

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

October 17, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Wednesday, October 17, 2018 with the following persons present: Council President Nicholas Imbesi; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Christopher Lincoln, Suzanne Thompson, David Amato; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Solicitor Keith Mooney; Police Chief Stephen 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 Hoffman, and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira. Council Members Nicholas Gardecki and Kirk Mullen were unable to attend.

VISITORS:	Karen Livingood	Resident
	Carl Garman	Resident
	Elizabeth Heckler	Resident
	Ammon Heckler	Resident
	Ben Franco	Business Owner
	Tom Hubric	Animal Rescue League
	Troy Hatt	Spring Township Fire Code Official

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.

Mr. Imbesi requested a moment of silence in memory of Elm Street Manager, Dean Rohrbach who passed away on October 7, 2018.

2. **BARRER & WHITE ANNEXATION:**

Keith Mooney reported the recommended easement to convey stormwater from 311 Penn Avenue across 308 Reading Avenue has been completed.

Motion to grant final approval of the Barrer & White land annexation. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

3. **ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE:**

Executive Director of the Animal Rescue League (ARL), Tom Hubric provided an overview of the scope of services provided by the ARL and the cost to provide these services. Following a financial analysis of their organization it was found that in order to continue to offer their services to Berks County municipalities a fee increase would be necessary. Therefore, municipalities are being requested to submit a baseline annual fee of \$1500 and would then be responsible monthly for the services actually performed within each municipality, which would include: resident drop-off; stray animal care; animal control investigations; and pick-ups. Mr. Hubric suggested the following to curtail incurred expenses:

- Refrain from contacting the ARL during their non-business hours of 8:00pm to 8:30am.
- Refrain from requesting pickup of animals by delivering animals during business hours.
- Purchase a microchip scanner to potentially return the animal to the owner. The ARL can provide an incentive to residents to microchip their animals by offering a microchip clinic at a cost of \$12 per animal.
- The ARL can provide a low-cost spay/neuter clinic in an effort to control population.
- Pass an ordinance requiring micro-chipping and spaying/neutering of animals within the Borough.

The ARL would like to partner with municipalities to address systemic problems of animal neglect and homelessness by partnering to educate the public about the value and advantages of spaying and neutering and trap-neuter-return programs to reduce the number of animals in distress.

Should the Borough decide not to enter into a contract with the ARL calls requesting pickup of animals would not be responded to, investigations into animal cruelty would not be performed and residents delivering animals to the ARL would be charged a fee.

4. **FIRE CODE OFFICIAL:**

Troy Hatt noted the UCC Administration and Enforcement regulation that has been adopted for use throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania effective October 1, 2018 and recommended West Reading Borough adopt the 2015 International Fire Code. The Borough's current Fire Prevention Ordinance lists adoption of the 2009 International Fire Code and noted a few changes that would be required to section and chapter numbers in the adoption of the 2015 version. The section referring to operational permits was noted should Council choose to perform annual inspections of fuel dispensing equipment and carbon dioxide beverage dispensing systems throughout the Borough.

Mr. Hatt inquired as to the version of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) adopted by the Borough in an effort to facilitate enforcement of property maintenance deficiencies found during commercial fire safety inspections. Mr. Wert stated current regulations follow the 2006 version, however the Planning Commission has recommended adoption of the 2018 IPMC.

Mr. Hatt noted approval by the Township of Spring Supervisors to enter into an agreement to perform fire safety inspections within West Reading. The agreement is currently with the Solicitor and should be available for review in the near future.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Carl Garman spoke about the previously approved project to relocate the Veterans Memorial from Borough Hall to the flag pole area near the pool. He requested the memorial be dedicated to Dean Rohrbach for his service to our country as a veteran as well as his service to the residents of West Reading in his role as Elm Street Manager. Mr. Garman stated costs associated with this dedication would be paid by outside sources.

Motion to rename the Veterans' Memorial in honor of Dean Rohrbach. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Owner of Winedown Café, Ben Franco requested a list of items that would be inspected during the previously mentioned commercial fire safety inspections prior to the inspection in an effort to prepare. Mr. Hatt provided an overview of the inspection process and Mr. Imbesi stated information would be provided to businesses following Council's approval of an agreement for inspection services.

Mr. Franco expressed concern regarding recent customer complaints on the available parking due to an increased issuance of parking tickets, he is in favor of paid street parking at a fair price and suggested improvements to signage to ensure visitors are aware of parking regulations. Also, Mr. Franco requested Council to keep employee parking in mind as well as resident parking during future parking discussions.

6. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the September 19, 2018 regular meeting minutes and the September 25, 2018 and September 29, 2018 budget meeting minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

7. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Mooney referred to the written report provided this evening, and noted minor revisions to the business privilege tax ordinance amendment. The ordinance amendment requires advertisement on three different occasions with seven days between advertisements.

Motion to advertise the business privilege tax ordinance amendment. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Minor revisions were made to the term of the parking lot agreement as requested by the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee to allow revisions to the agreement following a two-month experimental period. Mr. Mooney recommended retaining the 0800 to 0300 time frame within the agreement, which pertains to signage and enforcement to match the ordinance. Chief Powell noted the lot would be cleared at 0300 by Police Officers, however parking enforcement staffing during the trial-period would end at 2200.

Mr. Mooney noted a meeting scheduled tomorrow with Borough representatives and Metropolitan Management to discuss issues raised by Metropolitan Management with the rental property ordinance regulations.

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

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

- **Parkview Road Bridge** – The project is approximately 95% complete, Payment Application No. 2 has been received from DESSCO Design and Construction and it is recommended to provide payment in the amount of \$76,393.38.

Motion to approve Payment Application No. 2 to DESSCO Design and Construction in the amount of \$76,393.38. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Phase two of this project would be to resolve the vacating of Parkview Road. Items such as impact, signage and coordination with the City of Reading will be discussed during the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee meeting.

Mr. Unger also noted an interest indicated by UGI to install a gas line on the proposed pedestrian bridge. Grant award notification for the pedestrian bridge application should be announced in December.

In conjunction with the Planning Commission Mr. Unger recommended adoption of the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code. An ordinance amendment would be required.

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

8. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to executive session at 8:08 p.m. to discuss personnel and contract items. Council reconvened at 8:46 p.m. Mr. Imbesi announced Council's discussion regarding a police officer's request for six days of family medical leave.

Motion to award six shifts of medical leave for a Police Officer. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

9. **RECREATION COMMISSION:**

Helen Moyer announced the addition of carnival games and food vendors to the hayride and haunted house events. Permission was requested to serve alcohol in the park area on Friday, October 26, 2018 to create a more adult oriented event. Reading Distillery would provide the beverages and donate 10% of their proceeds to the Recreation Department.

Motion to allow offsite vendor to serve alcohol in the park on Friday, October 26, 2018. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

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

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

The Berks County Armed Forces Advisory Committee has announced the 71st Berks County Armed Forces Day Parade scheduled on Saturday, May 18, 2019.

Motion to approve the parade date and waiver of fees for the 71st Armed Forces Day Parade on Saturday, May 18, 2019. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

General Code has provided an estimate to codify ordinances enacted during 2018 at an estimate of \$2940 to \$3600. Mrs. Hoffman reported this line item is currently over budget, however Council agreed it is necessary to perform the codification.

A Housing Review Board application has been created and the ordinance in place to hear appeals pertaining to the Rental Housing Ordinance was found to be sufficient. Mrs. Hoffman requested Council's approval of a \$100 fee to cover expenses associated with conducting a hearing.

Motion to approve the Housing Review Board Appeal Application. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to approve Resolution 2018-15 Fee Schedule amendment to include a \$100 Housing Review Board Appeal fee. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Council discussed the recent Special Event Application received pertaining to West Reading Tavern's Pumpkin Festival planned this weekend. Mrs. Hoffman noted there are no street closure requests, nor Borough services needed and noted waiver of event application fees for their 2017 event. Council agreed to waive the fee with a notation of any expense incurred by the Borough for this event would be passed onto the event coordinator.

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

11. **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Kearney announced his endeavor to raise funds to purchase a police car. Forty \$1000 donations are being requested to meet the goal of \$40,000. The tax-deductible donations would be made payable to the West Reading Community Revitalization. Mayor Kearney reported \$6,000 has been received to date and he intends to solicit donations from individuals as well as local organizations.

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

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

Mr. Imbesi reported the Borough Newsletter has been sent to the printer with a target date to deliver to residents by October 26, 2018.

Due to cancellation of the October 13, 2018 budget meeting to allow visitation at the memorial services of Dean Rohrbach, Mr. Imbesi requested to schedule a budget meeting on Tuesday, October 30, 2018 at 6:00pm. Council agreed and the new meeting date will be advertised. The Public Works budget will be reviewed during the Tuesday, October 23, 2018 budget meeting and the Recreation budget will be reviewed during the Tuesday, October 30, 2018 budget meeting.

In an effort to alleviate complaints received regarding the recent increase in parking enforcement days and times, an internal policy will be recognized to enforce a three-hour time limit for parking along Penn Avenue between the hours of 10am and 10pm. Mr. Imbesi requested feedback from businesses within a few weeks as to the effects of this change.

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

13. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. **Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report and noted a request for a handicapped parking space within the 300 block of South Third Avenue.

Motion to approve the addition of a handicapped parking space in front of 301 S. Third Avenue. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Wert noted the additional enforcement at the traffic circle, which has been helpful to motorists and pedestrians. Mr. Imbesi noted the additional enforcement at the eastern entrance to West Reading has been helpful to pedestrians.

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

- b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to his written report and noted that having the new mechanic position has allowed the two older police vehicles that have been sitting in the yard to be listed for sale. A list of Borough vehicles is currently being populated and a cost saving analysis will be provided next month.

Motion to grant permission to list the 2009 and 2011 Dodge Charger's for sale. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Wert noted Elm trees located on Elm Street that are covered with Spotted Lanternfly egg masses. Mr. Murray stated egg masses would be removed during the winter months.

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

- c. **Fire Department** – Chief Burkholder referred to the written report and noted submission of a grant application to purchase a six passenger, four-wheel drive ATV unit to replace the smaller two passenger, two-wheel drive unit, which has proved to be helpful during large Borough events and to access hard to reach areas within the Borough.

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

- d. **Elm Street and Main Street** – Mr. Ratcliffe referred to his written report and noted the upcoming scarecrow contest and trunk-or-treat events. The Run Santa Run event is being handled by Fleet Feet of West Reading with a late request to close one block of Penn Avenue on December 8, 2018.

Ms. Thompson noted cancellation of the Halloween party, however a Christmas party is being planned at the Bethany Lutheran Church in remembrance of Mr. Rohrbach.

Motion to approve the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation reports. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

14. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Please see minutes noted as item nine.
- b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert referred to the written report and noted further Zoning amendments are being made following the Commission's review of County comments. Mr. Wert requested an ordinance amendment be provided to Council in time for the October 23, 2018 budget meeting to adopt the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code. Commissioners also discussed establishment of a Historic Architectural Review Board and revisions to the solicitation ordinance.

A Conditional Use Hearing application has been received requesting a variance within the Light Industrial District. Council agreed to hold the hearing on Tuesday, November 20, 2018 at 6:30pm.

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

- c. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert stated the meeting was cancelled however he noted construction has begun and is quickly progressing within the lots with basements in the Villa's development.
- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – Mr. Wert referred to the written report and noted the recent mosquito spraying within the Borough by the Berks County Conservation District was a result of a wrong turn, not realizing the sprayer was still activated. The Conservation District stated they would

notify us in the future when there are plans to spray within the City of Reading and Borough of Wyomissing. Also, the committee is currently reviewing the energy audit of the Borough Hall building. Mr. Wert requested a copy of the audit be provided to Council members for review.

Motion to approve the Environmental Advisory Council report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- e. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committees** – Mr. Lincoln referred to the written report and noted attendance at the meeting by the owner of Ady Cakes. The property rented by this business does not have access to the rear alley posing difficulty to deliver wedding cakes. The Committee discussed various options and a recommendation was made for Council to approve the installation of a “Saturday only”, 10am to 3pm loading zone in the vicinity of the business.

Motion to approve the installation of a Saturday only, 10am to 3pm loading zone in the vicinity of Ady Cakes. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

An ordinance amendment would be required for the installation of a loading zone, however Mayor Kearney granted permission to install the signage as soon as possible.

Mr. Lincoln noted the Committees discussion on the perception of speeding along Sunset and Sycamore Roads and has made a recommendation to Council to approve the installation of double yellow lines along the full length of Sycamore Road from Museum Road to Linden Lane to slow traffic and provide the ability for the Police Department to pull over drivers that cross the double yellow line.

Motion to approve the installation of double yellow lines within the full length of Sycamore Road from Museum Road to Linden Lane. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** – Mr. Murray referred to the minutes of October 9, 2018 and there were no questions.

Motion to approve the Shade Tree Commission report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- g. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Murray referred to the minutes of September 25, 2018 and there were no questions.

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

- h. **Finance Committee** – Mr. Imbesi noted the lack of a quorum for this meeting, however available members discussed the following items:

- The recent announcements of a recycling grant being awarded to the Borough in the amount of \$141,722.

- Mrs. Rentschler provided an estimated impact of offering a real estate tax credit to the four active members of the Volunteer Fire Company and Fire Police who own property in the Borough. Due to the negligible anticipated loss of \$503 and the potential incentive to promote volunteerism, it was suggested to proceed with enactment of an ordinance adopting Act 172 to offer a real estate tax credit only. An ordinance will be created for review.
- The Joint Municipal Authority financial statement for 2016 and 2017 reviewed last month had not been accepted through Council vote.

Motion to accept receipt of the Joint Municipal Authority of Wyomissing Valley Financial Statement December 31, 2017 and 2016. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

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

15. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Financial Statement** – There were no comments on the financial statement ending September 30, 2018.

Motion to approve the Financial Statement report ending 9/30/18. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Payment Approval Report 9/20/18 to 10/11/18 & 10/12/18 to 10/17/18** – There were no comments.

Motion to approve Payment Approval reports of 9/20/18 to 10/11/18 & 10/12/18 to 10/17/18. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

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

16. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Franco offered assistance from the business community for future regulations surrounding the Central Business District. Mr. Imbesi suggested a business member to be in attendance of meetings to provide comments/suggestions.

17. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman
Borough Manager