



# Administrative Report

## Mayor Eddie Moran

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** William M. Heim, Managing Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Kenya S. Edmonds, Special Assistant  
**MEETING DATE:** June 07, 2023  
**AGENDA MEMO DATE:** June 12, 2023

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### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

The Community Development Department has the following updates for the period starting May 15<sup>th</sup> through May 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The following tasks completed through various divisions in Community Development:

- Community Development commenced developing City's Consolidated Plan and Equity Plan for federal fiscal years (FFY) 2024 to 2028. The HUD funded plan is mandate to obtain the views and comments of individuals and organizations as to the housing and community development needs of the City, including fair housing; review past program performance; and obtain views and comments related to the draft Citizen Participation.
- Included in developing this report three meetings were held:
  - 1) Tuesday May 16, 5 to 7 p.m. City Hall, 815 Washington Street, 2nd Floor, City Council Chambers, Reading.
  - 2) Wednesday, May 24, 2 to 4 p.m., Keffer Park Field House, 301 Exeter Street, Reading.
  - 3) Wednesday, May 24, 5 to 7 p.m., Schlegel Park Field House, 100 E. Wyomissing Blvd., Reading.

\*A list of the organizations that attended meetings is available upon request.

- HOME ARP is finalizing draft applications to qualified agencies with the intent to start receiving, qualifying, and approving agencies for developing and maintaining non-congregate shelters, affordable housing, and single room occupancy (SRO). It is anticipated the completion of the application shortly after the approval of pending change order No. 2 in the amount of \$25,000.
- Monitoring funds for CDBG-CV allocated to assist in reducing homelessness by paying delinquent rent and utility invoice, remaining fund exceeds \$1.0 million. In order to utilize existing funds prior to expiration/termination of specific CDBG-CV line of credit in 2025. Currently, CD is reviewing requests to appropriate funds assisting partially renovating HVAC at the fire museum.
- Property Maintenance interviewed four (4) candidates that are qualified for the open positions of Property Maintenance Inspector. Expected start time, June 16.
- Building and Trade Mechanical Inspector Mr. John Stine resigned his position effective June 2. Building and Trade, with Stine's recent resignation, has two (2) vacancies to fill. An alternate approach is to retain the services of an outside firm for Plan reviews which would subsequently alleviate review time.
- Energov training for CD staff train the trainer phase requires dedication of most staff time. A plan was set in place and shared with Project Manager in anticipation to go live June 7. However, the date has since changed to August 11. The change in the start date causes conflicts with previous staff trainings, which could potentially cause a delay in daily tasks and would reflect on the progress made in Zoning and PMI.
- Property Maintenance division, completed two-hundred and thirty-one (231) quality of life inspections/citation, scheduled two-hundred and twenty-four (224) health, fire and safety inspections, seven-hundred and eleven (711) residential inspections for 2-years or property transfer, five (5) court appearances and issued fourteen (14) notices of violations.
- Building and Trade received fifty-one (51) permit applications, seven (7) sets of full plans (architectural, MEP), completed the review of fourteen (14) plan reviews, approved six (6) plans, issued fifty-five (55) building permits for various contraction tasks, and approved five (5) cases of utility restorations. Building and trade Inspectors approved ninety-three (93) inspections and denied thirteen (13) inspections.
- Historic Preservation Specialist, received seven (7) applications of completion of appropriateness (COA), approved two (2) of the applications, issued two (2) building permits, and supported eighteen (18) City residents with their applications and request to make modification to the exterior of residential or commercial façade.

## **FINANCE:**

The Finance Department has the following updates:

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **IT UPDATE**

- In preparation of Energov deployment, IT staff is setting up and distributing new iPads to system users. Also troubleshooting the final test pass of the Hansen system conversion data continues.
- The backup private wireless network will move from City Hall to the Public Works building to allow Police vehicles to connect to Public Works should the City network go down. City remote sites and VPN users will also be set to failover to the Public Works network.

- Getac tablets have been setup and issued to Police Department lieutenants and sergeants for the initial roll out.
- Research has begun into Cloudflare as a replacement to the City's domain name system (DNS) service. This would allow improved protection of DNS records and provide extra tools for disaster recovery.
- The electronic sign located on Penn Street has information honoring fallen firefighters. Fallen police officers will also be honored similarly once IT personnel have received all of the necessary information from the Police Department.

## **CSC UPDATES**

- **Hansen to EnerGov Data Conversion**

- The team continues working to define and correct data conversion issues. Another data review is pending with expectation of improvement in the fee related areas.

- **EnerGov**

The team has identified outstanding items for resolution:

- Export of data to collector for current new business privilege tax set-up.
- Export of delinquent fees to collector for delinquencies, data and fee collections holds.
- Import of collection receipts involving different departments.
- Batch processing for Business Privilege License bills, housing bills, trade license renewals, health permits.

- **Registered Bills aka Non-Permit, Non-License Payments**

- Payment processing still has to be determined. Preliminary research indicates that recurring payments (ex: industrial waste) may be better suited for processing in Munis to allow reporting on the payees and turnover to collections; however, individual/one-time payments may be most effective if processed through EnerGov.

- **Training**

- Citizens Service Center personnel have been reviewing and training in the EnerGov system. Staff member, Myriam Kalbach has been an asset collaborating with team members to provide guidance on business licensing.

- **Cashiering**

- New computer hardware necessary for Treasury's use of the Tyler software has recently been ordered, but it is uncertain if the equipment will arrive by the time it is needed in July.

- **Accounting Update**

- The Accounting Manager has created a project budgeting guidance and distributed same to Accounting, Capital Projects and affected department staff.
- The Accounting Manager has scheduled and is preparing for a meeting with Planning staff regarding the zoning escrow account reconciliation procedures.
- Training provided to the new Special Assistant to the Managing Director on the Munis system requisitions/purchase order and invoice entry processes along with budget information and accounting forms and procedures.
- Training provided to the Accounting summer intern which included daily cash reconciliation and project string processes.

- **Grants Update**

- An application submitted on May 30th to the Federal Highway Administration Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program with a total project cost of \$3.2MM.
- The Grants Coordinator continues to update Finance Department staff on project status in advance of the pending position vacancy.

## **CURRENT PROJECTS**

- **233 North 3rd Street Residential Building Stabilization – Rebid**

- The Chief Building Official has advised that re-bidding for the stabilization of 233 North 3rd Street is not currently required. The affected homeowner has decided to file a claim privately.

- **Centre Park Revitalization Project – Rebid**

- This project was contracted to a landscape architectural firm, Barry Isett, to conduct the design engineering for the revitalization of Centre Park. The final design includes 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. One bid received but it exceeded budget. A re-bid has been issued and responses are due June 22.

- **Laboratory Services for the WWTP**

- This project is to contract with a company who can conduct laboratory analysis for the parameters 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. This analysis includes, but is not limited to, pesticides, semi-volatiles, volatiles, organics, whole effluent toxicity, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) and metals. The selection committee has chosen the new vendor, and this will be advanced to City Council for action at the June 12, 2023, meeting.

## UPCOMING PROJECTS

- Roofing Replacement for the Reading Public Library - Northwest Branch
- PY2024 to PY2028 CDBG ESG and HOME Environmental Review Record Consultant Services
- Multiyear Financial Plan & Recommendations

## CONTROLLER UPDATES

- The City Controller continues to address Fiscal Year 2022 accounting and audit items including tentative audit findings.

## PROJECT MANAGER (ERP System)

### • EnerGov Implementation

- The system Go-live date has changed to 7/11 with a potential alternate date of 8/1.
- Remaining configuration items that can be accomplished by the team will be separated from those that require assistance from the consultant and are to be completed by mid-June.
- Process testing opportunities arranged specifically for Building & Trades leadership staff.
- The third pass of conversion data turned over to staff on 5/31. A fourth pass may be necessary.
- Licenses secured for all personnel needing them and subject matter experts (SME) continue training end users.
- It will be necessary to inform the public regarding the EnerGov implementation, post go-live. Maria Kantner, CSC Manager has agreed to serve as a resource for system demonstrations.

### • OpenGov

- Procurements implementation rescheduled for completion by mid-June, with a customer success transition call on June 12th.

### • Advancing Health Literacy (AHL) Grant

- A No Cost Extension application submitted, and corresponding budgets finalized.
- Recently submitted Grant Amendments have been approved by the Office of Minority Health.
- The Project Managers have completed the timeline for the No Cost Extension year.
- A Misinformation Toolkit has been completed and translated.
- An Organizational Toolkit was completed and is going to print.
- The Health Equity Director attended Tower Health- Health Equity Community Collaborative Meeting and presented on the AHL Health Taskforce.
- The Health Equity Director met with a representative of Bell & Evans and Medicare & Medicaid Services to discuss collaboration opportunities.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 31- Focus Group Session – YMCA
- June 3- Focus Group Session - 8th Street Church

- June 4-6- OMH Conference in Atlanta, GA
- June 30- Powerful Women Event - The Salvation Army

## **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

- No report

## **ONGOING PROJECTS**

## **DECISION MAKING**

- AHL Grant – City has submitted a No Cost Extension [NCE] for 12 months to complete work remaining under the grant.
- Recently met with RACC leadership on 5/31/2023 to request that one of their staff, Kelly Kidd be retained to complete evaluation of the grant. RACC requested the City issue them a directive to terminate services of their other employee Veronica Lopez. AHL team has expressed displeasure with the lackluster performance from Ms. Lopez to RACC dating back to Feb 2023. With no improvement to date, there is almost zero value added to retaining her for the additional time under the NCE. This staffing change will help ensure we have the competent services of Ms. Kidd through the conclusion of the additional time granted under the NCE.

## **FIRE:**

The Fire Department has the following updates:

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Completed Annual Haz-Mat required training.
- Presented The Fire Chief Award To Marlon Rivera at the annual Reading High JROTC award ceremony on May 18.
- Took delivery and placed in service a new Medic unit.

## **ONGOING PROJECTS**

- 9<sup>th</sup> and Marion Station – Slow progress. Tentative completion is still slated for June 9, 2023; however, I am confident that it will not be met.
- Four members returned from the final inspection of our New Engine #3 & Engine #9. Both apparatuses will be at the dealership in Lancaster County by next week for equipment mounting. The plan is for them to be in service by the end of July.
- The EVT mechanic position advertised, and HR had the first interview with a candidate on June 2, 2023. I will conduct a second interview shortly thereafter.

## **DECISION MAKING**

- Two minor discipline issues managed in my office. One grievance filed and sustained. Steps taken to correct the issue which caused the grievance.

## **INCIDENTS / CHALLENGES:**

- As noted in our meeting we have had four members retire early which has created vacancies.
- The department has had quite a few fires lately including a mountain fire on May 31. The fire was contained to about one acre with help from surrounding departments who have more equipment focused on wildland fires.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE:**

HR has the following updates:

### **Driver Safety Training:**

- The implementation of the Driver Safety program led to a 23% decrease in driver error road accidents from 2021 to 2022. The overall positive impact of the program is undeniable.
- Ongoing Driver Safety Training programs are important to a renewed commitment to promoting safe driving practices throughout the City of Reading.

## **Recommendations:**

### **Implement policy:**

- All City of Reading employees with access to City vehicles must successfully complete Driver Safety & Accident Investigation Training annually.
- Implement a cell phone and seat belt policy: The City of Reading prohibits employees using cell phone while they are driving a city vehicle. City employees should pull off the road and stop before they use a cellphone. All City of Reading employees must wear seat belts while driving a city vehicle.
- Provide individual Driver Safety and Accident Investigation completion certificates to all employees who successfully complete both courses.
- Additional Driver Safety classes scheduled for 2023 to accommodate anticipated growth and requirements.

## **LIBRARY:**

The Library has the following updates:

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- We had a successful Celebrity Bartender Fundraiser event, bringing in almost \$15,800, netting about \$14,500. We will be using \$7,500 to collaborate with South Central Art Partners to do three artists in residency programs at the branches.

## **ONGOING PROJECTS**

- Filling vacant positions: We have filled one of the two open Librarian II positions. I will be taking action soon on the other Librarian II position, and the open Assistant Director position.
- HVAC/generator project is ongoing but seems to be making good strides towards completion.
- RFP for evaluating our bank has been made public. We are waiting on proposals.
- Still working on getting hotspots ready to circulate to patrons and getting hotspots and Ipads ready for the Digital Literacy Instructor project. We hope to have these ready for the public in June or July at the latest.
- 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 had a Grand Opening for this project on Monday, June 5, @ 11am.

## **DECISION MAKING**

- The District decided to move from Ancestry.com database to Heritage Quest by Ancestry because the latter is available from home and thought that it would be more convenient for the community. This change over will happen in June/July.
- The District will also be moving from two part-time ILL staff to one full-time.
- We decided on a new logo. The revealing of the new logo will be sometime this fall.

## **CHALLENGES/OTHER ISSUES**

- Continued issues with the back yard of a property that connects with the library's Foundation building and parking lot - excessive trash, dead animals, people using it as a living space/storage space/bathroom, and there has been drug activity here as well. Its making staff feel extremely uncomfortable and unsafe as the parking connects to this yard. There have been conversations with the police about this issue and a complaint has entered into the City's irequest.

## **POLICE:**

The Police Department has the following update:

- In the process of reviewing background investigations for new hires.

## **PUBLIC WORKS:**

The Public Works Department has the following updates:



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Solid Waste/Recycling Division Manager met telephonically on 5/16/2023 with new Area DEP Grant Director Sharon Scantling to amend current “902” DEP grant to reflect price increase in ordered compactor vehicle for leaf collection. Expected delivery is Fall of 2023.
- Clean City Team (City Staff) completed sixty (60) clean- up and illegal dumping projects picking up four hundred and eighty-six (486) bags of litter and thirty-four (34) bulk items. Staff picked up one hundred and nineteen (119) tires, and twenty-nine (29) TV’s. Twelve (12) dead animals removed from the streets, and thirteen (13) graffiti abatement projects completed. “Gateway Tuesday” is ongoing as well as extra cleanings at the Pagoda and overlooks as well as the City Parks with the summer season upon us.
- Sustainability Manager meetings & events attended: Alvernia Sustainability Committee, Legacy City calls, Keep Reading Beautiful steering committee, HUB Housing Focus group, EV Charging public meetings, Earth Day 2023 wrap up (next meeting in July), PW Safety training, Urban Ag workgroup, multiple meetings between the Corps Network & others about the status of the RCC, Bernhart Dam Update (presenter).
- Final NPDES discharge permit for the WWTP received with an effective date of May 1st.
- The WWTP was in compliance for May with the first month of the seasonally lower permit limits despite several suspected slug discharges impacting the WWTP operation.
- The Sewer team assisted RAWA with an emergency repair by providing a dump truck and operator for two days as requested to minimize the service disruption.
- Report of a clogged catch basin led to the discovery of a 10-foot carpet remnant discarded into a catch basin blocking storm flows. Removed the inlet grate from the basin to clean and restore flow.

## ONGOING PROJECTS

- Solid Waste/Recycling Division Manager organized and chaired meetings on “Dumpster Day” planning for June 24th at PW Facility on 5/19/23.
- Clean City Coordinator Ryan Bradley signed up seven (7) new participants in the “Adopt-A-Block” initiative bringing the number to 133 as of 5/31/2023 and installed seven (7) new signs. Existing “Adopt A Block” groups cleaned up twelve (12) bags of litter, five (5) bags of yard waste and two (2) bulk items. Ryan also organized and facilitated Clean-Ups on South St. and Skyline Drive with sixteen (16) volunteers who cleaned up eight (8) bags of litter, three (3) TVs and three (3) bulk items. Also, Community Service workers cleaned fourteen (14) bags of litter from seventy-four (74) storm drains. Ryan also hosted the monthly BCTV show “Our City, Our World.”
- Sign quote for 800 Penn St returned and under review project is remobilizing expected 6/12.
- City Park playground – Dedication next week.
- River Road Extension – The Construction work is about 95% completed. No word back yet on a ribbon cutting date.
- 2023 Paving Project, Contract No. 2: 18W Hancock/E. Wyo. Boulevards Paving - Final design is in progress, MTA said it should be ready for bidding in June.
- 18W Liggett Ave/Hancock Blvd. Intersection – SSM and city met with the 18W committee and completed the final stakeholder review of the final plan.

- 18W Bike Safety Trail Project - MTA has provided their cost estimate to provide the Bike Trail engineering and appears acceptable, but the cost will exceed the available Blanket Agreement allotment for this year. We are reviewing other options.
- Knock-Down Traffic Signals – The city needs to pay MetEd for the service connection and PW is processing their invoice.
- N Front Street Traffic Signals Upgrade – SSM to resubmit revised drawing to PennDOT soon and submit final design invoices. PW submitted for the GLG reimbursement last week.
- ARLE Downtown Traffic Signal Retiming – Acting PW Dir. to submit an ARLE reimbursement request this week.
- Castlewood Street Dedication – Revised the report to include an assessment of the capacity of the system and is in review for a recommendation.
- Climate Action Plan (L-CAP) workshops meetings scheduled for June 5th @ 5pm, June 10<sup>th</sup> @ 11 am (SE branch RPL), June 7th @ 5pm, June 17th (NE branch RPL)- sign up & flyers distributed week of 5/15, Thirty (30) people max at each session. Administration & Council invited to attend as residents (in house sessions will be scheduled for July).
- Lucky’s Lane (339 S. 7th Street) garden install scheduled for June (regrading by RAWA begun- stone installation week of 5/15).
- Bernhart Dam next steps- coordinate with David Anspach and Kyle Zeiber engineering, additional soil, sediment, water testing, initial concept design process. Include Muhlenberg Twp, Conservation District, and County MS4 in process.
- 19th Ward Pump Station and Force Main Projects - The force main design team is receiving comments from PA DEP on the permit modification application packet submittal. Council awarded the new pump station design with the contract having been executed. The kickoff and key initial meetings are in the process of being scheduled.

## **CHALLENGES/OTHER ISSUES**

- Solid Waste/Recycling Division Manager divided secretarial duties with Diana Jimenez to fill in for Madelin Collins who has been out since 5/16/23 recovering from surgery.
- Vandalism at Baer Park for second time on the new LW4 court.
- Reading Climate Corps: It came to our attention on May 19th that Education Works (program manager) did not make payroll and there are significant financial issues on their end effecting RCC. The RCC was put on hold while next steps are being taken. COR funding for 2023 has not been disbursed. COR is making up the payroll for the Corps members via independent contractor status and invoice. Steering committee met on 5/31 to discuss next steps and to figure out a local management strategy. Additional meetings scheduled to discuss options & develop strategy. Program accounting does not match reporting from Education Works (this is a separate issue that needs attention from Legal Department- will follow up).
- 6th and Canal Pump Station - negotiation continues with the general contractor to resolve the pump vibration, potential change order request. Legal has taken the lead on this with input from the technical team.
- A potential new industry was evaluated as part of the industrial pretreatment program. A current permittee with compliance issues has indicated a willingness to enter into a compliance order and agreement to address their problems in a more long-term manner.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Good Medicine Indigenous Wellness Celebration: June 3rd, Riverfront Park (10am)
- L-CAP Workshops: SE RPL: June 5 & June 10, NE RPL: June 7 & June 17
- Juneteenth w/ NAACP, Elks Lodge: June 17th
- EAC WWTP Tour, June 27, noon (staff/administration/ council welcome)
- EJ Dive Picnic in the Park, July 8th (w/ 18th Wonder)
- Riverzilla: August 12, Riverfront Park