

**Borough of West Reading**  
**Borough Council**  
October 15, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, October 15, 2013 with the following persons present: Council President Kevin M. Conrad; Vice President James J. Gallen Jr., Council Members, Elizabeth L. Heckler, Amy B. Good, Nathalie R. Kulesa, Philip C. Wert; Mayor Shane J. Keller; Borough Manager Richard J. Sichler; Borough Solicitor Daniel P. Becker; Fire Chief Mark D. Burkholder; Police Chief Stephen D. Powell; Public Works Director Dean E. Murray; Chief Code Enforcement Officer Tracey L. Levering; Elm Street Manager Dean L. Rohrbach; Administrative Assistant Cathy L. Hoffman. Council Member Deborah Hutcheson was unable to attend.

<b>VISITORS:</b>	Ruth Cardell	Temple
	Carl Garman	Resident
	Amber Rambo	Resident
	Karen Livingood	Resident
	Jennifer Bednez	Resident
	Oswald Herbert	Resident
	Chris Kimberlin	Resident
	Kristin E. Rodriguez	Resident
	Valentin Rodriguez, Jr.	Resident
	Tina Shenk	Property Owner
	Kathy Frymoyer	Resident
	Christian Doyle	Resident
	Becca Gregg	Reading Eagle

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Kevin M. Conrad called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call. Mr. Conrad then introduced Chief Stephen Powell.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**  
Tina Shenk spoke about a handicapped parking space on Penn Avenue that has a 2 hour designation and asked if it is being enforced. Mr. Sichler said he would look into it.  
Carl Garman announced that Crime Watch would be holding a bicycle theft prevention event on Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Fire Company.
3. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**  
**Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the minutes of September 17, 2013.  
**Motion carried.**
4. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**  
Waste Disposal Contract – Mr. Sichler said that there was essentially nothing new to report that would assure Council that the weight limitations for the Western Berks landfill bridge will remain stable. It was his recommendation to renew the contract with Pioneer Landfill because it is a sure thing and will not interfere with our trash collection contract. **Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mr. Wert to authorize the Borough Manager to move forward with the preparation and execution of documents with Pioneer Crossing Landfill. **Motion carried.**

Use of Borough Seal – Mrs. Heckler spoke about a candidate in the upcoming election that has been using the Borough Seal on his political documents and the Internet without permission of the Borough. It was agreed that Council as a body has to remain neutral and not appear to endorse any particular candidate. **Moved by** Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mr. Gallen that the Borough of West Reading Borough Council officially condemns and so orders a cease and desist of any further unauthorized use of the official Borough Seal. This act by Borough Council serves to avoid the expressed or implied appearance of endorsing any candidate or campaign for political office.

**Motion carried.**

Mr. Sichler was instructed to write a letter to Mr. Gustis and any other political candidate that may have used the seal.

Reading Hospital Municipal Improvements Agreements – Mr. Becker said that the agreements for the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue project are ready to be executed by the Borough therefore it was **moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mr. Wert to authorize the appropriate Borough officials to execute the Municipal Improvements Agreement and the Easement Agreement, allowing the Reading Hospital to install the sewer line on Seventh Avenue. **Motion carried.** Mr. Conrad abstained as his engineering firm is designing the work for the Hospital. Mr. Gallen will sign instead.

5. **ORDINANCE 1023 – PARKING REGULATION AMENDMENTS:**

The Ordinance has been advertised and is ready to enact. **Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Wert to adopt Ordinance 1023. **Motion carried.**

6. **CONSULTANTS' REPORTS:**

- a. Solicitor's Report – Mr. Becker said that the attorney for Fulton Bank (Belovich property has reported that with regard to the Belovich property, the 'complaint for foreclosure' is in the hands of the bank to verify the complaint and once verified will be filed (within the next two weeks). It was also noted that there has been no viable interest in the property, but that once the bank is in possession of the property, they will try to market it.

A question was raised about campaign signs in the planting strip and Mr. Becker said he has reviewed the ordinances and found conflicts concerning this subject and that is no direct answer as to whether they are allowed. There was some discussion about how to resolve the situation and it was decided that it should be addressed by the Planning Commission before their recommendation is brought forward to Council. It was also noted that the Borough Seal also needs to be addressed.

**Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Solicitor's Report. **Motion carried.**

- b. Engineer's Report – Mr. Sichler introduced Tom Unger, the engineer from SDEi who will be undertaking the tasks of Borough Engineer. There was nothing further to report.

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

- a. 2012 Interim Uncollected Real Estate Taxes – Mr. Sichler explained that the amount of uncollected interim tax is \$18.52. **Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mr. Gallen to authorize Mr. Conrad and Mr. Sichler to certify the interim tax report. **Motion carried.**

- b. Street Lights Buy Back – Mr. Sichler said he had met with Suburban Lighting representatives concerning the possibility of purchasing the Borough's street lighting which could potentially save the Borough \$50,000 per year. A motion was made to enter into the contract after successful review by the solicitor, however it was rescinded after Council determined that more information is necessary. Suburban Lighting will be asked to attend the November Council meeting to discuss it further.
- c. Accounting Goals – Mr. Sichler said this would be discussed later once a personnel issue is dealt with during Executive Session.
- d. Borough Code Revision – Organizational Analysis – Mr. Sichler told Council that the first phase of the Code of Ordinance revision project has been completed and a preliminary draft has been provided. He noted that the format is much different that what has been in place, however the new style is much more readable and easier to search. **Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Code of Ordinance reorganization as proposed by General Code Services. **Motion carried.** It was noted that the project is about 25% complete.

**Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Borough Manager's Report. **Motion carried.**

8. **MAYOR'S REPORT & WEST READING COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION FOUNDATION REPORT:**

Mayor Keller noted that the minutes from the August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting were in the packet and highlighted the following:

- The last Farmers' Market for the season will be on November 24<sup>th</sup>.
- The process to acquire the second PARR property has begun.
- Pennsylvania Cable Network is filming a program about the Borough.

**Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Mayor's Report. **Motion carried.**

9. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- a. Code Enforcement – Mrs. Levering referred to her written report and noted the upcoming Zoning Hearing Board meeting scheduled for October 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Code Enforcement report. **Motion carried.**

- b. Police Department – Chief Powell noted that a written report had been submitted and then spoke about the excellent work done by the Department during the recent Amber Alert incident. He commended the officers and investigators for the excellent work they did in recovering the children successfully and resolving the situation in such a short period of time. He noted the excellent cooperation of the other County departments involved.

**Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mr. Gallen to approve the Police Department Report. **Motion carried.**

- c. Public Works – Mr. Murray had nothing to add to his written report.

**Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Public Works Report. **Motion carried.**

- d.. Fire Department – Chief Burkholder noted that the report had been distributed just prior to the meeting and added that there is a three page memo from the Fire Police at the end of the report.

**Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Fire Department Report.  
**Motion carried.**

- e. Elm Street – Mr. Rohrbach noted his written report and pointed out that he is preparing to submit another \$250,000 public improvement grant to DCED. He added that DCED would be in the Borough on October 17<sup>th</sup> to do an organizational assessment and encouraged Council to meet with them and provide comments about the Elm Street program.

**Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Elm Street Manager's Report. **Motion carried.**

10. **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:**

- a. Recreation Commission – Recreation Coordinator Helen Moyer introduced herself, noted the minutes of the October 1<sup>st</sup> minutes, and provided the following information:
  - The Hayride will be held on October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Mother Son Dance has been moved from November 1<sup>st</sup> to Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> because of the football game.
  - The Tree Lighting will be held on Friday, November 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to approve the Recreation Commission report. **Motion carried.**

- b. Planning Commission – Mr. Wert reported that at the meeting on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, a conditional use application for the property at 215 S. Fifth Avenue was discussed, as well as sign regulations. A recommendation regarding the amendments was proposed by the Commission, however since that meeting other sign issues have been brought up, including the political sign issue, therefore it will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Moved** by Mrs. Heckler and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Planning Commission report. **Motion carried.**

- c. Environmental Advisory Council – There was no meeting in September therefore no report was given.
- d. Safety Committee – There were no questions concerning the September 24<sup>th</sup> minutes.

**Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to approve the Safety Committee Report.  
**Motion carried.**

11. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Wert to approve the Revenues with Comparison to Budget Report for the 9 months ending 9/30/2013. **Motion carried.**
- b. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to approve Payment Approval Report for 9/18/2013 - 10/09/2013 and 10/10/2013 – 10/15/2013. **Motion carried.**

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Valentin Rodriguez, Jr. spoke about Section 1001 of the Zoning Ordinance concerning political signs and noted that it is silent concerning the right-of-way. He said that according to his deed, he owns the property out to the curb, therefore he can place signs in the planting strip.

Oswald Herbert asked about the Belovich development being subdivided and it was clarified that the property has been subdivided however the lots can only be sold for townhouse development.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Council recessed to Executive Session at 7:58 p.m. to discuss personnel. When the meeting reconvened at 8:29 p.m., the following actions were taken:

- **Moved** by Mrs. Kulesa and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to hire Jeanette Rentschler as the Treasurer for the Borough of West Reading at a salary of \$38,000. **Motion carried.**
- **Moved** by Mr. Gallen and seconded by Mr. Wert to bring in an accounting consultant for a fee not to exceed \$5000 for 2013. **Motion carried.**
- **Moved** by Ms. Good and seconded by Mrs. Heckler to advertise the Conditional Use Hearing for the property at 215 S. Fifth Avenue to be held on Tuesday November 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. **Motion carried.**

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mrs. Kulesa to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman  
Administrative Assistant