

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL

January 15, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 with the following persons present: Council President Nicholas Imbesi; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Christopher Lincoln, Suzanne Thompson, Nicholas Gardecki; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Solicitor Charles Haws; Police Chief Stephen Powell; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Recreation Director Helen Moyer; Engineer Tom Unger; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliff; Treasurer Jeanette Rentschler; Borough Manager Cathy Hoffman, and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira.

VISITORS:	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Karen Livingood	Resident
	Andrew Moletress	Resident
	Patrick Kaag	Resident
	Troy Hatt	Fire Code Official
	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. **CONDITIONAL USE HEARING:** Mr. Imbesi noted a Conditional Use Hearing was held prior to the Council meeting tonight where Council Members granted approval of signage plans for 416 Penn Avenue as submitted.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.
4. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Ms. Thompson noted revisions were needed to the December 18, 2018 minutes with regards to her statement regarding the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation Bylaws, which she had requested to be entered into the record had not been done. Ms. Thompson also noted the omission of approving the list of 2019 Appointments/Reappointments, which she had made a motion to approve at the December meeting. Approval of the minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

Motion to table approval of the December 18, 2018 Council minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 5-0.**

5. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:**
 - a. Resolution 2019-1 Adoption of new Business Privilege Tax and Mercantile Tax Regulations – Motion to approve Resolution 2019-1. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**
 - b. Enforcement of Parking Regulations Amendment – Mr. Imbesi noted the amendment is proposed because of previous budget discussions to increase the illegal parking penalty from \$25 to \$30. Motion to authorize advertisement of an ordinance to amend the parking penalty. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Nicholas Gardecki joined the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

- c. Fire Inspector Intergovernmental Agreement – Mr. Imbesi stated a cooperation agreement has been received and reviewed by the Borough Solicitor to allow the Township of Spring to provide commercial fire inspection services, fire investigation services and special event inspection services.

Mr. Lincoln asked the Fire Code Official if all commercial properties would be inspected annually. Mr. Hatt stated he could not guarantee all properties would be inspected annually, Spring Township will advertise to hire two individuals to assist in performing these inspections upon Borough approval of the cooperation agreement. The annual consideration for services monthly installments will be prorated until the program is fully operational.

Mr. Lincoln also inquired as to the current insurance coverage being sufficient to cover these additional services. Mrs. Hoffman will review the current policy coverage.

Motion to authorize advertisement of an ordinance to enact the intergovernmental cooperation agreement. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln.

Motion carried 6-0.

Andrew Moletress inquired with Mr. Hatt as to the review of West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation event applications. Mr. Hatt requested the information to be forwarded to him for review of the activity and the area. Fire safety suggestions/guidelines may be provided in advance of the event.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. **Animal Control Services** – Mrs. Hoffman noted attendance to the Berks County Cooperative Purchasing Council meeting where the main topic of discussion pertained to animal control services. An alternate vendor was in attendance and discussed offering similar services at a similar cost to municipalities in Berks County and it was noted that municipalities are only required by state law to provide services for rabid or aggressive dogs. Mr. Haws stated the only requirement would be to detain dogs running at large for a period of four to seven days. Mr. Haws also noted a number of facilities with kennels that can be found on the Department of Agriculture's website, which would not require a contract for this type of service.

Mr. Wert expressed concern for the community's quality of life in the endeavor to control the feline population and expressed his desire to opt for the Animal Rescue League's fee-for-service contract. Council members discussed potentially modifying the contract to require documented proof via photo identification and a photo of the animal being dropped off to ensure the bill for services is accurately represented. The Borough Manager will contact the Animal Rescue League to determine if they are amenable to a contract revision.

Motion to table contracting animal control services until further information becomes available. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

7. CONSULTANT'S REPORTS:

- a. **Solicitor's Report** - Mr. Haws referred to the written report provided this evening with four action items, three of which have already been addressed this evening. The final action item is to authorize execution of an amendment to the Pioneer Crossing Landfill

Air Space agreement extension. The one-year extension would become effective on February 1, 2019 and end on January 31, 2020. The agreement has been reviewed and no issues were found.

Motion to authorize execution of the lease agreement extension. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

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

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

- **Fifth Avenue/Museum Road Paving** – Mr. Unger requested authorization to advertise to receive bids for this paving project in time for the February Council Meeting.

Motion to authorize advertisement to receive bids for the February 19, 2019 Council meeting. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- **Green Light Go** – Three bids were received on January 9, 2019 from Telco in the amount of \$119,523; CM High in the amount of \$121,100; and Kuharchik in the amount of \$134,030. A motion is needed to accept these three bids.

Motion to accept the three traffic signal modernization bids. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Recommendation was made to award the contract to Telco in the amount of \$119,523, which fits nicely into the amount of grant monies available.

Motion to award the bid contract to Telco in the amount not to exceed \$119,523. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- **Pine Street Water Line and Valve Replacement** - Plans and specifications will be prepared and presented to the board with scheduling of the project during the summer months.

Mr. Unger also indicated there might be two additional roadways paved later in the summer depending on the outcome of the Museum Road paving project.

Motion to approve the Engineer/Code Enforcement report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Unger departed the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

8. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to executive session at 7:51 p.m. to discuss contractual and litigation items. Council reconvened at 8:18 p.m. and Mr. Imbesi announced Council's discussion regarding a retired Police Officer's unused sick time.

Motion was made to allow 50 hours of unused sick time to be placed in the sick-time bank. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 6-0.**

9. BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

- a. **2019 Meeting Dates** – Mrs. Hoffman noted a change to the meeting start time for the Economic Development Committee, Environmental Advisory Council and Planning Commission meetings from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and requested ratification of this revision.

Motion to approve the ratification of meeting start times. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Board Vacancies** – Mrs. Hoffman reported a resignation notice had been received from William Gernert to resign from the Joint Municipal Authority Board and requested acceptance of this resignation.

A motion was made to accept the resignation of Mr. Gernert from the Joint Municipal Authority. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Three letters of interest were received to fill the board vacancy on the Joint Municipal Authority, Cody Rhoads, Andrew Moletress and Oswald Herbert.

A motion was made by Ms. Thompson to appoint Oswald Herbert to the Joint Municipal Authority Board. There was no second to the motion and therefore it failed.

Mr. Gardecki noted previous experience by Mr. Rhoads and made a motion to appoint Cody Rhoads to the Joint Municipal Authority Board. There was no second to the motion and therefore it failed.

Motion to appoint Andrew Moletress to the Joint Municipal Authority Board. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

A letter of interest was received from Patrick Kaag to fill a vacancy on the Shade Tree Commission. Mr. Kaag is currently a member of the Environmental Advisory Council.

Motion to appoint Patrick Kaag to the Shade Tree Commission. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Department of Emergency Services Training** – Mrs. Hoffman noted an elected official training session being held at the County of Berks Department of Emergency Services on Wednesday, January 30, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

- d. **Certification of Unpaid Tax Bills** – Mrs. Hoffman requested authorization to execute the certification of unpaid 2018 tax bills to the Berks County Tax Claim Bureau.

Motion to authorize execution of the certification. **Moved** Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion to approve the Borough Manager's report. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Haws departed the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

10. MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Kearney stated he had nothing new to report.

Motion to approve the Mayor's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 6-0.**

11. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Mr. Imbesi noted the remaining board vacancies to be filled are: Finance Committee; Environmental Advisory Council; Shade Tree Commission and Zoning Hearing Board Alternate.

A meeting has been requested with PennDOT through Mark Rozzi's office to discuss options to modify the 2nd and Penn Avenue intersection to improve pedestrian crossing safety.

The County will be providing new electronic voting machines in the near future and Mr. Imbesi noted the new format could be confusing for elderly residents and suggested education be provided to familiarize our residents.

Mr. Wert noted precinct confusion on two levels within West Reading:

- Numbering of Precincts – Precincts should be renumbered from one and three to one and two.
- Precinct Boundary Lines – Redrawing of lines is needed to equalize the population and designate a more logical voting precinct to the residents location within the Borough.

A resolution will be drafted for review during the February Council meeting.

Motion to approve the Council President's report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

12. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. **Police Department** – Chief Powell referred to his written report and noted that Sergeant Joe Brown honorably retired from the West Reading Police Department on January 8, 2019 after 27 years of service.

A written Civil Service Testing examination for the rank of Sergeant was given on Saturday, January 5, 2019 with results to be certified on January 24, 2019. Those who passed the written exam will proceed to the oral exam portion of the process. The top three candidates will be forwarded to Council for consideration for promotion to the rank of Sergeant. Entry level testing will be administered in April.

Motion to approve the Police Department report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Public Works** – Mr. Murray referred to the written report and had nothing new to add. Mr. Imbesi stated he is pleased with the mechanic report. Mr. Lincoln inquired as to ownership of the deteriorating school zone flashing sign; Mr. Murray believes it is the Borough. Mr. Lincoln indicated that he would obtain a permit to replace the sign when necessary.

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

- c. **Fire Department** – Chief Burkholder referred to the written report and there were no comments.

Motion to approve the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Gardecki. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- e. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation** – Mr. Ratcliffe noted the Carriage Ride event went well with a cash positive result. A small group of retailers closed their doors at the end of 2018, however these locations are currently being pursued by other businesses.

Mrs. Hoffman requested a list of 2019 events in need of road closure. Mr. Ratcliffe provided the following information:

- April 27 – Craft Pretzel and Beer Fest
- June 15 – Art on the Avenue
- September 21 – Fall Festival

Mr. Ratcliffe noted that the Run Santa Run and Car Cruise events would no longer require street closures.

Motion to approve the street closure dates. **Moved** by Mr. Gardecki and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Moletress noted progress to hire a part-time event coordinator and grant writer at a rate of \$20 - \$25 per hour.

Motion to approve the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

13. COMMITTEE / COMMISSION REPORTS:

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Mrs. Moyer referred to the written report and noted two action items. The list of 2019 Recreation Events and a revised swim lesson fee schedule would need Council's approval.

Motion to approve the 2019 Recreation Event list and revised swim lesson fee schedule. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mrs. Moyer noted an interest has been shown in the recent announcement of a Disc Golf Course coming soon. A soft opening is planned in the spring.

Motion to approve the Recreation Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Planning Commission** – Mr. Wert noted review of the conditional use request for signage at 416 Penn Avenue and the continued review of the solicitation ordinance amendments. A recommended solicitation ordinance amendment should be coming to Council in a month or two.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Ms. Thompson. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- c. **Economic Development Committee** – Mr. Wert stated the committee met last evening and minutes are not yet available. The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance joined the meeting to discuss grant opportunities and strategic planning. There are resources available that would benefit the community.

Motion to approve the Economic Development Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – A meeting was not scheduled during the month of December.
- e. **Traffic & Infrastructure Committee** – Mr. Lincoln referred to the written report and noted a special parking workshop meeting that will be held on January 23rd to work through logistical details of implementing paid parking.

Mr. Wert suggested the addition of a Met-Ed streetlight at the 7th and Walnut Street intersection due to increased pedestrian traffic. It was recommended to review the land development plan for the Narrow Fabric building improvements to determine if lighting will be added near this intersection prior to requesting the installation of a streetlight.

Motion to approve the Traffic & Infrastructure report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** - Mr. Murray referred to the written report and noted the new meeting day and time. It was recommended to band trees no later than March to control the lanternflies and monitor the community garden.

Motion to approve the Shade Tree Commission report. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

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

Motion to approve the Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- h. **Finance Committee** – Mr. Imbesi referred to a letter of interest and resume provided this evening for Kylie LaSota to join the Finance Committee.

Motion to appoint Kylie LaSota to the Finance Committee. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 6-0.**

It was recommended by the Committee to invest \$400,000 of the Special Reserve funds that have been allocated for capital projects that will not be needed until April in a PLGIT 90-day investment at a rate of 2.7%.

Motion to invest \$400,000 with PLGIT. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Imbesi reported 2018 ended with \$400,000 more than anticipated due in part to a large Berks EIT payment in December. Mr. Imbesi recognized staff for working within the 2018 budget. Ms. Thompson recommended allocating additional funds to the Police Pension fund.

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

14. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Financial Statement** - There were no comments on the financial statement ending 12/31/18.

Motion to approve the financial statement ending 12/31/18. **Moved** by Mr. Lincoln and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 6-0.**

- b. **Payment Approval Report 12/19/18 to 1/10/19 & 1/11/19 to 1/15/19** – There were no comments on the payment approval reports.

Motion to approve Payment Approval report 12/19/18 to 1/10/19 & 1/11/19 to 1/15/19. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

15. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Karen Livingood noted her demo of the new voting machines and expressed concern regarding the increased storage needed for paper ballots. Mrs. Livingood conveyed her gratitude of Council to draft a letter to the County requesting alteration of the precinct boundaries.

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman
Borough Manager