

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING**

**February 27, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.**

West Reading Borough Council held its second monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 with the following persons present: Council President Ryan Lineaweaver; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Pro-Tem Patrick Kaag; Council Members Zachary Shaver, Denise Drobnick, Bethany Bower, and Zanna Leiendecker; Mayor Samantha Kaag; Borough Manager Dean Murray; Chief of Police Richard Tornielli; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

**VISITORS:** James Rogers, Resident Suzanne Thompson, Resident  
Richard Sichler, Resident

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. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Mr. Lineaweaver noted an executive session that was held at 6:30 p.m. this evening to discuss personnel matters pertaining to Public Works, Parking Enforcement, Interim Borough Manager, and the Police Officers Collective Bargaining Agreement.
3. **AGENDA AMENDMENTS:** There were no amendments to the agenda.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Rogers noted last week's appointments to the Finance Committee provides a quorum allowing this committee to meet for the first time since June of 2019. He plans to attend these meetings to share details on his research into Business Privilege Taxes to make committee members aware of account standings.

Mr. Rogers spoke of resident attendance to the last Traffic and Infrastructure Committee meeting to their share thoughts on a recent parking restriction implemented on Plane Alley. One resident provided an illustration of the 20' wide alley noting the average width of 8' for a commercial vehicle and a recommendation to allow parking along one side. Mr. Rogers recommended painting a white line 8' from the edge of the property with stall lines for enforcement purposes to create 10 – 14 greatly needed parking spaces. It was recommended to share this feedback with the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee.

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

Mr. Lineaweaver referred to an Alvernia University Preferred Partner Agreement that would provide a 20% discount on all eligible graduate and adult undergraduate programs in person and online. The discount is available to West Reading Borough officials including committee members, staff, verified volunteers, business owners and their employees.

Motion to enter into an agreement with Alvernia University to provide discounted tuition for borough staff, borough officials, business owners and their respective employees. **Moved** by Ms. Leiendecker and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 7-0.**

6. **POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT:**

- a. **Collective Bargaining Agreement** – Chief Tornielli proposed amending the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with regards to wage increases to provide credit for prior law enforcement in an attempt to recruit more experienced Police Officer applicants with Act 120

Certifications. With this amendment two Police Officers would be moved to a higher tier of the pay schedule. It was noted that the increase would affect starting salaries only.

Motion to approve a memorandum of understanding amending the wage increase section of the Police Officers Collective Bargaining Agreement. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **Parking Enforcement Officer Position** – Mr. Lineaweaver noted termination of a previous Parking Enforcement Officer last November and the decision to wait to fill this position until the busy season.

Motion to advertise the position of full-time Parking Enforcement Officer. **Moved** by Ms. Bower and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- c. **Firearms Purchase** – Chief Tornielli shared 2024 budgeted Capital Expense plans to replace thirteen-year-old rifles. Firearm instructors researched and recommended a rifle platform Colt model to replace the current rifles based on performance reliability and the ability to maintain and service. This model is compatible with the rack systems that are currently installed in patrol vehicles. Four local distributors were requested to provide quotes, three of which were unable to provide due to lack of availability. A single quote was received from Witmer Public Safety Group located in Coatesville with a \$4,000 credit to trade in the currently owned rifles after the officers have been trained and qualified on the new rifles. The total quoted cost of \$19,454 is below the budgeted total project amount of \$38,000.

Motion to approve the purchase of budgeted firearms. **Moved** by Ms. Leiendecker and seconded by Mr. Shaver. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- d. **Firearm Accessories Purchase** – Chief Tornielli noted that firearms are sold separately from accessories primarily because they cannot be listed together on Costars. A quote was received from Witmer Public Safety Group, a Costars vendor, at a price lower than Costars' pricing. The quoted accessories totaling \$14,080.95 are optics, rail mounts, buttstocks, and rifle cases.

Motion to approve the purchase of budgeted firearm accessories. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 7-0.**

## 7. **BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Interim Borough Manager** – Mr. Murray requested consideration to hire Richard Sichler as the Interim Borough Manager from April through June to assist until a new manager is hired. Mr. Sichler introduced himself to the Borough Council, noting that he moved into the borough in 1990, raised four children and a dog, and is happy to help during this transition.

Motion to hire Richard Sichler as the Interim Borough Manager. **Moved** by Ms. Leiendecker and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **Borough Manager Position** – Mr. Murray requested authorization to advertise the position of Borough Manager. Mr. Lineaweaver noted approval to hire the Center for Excellence in Local Government (CELG) last week to assist in the hiring process, this would approve the advertisement that will be handled by the CELG.

Motion to authorize advertisement for the Borough Manager position. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Leiendecker. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- c. **Letter of Resignation** – Mr. Murray requested consideration of accepting a letter of resignation from an Associate Member of the Environmental Advisory Council. Mr. Kaag noted work obligations that interfere with Ms. Matthews' attendance.

Motion to accept a letter of resignation from Christine Matthews as an Associate Member of the Environmental Advisory Council. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 7-0.**

8. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Shaver and seconded by Ms. Leiendecker. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary