

## BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

**September 19, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.**

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Wednesday, September 19, 2017 with the following persons present: Council Vice President Nathalie Kulesa, Council Members Christopher C. Lincoln, Philip Wert, Grace M. Craze, Suzanne Thompson, Nicholas Imbesi, Solicitor Charles Haws, Police Chief Stephen D. Powell, Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler, Public Works Director Dean Murray, Recreation Director Helen Moyer, Engineer Tom Unger, Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe, Fire Chief Mark Burkholder, Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr., Borough Manager Cathy L. Hoffman and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Council President Carl Garman was unable to attend.

<b>VISITORS:</b>	Karen Livingood	Resident
	James T. Rogers	Resident
	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Amber Rambo	Resident
	Andrew Kearney	Resident
	Jeffrey Reiff	Resident/Business Owner
	Tina Shenk	Property/Business Owner
	Marina Gehman	Property Owner
	Robin Dautrich	Wyomissing Resident
	Lucinda Butler	Wyomissing Resident
	Dawn Walls	Wyomissing Resident
	Reading Eagle Reporter	

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council Vice President Nathalie Kulesa called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

Mrs. Kulesa stated that a liquor license hearing had been held at 6:00 p.m. which was followed by an executive session to discuss litigation. There was no action needed at this time.

2. **AMERICAN DEVELOPERS & INVESTORS, LLC:**

Mr. Haws reported Attorney Salvatore Folino informed him prior to the meeting that American Developers & Investors, LLC as part of the Agreement of Sale intends to provide a letter of credit in the amount of \$58,341.88 to be posted as security for the remaining public improvements that have not yet been completed in the Narrow Fabrics Housing Development.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ms. Rambo noted her frustration with the expanding population of feral cats within the neighborhood and the public safety issues this creates. Ms. Rambo also suggested verbal complaints be allowed through the Code Enforcement Department for older residents who do not have access to computers in order to expedite reaction time to their complaints.

Mr. Rogers inquired as to censorship of an article for the upcoming Fall Courier. Mr. Wert explained the lengthy discussion at the previous Council meeting on campaign type content prior to an election and Council's unanimous decision to remove these articles from the Courier to avoid the need to censor article content in the future. Mr. Rogers also expressed frustration on a notice of violation he received for a political sign that was posted upon his property. Mr. Wert noted ordinance regulations prohibits the posting of political signage more than 60 days prior to an election.

Mrs. Livingood inquired as to enforcement of illegal parking at Sycamore Road and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and requested this area be patrolled during evening field practices. Chief Powell stated tickets would be issued to the offender and will ensure patrol of the area during practice times. Chief Powell also requested reports of illegal parking to the Police Department while the car(s) are parked illegally.

Mrs. Dautrich expressed concern regarding picketers from the Allentown area who refer to themselves as “The Abolitionist” greeting Wyomissing Junior/Senior high school students exiting and entering buses at both the start of school and dismissal times for the past three weeks. Objectionable materials are being distributed as well as chanting “No Abortions” to these 7 – 12 year old students. Mrs. Dautrich requested the Borough enact an ordinance to create a buffer zone for future safety of the elementary school located within the Borough. Mr. Haws will provide a memo to Council as to their legal enforceable guidelines for consideration.

Mr. Herbert stated he witnessed distasteful facial expressions from a certain Council member during Ms. Thompson’s presentation of research to alternate parking study options during a previous Council meeting.

Mr. Rogers questioned a recent denial to his right-to-know request for 2018 budget documentation and noted that he had received copies in the past. Mrs. Hoffman stated currently there are no documents available. Mr. Haws stated there is no obligation to provide draft documentation, however Council may approve such a request.

Ms. Shenk requested Council members avoid quarreling during public meetings and noted that West Reading has a lot to be appreciative of and her desire to be part of a congenial community.

4. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the Council minutes of August 15, 2017 and August 29, 2017. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

5. **ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:**

**Resolution 2017-5 Increasing Police Officer’s Pension Contribution** – There were no comments.

Motion to approve Resolution 2017-5 increasing contributions to 5.5%. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. **Land Acquisition from RDC Realco, LLC:** Mr. Haws noted the two lot, tax-free transfer agreement is planned to close in the near future.
- b. **Parkview Road Bridge** – Mrs. Hoffman reported the County responded to her inquiry regarding length of time to utilize the Liquid Fuels Funds to demolish the bridge, the County is in acceptance with the 18 month time frame as requested. However, funds may not be used to create a new pedestrian bridge to connect trails through the parklands. Council decided to begin the bid process to demolish the bridge and will begin researching potential grants to construct a pedestrian bridge. Mr. Unger will research whether the existing renovation permit will cover demolition of the bridge.

Motion to prepare bid documents for the demolition of the Parkview Road Bridge. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

7. **CONSULTANTS’ REPORTS:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Haws had no additional report to give other than items found elsewhere on the agenda.

Ms. Thompson asked Mr. Haws as to explain various forms of binding contracts, which he provided.

Motion to approve the Solicitor's Report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Engineer/Code Enforcement Report** – Mr. Unger referred to his report and noted the following:
- The Sunset/Sycamore Road alley sewer and paving project is underway. The short block has been completed and is currently working on the long block. Progress has been slow due to site conditions.
  - The 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Sidewalk Enhancement Project has been completed. Payment Application No. 2 has been received and recommended Council's approval to remit payment. The balance of a 5% retainage in the amount of \$8,847.36 would be held for the amount of work completed to date and all punchlist work has been satisfactorily completed.

Motion to approve Application for Payment No. 2 to Bertolet Construction in the amount of \$97,450.03. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- The Vanity Fair Land Development Plan legal description and easements has been corrected and approved.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue alley paving project start date will coordinate with the completion of the Sunset/Sycamore Road project, which appears to be the second week of October.
- The Spruce Street Water project has been awarded and a preconstruction meeting was held on September 11, 2017. Construction is planned to commence next week.
- The Sunoco Station 20' x 60' addition requires four variances/special exceptions pertaining to building setbacks and expansion to the existing non-conforming structure and was reviewed and discussed with the Planning Commission. Mr. Wert noted the Planning Commission's unanimous decision to recommend that Council oppose the request due to the vague information provided and safety aspects as noted by Systems Design Engineering in their comment letter.

Motion to request Borough Solicitor attend the Zoning Hearing Board hearing scheduled on September 28, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion to approve the Engineer/Code Enforcement Report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Craze. **Motion carried 6-0.**

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

- a. **Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for Non-Uniform Employee Pension Plan** – Mrs. Hoffman noted the worksheet and calculation of \$42,610 obligation for 2018.

Motion to authorize minimum municipal obligation for non-uniform pension plans in the amount of \$42,610. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Craze. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **2018 Animal Rescue League (ARL) Agreement** – Mrs. Hoffman noted the annual agreement to contract with the ARL to remove domestic animals within the Borough. Mr. Wert asked for

more information as to the noted 41 animals removed from the Borough. Mrs. Hoffman will request a representative attend a Council meeting to discuss resident options for feral cat removal and future documentation of circumstances where animals were removed.

Motion to approve the Manager's Report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

9. **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Rodriguez provided a written report during the Council meeting and reviewed his attendance to various meetings/events. The Mayor's report also included his interaction with the Wyomissing School District regarding school crossing guards. Payment of the two invoices recently received from the school district totaling approximately \$55,000 will be held until the Mayor contacts the new Superintendent.

Mayor Rodriguez read a Commendation to proclaim September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

Motion to proclaim September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion to approve the Mayor's Report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

10. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

a. **Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report and noted the following:

- The full-time Parking Enforcement Officer has returned to duty relieving the part-time Parking Enforcement Officers of their duties.
- The new K-9 will be trained for patrol and narcotics similar to Canine Officer Fox, and a list of donors funding the amount of \$14,500 will be provided at next month's meeting.

Motion to approve the Police Department Report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to the written report and discussed the following:

- The 2013 Ford Taurus Interceptor auction ended with a bid of \$8,200.

Motion to accept the auction bid of \$8,200 for the 2013 Ford Taurus Interceptor. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- The street sweeper has been listed for auction today. Ms. Craze inquired as to the recent expenditure for this street sweeper, and Mr. Murray noted a mechanical part that was needed in order to render the sweeper operable to sell.
- Mr. Murray requested authorization to bid the sewer line camera project budgeted this year not to exceed \$50,000.

Motion to authorize sewer line camera bids not to exceed \$50,000. **Moved** by Ms. Craze seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion to approve the Public Works Department Report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Fire Department** – Chief Burkholder referred to the written report and noted the Fire Department Open House will be held on October 11, 2017.

Motion to approve the Fire Department Report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Craze. **Motion carried 6-0.**

d. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation**

- **Main Street** – Mr. Ratcliffe referred to his report and noted his suggestion to hold the Twilight Criterium Bicycle event during the month of August next year to avoid 3 weekends in a row of events in September. Mr. Ratcliffe also noted his discussions with the West Reading Shopping Center owner to find solutions to parking issues and they are currently awaiting the results of the recent parking study. Also, a scarecrow contest is being coordinated with the City of Reading's event.
- **Elm Street** – In Mr. Rohrbach's absence Ms. Thompson recapped the report and noted the number of volunteers from Morgan Corporation for their Paint the Town Event.

Motion to approve Main Street and Elm Street Manager's Reports. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

11. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to her written report and noted the following:

- Mrs. Moyer is currently working with the Reading Eagle on an article regarding the history of the Pavilion, which was built in 1939. A plaque was on display, which was donated anonymously of an article by Michelle Lynch of the Reading Eagle regarding the history of the pool.
- The Harvest Festival will be held on October 7, 2017, which includes a chili cook-off and tree give-away.
- Preparations have begun on the haunted house.
- Mrs. Moyer requested approval for the reappointment of Recreation Commission members Nathalie Kulesa, Melissa Hassler, Karen Livingood, Jennifer Witman and Kristin Hawley.
- Mrs. Moyer also requested Council to accept the resignation request of Jill Siggins.

Motion to approve reappointment of Recreation Commission members for a two-year term effective January 1, 2018. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Craze. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion to accept the resignation of Jill Siggins from the Recreation Commission. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion to approve the Recreation Director's Report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert referred to the minutes of September 6, 2017 and noted the ongoing zoning changes being discussed. One of the proposed changes would modify the zoning for townhouses and parcels located within the 300 and 100 blocks of Tulpehocken Avenue changing from Residential Professional (RP) to R2. The Mayor suggested allowing the parcels

within the 100 block of Tulpehocken Avenue from Mom Chaffee's to the circle to remain RP. The RP District permits an office in the residential dwelling.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission's Report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert referred to the minutes of September 11, 2017 with an updated list of foreclosed or vacant properties and asked everyone to alert the Committee regarding other properties that may not be included on this list.

Motion to approve the Economic Development Report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – Mr. Wert referred to the minutes of August 29, 2017 and noted a variety of smaller trees that are being ordered for the October 7, 2017 tree give-away.

Motion to approve the Environmental Advisory Council Report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- e. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committees** – Mr. Lincoln referred to the minutes of September 13, 2017 and noted there were no action items. Mr. Wert asked if the proposed intersection changes would be completed prior to the opening of the new loft apartments tentatively planned for next summer.

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Reports. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Craze. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** – Mr. Murray referred to the minutes of the September 12, 2017 meeting and noted that he has requested quotes for the removal/trimming of a number of trees in order to proceed and stay within the budget. The Mayor noted the owner of Bill's Transmission requested to speak with Mr. Murray regarding planting a screening/buffer along the front of the property line.

Motion to approve the Shade Tree Commission Report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- g. **Finance Committee** – Ms. Thompson referred to the minutes of the September 18, 2017 meeting that were provided this evening with a number of questions regarding payment approvals. Answers were provided to the following questions:

- Total communication expenses, phone versus cell phone: Phone \$2025 and cell phone \$1800.
- Reading Hospital \$25,000 contribution to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue sidewalk project has not yet been received.
- The Walker Parking Consultant contract has been executed.
- The Fire Department Debt Service expenditure pertained to the ladder truck.

Motion to approve the Finance Committee Report. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- h. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray referred to the minutes of the August 29, 2017 meeting. There were no questions.

Motion to approve the Safety Committee Report. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

12. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Revenues with Comparison to Budget** – Mrs. Rentschler referred to the report. There were no comments.

Motion to approve the Revenues with Comparison to Budget Report of 8/31/17. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Payment Approval Report 8/16/17 to 9/15/17 & 9/18/17 to 9/19/17** - Mrs. Rentschler referred to the reports. There were no comments.

Motion to approve the Payment Approval Reports of 8/16/17 to 9/15/17 & 9/18/17 to 9/19/17 except the school crossing guard invoices. **Moved** by Ms. Craze and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried 6-0.**

13. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Reiff inquired about the municipal parking lot located on Franklin Street possibly being converted to a four-hour parking limit and his understanding that this lot was created with fuel tax for business use. Mr. Reiff suggested in lieu of his auto mechanic business' use of this municipal lot that the 11' alley located adjacent to this lot be provided for his use. Mr. Lincoln requested Mr. Reiff attend the next Traffic and Infrastructure meeting being held on October 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss further.

Mr. Rogers commented on the right-to-know request copy of Systems Design Engineering's Code Enforcement contract being just a proposal since there are no signatures.

Ms. Rambo noted additional neighbor difficulties with feral cats, remaining water balloon signage in the area of Pine Street, trimming of vegetation within alley line of sight and removal of the Parkview Road Bridge creating increased traffic on Sunset Road.

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Ms. Craze. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Cynthia Madeira  
Assistant to the Manager