

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

June 19, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, June 19, 2018 with the following persons present: Council President Nicholas Imbesi; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Christopher Lincoln, Nicholas Gardecki, Kirk Mullen; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Solicitor Keith Mooney; Police Chief Stephen Powell; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Director Helen Moyer; Engineer Craig Momose; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe; Elm Street Manager Dean Rohrbach; Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman, and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Council Members David Amato and Suzanne Thompson were unable to attend the meeting.

| | | |
|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| VISITORS: | Karen Livingood | Resident |
| | Oswald Herbert | Resident |
| | Douglas Zeeger | Resident |
| | Christina Shenk | Property/Business Owner |
| | Christopher Herr | Maillie |
| | Anthony Tucci | Western Berks Ambulance |
| | 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. **MAILLIE AUDIT DISCUSSION:**

Christopher Herr provided an overview of the Department of Community and Economic Development audited financial statement for year ending December 31, 2017. Mr. Herr noted general revenues had increased in comparison to 2016 due to an increase in the tax millage, permitting of larger construction projects, receipt of a recycling grant and K-9 and playground program donations. Charges for services were lower during 2017 even with a rate increase for sewer and water due to a 10% reduction in use by the hospital. Expenses had increased during 2017 with regards to general government due to a full year in wages for a Borough Manager and expenses associated with Imageze for support of the technology infrastructure. Public safety expenses had decreased indicating good cost control for the Police Department. Public Works sanitation, streets and water expenses were higher due to the purchase of a street sweeper, multiple paving projects, and sewer line and water main replacement projects. Overall income or debt loss expenses increased due to capital projects relating to paving and the decrease in water and sewer revenue.

Andrew Kearney requested the auditor's suggestions for budgeting modifications. Mr. Herr stated the general fund should not run a deficit for multiple years and to monitor the water and sewer usage.

Motion to approve the Maillie DCED audited financial statement for year ending 2017. **Moved by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Wert. Motion carried 5-0.**

3. **WESTERN BERKS AMBULANCE:**

Anthony Tucci provided an overview of their report for May and noted that 274 calls were received resulting in the transport of 234 individuals. Also, the administration of Narcan is down in West Reading. Mr. Tucci noted that Western Berks Ambulance had received the Heart Safe Mission Lifeline Gold Award again for outstanding heart attack care. A Federal 5310 grant was received to

purchase two wheel chair vans and they are in the process of receiving \$166,000 for personnel protective equipment. Mr. Tucci requested everyone to reach out to Representatives and Senators of the state to request approval of Senate Bill 1003 and House Bill 699. Senate Bill 1003 would allow EMS to bill insurance companies for treatment without transport and House Bill 699 would increase Medicaid rates, which have not increased since 2004.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

5. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the May 16, 2018 Council minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

6. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. Resolution 2018-7 – Fixing Charges for Industrial Wastes. Mr. Lincoln noted the change would be a rate reduction.
- b. Ordinance 1088 – Shade Tree Commission Membership. Mr. Wert requested the addition of (5) behind the word five in Section 103-2 Membership and authority of Shade Tree Commission.
- c. Ordinance 1068 – Enabling Traffic and Infrastructure Committee. Mr. Wert requested the addition of (1) behind the word one in Section 51-2 C. Membership.
- d. Ordinance 1089 – Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations Amendment
- e. Ordinance 1090 – Street Opening Amendment

Motion to approve Resolution 2018-7 Fixing charges for industrial wastes. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to approve Ordinances 1088, 1068, 1089 and 1090 with noted revisions. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Mr. Imbesi noted there was no further information received from UGI to install a gas line through the park system. UGI is awaiting approval from DEP to bore under the creek. No action is needed at this time.

8. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Mooney referred to the written report and stated there were no action items. He noted the following activity:
 - Review and revisions to a Memorandum of Understanding with the hospital to install a temporary MRI facility;
 - Drafting of a paving agreement setting responsibilities for the proposed Parkside Drive North paving project to be completed by the Reading Hospital;
 - Review and revision to the Berks EIT business privilege tax collection agreement ensuring changes would not invalidate the tax.

Motion to approve the Solicitor's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Engineer/Code Enforcement Report** – Craig Momose referred to the written report and noted the following:
- **Parkview Road Bridge** – To date only one contractor has requested the bid specifications to demolish the bridge. The advertisement has been forwarded to other bridge contractors to encourage more bidding. Mr. Mooney noted a contract may be awarded to only one bidder, however if no bids are received the project would need to be advertised again.
 - **Chestnut Street Sidewalk Enhancement** – Two bids were received with the lowest bidder being Bertolet Construction who replaced the sidewalks along South Sixth Avenue last year. Mr. Momose recommended awarding the contract to Bertolet Construction.

Mr. Lincoln asked if UGI had been notified of the project area to avoid damaging new sidewalk as was done along Sixth Avenue last year. Mr. Momose reported they have been notified.

Mr. Rohrbach noted approximately \$4,000 of grant money will be available after construction costs to compensate engineering fees. Mr. Rohrbach also noted the desire to complete the project prior to the start of school since the project area is located adjacent to the school playground.

Motion to accept the Chestnut Street Sidewalk Enhancement bids. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to award the Chestnut Street Sidewalk Enhancement contract, not to exceed \$83,907 to Bertolet Construction. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- **Fifth Avenue/Museum Road Paving** – Mr. Momose requested authorization to advertise to receive bids for this paving project in order to obtain information in time for the July Council meeting.

Motion to authorize advertisement of bids for the Fifth Avenue/Museum Road Paving project. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to approve the Engineer/Code Enforcement report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

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

Mrs. Hoffman noted during budget season last year it was decided to offer an electronic newsletter to save money. However, due to unforeseen issues in creating an electronic newsletter and recent sample newsletters that have been provided by Hometown Press, Mrs. Hoffman requested permission to allow Hometown Press to create and print newsletters at no cost to the Borough. The Borough would fund only the postage portion estimated to cost \$300 - \$400.

Mr. Lincoln inquired as to previous newsletter printing costs. Mrs. Hoffman reported the cost was approximately \$1500. Funding for the creation and printing by Hometown Press would be obtained through advertisements, which would be advantageous to merchants as well as the Borough.

Motion to authorize the Borough Manager to enter into a trial issue agreement with Hometown Press contingent on Council review of contract signage if required. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to approve the Borough Manager's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

9. **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Kearney congratulated Sergeant Joseph Brown for his accomplishment in completing training and graduating from Police Command Training administered by North Western University.

Mayor Kearney read a proclamation recognizing and commending Dr. Vincent Pellegrini for his contributions and dedication to women's healthcare and the community since 1978.

Motion to approve the Mayor's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

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

Mr. Imbesi noted an abbreviated non-discrimination ordinance that was provided to Council for review and comment and requested the Solicitor's approval in order to advertise.

Mr. Mooney expressed concern regarding enforcement due to this being a category that is not protected under state legislation. The Borough would need to investigate complaints and hear cases. Council members discussed the possibility of seeking a volunteer that may be qualified or contracting with a consultant. Mr. Mooney recommended a body other than Council perform the investigations and hear cases.

Mr. Imbesi stated that he would contact the similarly sized Borough of Ambler to discuss their adopted anti-discrimination ordinance and body of enforcement. Mr. Imbesi recommended contact be made with state and congressional representatives to request the addition of this policy in order to protect citizens from discrimination.

Motion to table the non-discrimination ordinance pending further revisions. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to approve the Council President's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

11. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

a. **Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report and noted personnel items for executive session and the following:

- Officers Holben and Marks have secured a grant for the K-9 program in the amount of \$70,000.
- Requested expediting a recent handicap parking space request for a resident located within the 300 block of Sycamore Road. Mrs. Hoffman noted recent handicap space removals in the vicinity, which have not yet been amended within the ordinance, which would only require the sign to be replaced. Chief Powell requested Council's approval of a handicap space contingent on the space currently being listed in the ordinance. Mr.

Mooney noted a 30-day experimental regulation that could be authorized by the Mayor allowing the required time for advertising should an ordinance change be necessary.

Motion to approve the handicapped space within the 300 block of Sycamore Road. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- One vehicle replacement was cut from the 2018 budget, however approval was given to approve the purchase of a vehicle mid-year should funds be available. Chief Powell noted \$28,000 in repairs made since 2009 to the 2009 Ford Explorer and requested approval to purchase a marked SUV. The 2009 Explorer would replace the current parking enforcement vehicle. Mr. Wert requested time to review funds available within the budget and Chief Powell would obtain a quote to discuss further during the next meeting.

Motion to approve the Police Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to his written report and noted an action item:

- Council approval was requested to hire a mechanic as discussed during 2018 budget meetings to perform preventative maintenance and repairs for the fleet of Public Works, Police and certain Fire Department vehicles. Mr. Murray has been tracking labor and part expenses during 2018 for each department to obtain additional information as to costs incurred for vehicle maintenance. Mr. Murray stated this individual would need to possess certifications and provide their own tools. This individual would also perform small engine repairs and assist crewmembers with duties as needed. The purchase or lease of a lift and emission-testing computer would be needed to perform vehicle state inspections.

Motion to approve the advertisement of a full-time mechanic position. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to approve the Public Works Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

c. **Fire Department** – Chief Burkholder stated he was called out of the meeting earlier for a fire call and referred to his written report. Chief Burkholder reminded everyone of the Red Cross smoke detector installation event being held this Saturday within the Linden Lane, Playground Drive and Sycamore and Sunset Road areas between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Door hangers will be provided to these residents to announce the event.

Motion to approve the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

d. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation**

Elm Street – Mr. Rohrbach stated a letter from the Borough Manager would be required to notify DCED of the Chestnut Street Sidewalk Enhancement project scope of services for the remaining grant monies. Also, a modification to the budget is needed to move funds from contingency to construction.

Motion to authorize the Borough Manager to submit a letter to DCED for the 400 block of Chestnut Street Sidewalk Enhancement project scope of services. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Rohrbach reported two Townie Awards were received, one for the Cherry Street Mural Corridor and the other for recognition as the most productive residential revitalization program within the state. Mr. Rohrbach noted DCED's recommendation to pursue a hybrid designation for the West Reading Elm/Main Street programs. More information will be available in the future, and stated a resolution would be required to submit the application.

Main Street - Mr. Ratcliffe thanked the Public Works and Police Departments for their assistance during the recent, most successful Art on the Avenue event. The 400 and 700 blocks of Penn Avenue were full of vendors and visitors alike. A reminder of the Criterion event to be held on August 4th and Cruisin' the Avenue on September 1st, Labor Day weekend. Mr. Ratcliffe also noted regular 2nd Friday events on the Avenue, monthly educational meetings that are being held with businesses in an effort to combat online retail giants and a meeting with the owner of the West Reading Shopping Center has been scheduled to discuss use of this parking lot.

Motion to approve West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

12. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to her written report and noted the following:
- Movie in the Park will take place this weekend with a classic car show. The movie will be Grease and the concession stand will be open to raise money for the playground program.
 - The 4th of July event will have a new band and vendors. A DJ and games will take place in the pool area from Noon to 6:00 p.m. and festivities moved to the field area with the band at 6:00 p.m.
 - Due to awaiting approval of an ordinance amendment, the concert in the park event scheduled in June has been cancelled. A new date will be selected in September.
 - Ninety-five children are registered in the playground program with approximately half of them attending the all-day program.

Motion to approve the Recreation Director report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert referred to the written report and noted the following:
- Land development plans were reviewed for the Sunoco station on Penn Avenue. Revisions to the plan are needed and will meet with the owner/developer at the July meeting.
 - The Joint Comprehensive Plan is almost complete; the last meeting will take place next week. A plan will be provided to all municipalities involved.
 - Minor revisions to the Zoning Ordinance were discussed.
 - Regulations pertaining to animal burial were discussed to allow the burial of animals up to 20 pounds at least three-feet below the surface of the ground with animals weighing less than five pounds being exempt from these regulations.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- c. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert referred to the written report and noted discussions to expand the committee. Committee members identified potential people within the community that would be good additions. Two property/business owners within the Borough, John Woodward and Benjamin LaManna, were open to being added to this committee and the board recommended adding these particular individuals to the committee.

Motion to appoint Mr. Woodward and Mr. LaManna to the Economic Development Committee. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Mullen inquired as to the railroad bridge painting. Mr. Wert reported a suggestion was made to have raised lettering with back lighting similar to the Ardmore bridge.

Motion to approve the Economic Development Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – Mr. Wert referred to the written report and noted the following:
- An energy audit is currently being performed with a report of recommendations to follow. The Berks County Community Foundation will reimburse the Borough for this expenditure.
 - An improvement has been seen in the placement of only recyclable materials within the bins now that labels have been applied. There were discussions regarding the potential benefits for the Borough to collect recyclable materials from apartment buildings and businesses.
 - There were discussions regarding the potential of Borough collected yard waste with a new trash collection contract in 2019. Mr. Murray noted PennDOT's requirement to remove combustible material from under the bridge area. They have been working with DEP for placement recommendations of combustible yard waste.
 - Sustainable community certification is being reviewed to potentially apply for later in the year.
 - Mr. Wert noted that he stepped down as the Chair of the Committee and requested Jenna Hiester to take over as Chair, she was more than happy to do so.

Motion to approve the Environmental Advisory Council report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- e. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committees** – Mr. Lincoln referred to the written reports and noted continuing discussion regarding parking along Penn Avenue with a fall time frame to begin implementation of private parking lot areas. The Reading Hospital has remediated the banner sign placement locations as requested.

Mr. Wert inquired as to the requirement of adding three catch basins for the Parkview Road Bridge demolition project as noted in the minutes. Mr. Lincoln stated that a correction to the minutes is needed and clarified that where the existing curb line with grass area located beyond this curbing would collect stormwater runoff from Parkview and Sycamore Roads, in order to

allow drainage beyond this curb line three depressed curb areas will be added to allow water to flow to the grass area. There have been discussions to potentially add a rain garden in this grassy area in the future with grant monies from the Wyomissing Creek Coalition to meet MS4 initiatives.

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee reports. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** – Mr. Murray referred to the written report and noted delivery of trees, which will be planted this week.

Motion to approve the Shade Tree Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- g. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray referred to the written report, there were no comments.

Motion to approve the Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- h. **Finance Committee** – Mr. Imbesi noted committee discussions regarding an investment policy with the intent to provide a copy for Council review next month. Mr. Murray attended the meeting to discuss the Public Works five-year plan. Department heads have been asked to begin preparation of 2019 budget information since the first budget meeting is scheduled on August 28th. Also, the financial consultant will be attending the next Finance Committee meeting.

Motion to approve the Finance Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

13. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Financial Statement** – Mr. Imbesi referred to the statement for 5 months ending 5/31/2018. Mr. Wert noted a significant increase to transient retailers licensing, which Mr. Imbesi noted was because of increased awareness that has been provided via the Voices of West Reading Facebook page.

Motion to approve the Financial Statement report ending 5/31/18. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Payment Approval Report 5/17/18 to 6/14/18 & 6/19/18** – There were no comments.

Motion to approve Payment Approval reports of 5/17/18 to 6/14/18 & 6/19/18. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mrs. Rentschler noted a new general ledger code has been added to the financial statement to track interest earned on the PLGIT Prime investment account.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's report. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to executive session at 9:05 p.m. to discuss personnel items. When Council reconvened at 9:34 p.m. Mr. Imbesi announced the following action items:

- Motion to approve the hiring of Karl Ponce as a part-time Parking Enforcement Officer at \$13.50 per hour with an increase following training to \$14.00 per hour. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 5-0.**
- Motion to approve the hiring of Brandon Morris as a part-time Police Officer at \$20.50 per hour. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**
- Motion to approve the hiring of Daniel Vale as a part-time Police Officer at \$19.50 per hour. **Moved** by Mr. Mullen and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

17. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

18. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Mullen. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman
Borough Manager