



Administrative Report  
Mayor Eddie Moran

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** William M. Heim, Managing Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Kenya S. Edmonds, Special Assistant  
**MEETING DATE:** August 14, 2023  
**AGENDA MEMO DATE:** August 09, 2023

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➤ **FINANCE**

Finance has the following updates:

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

▪ **CSC Update**

**New Accounts - Residential Trash Service**

- A number of complaints about skipped trash pick-ups were made when the City's municipal trash agency recently added about 750 clients. Most of the reports included clients who needed special considerations because of their disabilities. The Solid Waste Division staff was made aware of these problems.

**Tyler Software**

- In addition to deploying Munis EERP Invoicing, Tyler Cashiering, and Civic 311 setup, CSC personnel is also working to resolve challenges with the EnerGov conversion. In addition to tackling the adoption of the new software and the unique issues each program provides, it has been difficult to stay on top of everyday activities.

▪ **Accounting Update**

- For the second quarter of 2023, the US Census tax forms for both non-property and property were submitted.
- A candidate for the Accountant I position underwent an interview.
- For the second quarter of 2023, a registered bill in the amount of \$62,742.46 was made to cover the cost of the school crossing guards for the Reading School District.

- With help from the Accounting intern, the 2024 Budget Excel templates for all city agencies as well as the 2024 draft position ordinance listing were successfully generated.
- **Grants Update**
  - As of 8/1/23, Enid Narvaez has taken over the duties of Grants Coordinator. We wish her luck in her new position.
- **Controller Update**
  - The City Controller is still working on the 2024 budget as well as accounting and audit concerns for the fiscal years 2023 and 2024.
- **Project Manager (ERP System)**
  - **EnerGov Implementation**
    - The installation of Tyler payments, cashiering training, and successful completion of the go-live checklist will all be taken into account when choosing a go-live date. The conversion data for this project is going through a fifth round, and of the 37 issues listed on the issue log, 11 have been fixed. Building and trade staff is still undergoing process testing and training, it may be required to meet with the consultant again. City wide staff are requesting customized reports and form, according to IT developer Randy Meyer. Public information materials used by the City of Gilroy to introduce its Energov launch were circulated for review, and end user training and configuration of Munis General Billing occurred on July 26<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - **My Civic 311/Tyler 311**
    - On August 16, there will be a solution orientation. The remaining sessions, which run until December 2023, have dates set.
- **Advancing Health Literacy (AHL) Grant**
  - A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with Helping Harvest Food Bank as a project partner.
  - To discuss potential collaboration and partnership opportunities, AHL officials met with members of ILead, the Latino Chamber of Commerce, the National Parents Union, and the Reading NAACP Branch.
  - Abilities in Motion conducted an interview with the AHL team on BCTV. Air timings are 10 a.m. on July 28, 9 p.m. on July 29, and 9 a.m. on July 30. (link to broadcast below)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N54f5dKS5aU&list=PLjuI03soTP4HUiVujpdDvVLXqjC74LXOM&t=3s>

- On August 1, team members took part in National Night Out, tabling and educating/assessing our community members on misinformation.
- Staff members are finalizing Grant Year Two payments and preparing for Year Three.
- **Upcoming Events**
  - August 12,2023- Berks Community Health Center Community Fair on Penn Street
  - August 20,2023- NAACP event with Bring the Change Organization - Health Fair at City Park
  - September 01,2023 - First Friday
  - October 01, 2023- Berks Cultural Diversity Festival at City Park
- **Capital Projects**
  - **Project Highlights**
    - Staff are pushing for substantial completion of the 800 Block of Penn Courtyard in time for the August 12<sup>th</sup> Berks Community Health Center's Community Day on Penn Street event. Installation of all concrete and handrails is anticipated to be completed by the event with other finishing items to follow.
    - Demolition work continues on the former Mineral Springs Hotel building.
    - Financial savings were realized by relocating soil from the Skatepark project site to the Egelman's Dam location.
  - **Project Updates**
    - **Eighth and Court Fire Station** – The boiler system construction by Blanski Energy Services is paused while a possible conflict with structural damages is investigated. Follow up discussions have involved a potential sale to the Reading School District. A response is pending regarding interest in the sale.
    - **The City Park Playground** – With a contract end date of 12/31/22, punch list items remain to be completed.

- **Centre Park Revitalization** – Responses to the second round of bidding exceed the current budget and a request was made for additional funding.
- The **800 Block of Penn Courtyard** is under construction. Thirty days have been added to the schedule and \$91,000 to the cost via change order.
- **Reading Public Library HVAC** - Alan Shuman is interested in cost sharing. Lead concerns are present and change order is pending.

- **OTHER**

- **Budget** – Department spreadsheets and Munis Central Budget Entry portal will be ready next week for Directors to begin entering their 2024 budget.
- **CIP Committee** – Meeting is targeted for the week of August 21<sup>st</sup>.
- **ARPA** – Committing final funding – If all towards properties we need to agree on where to budget it to ensure movement in 2024. Somewhat ties into Capital needs assessment during that committee review.

- **FIRE**

The Fire department has the following updates:

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- On July 25, a meeting with the Civil Service Board took place. Organized testing dates set just for paramedics. The written test is scheduled for September 23, 2023, and an announcement / advertisement will be made as soon as possible. Physical exams will take place the first week of October, and oral interviews the second.
- Some "street time" training has begun for the 10 Probationary FF/EMT. They seem to be doing well.
- A blood drive organized by our organization was held at City Hall on Tuesday, August 1. Our target was 20 donors, we ended up with 22.

- **HUMAN RESOURCE**

Human Resource has the following updates:

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Professional Development Training:** Training employees to ensure they have the skills and knowledge required to perform their assigned responsibilities and job functions within their department to step in during unplanned absence.

Classroom training is an essential part of professional development. Below you will find a summary of classroom training activity as of July 30,2023.

- **Accident Investigation & Driver Safety:** 100 employees successfully completed this mandatory training. Participation has improved during the second quarter of this year.
- **Material Handling and Ergonomics Training:** 72 employees successfully completed.
- **Hazard Communication GHS:** 61 employees successfully completed.
- **Traffic Control and Work Zone Safety:** 50 employees successfully completed.
- **Heat Injury Prevention:** 39 employees successfully completed.
- Total employees completed classroom training 322.

➤ **LIBRARY**

The RPL has the following updates:

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Completed the state's mandatory State Aid Library Subsidy Application (SALSA).
- Collaborated with GRCA to build an Instagram Reel for publicity.

**ONGOING PROJECTS**

- Developing a significant Email Migration project for the District Libraries.
- We are now recruiting for the Assistant Director and Librarian II roles, currently we are preparing to begin interviewing potential Assistant Director applicants. Additionally, we are attempting to fill two open positions in the library: Custodian/Driver and a part-time Early Literacy Specialist.
- On August 10th, the committee will hear presentations from the banks that responded to the request for proposals (RFP).
- Currently working on the project for the annual policy review.
- Started working on the 2024 annual budget.

**DECISION MAKING**

- Hired a Summer Library Clerk, the SE Youth Services Librarian, and the Archival Digital Intern

## **CHALLENGES / OTHER ISSUES**

- The HVAC system project is still unfinished and is dripping condensation in the Children's Department. Because of the circumstances, staff members are having breathing problems.

## ➤ **PUBLIC WORKS**

Public Works department has the following updates:

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- On July 18, 2023, the managing director and the manager of the solid waste and recycling division met to talk about recent developments in the division and upcoming plans to enhance resident service.
- On 7/31/2023, the manager of the Solid Waste/Recycling Division participated in a Zoom ethics training session, and on 8/1/2023, "National Night Out" was held at College Manor Pool.
- Legacy City calls and Community Conversations, Keep Reading Beautiful Steering Committee meetings, EAC Committee meetings, Greenhouse Workgroup strategic planning meetings, Safety Committee meetings, MYSI field trips to RACC and WWTP, and National Night Out were among the meetings and events that the Sustainability Manager attended.

## **ONGOING PROJECTS**

- The Clean City Coordinator along with 79 volunteers cleaned up 41 bags of litter and rubbish over the course of 8 clean-up projects performed.
- The Clean City Team (City Staff) finished 41 clean-up and unlawful disposal tasks, collecting 42 bulk items and 336 bags of trash. Staff members collected 15 TVs and 48 tires. The removal of 15 illegal signs, the removal of 25 dead animals from the streets, and the completion of 13 projects to clean graffiti. In preparation for increased foot traffic brought on by the bridge shutdown on Schuylkill Ave in August, the pedestrian bridge at Lafayette St. and W. Green is being cleared. It will be finished by August 11, 2023.
- Pushing for the completion of the 800 courtyard in time for the event at the Berks Community Health Center on 8/12. We anticipate that all of the concrete

and railings will be finished, with the remaining finishing touches to be added after the event.

- We saved money by moving soil from Skatepark to the Egelman's dam project since Mineral Springs is slowly being knocked down.
- The manager of the Solid Waste/Recycling Division met with the managers of Special Projects and Sustainability to discuss funds and plans for guard rails that will increase safety and discourage unlawful dumping through an intergovernmental collaboration. The basic outline for planning is due in September 2023.
- The Greenhouse Workgroup will meet at Public Works on Tuesday, August 15. Setting up a membership structure, an oversight committee, and programming requirements are our main priorities.
- Keep Reading Beautiful is on track to join forces with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful on August 15, 2023. Reading Beautification Inc. will be replaced by KRB, which will also support Public Works and its volunteer network.
- MYSI student support & supervision- Mt. Penn trail cleanups, storm drains, field trips.
- The PA DEP is providing feedback to the force main design team regarding the submission of the permit modification application packet. The City is getting ready for the design team to electronically submit all other permits, including the ones for the railroad crossings to RailPros and the Schuylkill River crossing at PA DEP.
- PA DEP permitting required for construction is being finalized by RK&K for submission. This must be completed prior to finalizing other aspects of the WWTP upgrades construction.
- **Paving Project 2022:** August 31, 2023, is anticipated date of completion. If PennDOT does not promptly approve the outstanding HOP application, this date could need to be extended. A proposal for finishing the curb and sidewalk repairs along Buttonwood St. will be made by Furnace Stream Farms and their subcontractor Forino. At 6th and Church Sts., Forino is now putting in the corner ramps, which will connect to the suggested curb and sidewalks.
- **Paving Project 2023, Contract No. 1:** Design proposals for ADA ramps are being submitted and approved. The ramp field work will start the week of

August 7th. Prior to the cycle race on August 27, the city requested that Angora Road be fully paved. They will try to achieve that, according to Allen Myers.

- **Paving Project 2023, Contract No. 2: 18W Hancock/E. Wyo Boulevards Paving (now the 2024 Paving Project)** - The final design is being worked on, and MTA will determine what type of E&S permit will be required. PW has determined that this project will be called the "2024 Paving Project" and will be put out to bid in 2023 and built in 2024 due to the high work current load and schedule of this design. The engineering assistance for this project will require an amendment to the McCormick Taylor LFT agreement to raise the not to exceed limit, which is in progress.
- **18W Liggett Ave/Hancock Blvd. Intersection: Stormwater Phase** – The Stormwater Contract are in Bid Phase. On July 24, 2023, a pre-bid meeting was held. The expected award date is August 28, 2023, and completion possibly early this winter or next spring.
- **Knock-Down Traffic Signals** – MetEd completed the electric feed to the signal at 4th and Court St. The signal is now operational. Telco must still complete some final field work at this signal.
- **N Front Street Traffic Signals Upgrade** – The final permit plans are with PennDOT for signatures. The project is scheduled to bid this summer.
- **Buttonwood Gateway Phase 1** – PW has submitted a request to Admin and Council for authorization to award the sewer repairs contract to Performance Pipe Inc. through Costars. PW determined from prior work that PA prevailing wages will apply. CDR will be amending their drawings and specs for the in-situ pipe lining repair method. The contract is expected to be awarded in August following Council action to award.
- **Buttonwood Gateway Phase 2** – Revised drawings were submitted, and additional comments are being addressed. PW needs to secure right-of-way from the RRA for the sidewalk on Speidel St. The design is about 80% complete. Anticipated bid award is for August-Sept.
- **ARLE Downtown Traffic Signal Retiming** – Construction is underway. PW, IT and Telco are scheduled to meet August 09, 2023, to determine the workstation locations and connections.



- **Summit Chase Lighting** – The construction contract was awarded on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to Hirneisen. The pre-Construction meeting was held on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Hirneisen has coordinated with MetEd for a new power feed.
- **Castlewood Street Dedication** – PW is prepared to recommend dedication of the streets and adjacent storm system; however, we first need to find documentation that establishes Glen Road as a dedicated public street. These documents are necessary for several reasons including the ability to apply for these streets to be added to the City’s liquid fuels program.
- **Guiderrails** – Design phase is 80% complete. The remaining challenge is to find documentation that confirms Glen Road as a city street (this is the same issue for the Castlewood streets dedication). If documentation is not found, then the city may be required to do a complete road survey and then submit for dedication through City Council to establish Glen Road as a City street.
- **Hampden Boulevard Safety Improvements:** Sight Distance improvements – McCormick Taylor has submitted a proposal to provide the engineering, but their LFT Agreement must be amended for this task to be approved, this applies to the other MTA projects noted above.

## **CHALLENGES / OTHER ISSUES**

- To ensure uninterrupted continuation of key programs, Solid Waste/Recycling Manger met with key staff on August 02, 2023, to plan and assign duties of Ryan Bradley during his absence.
- The missing 10-foot pipe section of the 8-foot diameter corrugated metal primary pipe carrying the Bernhart Creek from the Northmont inlet was located by a staff member while kayaking down the Schuylkill River. Despite its size and thickness, it appears to have been crumbled like foil by the force of the water. Meetings are ongoing with an emergency contractor with discussion about the various manners to repair and rehabilitate the pipe in this storm shed. We investigated the time required to obtain the pipe in various materials in that size. From when the outfall at Heritage Park separated and enter the Schuylkill River in 2015, a pipe section was retrieved and saved that is the same diameter and material, including the bitumastic coating. Short-term to replace the pipe in the alley to the north of Delta Avenue, this section will be used. Long-term, several additional aspects will need to be addressed. Also, repairs are required to the new bar rack immediately upstream of the inlet as well as the inlet grate structure immediately prior to Bernhart Creek going underground. Research is being

done with original design and as-built plans for the entire system from the Northmont inlet to the North Reading storm pump station.

- The North Reading storm pump station was cleaned of debris as flows receded and the pump station was flooded to observe the large storm pumps in operation. MetEd also was investigating an operational issue impacting a single phase on the high voltage feed into the pump station. A bad high voltage fuse was the source of the problem. Mysteriously, the larger storm pumps were still able to run as needed.
- The Sewers team is methodically investigating numerous reports of sinkholes that have surfaced since the storm. Repairs requiring excavation are being prioritized while additional issues are being researched.
- The Consent Decree team met with the regulators to discuss the current status of capital projects as well as the 4th modification to the Consent Decree as proposed. The regulatory team is requesting a greater level of detail with interim milestones than has existed to date over the past twenty years of these discussions. Finally, the City's payment and regulators' receipt of stipulated penalties was discussed.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **Riverzilla:** August 12, Riverfront Park 11a-3p (riverbank clean-up 9am)
- **Reading Iron Playground Block Party:** August 19, 2pm