

BOROUGH OF WEST READING – BOROUGH COUNCIL
2nd Regular Meeting/Workshop

March 27, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

West Reading Borough Council held its 2nd Regular Meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 with the following persons present: Council President Nicholas Imbesi; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Members Christopher Lincoln, Suzanne Thompson, Nicholas Gardecki, Kirk Mullen, David Amato; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Police Chief Stephen Powell; Fire Chief Mark Burkholder; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Pat Brandenburg, Township of Spring, Department of Public Safety, Commissioner
Troy Hatt, Township of Spring, Department of Public Safety, Deputy Fire Marshal
Nathalie Kulesa, Resident
Karen Livingood, Resident
Reading Eagle Reporter

Call to Order:

Council President Nicholas Imbesi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commercial Fire Inspections

Mr. Imbesi introduced Mr. Brandenburg and Mr. Hatt to Council members; the following aspects were discussed in relation to fire inspections:

- **Expense** – Mr. Brandenburg noted a regional, not for profit approach to perform fire safety inspections of the 305 businesses to be estimated at a cost of \$125 - \$150 per inspection. Larger facilities, such as nursing homes and schools, were recommended to charge an hourly rate. The Borough would be responsible to invoice the fees for these inspections to the owner of the establishment.
- **Inspection** – One to two inspectors would be assigned to the area to establish a familiarity with the structures and owners of the businesses. Members of the Fire Department are encouraged to attend inspections to create a diagram/layout of the business and establish a point of contact to allow safe, expedient responses in an emergency situation. During initial inspections the inspectors would exhibit tolerance and understanding as well as offer suggestions to bring the businesses into compliance. Inspectors would be certified under the International Fire Code as well as International Property Maintenance Code, which would allow the inspector to perform the currently required commercial occupancy inspection prior to a new business opening. To maintain uniformity with neighboring municipal fire inspections it was recommended to adopt the 2018 International Fire Code. Training of volunteer fire fighters would be provided to assist when inspecting larger special events; also fire investigation services would be made available to the Fire Chief. Automated inspection reports would be generated and provided to the business owner and Borough. Maximum occupancy rates would be established for each individual business. Fire Certifications would be issued at the completion of the inspection provided no life safety issues are present. Remaining minor violations would be reinspected in approximately two to four weeks; failure to comply would result in removal of the certification. Inspection of vacant structures would be a lower priority, however all systems must be operational. Fire Certifications can be provided to the business insurer to potentially lower their premiums.

- **Enacting** – Should Council decide to proceed with fire inspection services, execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Township of Spring along with enacting an ordinance establishing the Township of Spring as Fire Marshal would be required.

Mr. Imbesi thanked Mr. Brandenburg and Mr. Hatt for taking the time to meet with Council and stated Council members would discuss this further and respond with their decision in the near future. Mr. Brandenburg and Mr. Hatt departed the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Ordinance 1085 Designation of Permit Parking

Mr. Lincoln inquired as to why only a portion of this block would be designated as permit parking. Council members discussed the current designation of a handicap parking space and driveway/alley dividing the parking spaces. Council members agreed to adopt Ordinance 1085 to begin designation of permit parking and to begin drafting Ordinance 1086 to designate the entire length of the block as permit parking.

Motion to approve Ordinance 1085 Designation of Permit Parking. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Additional Parking Enforcement

- **Signage** – Adoption of the additional parking enforcement time frames requires alteration of existing signage along Penn Avenue and within the municipal parking lot. Mr. Murray stated the Penn Avenue signs could be altered, however the municipal lot signage would need to be replaced.
- **Parking Enforcement Officer** – Funding for the additional personnel to enforce the new parking requirement was not budgeted, however the anticipated fines would potentially cover this expenditure. The 30-hour Parking Enforcement Officer position will be advertised with an anticipated \$15 per hour pay scale.

Council members discussed the potential to report parking violations via text message through the current handheld ticketing apparatus. Chief Powell will review the equipment manual.

Parks & Recreation Alcohol Prohibition

Mr. Imbesi tabled discussion on allowing alcohol to be served in the park area for the proposed Concert in the Park events this summer to allow time to inquire with the Borough's insurance agent as recommended by the Solicitor.

Special Event/Public Gathering Ordinance

Council reviewed document revisions as previously discussed. Ms. Thompson suggested the addition of a revision date to all Borough documents. Ms. Thompson also requested a Special Condition area within the Special Event/Public Gathering Application above the applicant's signature. Council agreed to add an item within the Step 4. Attachments section on page two of the application to request the applicant attaches any special condition requests with the application.

Motion to advertise Ordinance 1087 Special Event/Public Gathering Ordinance with noted revision to the application. **Moved** by Mr. Amato and seconded by Mr. Lincoln. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Handicap Parking Space Permit

Chief Powell provided Council members a handicap parking permit application for the north side of the 400 block of Chestnut Street. The proposed parking space designation would be located within the first space west of the bus stop area.

Motion to approve the handicap parking space permit along the north side of the 400 block of Chestnut Street within the first space west of the bus stop designation area. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Chief Burkholder requested permission for a member of the American Red Cross to attend the April Council meeting to discuss a proposed smoke detector installation event on June 23rd. Council members welcomed the visit.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. **Moved** by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Amato. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman
Borough Manager