plaque from the Department. Chief Fabriziani noted that parking enforcement will be handled by a part-time staff person as well as the duty cars until a replacement is hired. He noted that the deadline for applications was January 20th and that 27 applications had been received. A recommendation will be brought to Council at the February meeting.

Motion by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the Police Chief's Report. **Motion carried.**

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Keller stated that the bulk of his report had already been handled in the Borough Manager's Report, however he commented regarding the Armed Forces Day Parade by stating the it is the lowest attended parade and that expanding it to the Penn Avenue/Street Corridor would be a benefit. If this parade can be held successfully and prove to PennDOT that it can be done safely, it may open the door to hold other parades on the Corridor.

Moved by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Geddio to accept the Mayor's Report. **Motion carried.**

BOROUGH FOREMAN'S REPORT:

Moved by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the Borough Foreman's Report. **Motion carried.**

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Burkholder noted that the officer changes for the Fire Company are detailed in his written report. **Motion** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the Fire Chief's Report. **Motion carried.**

MAIN STREET EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Hollinger updated Council by stating that a public hearing for the BID had been held just prior to the Council meeting and that they will now have a 45 day period to receive comments. Following that, the votes must be submitted by March 6th.

Mr. Hollinger then asked for approval to apply for a special events certificate for "A Taste of West Reading" which will be held on March 24th. **Motion** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Conrad to permit Main Street to apply for a special events certificate. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Main Street Executive Director's Report. **Motion carried.**

ELM STREET MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Rohrbach reported the following:

- He is preparing for Elm Street's first federal audit.
- The façade improvement program was closed on December 31, 2008 with over \$73,000 being invested in the Elm Street neighborhood.

- He has been elected the chairman of the statewide Elm Street Program and Services Board which will enable him to help make Elm Street a better program statewide.

Motion by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the Elm Street Manager's Report. **Motion carried.**

REVENUES WITH COMPARISON TO BUDGET – ENDING 12/31/08:

Motion by Mr. Conrad and seconded by Mr. Doyle to approve the Revenues Report for the twelve months ending 12/31/08. **Motion carried.**

PAYMENT APPROVAL REPORT - 12/16/08 TO 1/20/09:

Motion by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Conrad to approve the Payment Approval Report for 12/16/08 to 1/14/09 and 1/15/09 to 1/20/09. **Motion carried.**

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Mr. Doyle and seconded by Mr. Conrad to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant

Approved by George I. Tindall
Borough Manager/Secretary