

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

JULY 15, 2008 – 7:00 P.M.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, July 15, 2008 with the following persons present: Council President Nathalie Kulesa; Council Members Kevin Conrad, James Gallen Jr., Michael Morrill, Philip Wert; Mayor Shane Keller; Borough Solicitor Socrates Georgeadis; Police Chief Ed Fabriziani; Code Enforcement Officer Gerald Trate, Borough Foreman Jim Beane; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Recreation Coordinator Daphne Klahr; Main Street Executive Director Nevin Hollinger; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach; Administrative Assistant Cathy Hoffman and Administrative/Fiscal Clerk Stephanie Burkholder.

VISITORS: Ruth Cardell – 728 Reading Avenue
Sheila Scott – 322 Chestnut Street
Elizabeth Heckler – 460 Chestnut Street
William Gernert – 107 N. 3rd Avenue
Don Haines – 156B West Fulton Street
Darryl Jenkins – Great Valley Consultants
Amber Rambo – 307 Sunset Road

Council President Nathalie Kulesa called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Reverend Caceres of Lighthouse Christian Center gave the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: - There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved the Council minutes of June 17th 2008.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

Main Street Phases 4 and 5 Update – Mr. Wert stated that he, along with Mr. Tindall and Mrs. Kulesa had met with Alan Piper of the Berks County Planning Commission regarding the shortfall in funding for Phases 4 and 5. Mr. Wert explained that Mr. Piper was able to secure funds to cover the entire shortfall amount, contingent upon approval from the Coordinating Committee which will meet on July 17th. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council accepted the bids for Main Street Phases 4 and 5, contingent upon the approval from PennDot.**

Resignation of Joseph York from JMA - Mrs. Kulesa stated that a letter of resignation had been received from Joseph York who had represented the Borough on the Joint Municipal Authority of Wyomissing Valley. Mrs. Kulesa asked for Council's approval to offer the position to Robert DiSands who had been interviewed by Council in May for a previous vacancy on the JMA, but was not chosen at that time. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council accepted the resignation of Joseph York from the JMA.**

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council agreed to offer the JMA vacancy to Mr. DiSands.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council approved the Borough Manager's Report.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Mr. Jenkins stated the bids had been received for the 2008 Streets Project and that the low bid was submitted by Burkholder Paving in the amount of \$84,158. for the repaving of the alley parallel to Pine Street, as well as the paving of a portion of the walking trail. He noted that a portion of the trail paving will be covered by the DCNR grant. **On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council awarded the paving project to Burkholder Paving in the amount of \$84,158.**

Regarding the Franklin Street project, Mr. Jenkins stated that the project is complete and payment needs to be approved by Council, although the funds will be paid by Berks County Community Development directly to EJB Paving. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council approved the payment application from EJB Paving in the amount of \$55,418.04 which will be paid by Berks County Community Development.**

Mr. Jenkins noted that in regard to the Main Street Phases 4 & 5 project, he will await the outcome of the July 17th meeting before sending contract documents to the contractor.

Regarding the Pool House Steps project, Mr. Jenkins recommended awarding the project to the lowest bidder which was Forino Company, in the amount of \$19,498.61. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council awarded the Pool House Steps project to Forino Company in the amount of \$19,498.61.**

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved the Engineer's Report.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT:

Mr. Trate had nothing to add to the written report and there were no questions, therefore **on motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council approved the Code Enforcement Officer's Report.**

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Georgeadis stated that the ordinance requiring premises address numbers on the rear of dwellings abutting streets, roads or alleys had been advertised and was ready for Council's vote. **On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the ordinance.** It was noted that residents have 90 days in which to comply with the ordinance and it was recommended that the numbers be displayed at the most prominent location at the rear of the property, ie on a rear door, fence, garage, etc. It was noted that residents will be informed about this change by all means possible, such as the newsletter, on the website, on water bills, etc.

Mr. Georgeadis provided Council with the written decision for the Conditional Use Application of Sam Singh (501 Penn Avenue). The application had been heard at a Public Hearing on June 17th and was approved by Council at the June 17th Council meeting. The only requirement remaining is for the document to be signed.

On motion duly made by Mr. Gallen, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved the Solicitor's Report.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

Traffic Committee – Mayor Keller stated that at the June 18th Traffic meeting, two recommendations were made. The first was for Council to approve a \$1900. expenditure for a traffic study at 3rd and Penn to look at the possibility of restricting traffic to right turns only, both northbound and southbound. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council approved the \$1900. expenditure for the traffic study at 3rd and Penn Avenues.**

The second item was for Council to approve a two hour parking zone on South Fourth Avenue, between Penn Avenue and Cherry Street, on both east and west sides of the street. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council approved the advertising of an ordinance to permit a two hour parking zone on South Fourth Avenue.**

It was also noted that in the Traffic Minutes of June 18th, the proposed 4 way stop sign is at 3rd and Pine, and not 4th and Pine as stated in the minutes.

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Traffic Committee minutes, as amended.

Recreation Commission – Recreation Coordinator Daphne Klahr reviewed the list of recent/upcoming events including “Movies in the Park”, midnight swims, and National Night Out.

She asked Council’s views regarding rescheduling the July 4th fireworks that were postponed due to rain. The two proposed dates were Labor Day 2008 or Memorial Day weekend 2009. **On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council agreed to reschedule the fireworks for the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend 2009.**

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council approved the Recreation Commission report.

Safety Committee – **On motion duly made by Mr. Gallen, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Safety Committee minutes of June 25th 2008.**

POLICE CHIEF’S REPORT:

In addition to his written report, Chief Fabrizio told Council about the following:

- National Night Out will be held on August 5th from 5 – 9 p.m.
- The Borough has applied for a grant for the emergency generator through FEMA which if received will require a 25% match from the Borough.
- A report detailing overtime for the first half of the fiscal year compared to 2007 was reviewed. He noted that although the hours are up, 122 hours were reimbursed by the State through “Smooth Operator”.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council approved the Police Chief’s Report.

MAYOR’S REPORT:

Mayor Keller stated that he had met with Dan Becker regarding Ordinance 889 which was enacted in 2003 to establish the Neighborhood Improvement District Authority and set up the special assessment for business/property owners on Penn Avenue. He noted that the ordinance has a ‘sunset’ provision which

expires at the end of 2008 and if specific steps are not followed and it expires, the BID would be dissolved.

Council discussed the amount of the BID assessment, whether the amount should be increased and if the level of service should change. They also discussed the timeline that must be followed in order to have everything in place by the end of the year. Mayor Keller said that he would take it to the Main Street Authority at their August 5th meeting and would bring a recommendation back to Council. Mayor Keller also requested a brief Executive Session at the end of the meeting.

On motion duly made by Mr. Gallen, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Mayor's Report.

BOROUGH FOREMAN'S REPORT:

Borough Forman Jim Beane provided the following information in addition to his written report:

- The Borough is experiencing a problem with yellow jackets, which has been a County-wide problem this year. Ehrlich's will continue to treat the pool area to resolve this ongoing problem.
- Japanese beetles are also a problem at the playground/pool area. Wolf Tree Service will be spraying trees to alleviate the problem.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council approved the Borough Foreman's Report.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Burkholder had nothing to add to his written report, therefore **on motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Conrad, and passed, Council approved the Fire Chief's Report.**

MAIN STREET EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Nevin Hollinger reported that the façade grant contract has been backdated to 2005, which will permit approval of 14 additional grants through DCED, with the remainder of the funds being applied to a new grant process.

Mr. Hollinger also gave a brief report regarding Art on the Avenue and thanked everyone for their assistance. He noted that the closing down of Penn Avenue was very well received.

As a final note, Mr. Hollinger stated that he has been receiving substantial comments regarding parking in the Penn Avenue area. He said he would like to more formally address the problem and come up with some specific recommendations pertaining to parking.

Mr. Conrad gave a brief synopsis regarding previous proposals for parking solutions including the proposed Cherry Street parking lot. He said that there are funds available from Berks County Redevelopment, however the exact amount is not known. It has been suggested that the best solution could possibly be a 50% matching grant from the Redevelopment Authority that would enable business owners on Penn Avenue to install parking areas at the rear of their premises. Other discussion ensued regarding the 'perception' of a parking problem, policing of the 2-hour zones, signage, etc.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council approved the Main Street Executive Director's Report.

ELM STREET MANAGER'S REPORT:

Dean Rohrbach highlighted three items from his report; street lights being changed to sodium vapor bulbs, pocket ashtrays being distributed through the cigarette littering campaign, and the summer block party that will be held on August 23rd.

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Gallen and passed, Council approved the Elm Street Manager's Report.

REVENUES WITH COMPARISON TO BUDGET – ENDING 6/30/08:

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved the Revenues Report for the six months ending 6/30/08.

PAYMENT APPROVAL REPORT - 6/17/08 TO 7/14/08:

On motion duly made by Mr. Gallen, seconded by Mr. Morrill and passed, Council approved the Payment Approval Report for 6/17/08 to 7/14/08.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council adjourned to Executive Session at 8:25 p.m. When the meeting reconvened at 8:45 p.m., the following actions were taken:

On motion duly made by Mr. Morrill, seconded by Mr. Conrad and passed, Council approved that Cpl. Keith Phillips be awarded statutory Heart and Lung benefits as a result of the injury he suffered on June 28th 2008. This position is consistent with the Worker's Compensation insurance carrier granting him Workman's Compensation benefits.

Mrs. Kulesa appointed Mr. Geddio, Mr. Wert and Mr. Morrill (chairperson) as the Negotiating Committee for the upcoming Police Contract. Mr. Conrad will serve as the alternate.

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion duly made by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Wert and passed, Council adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant

Approved by George I. Tindall
Borough Manager/Secretary