



Administrative Report  
Mayor Eddie Moran

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** William M. Heim, Managing Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Kenya S. Edmonds, Special Assistant  
**MEETING DATE:** October 09, 2023  
**AGENDA MEMO DATE:** October 04, 2023

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## **FINANCE**

The Finance Department has the following updates:

### **IT Update**

The distribution of new tablet devices to the Patrol Division of the Police Department has been completed.

A full disaster recovery test is planned for the coming weeks, likely to occur during a weekend to limit the impact to users. Currently there are only three pc units utilized for the testing which have been failing.

A refresh of the firewall was completed at all City remote locations.

### **Accounting Update**

To assist with the preparation of the 2024 budget, the newly hired Accountant I staff member was trained in reconciling salaries, part-time and civilian wages, with the required social security withholding amounts.

The Accounting Manager worked in collaboration with the IT Division's Tyler Support Specialist to resolve several issues recently encountered regarding the Tyler Munis system.

### **Ongoing Projects**

Accounting team is working on 2023-year end preparations, which include producing the purchase order closed vs cancellation status instructions and the Form 1099 checklist.

## **Purchasing Update**

### **Recently Awarded**

**Laboratory Services for the WWTP** – Awarded by City Council to M. J. Reider, Reading, PA for a total of \$61,231 for a three-year period with an option to renew for one year.

The purchase of new office furniture systems for the Police Department's Criminal Investigations Division, Auto Theft Task Force office from Friant and Associates, LLC., San Leandro, CA, in the amount of \$41,359.75 to be paid from CIP funding.

**Strategic Management Planning** – Awarded by City Council to PFM, Philadelphia, PA in the amount of \$125,000.

### **Current Projects**

#### **Liggett Avenue, Hancock Blvd., and Wyomissing Blvd Storm Sewer Improvements**

Five bids were received on August 22, 2023. An unanticipated issue was raised recently by PennDOT concerning Parking Authority fees which has delayed the award of this project. PennDOT has forwarded the matter to their Central Office for a legal review which could require two months for a decision. The City planned to partially fund this project with Liquid Fuels funding. To avoid the delay by PennDOT and advance the project for award at City Council's meeting next month, there is a proposal to switch the funding to 100% Fund 55, Stormwater Construction. Although there is an insufficient balance in the 2022 account line budget to fully fund this \$1.8 million project, the timing of construction is such that the project will not require spending that entire amount this year. It is suggested that the funding be derived from the Fund 55 current 2022 budget combined with the 2024 budget.

#### **Bandshell Improvements Project**

To rehabilitate the Bandshell located at City Park. The bids will be due on October 20, 2023.

#### **Towing Services**

A request for qualifications will be released shortly for City of Reading Towing Services as provided for in Chapter 576, Vehicles and Traffic of the Code of Ordinances.

#### **OpenGov Procurement**

Purchasing Division staff is in the process of migrating to the new OpenGov procurement portal. To date approximately 5,000 of the 44,000 vendors invited have signed up for access.

## **Project Manager (ERP System)**

### **EnerGov Implementation**

Staff is preparing a sixth run of conversion data. Small group meetings with members of the Property Maintenance group are being held to encourage adequate documenting of issues that emerge. The issue log now has 30 active issues, with an additional 31 addressed. A brochure has been produced to attract system testers, which can be placed on the City website and hung in various locations. Subject matter experts continue to train end users. The lead abatement efforts' activities are being linked into the EnerGov system.

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

AHL officials staffed a table at the September 22, 2023, PA Latino Convention in Harrisburg, PA, where they were able to expand the team's network and highlight its Health Equity efforts. Team members were acknowledged as sponsors at the FaithCare annual banquet on September 24, 2023. In the event brochure, the AHL logo and QR code were inserted. On September 26, 2023, staff met with Berks Counseling Center representatives to develop three SMART goals and examine the overall plan of execution that will be utilized to measure progress.

### **Upcoming Events**

- September 30 - 6th Ward Festival
- October 1 - Berks Cultural Diversity Festival at City Park- Bring the Change
- October 6 - Albright College Resource Fair
- October 8 - Puerto Rican Day Parade
- October 16 - Reading Elderly
- October 29 - Health Resource Fair sponsored by Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz's office.

### **Capital Projects**

The former Mineral Springs Hotel was demolished on September 28, 23. On 9/20/23, a dedication ceremony for the newly finished 6th and Amity Playground enhancement project was held. The construction contract for the Centre Park Rehabilitation project has been signed, and the Notice to Proceed is being issued. On 9/29/23, a preconstruction meeting was held in conjunction with the Fire Station Sidewalk Improvement Projects. On 9/27/23, City Park's construction and renovations were completed. The hockey rink at 3rd and Spruce Recreation Area has recently been upgraded and a dedication is planned for 10/03/23. The tennis court at Baer Park was renovated, and a dedication ceremony was held on 9/11/23. The sale of 946 - 970 Morgantown Road property was completed on 9/14/23.

## **Ongoing Projects**

The budget for 2024 is balanced and ready for presentation to Council. Budget printing will begin on the 3rd and should be ready for distribution by the 6th. The first ARPA Small Business Committee Review will be held on October 3rd at 1:30pm.

## **LIBRARY**

The Library has the following updates:

On November 1, 2023, Northeast Branch Manager Rachel Constein will take on a dual role and become Branch Manager for both Northeast and Northwest Branches. Rob Martin, the current Northwest Branch Manager will become the new Southeast Branch Manager. He will also supervise the Senior Outreach program, which operates out of the Southeast Branch.

Starting on November 1, 2023, we will be slightly reducing the Northwest Branch hours to reflect the lack of community use in the morning hours. The new hours will be M/W/Th 12-5:30 and Tuesday 1:30-7pm. (Prior hours were M/W/Th 9-5:30 and Tuesday 10:30-7.) This will allow us to be the best stewards of community resources and maximize services for the hours the community most uses this particular branch.

## **POLICE**

The Police Department has the following updates:

The Neighborhood Gun Violence Unit conducted an operation on Thursday, September 27th from 1600-2200hrs.

## **Decision Making**

On Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup> of 2023, Capt. Cheryl Pentheny and Deputy Chief Ruiz met with Jamar relative to the 2024 Budget. They were able to present a savings of \$1,466,555.74.

On Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup> of 2023, Deputy Chief Ruiz along with Capt. Rogers, Capt. Rothermel and Capt. Pentheny had a meeting with Lt. Lance Lillis and Sgt. Melville Fegely relative to departmental job rotation.

These changes are as following:

- 1) Lt. Lance Lillis will be replacing Lt. Luz Shade from C platoon.

- 2) Sgt. Melville Fegely will be the Community Response Coordinator.
- 3) Lt. Luz Shade will be the Chief's Administrative Assistant.

These changes will be taking place on November 6<sup>th</sup> of 2023, unless Lt. Lance Lillis decides he would rotate earlier than November.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

The Public Works has the following updates:

**Solid Waste/Recycling Division Manager** is working with the Berks County Conservation District (BCCD) to secure grant funding (written by BCCD staff) to help defray our tire disposal costs with the mutual goals of cutting our costs and reducing mosquito breeding, which thrives inside of dumped tires.

**Clean City Coordinator** completed installation of 12 of 15 "Doggie Stations" at Parks throughout the City and signed up 4 new "Adopt A Block" participants.

**Clean City Team (City Staff)** completed 90 clean-ups disposing of 679 bags of trash and litter, 35 bulk items and delivering 180 recycling bins.

**Community Garden Composting Bin mini-grant program:** 13 eligible gardens applied. Bins are in the ordering process.

**Sustainability manager** conducted an urban ecology "litter lab" with Alveria ecology students at Riverfront Park & Baer Park SRT trailhead 9/18 & 9/20.

**Green Energy REC (Renewable Energy Certificates)-** purchased 5859 RECs for a 25-month term covering 6250 MWH, 45% of the City of Reading's municipal operations (excluding WWTP, and authorities). RECs were purchased through the Direct Energy contract, purchased separately from the initial energy buys due to the market volatility of late 2022, early 2023. The cost of the RECs is \$29,988.28., paid out the Sustainability line item.

In 2019, City Council passed the Reading for 100 resolutions, seeking to transition to 100% renewable energy purchasing by 2030 for municipal operations. Purchasing RECs helps us to meet that goal for electricity use.

**Mineral Springs Hotel** Demolition completed; PW walk through 9/28/23.

**6th and Amity Playground** Completed, Dedicated 9/20/23.

**3rd and Spruce Hockey Rink** upgrades completed, Dedication 10/3/23.

**Baer Park Tennis court** overhaul completed, Dedicated 9/11/223.

**Paving** – The 2023 Paving work was completed this week, a month ahead of the anticipated schedule. The ADA ramps for the 2022 Project should finish next month and ramps for the 2023 Projects are continuing to finish up next year.

**Summit Chase Street Lighting** – Hirneisen is still waiting for MetEd to set up the new service, however they were on-site to de-energized the existing streetlights. Hirneisen expects to start the directional drilling as soon MetEd completes the de-energizing. The streetlights are expected to ship soon.

**18W** – Curb rehabilitation work to start the week of Oct. 9. The Liggett Ave. Stormwater Improvements Project bid was successful, however PennDOT did not yet approved the project for LFT funding due to RPA parking permit fee concerns. Therefore, to keep this moving, PW is requesting that this project move forward using 100% stormwater funding. Anticipated award is Oct. 9.

**Buttonwood Gateway** – Phase 1 Sewer rehab work to start Oct. 2. Reading Redevelopment Authority is reviewing our request for a sidewalk easement to rehab Speidel St.

**Hampden Boulevard Traffic Calming** – McCormick Taylor began the survey for the safe sight distance layout at 4 intersections. The latest police reports for Hampden Blvd. were received and sent to McCormick.

PA DEP scheduled an MS4 inspection for the end of September providing an extensive list of documents that the team and outside support are compiling. The results of the Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing were received, and the passing results submitted to PA DEP.

US EPA notified staff they were scheduling a pretreatment audit before the end of September. This includes review of WWTP operational data, pretreatment reports, and site visits of permitted industries.