

## BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

**April 17, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.**

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, April 17, 2018 with the following persons present: Council President Nicholas Imbesi; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Christopher C. Lincoln, Suzanne Thompson, Nicholas Gardecki, David Amato, Kirk Mullen; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Solicitor Charles Haws; Police Chief Stephen D. Powell; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Director Helen Moyer; Engineer Tom Unger; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe; Borough Manager Cathy L. Hoffman, and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira.

<b>VISITORS:</b>	Karen Livingood	Resident
	Ammon Heckler	Resident
	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Nathalie Kulesa	Resident
	Douglas Zeeger	Resident
	Ryan Lineaweaver	Resident
	Patrick Kaag	Resident
	Karin Long	Resident
	Maurice Brown	Resident
	Elisa Orquiza	Resident
	Cory Mays	Resident
	Lori Hoffman	Resident
	Mike Horman	Resident
	Kim Collins	Resident
	Maria Loun	Resident
	Robin Horman	Property/Business Owner
	Tina Shenk	Property/Business Owner
	Frank Cocuzza	Property/Business Owner
	Steve Woodward	Property/Business Owner
	Mark Woodward	Property/Business Owner
	Robert Metzger	Business Owner
	Chris Sterling	American Red Cross
	Val Lacis	Reading Eagle Reporter

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

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**  
Ammon Heckler noted parking tickets that were issued today and a car towed from the 400 block of Chestnut Street for street cleaning while the block was closed without notification from UGI to perform street repairs. Chief Powell stated parking tickets were not issued for street cleaning today since the street was not cleaned due to UGI repair work and noted if a car was towed it was probable that this was to allow street repairs to be completed. However, Chief Powell will investigate whether proper notification was provided to prohibit parking.

Mark Woodward requested permission to close the 000 block of South Sixth Avenue between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual French Fry Festival to be held on Saturday, August 11, 2018 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. as well as prevent parking within the five parking spaces

located between 600 and 614 Penn Avenue. Mr. Woodward provided Council members with a diagram of the proposed layout for the anticipated 12 to 15 vendors. Porta Potty's, trash removal, insurance certification and permitting fees would be handled by West Reading Tavern. Mrs. Hoffman stated a special event fire inspection would be performed to ensure public safety.

Motion to approve the closure of the 000 block of South Sixth Avenue on Saturday, August 11, 2018 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Mr. Woodward also requested Council to consider enacting an ordinance to prohibit pop-up liquor sales along Penn Avenue, which diminishes business from the existing liquor licensed establishments. Mr. Wert noted the non-profit West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation obtains a percentage of proceeds from pop-up vendors in an effort to recoup expenses related to hosting large events on Penn Avenue.

Maurice Brown expressed a desire from members of the community to create a West Reading Swim Team with minimal commitment or cost to the Borough. Parents are willing to obtain lifeguard certifications and schedule practice times around current swim lesson time frames. Mr. Imbesi requested Mr. Brown arrange a meeting with the Borough Manager and Recreation Director to discuss acceptable elements, which would include meeting state guidelines/requirements, to host a swim team at the Borough pool.

Karen Livingood expressed her concerns regarding the allowance of alcohol within park areas prior to Council's adoption of Ordinance 1087 Special Event/Public Gathering. Mrs. Hoffman stated the Special Event Ordinance pertains primarily to the Penn Avenue area and does not include the park system. However, an amendment to the ordinance pertaining to rules and regulations of the park and recreation area is being considered to allow consumption of alcohol during a controlled event approved by Council. Mr. Wert noted this amendment is being considered to provide an adult oriented recreation event by allowing a series of pop-up concerts in the park area. Mrs. Livingood requested members of the community located adjacent to parklands be surveyed due to her concerns surrounding noise, parking, etc. Mr. Imbesi offered to join Mrs. Livingood in visiting the properties adjacent to parklands to attain resident feedback.

Motion to table amendment to the Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations Ordinance. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Frank Cocuzza requested ending the Fall Festival Event at 7:00 p.m. to deter inebriated conduct issues that have resulted in the past between the hours of 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Maria Loun noted her efforts to treat a cockroach issue at her home located within the 400 block of Chestnut Street. The exterminator recommended treatment to neighboring homes, which Ms. Loun noted were rental properties. Mrs. Hoffman will discuss pest infestation enforcement options with the Code Enforcement Department and contact Ms. Loun.

3. **AMERICAN RED CROSS:**

Mr. Sterling reported the American Red Cross is planning a smoke detector installation event within the Borough on Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Volunteers would go door-to-door to educate residents and offer installation of 10-year lifespan smoke detectors at no charge. Pre-cavassing of the area would take place a few days prior to this date to announce the event via door

hangers and lawn signage. Mr. Imbesi requested volunteers obtain a no fee solicitation permit to register the activity with the Code Enforcement and Police Departments. Mr. Wert suggested waiving prohibition of signage within planting strip areas for this event.

Motion to waive prohibition of signage within the planting strip area for the American Red Cross smoke detector installation event. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

**DEPARTMENT REPORT:**

Mr. Imbesi noted an alternate commitment for the Police Chief and moved his report up on the agenda.

**Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report.

Mr. Imbesi inquired as to the status of drug activity within the Borough. Chief Powell stated the numbers remain steady and the information can be updated within the report next month.

Motion to approve the Police Department report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Chief Powell departed the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

4. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Mr. Imbesi requested correction of the March 20, 2018 minutes on page four to correct the spelling of Mark Rossi to Mark Rozzi and correct the spelling of Judy Schwenk to Judy Schwank.

Motion to approve the March 20, 2018 Council minutes with noted revision and the March 27, 2018 Council Workshop minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 7-0.**

5. **ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:**

- **Resolution 2018-5 Procedure for Destruction of Public Meeting Audio Tape** – Mr. Imbesi noted Mrs. Madeira's attendance to a training seminar where it was recommended to adopt a Resolution establishing procedures for destruction of public meeting audio tape recordings. Motion to adopt Resolution 2018-5 Procedure for Destruction of Public Meeting Audio Tape. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**
- **Ordinance 1082 Notice of Adoption of Code**
- **Ordinance 1086 Permit Parking and Handicapped Space Amendments**
- **Ordinance 1087 Special Event/Public Gathering**

Motion to adopt Ordinance 1082 Notice of Adoption of Code, Ordinance 1086 Permit Parking and Handicapped Space Amendments and Ordinance 1087 Special Event/Public Gathering. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 7-0.**

6. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Haws referred to the written report provided to Council this evening and noted a land acquisition item to be discussed during executive session.

Motion to approve the Solicitor's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

b. **Engineer/Code Enforcement Report** – Mr. Unger referred to his report and noted the following:

- **Parkview Road Bridge** – The existing sloped wall and bridge abutments will remain to control erosion and provide support for the proposed pedestrian bridge. Curbing and green space would be installed across the abutment as well as installation of the existing aluminum railings as a barrier. Plans and specifications are being prepared in anticipation of receipt of a DEP demolition permit, which is required prior to proceeding.
- **Chestnut Street Sidewalk Enhancement** – Final plan specifications are being prepared while awaiting submission of resident easement agreements to place the project out for bidding.
- **Seventh Avenue & Walnut Street Intersection** – Awaiting scope of work to be performed by the Public Works Department to determine if project cost will remain below the bidding threshold.
- **Sewer Line Cleaning & Televising** – A report of the televised collection system findings were shared with Council along with a three-year recommended project phasing, which indicated the 12" interceptor along Linden Lane would be the highest priority for 2019 and the 66 laterals to be replaced along Sycamore Road in 2020. Mr. Murray stated the Public Works Department will be making noted repairs to the collection system tomorrow at the intersection of Sycamore and Parkview Road.
- **Code Enforcement Department** – A number of letters were mailed during the month of March to address ongoing trash violations.

Motion to approve the Engineer/Code Enforcement report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

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

- a. **Soap Box Derby Event** – Mrs. Hoffman noted alternate dates provided by Mr. King for this event are Sunday, August 19<sup>th</sup> or Sunday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Council agreed the September 23<sup>rd</sup> date was preferable to avoid lack of attendance due to school activities and cooler weather conditions.

Motion to approve the Soap Box Derby Event to be held on Sunday, September 23, 2018. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **CELG Municipal Officials Breakfast** – Mrs. Hoffman requested notification from Council members should they wish to attend this breakfast presentation on April 27<sup>th</sup> at the Strausstown Volunteer Fire Company.
- c. **Agency Open Records Officer** – Mrs. Hoffman requested appointment of Cynthia Madeira as an alternate Open Records Officer.

Motion to appoint Mrs. Madeira as an alternate Open Records Officer. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 7-0.**

8. **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Kearney stated he had nothing new to report.

Motion to approve the Mayor's report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

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

Mr. Imbesi noted a potential mistake being made during budget season last year regarding a decision to eliminate free pool memberships for employee family members. Mr. Imbesi requested new Council members reconsider removal of this benefit primarily for the Volunteer Fire Department family members. Council agreed to reinstate pool membership benefits.

Motion to reinstate free pool membership benefits for employee family members. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Chief Burkholder requested Council to define a formula in which to determine a volunteer fire fighter pool membership qualification. Chief Burkholder noted this is used as a recruitment tool to encourage fire call attendance. Council allowed the Fire Chief to determine qualification and authorize the registration forms and send them directly to the Borough Hall Staff as opposed to pool staff.

Mr. Imbesi alerted Council members to a potential anti-discrimination ordinance that may be on the table next month.

Motion to approve the Council President's report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

10. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

a. **Police Department** – See report above.

b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to the written report provided to Council this evening and noted community service individuals will be assisting with trash collection along the 200 block of Penn Avenue and Buttonwood Street.

Motion to approve the Public Works Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 7-0.**

c. **Fire Department** – Chief Burkholder referred to his written report and noted information pertaining to the cause of the fire within the 600 block of Penn Avenue is included. Also, the ladder truck is currently out for service for approximately one-week. Chief Burkholder inquired with the Public Works Department as to flow testing progress. Mr. Murray stated 10% have been completed and is currently awaiting response from an ISO representative to proceed.

Motion to approve the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

d. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation**

**Main Street** - Mr. Ratcliffe reported an interest among six different private parking lot owners around the Borough to potentially establish lease agreements to utilize their parking spaces. Further discussions are needed regarding lease agreements, marketing, signage, kiosk, mobile apps, etc. Mr. Ratcliffe noted the parking study's indication that after 5:00 p.m. and weekends were the most perceived time frames that parking is unavailable. The average cost to park upon these lots would be one-dollar per hour.

Ms. Thompson expressed concern regarding the cost to implement these agreements and charging visitors to park. Mr. Imbesi noted the issuance of parking tickets would defray the costs associated with implementing these agreements as well as provide an immediate solution

to parking issues along Penn Avenue. Ms. Thompson also noted the swiftness of advancement in plans since the parking study was only released a few weeks ago. Mr. Imbesi suggested that Ms. Thompson attend the public Traffic meetings held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. to participate in the in depth discussions.

In Dean Rorhbach's absence, Ms. Thompson noted the Earth Day Event being held this Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with a meeting place at the Community Garden.

Motion to approve Elm Street and Main Street Manager's report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 7-0.**

11. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to her written report and requested a motion from Council to approve the hiring of three lifeguards: Emily Rose Rouleau, Giovanni Estronza and Helen Lahmann-Metcrafe at \$8.25 per hour and a front desk clerk Keena Flowers at \$7.25 per hour.

Motion to approve hiring three lifeguards at \$8.25 per hour and one desk clerk at \$7.25 per hour. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Mrs. Moyer requested Council's decision to promote dates for community yard sale events, noting the only action by the Borough would be to advertise the events. Mr. Wert recommended the morning of Art on the Avenue and Fall Festival between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Motion to approve Community Yard Sale Event dates on Art on the Avenue and Fall Festival mornings from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Ms. Long suggested notifying Opportunity House of these dates to remove leftover, unwanted items.

Ms. Thompson reported Grace Craze obtained a replacement cooking stove for the Bicentennial House, which the Public Works Department has installed. Ms. Craze is currently looking for a replacement refrigerator.

Motion to approve the Recreation Director's report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert referred to the written report and noted Vanity Fair's request for relief from total allowable sign size on any one building façade. The Commission members agreed to provide a letter of support to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mr. Wert commended Jennifer Bressler for her dedication to attend all Joint Comprehensive Plan meetings this past year. The Joint Comprehensive Plan should be completed this summer.

The Commission briefly discussed a complaint received regarding burial of dogs in yard areas. Review of additional guidelines will be discussed next month. Mr. Imbesi suggested at minimum specifications for burial be established. Mr. Haws noted that currently there are no state laws/regulations prohibiting burial of anything, including people, in a back yard.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- c. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert referred to the written report and noted the ongoing review of foreclosed/blighted properties. Additional committee members are needed and would welcome someone with a legal, financial or real estate background. Mr. Wert also recommended review of a detailed case study regarding West Reading at [www.eyeonmainstreet.com](http://www.eyeonmainstreet.com).

Motion to approve the Economic Development Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – Mr. Wert stated a quorum was unavailable, however the time was used as a workshop to discuss coordination of efforts for the Earth Day Event being held on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mr. Wert reported three letters of interest were received to expand membership of the board and requested Council's approval to appoint.

Motion to appoint Karin Long, Ryan Lineaweaver and Patrick Kaag to the Environmental Advisory Council. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Motion to approve the Environmental Advisory Council report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- e. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committees** – Mr. Lincoln referred to the written reports and stated all of the items have been previously discussed this evening. A joint meeting has been scheduled with the Economic Development Committee, West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation, Planning Commission and Traffic Committee on Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the Fire House to discuss potential solutions to parking issues.

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee reports. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** – Mrs. Hoffman stated the meeting was cancelled due to the lack of a quorum. Mr. Wert suggested updating the ordinance to increase membership.

- g. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray referred to the Safety Committee minutes. There were no comments.

Motion to approve the Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- h. **Finance Committee** – Mr. Imbesi stated the meeting was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts with key members and invitees.

12. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Financial Statement** – Mrs. Rentschler referred to the statement for 3 months ending 3/31/2018, there were no comments.

Motion to approve the Financial Statement report ending 3/31/18. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 7-0.**

- b. **Payment Approval Report 3/21/18 to 4/13/18 & 4/14/18 to 4/17/18** – There were no comments.

Motion to approve Payment Approval reports of 3/21/18 to 4/13/18 & 4/14/18 to 4/17/18.

**Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 7-0.**

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to an executive session at 10:02 p.m. to discuss land acquisition. When Council reconvened at 10:35 p.m. there were no actions needed regarding land acquisition. Mr. Imbesi noted a request from the Recreation Commission to remove Ms. Thompson as a member of the Recreation Commission. There was no further discussion and a motion was made to approve the removal of Ms. Thompson from the Recreation Commission. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **In favor of the motion** – Mr. Wert, Mr. Mullen, Mr. Gardecki, Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Amato and Mr. Imbesi. **Against the motion** – Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-1.**

14. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Brown reported he was glad he came to the meeting tonight and pleased that Council decided to close the diving well for the safety of children. Mr. Brown also appreciated the full transparency that Council has demonstrated and understands a Right-to-Know request is required for anything that is not available on the website. Mr. Brown suggested photos of the void discovered behind the wall of the diving well be shared with the public, Council agreed.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman  
Borough Manager