

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING**

January 25, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its second monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, January 25, 2022 with the following persons present: Council President Ryan Lineaweaver; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Pro-Tem Christopher Lincoln; Council Members Jennifer Bressler, Patrick Kaag, Denise Drobnick, and Zachary Shaver (via Zoom); Mayor Samantha Kaag; Solicitor Daniel Becker; Officer-in-Charge Ryan Phillips (via Zoom); Borough Manager Dean Murray; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

VISITORS:

James Rogers, Resident

Karen Livingood, Resident (via Zoom)

Oswald Herbert, Resident

Bill Fox, Visitor

Jenell Wolf, Laney's Legacy of Hope

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Ryan Lineaweaver called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

2. **PRESENTATION:**

- a. **Fashionista 5K:** Ms. Wolf requested consideration to approve the date and time associated with the 7th Annual Fashionista 5K run or walk event proposed on May 1, 2022 beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 11:00 a.m. The proposed route differs from previous years in an attempt to include Delaney's Circle and her frog sculpture. Mr. Murray noted concerns regarding additional costs associated with the proposed new route. Department leaders have begun reviewing the proposed route to possibly recommend alterations.

Motion to waive application fees for this event and to approve the event date and time of May 1, 2022 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Ms. Wolf departed the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Rogers shared information he obtained through a right-to-know request that he believes three of the forty-six properties that failed to pay their 2021 property taxes are rental properties. He indicated that there are multi-unit rental properties that have not paid their business licensing or business privilege taxes since 2015. Mr. Rogers recommended that Council implement a better program to more efficiently generate these funds, such as requiring the Code Department's business and rental inspectors to provide registration forms to the businesses that are not currently registered with Berks Earned Income Tax Bureau during these scheduled inspections. Mr. Rogers indicated that in lieu of the Turnkey Taxes program the Code and Treasurer Departments could institute a more efficient business privilege tax collection system.

Mrs. Livingood asked if Linden Lane was intended to be repaved this year. Mr. Murray reported that this is a planned 2022 road improvement project. Mrs. Livingood also requested filling of a large pothole located on Parkside Drive North near Museum Road. Mr. Murray noted a water main break in that vicinity that would be cold patched in the near future.

4. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. **Ordinance 1147 Zoning Amendment** – Mr. Wert requested clarification on the ordinance number. Mrs. Madeira noted a change in numbering due to the removal of last week's

amendment to the landfill designation. The accurate Zoning Ordinance amendment number would be 1147.

Motion to approve an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **Ordinance – Deferred Retirement Option Plan Amendment** – Mr. Lineaweaver indicated that this amendment to the Pension and Retirement Chapter would extend the maximum period for an officer to participate from three to four years to align with the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Motion to authorize the advertisement of an amendment to the Deferred Retirement Option Plan. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 7-0.**

5. **LANDFILL SERVICES AGREEMENT:**

Mr. Lineaweaver noted that the award of a contract to Berks Transfer last week for landfill services was found not to include recyclables. Therefore, a fourth extension to a lease agreement with Pioneer Crossing is before Council tonight for consideration.

Motion to approve an extension to the landfill services agreement with Pioneer Crossing landfill through December 31, 2022 at a rate of \$92.20 per ton. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Attorney Fox provided three copies of original signed contracts for the Borough's use and requested a fully executed copy to be forwarded to his attention.

Attorney Fox departed the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

6. **NOISE NUISANCE DISCUSSION:** Mr. Becker shared that the Borough of Wyomissing has also logged several noise complaints from their residents within the Berkshire Heights area of noise emanating from the City of Reading. It was indicated to Mr. Becker that Wyomissing Borough would more than likely support the Borough of West Reading's efforts in communicating this nuisance to the City of Reading. A joint letter will be drafted to expand on the area being affected to include Berkshire Heights. Mr. Lincoln recommended including information on the numerous attempts that have been made to speak with City of Reading staff members to abate a two-year long intermittent nuisance. Mr. Wert will draft a letter for review by the Wyomissing Borough Manager and Chief of Police prior to presenting to their Borough Council as a request for their support. Mr. Becker recommended the inclusion of simple suggestions to minimize the noise impact and the courtesy of a response from Reading City Council.

Motion to authorize the Borough Manager to communicate with the Borough of Wyomissing Borough Manager to comprehensively gain approval to present a joint letter to Reading City Council. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 7-0.**

7. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Mr. Lineaweaver noted an executive session that was held tonight beginning at 6:30 p.m. to discuss personnel matters. There is an action item to bring forward regarding personnel.

Motion to amend the agenda to include a vote to increase the part-time Parking Enforcement Officer rate of pay. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve a rate of pay increase to \$15 per hour for the part-time Parking Enforcement Officer position. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 7-0.**

8. **WEST READING COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION FOUNDATION 2022 EVENT ROAD CLOSURES:**

The list of 2022 event dates that would require the closure of Penn Avenue are:

- April 23, 2022 Craft Pretzel & Beer Fest
- June 18, 2022 Art on the Avenue
- September 17, 2022 Fall Fest

The time frames requested for closure during all three events were 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Sergeant Phillips noted that the 10:00 p.m. reopening time frame was later than usual. Ms. Drobnick noted her assistance last year to encourage and assist vendors to vacate Penn Avenue to allow the reopening of the roadway and relief of staff members, and the difficulties that were faced to achieve this endeavor. Mr. Wert was able to bring Mark Ratcliffe into the conversation via telephone who confirmed that the requested longer time frame was a default to ensure the ability to clean and reopen the roadway took place prior to the requested end time of 10:00 p.m. The Art on the Avenue and Fall Fest events are scheduled to end at 7:00 p.m. for the 400 through 700 blocks of Penn Avenue, and the Craft Pretzel and Beer Fest is scheduled to end at 5:00 p.m. for the 500 through 700 blocks of Penn Avenue.

Motion to approve the closure of Penn Avenue from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for the 2022 Craft Pretzel & Beer Fest on April 23rd, Art on the Avenue on June 18th, and Fall Fest on September 17th. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

16. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Rogers requested additional information on the ordinance that was adopted earlier tonight. Mr. Wert explained the changes that allows mixed-use development as recommended by the Derck & Edson plan, the addition of a definition of convenience store and the designation of districts where this use would be an allowed use, and the addition of a General Business Overlay to the parcels located immediately adjacent to the traffic circle to encourage future redevelopment.

Mr. Herbert recommended for transparency purposes that the action items listed on the agenda be more explicit especially with regards to ordinance enactments. Mr. Lineaweaver noted that last week the proposed amendment had been explained in more detail prior to authorizing the advertisement of an amendment. It was also noted that the ordinances are available in their entirety on the Borough's website.

17. **ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary