

Councilor Miller stated that the ribbon cutting for the WCR (Women’s Club of Reading) Center ADA improvements occurred last week. The ADA improvement added a list at the read of the property in compliance with HARB regulations. He also stated that The Village held a community meeting at Café Esparenza last week. He noted the success of the 1st Friday held last week in the 600 block of Penn Street.

Councilor Ventura noted her distress over the most recent gun violence event in her neighborhood and the others that occurred over the past weekend. She stressed the need for a solution to youth violence that offers those affected with alternatives that will change their path. She urged all residents to be cautious and aware of their surroundings.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with the need to identify a sound solution to combat youth violence, as gun and drug trafficking play a large role in this issue across our Country. She spoke about the rededication ceremony for the Peace Dove located within City Park and the continued problems with vandalism and dumping on Mt. Penn. She described the most recent damage to the fencing that protects the Fire Tower from vandalism and the need to safeguard the entire Mt. Penn asset.

Councilor Butler noted the meeting planned for tomorrow at 5 pm at the Albright Roessner Center in Room 100 regarding electronic vehicle charging stations.

Council President Reed congratulated Councilor Butler on his upcoming graduation from Kutztown University this Saturday. She described the Mother’s Tree Anniversary event being held this weekend at the County Bingaman Center from 10 am to 3 pm. She stated that a birch tree was planted by in 1923 by conservationist Solan Parkes on May 13, 1923, Parkes planted a near Antietam Lake to honor not only his mother but mothers everywhere. The tree is registered in the Hall of fame for Trees by the American Forestry Assoc. in Washington, D.C. She explained that birch trees do not perform well in our climate requiring the tree to be replaced about every 10 years.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz encouraged Council members to consider participating in the upcoming budget and audit webinars trainings.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

The managing director highlighted the report distributed electronically and attached to the agenda (see below).

TO: City Council
FROM: William M. Heim, Managing Director
PREPARED BY: William M. Heim, Managing Director
MEETING DATE: May 8, 2023
AGENDA MEMO DATE: May 3, 2023

The Finance Department has the following updates:

I. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **IT Update**

- The Public Works facility has been upgraded to a 1 gig fiber optic internet connection.
- Deployment is impending of Microsoft 365 to City staff who are currently using Office 2013.
- An antenna booster has been installed at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.
- The successful candidate chosen for the Tyler Support Specialist position will begin working in that role on Monday, May 1st.

- **CSC Update**

- **Berks Earned Income Tax**

- Per a request from Keystone Collections Group and to enhance collections of Local Services and Per Capita taxes, Berks Earned Income Tax Bureau was requested to submit the yearly tax information file to Keystone, per the specifications supplied.

- **Downtown Improvement District**

- CSC staff has been working with the City Core Manager, in collaboration with Property Maintenance personnel, regarding the seasonal vendors wishing to conduct sales in the downtown area. A plan which will increase the efficiency of the procedures regarding the approval process and location of the vendors is under development.

- **Accounting Update**

- Fiscal year 2022 was successfully closed in the Accounting system on 4/21/2023 and the year-end process checklist was updated accordingly.
 - Seven Penn State students were interviewed for a summer Accounting Intern position and three potential candidates were identified.
 - Assistance was provided to the external auditors to address accounts payable questions.
 - The Accounting Manager met with staff to continue work on the new employee Munis system training manual currently in development.

- **Grants Update**

- **Advancing Health Literacy Federal Grant**

- An application for a no cost extension is in draft form and under review prior to submission.

- **Charging Fueling Infrastructure Federal Grant**

- A community meeting has been scheduled for May 9th from 5-7PM at Roessner Hall on the campus of Albright College.
 - Representative Houlahan has provided a letter of support for the City's application.
 - A letter of support is pending from MetEd.
 - A visit to the City is scheduled with Katherine Lobosco, of CNN on May 2, 2023 to discuss proposed charging locations along with other infrastructure and economic development efforts planned and underway.

- **Purchasing Update**

- **Recently Awarded**

- **Youth Violence Website:** DaBrian Marketing Group, Reading, PA for a total of \$50,000 over four years.
- **City Hall Radio Booster:** Berkshire Systems Group, Shillington, PA in the amount of \$153,578.
- **ARLE Downtown Traffic Signal Optimization:** Telco, Reading, PA in the amount of \$216,000.

Current Projects/Upcoming Projects

- **RFQ – 19th Ward Pumping Station** – For the delivery of engineering services for the design, permitting, preparation of plans and technical specifications including final contract documents for bidding, bid phase services and design services during construction associated with the new 19th Ward Pump Station. The selection committee will be holding an interview with the top ranked company on May 3, 2023, ahead of advancing to City Council for award.
- **Centre Park Revitalization** – For the replacement of the current fountain with a period-correct Victorian Style fountain, refurbishment of walkways and garden features, installation of additional water supply points, replacement of benches and lighting figures. Bids were due on April 18, 2023. One bid was received which was rejected due to being over budget. A re-advertisement is planned.
- **2023 Roads Program Project** – To repave four miles of City streets, including the associated ADA curb ramps. Bids were received on April 17th and a recommendation memo is pending.
- **WWTP Laboratory Services** – To contract with a vendor to conduct laboratory analysis for the parameters that are required by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit beyond the wet chemistry that is performed routinely in house to maintain plant compliance. The selection committee is currently reviewing pricing proposals ahead of advancing to City Council for award.

- **Controller Update**

- The City Controller continues to address requests and inquiries from the City’s external auditors.

- **Project Manager (ERP System)**

EnerGov Implementation

- The majority of systems testing has been completed and all of the Hansen conversion data has been reviewed. Issues requiring further attention have been identified including the fee calculations.
- Train-the-trainer is scheduled for the first two weeks of May for subject matter experts and other selected staff to be followed by end user training. A decision regarding the go-live date will occur by May 15th.

Capital Projects

- The unveiling of the Peace Dove sculpture is scheduled for Saturday, April 29th at City Park in conjunction with the Peace March. The Mayor and members of City Council are scheduled to speak and the local news media has been invited.

OpenGov Implementation

- Opengov procurements implementation is anticipated to be completed by mid-June.

- **Advancing Health Literacy (AHL) Grant**

- An MOU2 regarding Community health organizational literacy was executed with Reading Community Pharmacy with additional organizations to follow.
- The quarterly grant reporting to HHS has been completed.
- The AHL team toured City Hall with an artist who provided input regarding art placement ideas.
- Focus group planning has been finalized. Facilitation training was completed and recruitment efforts continue. Thirty individuals were signed up to participate during the City Park Earth Day event.
- Upcoming Focus Group sessions include May 17th at Reading Elderly and June 3rd at 8th Street Church.

- **Capital Projects**

1. Plum and Franklin HVAC- Contract with Warko 4/20/23
2. 8th and Court boiler system- Under construction- Blanski Energy Services- **possible conflict with Structural damages identified.**
3. McKnight and Spring- Cares- HVAC (Covid/ CDBG)- under construction Warko Group- change order approved by CD.
4. Reading Fire Museum HVAC- Design in Progress- Engineering of HVAC is in progress.
5. 3rd and court Sidewalk- Proposal signed- in design
6. Radio Booster Project-Council award to Berkshire- contract pending
7. Plum and Franklin Sidewalk- Proposal signed- in design
8. City Park playground- under construction Empire Services- Contract end date is 12/31/22- **issued a letter of notice of violation-** final completion expected May 19, 2023
9. Reading Skate Park- Contract completed for Land Tech- Contract with Grindline pending with Legal
10. 6th and Amity- Under Construction – June 29th expected completion date
11. Baer Park- Construction Pending- ground breaking 5/9/2023 Mayor’s office translating flyers to be posted 5/1
12. Baer Park Lights- Needs funded- 2/28 call with Carlos Torres – **Guzman update pending**
13. Baer Park Basketball Paving- new paving completed, court color expected 5/8- 5/12 final products 6 weeks out. Dedication TBD
14. Basketball Court resurfacing- 2023 budgeted- **refocus- Blacktop Meeting 4/13 with Mayor asked to have temp repairs completed for June play**
15. Reading Iron- Design underway- 30% drawing advanced to South of Penn for progress report- community meeting needs to be scheduled to review.
16. Centre Park- 1 bid received- **Engineers rejection letter pending. Budget was \$750,000 bid was \$1.64 million. Re-bid pending.**
17. Swings, Slides, Nets- final punch lists under review
18. 3rd and Spruce Roof- construction mobilization 5/2
19. 3rd and Spruce HVAC- submittals underway- construction pending
20. 3rd and Spruce Hockey Rink upgrades- two quotes from cooperative companies received and circulated
21. 3rd and Spruce Playground- Construction Pending June 19, 2023 Purcell construction- ground breaking 5/9/23. Mayor’s office translating flyers to be posted 5/1
22. Egelman’s Dam- ECS drill completed- **BOG TURTLE hazard identified-** Change order executed
23. Egelman’s Drainage project- Asking ECS for a proposal of services.
24. William Penn Fire Tower- 2023 ventilation, mortar work- engineer review pending
25. Camp Lilly- Bid doc being assembled- Construction expected no sooner than 8-11 after camp concludes

26. Lance place- Construction underway
27. 800 block Courtyard- under construction- rework in progress after City consultations- engineer and contractor back in line CEG owning some issues.
28. Overlook Cleaning- ideas discussed- with Sustainability (Bethany and Ryan) for direction
29. Penn Street Public restrooms- Comfort Station accessed 4/21 total loss. Pending direction
30. MP3 Study- underway
31. City Park Band Shell and Pond- engineering proposal signed- design in progress
32. Greenhouse- Pending Berks nature and RSD conversations- sounds promising
33. Schlegel pool Pump house- Next to get engineering proposal for re-design. Fall 2023 construction target post season
34. Mineral Springs Hotel- insurance pay out completed- vendor signing w9- schedule pending for work
35. Statues and Monuments- photos and list sent to Grants for possible grant application
36. Turtle Statue- agreement signed PO requested work TBD- relocation consideration.

37. City Hall HVAC- Design underway
38. Pagoda Wall- Design underway
39. Pagoda MEP- Council Report 4/24- pending invasive structural research
40. PW building HVAC- Design underway
41. Bushong Dam- Design underway
42. Willow Creek- Contract pending with Legal award to Flyway Construction- small delay for RAWA issue
43. Property Room/ Office Relocations- under construction
44. Property sales- property committee dissolved- final approval pending to advance advertisement
45. Property acquisition- 951 Morgantown Rd, MD has Council Support- should have a vote 5/8
46. Property acquisition - 301 Spruce- appraisal in hand awaiting further direction
47. Cedar Lot Paving- engineering proposal requested
48. PW Paving- \$150,000 soft quote needs engineering contracts- Cedar lot started PW next
49. Operation Splinter- continue- **PW needs lighting worked on to continue electrical and plumbing**
50. Evidence/PD basement retro-fit- **engineer walk through 4/13/23**
51. Demolitions- 106, 14th and Walnut- Pending ARPA considerations
52. Conservation Building City Park- RAWA not interested now with Rec complication. Repairs needed
53. City Hall Fuel Tank- Awaiting direction- expensive and unqualified.

54. Reading Public Library HVAC- Alan Shuman interested in split costs- developing **LEAD is back on the radar- Change order pending**- project close out meeting 4/27
55. Northwest Library Roof Replacement- design engineering underway
56. Northwest Circulation Desk- design engineering underway
57. SE and NE Library Lighting/Ceiling Project- 2023

Completed this reporting period:

58. Fire Station Lockers- Completed

The Fire Department has the following updates:

1. Accomplishments:

- Attended the Eastern Division Fire Chiefs Association conference in Maryland. Informational conference as well as great networking.
- Attended and partook in the Departmental structure live fire training. I made this a mandatory class for all and participated as to not be hypocritical.
- Took delivery of the EMS Chase truck, 2023 Chevy Tahoe which will be manned by the on duty EMS Lieutenant to help alleviate some nuisance EMS calls as well as allow the Lieutenant to accomplish more administrative work that is require

2. ONGOING PROJECTS:

- 9th and Marion Station – Slow progress. Tentative completion is now June 9, 2023
- Production on the 2 new Engines purchased last year through CDBG is progressing. Four of our members will be going to the factory in Appleton, Wisconsin on May 20 for final inspection of both apparatus.

3. DECISION MAKING

- No grievances or discipline issues.

4. INCIDENTS / CHALLENGES:

- Responded to the 4 alarm fire on N.11th St on April 23 which severely damaged 4 homes. A great job by all city as well as assisting county departments.
-

The Library has the following updates:

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We were approved as a passport agency location. As soon as staff completed the training process, we will advertise our new service to the public.

ONGOING PROJECTS

- Filling vacant positions: Systems Admin/Assistant Director position; two open Librarian II positions.
- HVAC/generator project is on-going. Awaiting decision about location of gas line.
- RFP for evaluating our bank has been made public as of this week.
- Working on getting hotspots ready to circulate to patrons, and getting hotpots and Ipads ready for the Digital Literacy Instructor project.
- We are in the final stages of having a refrigerator and food pantry located on the outside of the SE Branch to help provide healthy food for residents. We have a tentative Grand Opening date for this project on Monday June 5 11am.

DECISION MAKING

- Decided on a candidate for the one Librarian II position. An offer is pending regarding this.

Public works has the following updates:

1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Solid Waste Division Manager worked distributing supplies and meeting with groups at City Wide Clean Up/Earth Day event on Saturday 4/22/2023 at City Park.
- Clean City Team (City Staff) completed 40 clean- up and illegal dumping projects picking up 362 bags of litter and 22 bulk items. Staff picked up 20 tires and 24 TV's. 11 dead animals were removed from the streets, 7 vacant homeless camps cleaned up with assistance from the Police Dpt. And the Homeless Coalition. 55 recycling bins were also delivered.
- Sustainability Manager Meetings attended: RKAALabyrinth, Legacy Cities, Good Medicine Planning, Alvernia CBCL Conference (panelist), RACC IPCC Roundtable (panelist), Albright Radio w/ Nolde Forest, Urban Ag workgroup, PSTATS (panelist w/ Scott Bachman), EAC.
- Reading Climate Corps cohort 2 began on Monday, April 24. Need: a regular meeting place for the Corps with tool storage.
- The Sewers team added a manhole in the sanitary system at North 11th and Windsor Street to make a section with an unusual configuration accessible for routine maintenance.

2. ONGOING PROJECTS

- Clean City Coordinator Ryan signed up 5 new participants in the "Adopt-A-Block" initiative bringing the number to 122 as of 4/24/2023. Ryan also organized and facilitated the annual "Great American Clean-Up" which included multiple clean-ups at various locations around the city throughout the week starting on 4/15 and culminating in the main event of Saturday 4/22/2023 at City Park in conjunction with the Earth Day Celebration. Totals of volunteers, hours worked and quantities of litter, trash and bulk items cleaned up will be forthcoming in a report during the week of 5/1/2023.
- Clean City Program "Gateway Tuesday" is ongoing and has improved the appearance of all gateways heading into our City and will be a regular part of our operation.
- Baer Park paving is completed in conjunction with LW IV! Color to begin next week and follow on products to be completed in approximately 8 weeks. Dedication pending completion and Lakers Playoff Run.
- 8th and Court boiler system- Under construction- Blanski Energy Services- possible conflict with structural damages identified.
- City Park playground- under construction Empire Services- contract end date is 12/31/22- issued a letter of notice of violation- final completion expected May 19, 2023.
- Basketball Court resurfacing- 2023 budgeted- refocus- Blacktop Meeting 4/13 with Mayor asked to have temp repairs completed for June play.
- Centre Park- 1 bid received- Engineers rejection letter pending. Budget was \$750,000 bid was \$1.64 million. Re-bid pending.
- Egelman's Dam- ECS drill completed- BOG TURTLE hazard identified- Change order executed.

- 19th Ward Pump Station and Force Main - The City selection team scored technical and price proposals received for the new pump station design. Interviews with the committee will be scheduled for top teams.
- WWTP Compliance and Permit Status - Final NPDES discharge permit for the WWTP was received with an effective date of May 1st. Staff is reviewing and ensuring all required sampling and analysis changes will be implemented timely. The WWTP is in compliance for April with lower permit limits beginning May 1st.
- River Road Extension – The Contractor is completed the mill and overlay of W. Windsor St., most of the landscaping, and the new Lincoln St. paving was completed last week. The project is over 80% complete and ahead of schedule. The estimated substantial completion could be as early as June.
- 2023 Paving Project, Contract No. 1 – The bids were opened on 4/17/230. Low bid is Allen Myers at \$4.9M, which is under the estimated cost of \$6.1M. Anticipated award is 5/8/23, after we resolve a Purchasing policy issue. The Solicitor and PW are working to have a contract executed to start work in May.
- Knock-Down Traffic Signals – All 5 signals have been replaced but MetEd has not yet connected the power to the signals at 4th and Court St and 3rd and Buttonwood. Telco and PW are working with MetEd to get this done. The city needs to pay MetEd for the service connection but has not yet sent their invoice.
- Buttonwood Gateway Phase 2 – This is the streetscaping phase of the project. We met with the Consultant last week. They are now completing the final design.
- ARLE Downtown Traffic Signal Retiming – This project was awarded to Telco this week. Waiting for Law to execute the contract.
- Summit Chase Lighting – The construction contract was awarded on 4/10/23 to Hirneisen. A contract (with Law) and NTP is anticipated by 1st week of May.
- Castlewood Street Dedication – Cedarville conducted the assessment of the stormwater management system. The report is being revised this week to include an assessment of the capacity of the system.

3. CHALLENGES/OTHER ISSUES

- Solid Waste Division Manager contacted applicants and scheduled interviews for week of 5/1/2023 to fill two (2) part time positions in department.
- 6th and Canal Pump Station Phase 2 Upgrades - City staff, including Law, and PM/CM team met with the general contractor to discuss the pump vibration investigation and resolution based upon their potential change order request. Future discussions will be led by Law.
- SCADA communication issues impacted initially the solids handling building followed by the entire network at the WWTP. With coordinating key contractors, the issue has been addressed initially, and future software updates are expected to improve and remediate this issue.
- Sewer lateral damage was located on a state route directly under a recent RAWA repair site. With the PennDOT permit still active, RAWA placed a PA One Call and excavated for the Sewers team to make the repair at this commercial property.

4. UPCOMING EVENTS:

- We Conserve PA, Plenary Breakfast: April 27, 9am
- Good Medicine Indigenous Wellness Celebration: June 3rd, Riverfront Park (10am)
- EJ Dives Picnic in the Park, July 8th (w/ 18th Wonder)