

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING**

**October 18, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.**

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 with the following persons present: Council President Ryan Lineaweaver; Council Members Patrick Kaag, Jennifer Bressler, Zachary Shaver, and Denise Drobnick; Mayor Samantha Kaag; Solicitor Daniel Becker; Fire Chief and Building Code Department Manager Chad Moyer; Chief of Police Richard Tornielli; Recreation Director Michael Esterly; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler (via Zoom); Borough Manager Dean Murray; Public Works Director Kerry Grassley; Engineer Pamela Stevens; Junior Council Person Mark-Handy Phanor; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Council Vice President Philip Wert and Council Pro-Tem Christopher Lincoln were unable to attend.

**VISITORS:**

Kristine Krupa-Hinsey, Visitor  
Steve Hinsey, Visitor  
Aaron Hinsey, Visitor  
Tanya Hinsey, Visitor  
Sandra Hinsey, Visitor  
Randall Hinsey Jr., Visitor  
Anthony Tucci, Western Berks Ambulance (via Zoom)

James Rogers, Resident  
Karen Livingood, Resident  
Suzanne Thompson, Resident  
Tina Shenk, Resident & Business Owner  
Maureen Hasty, Resident  
Brad Hollenbaugh, Visitor (via Zoom)

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Ryan Lineaweaver called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.
2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Mr. Lineaweaver noted an executive session that was held on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the potential acquisition of real property, and potential litigation matters.
3. **AGENDA AMENDMENTS:** There were no amendments to the agenda.
4. **COMMENDATION:** Mr. Lineaweaver noted his familiarity with the Hinsey family beginning with Shelby as an intern for four years with Reading United. In remembrance of Randall Hinsey, Sr. Mr. Lineaweaver read aloud and presented a commendation highlighting his service to the community as a Council Member, Vice President of Council, and Board of Director Member of the West Reading Main Street Authority.

The Hinsey family departed the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Rogers provided an update to his Business Privilege Tax remittance findings noting the recent sale of the Franklin Manor apartment complex. He shared that the new owner has registered with Berkheimer Tax Innovations, however, the previous owner has not remitted a 2023 tax payment. Therefore, the Borough's tax collector is sending a delinquent notice. He was pleased to know that the tax collector portion of the system is functioning well.

6. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the September 19, 2023, regular meeting minutes, the September 26, 2023 conditional use hearing and budget meeting minutes, and the October 7, 2023 budget meeting minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

7. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. **Ordinance 1175 Special Purpose Parking Zones Amendment** – Mr. Lineaweaver noted the advertised proposed amendment to relocate an accessible parking space on Tulpehocken Avenue.

Motion to adopt an amendment to relocate a handicapped parking space designation within the 100 block of Tulpehocken Avenue. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Resolution 2023-22 Road Closure Policy** – Mr. Murray noted a recommendation from the police department to create guidelines to coordinate and support safety measures during instances of required road closure instances such as the operations of roadwork, building repairs or community events.

Motion to adopt a road closure policy. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- c. **Resolution 2023-23 Extension of Local Disaster Emergency** – Mr. Lineaweaver requested consideration to extend the local disaster emergency until the next Borough Council meeting.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2023-23 extending the Proclamation of the Local Disaster Emergency until the November 21, 2023 Borough Council meeting. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

8. **CONSULTANT'S REPORT:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Becker indicated that he had nothing new to report that is not otherwise covered on the agenda.

- b. **Engineer's Report** – Ms. Stevens reviewed the following:

- The 2023 Road Projects have been completed except for a few punch list and closure paperwork items. Ms. Stevens recommended approving the first and final payment application contingent upon completion of these items.

Motion to approve the first and final payment application to H&K Group, Inc. for the 2023 Road Projects totaling \$314,341.81 contingent upon fully satisfying the contract. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- Ms. Stevens requested to formally award the Commonwealth of PA Financing Authority (CFA) grant funding of security camera upgrades to Borough Hall, the Police Department, and Penn Avenue to a Costars approved contractor, Berkshire Systems Group, Inc., in the amount of \$264,750.

Motion to award Berkshire Systems Group, Inc. the Commonwealth of PA Financing Authority security camera upgrades contract in the amount of \$264,750, and to permit

the Borough Manager to execute relevant contract documents. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- The Solid Waste and Recycling new bids were opened on October 13, 2023, and the apparent low bidder is Hollenbaugh's Trash and Recycling, LLC. Mr. Becker confirmed that his office reviewed the bids that were received, and all documentation was in order and found to be acceptable. Ms. Stevens reviewed the low bid options to consider:
  - Option 1 with a service period of three years totaled \$1,607,100 which includes landfill expenses.
  - Option 2 with a service period of three years totaled \$1,093,500 which does not include landfill expenses.
  - Based on an estimated tonnage breakdown over the course of a three-year period, the difference between Options 1 and 2 was \$54,600. Mr. Grassley noted plans to implement a ticketed bulk collection program in the new year which may offset landfill expenses. Ms. Stevens shared the reasonable per unit rates for small, medium, and large bulk items provided by Hollenbaugh's Trash and Recycling, LLC.

Mr. Lineaweaver stated that Options 1 and 2 are three-year options, while Options 3 and 4 are one-year options. The one-year bid options were more costly than the three-year options. Mr. Grassley asked if a separate landfill disposal contract would be needed for Public Works-related disposals. Mr. Becker indicated that because this would be above and beyond the contracted bid specifications a separate landfill contract would be necessary.

Mr. Hollenbaugh joined the meeting via Zoom at 7:20 p.m.

Mr. Lineaweaver shared J.P. Mascaro & Sons, Inc.'s bid for Option 1 totaling \$2,561,306.40, and Option 2 totaling \$1,962,532.80, both of which are roughly double the cost of Hollenbaugh's Trash & Recycling, LLC bids.

Motion to accept the Collection, Transportation, Marketing and Processing of Municipal Solid Waste, Bulk Items, and Recyclable Materials bid submissions of October 13, 2023, and to select Hollenbaugh's Trash & Recycling, LLC Option 2 for years 2024 through 2026 with two one-year extension options. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to accept the Engineer's report. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Ms. Stevens departed the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

9. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Mr. Lineaweaver welcomed Mr. Phanor as the new Junior Council Person seated at the table this evening. Mr. Phanor introduced himself, noting that he is a second-year student at Kutztown University majoring in political science, which is what drew his attention to the Junior Council Person program. He plans to attend law school to serve in public policy and interest and felt the Junior Council Person program would be beneficial to this endeavor.

Mr. Lineaweaver encouraged Mr. Phanor to participate in discussions, noting that he may not vote or participate in executive sessions. Mr. Phanor asked how to interject questions he may have during the meeting. Mr. Lineaweaver indicated that the board respects each other's time and comments, and Mr. Phanor was welcome to interject at any time that seems appropriate.

Mr. Tucci joined the meeting via Zoom at 7:28 p.m.

Motion to accept the Council President's report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

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

a. **Bill of Sale for Narrow Fabrics Subdivision Streets, Facilities and Equipment** – Mr.

Murray requested consideration to execute a Bill of Sale to finalize the dedication of streets within the Belovich development.

Motion to execute a Bill of Sale with American Developers & Investors, LLC for the facilities and equipment located on Elm Street and Cashmere Way – North Portion constructed to serve the Narrow Fabrics Subdivision and intended to be dedicated to the Borough. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

b. **Parking Lot Management Agreement** – Mr. Murray requested consideration to authorize the solicitor to revise the paid parking lot management agreement. Following a meeting with the property owner a few aspects of the agreement are to be revised.

Motion to authorize the Borough Solicitor to revise the paid Parking Lot Management Agreement with Back 9 Realty, LLC. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

It was noted that Mr. Murray has not received an event form for the proposed October 28, 2023 S'mores event along Penn Avenue and Mayor Kaag has not received a request for road closure.

Motion to accept the Borough Manager's report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 5-0.**

11. **MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Kaag provided the following verbal report:

- Mayor Kaag announced Mr. Murray's official two-year anniversary as Borough Manager was on September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- On October 6<sup>th</sup> she attended an event committee meeting.
- On October 8<sup>th</sup> she attended the Environmental Advisory Council's Free Market.
- On October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, she, Mr. Kaag, and Mr. Gardner cleaned the memorial area and updated the flags. Mr. Gardner is seeking a veteran community-oriented entity to assist the Recreation Commission in establishing and performing regular cleanings and updates to the memorial.

Motion to accept the Mayor's report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

12. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. **Police Department** – Chief Tornielli referred to his report and offered to answer any questions. There were no questions or comments.

Motion to accept the Police Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Public Works Department** - Mr. Grassley referred to his report and offered to answer any questions. He noted that the catch basins and storm lines have been installed near the firehouse and proposed memorial garden and the sidewalks are scheduled to be installed next week. He met with a representative of New Castle Lawn and Landscape today to inform them that they may take control of the area as of Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup> to create a memorial garden for the R.M. Palmer incident.

Mr. Grassley also shared that a new more secure window area has been created for the code department. And twenty-two trees have been ordered and will be planted next week.

Motion to accept the Public Works Department report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- c. **Fire Department** – Chief Moyer referred to his written report noting that we still have an engine for sale without bid submissions. There were no questions or comments.

Motion to accept the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Shaver and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- d. **Code Department** – Mr. Moyer referred to his written report and shared the addition of information from The Compliance Engine that is in its infancy stage. As more inspections are performed the overall picture of compliance will become clearer.

Motion to accept the Code Department report. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- e. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation** – In Mr. Ratcliffe's absence Mr. Lineaweaver provided an overview of his report noting the successful Fall Fest event with the most vendors to-date. The Fete en Blanc event held on October 7<sup>th</sup> was a good start to what they hope to be an annual tradition. They are still working on the lighting and gateway grants with plans to implement the gateway project in the spring of next year. Mr. Ratcliffe is applying for the Local Share Account grant that is due this November.

Motion to accept the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

### 13. COMMITTEE / COMMISSION REPORTS:

- a. **Equity Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce** – Mrs. Bressler had nothing new to report at this time.
- b. **Recreation Commission** – Mr. Esterly referred to his written report and noted the haunted house opened last weekend. This coming weekend at the pavilion there will be tickets available for hayrides and the haunted house.

Mr. Esterly requested consideration to approve a partial closure of Delaney Circle for the Tree Lighting Ceremony on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mr. Lineaweaver noted that road closures no longer need to be presented to Borough Council for approval, these requests should be directed to the Mayor.

Ms. Drobnick noted recent discussions to plan a calendar of events for 2024 and the upcoming Dia de Los Muertos Pet Parade that will be hosted on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> along Penn Avenue.

Mr. Lineaweaver congratulated Mr. Esterly on his one-year anniversary as Recreation Director.

Mrs. Lineaweaver joined the meeting via Zoom at 7:41 p.m.

Motion to accept the Recreation Commission report. **Moved** by Mrs. Bressler and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- c. **Planning Commission** – In Mr. Wert’s absence Mr. Lineaweaver shared the Commission’s continued discussions on form-based codes to establish policies for zoning districts, site frontages and signage.

Motion to accept the Planning Commission report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mrs. Bressler. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- d. **Economic Development Committee** – The October Economic Development Committee October meeting was cancelled.
- e. **Environmental Advisory Council** – The September Environmental Advisory Council meeting was cancelled.
- f. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committee** – In Mr. Lincoln’s absence Chief Tornielli recapped discussions to designate a single location to affix a parking permit on a motorcycle with or without a cover. Mr. Lineaweaver noted traffic checks at Sixth and Reading Avenues regarding illegal parking to pick up takeout food and recommendations that were made by Chief Tornielli to improve safety in this area. Also, a Back-to-School Aggressive Driving Pedestrian Safety Detail was performed at the Fourth and Penn Avenue school crossing intersection.

Motion to accept the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- g. **Shade Tree Commission** – Mr. Kaag noted the usual review of tree removal, planting, and trimming as well as trees that are on a watchlist. The larger trees along Sunset and Sycamore Roads were discussed with plans to trim them soon. Mr. Grassley shared plans to plant twenty-two trees on Ann Street, the 600 block of Spruce Street, the 200 block of Franklin Street and to fill in missing areas. Mr. Kaag noted the welcome addition to the Commission of Michael Hayes who is an arborist by trade and plans to comprehensively plan maintenance of Borough trees in the future.

Motion to accept the Shade Tree Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Shaver and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- h. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray noted the lack of a report this month due to the annual refresher training that was scheduled today. Absent members of this committee will attend an online course.

Motion to accept the verbal Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Shaver and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

**14. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Financial Statement Ending 9/30/2023** – There were no questions or comments.
- b. **Payment Approval Report 9/20/23 to 10/13/23 and 10/14/23 to 10/17/23** – There were no questions or comments.

Motion to approve the financial statement ending 9/30/2023, and Payment Approval Reports of 9/20/23 to 10/13/23 and 10/14/23 to 10/17/23. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

**15. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ms. Shenk noted the recent improvements to her front business façade and the discussions with Derck & Edson to update the business district codes which are needed. She made one suggestion to Borough Council that pertained to the sign portion of the fee schedule, and that was to retain the existing \$100 fee for the initial sign permit application but to reduce subsequent simultaneously submitted sign permit application fees to \$50 each.

Mr. Tucci referred to his monthly report and shared that he submitted the R.M. Palmer incident for the Spirit of Courage Award through the Lehigh Valley Burn Foundation. Undenounced to Western Berks Ambulance the event was held last evening. The first responders to the R.M. Palmer incident were listed in their program and he plans to provide copies of the program to the Borough.

- 16. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Shaver and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary