

City of Reading City Council
Regular Meeting
October 24, 2022

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given virtually by Pastora Isabelle Pena, Iglesia Respiro y liberacion de Dios.

All present pledged to the flag.

There were executive sessions held after the October 24th COW meeting on personnel and litigation.

ATTENDANCE

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz
Councilor Daubert, District 1
Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2 - virtually
Councilor Ventura, District 3 - virtually
Councilor Butler, District 4 - virtually
Councilor Reed, District 5
Councilor Miller, District 6
Council Solicitor M. Gombar
City Auditor M. Rodriguez
City Clerk L. Kelleher
Mayor E. Moran
City Solicitor F. Lachat
Finance Director J. Kelly

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz stated that there are three (3) citizens registered to provide public comment on non-agenda matters.

Councilor Reed read the public comment rules adopted by ordinance.

Yolanda McLeod, of Cedar Street, was not present in the room or connected virtually.

Pam Gockley, of N. 16th Street, stated that October is Bully Prevention Month and she described the Camel Project program that she created to address bullying and its effect on school age children and adults.

Carol Riley, of S. 4th Street, described her experience with the eviction process and her work to find a new apartment. She stated that her efforts to educate the community about epilepsy began in 2019.

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz thanked Ms. Gockley and Ms. Riley for their comments.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading and the minutes from the October 10th Regular Meeting, along with the summations of discussion from the October 10th and 17th COW meetings and the October 17th Nominations meeting. She stated that that under the Resolution heading B Appointments to the Planning Commission is withdrawn and that under the Consent Agenda the following changes are required:

- Relocate the Award of Contract B regarding the restoration of the Dove to the Resolution heading
- To Award of Contract E amend the agenda memo and heading from CDBG to CDBG Covid
- To Award of Contract K change Public Works to CD in the amount of \$100,000 in the agenda memo and the heading

The agenda for this meeting including the Consent Agenda legislation, as amended, and the minutes from the October 10th Regular Meeting, along with the summations of discussion listed were approved by acclimation, without objection.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda is designed to provide efficient approval of non-controversial legislation that does not require discussion/debate by giving approval via acclimation when the meeting agenda is approved. The President of Council will call Council's attention to the list of Consent Agenda legislation at the meeting before action is taken, which allows Council to remove a piece of legislation for separate consideration.

A. Resolution 154-2022 – authorizing the donation of steel deck stage panels, acquired when DID was disbanded, to Genesis Theatre

Relocated to the Resolution Section

B. Award of Contract – for the Sole Source Purchase of services to replace the Peace Dove in City Park with a Cast Stone replica created by Kreilick Conservation at the cost of

\$81,048 allocated from ARPA funding

C. Award of Contract – for the Skyline Drive Observation Overlook Clearing to Bartlett Tree Experts, Reading, PA at the cost of \$165,498 from the Public Works budget to remove all trees and large underbrush as identified by the City Arborist to create a clean and unobstructed line of sight at all three observation overlooks.

D. Award of Contract – for the 6th and Amity Playground Project to, Uhrig Construction, 1700 N 5th Street Reading, at the cost of \$574,000 for removal and pruning of trees where required, installing porous asphalt paving walkways, segmental block piers, landscaping; installation of modular play and swing structures, benches, and safety surface mulch; and all related work. Funding is composed of \$150,000 from DCNR, \$330,500 from CDBG and \$235,000 from the CIP

E. Award of Contract – for the McKnight and Spring Fire Station HVAC Improvements Project

to the Warko Group, 18 Morgan Drive Reading, PA at the cost of \$293,000 from CDBG **COVID** to replace the HVAC systems in like kind and upgrade the indoor air quality of the facility with the use of bi-polar ionization (BPI) technology.

F. Resolution 155-2022 - for upgrading the equipment at 10 of the current VSU (Video Safety Unit) camera locations to LTW (Lets Think Wireless, LLC), Pine Brook, NJ at the cost of \$559,670.09 allowing the addition of five (5) repeater sites for future City-wide camera sites and adding seventeen (17) new camera sites to expand the VSU Camera network to seventy-nine (79) City-wide camera sites adding additional coverage areas that are currently not able to be utilized. LTW has the current VSU maintenance contract and is a member of CoStars

G. Award of Contract – for the Consulting Services for the Egelman’s Dam Modification Engineering Services Project to, ECS Mid Atlantic LLC, Wexford, PA at the cost of \$133,750 from H2O Grant, ARPA and 2023 Storm Water Funds to evaluate the existing structure and design of upgrades through construction and project management. Special considerations will be placed on the historical, cultural, and community aspects of the structure to preserve the existing integrity and utilization of the building

H. Award of Contract – for the Third and Spruce Playground Project to, Purcell Construction, Denver, PA at the cost of \$479,600 for preparatory work relative to the performance of the various construction operations of the Project. Removal of existing vegetation, removing existing above-grade improvements and removing existing below-grade improvements. Funding is composed of \$250,000 from a Keystone Grant, \$150,000 from CDBG and \$100,000 from CIP

I. Resolution 156-2022 – authorizing the disposition of records for the Law Department in accordance with Resolution 134- 2009 and State Act 428 as follows: Contracts that have been completed or terminated for more than 12 years, Registered Bills more than 4 years old,

Litigation files for closed cases that are not precedential that are more than 4 years old and Liens satisfactions more than 2 years old

J. Resolution 157-2022 – authorizing the purchase of office furniture for the Property Maintenance Division from GSA-approved vendor EthoSource in the amount of \$54,785.00 from the budgeted account for City Hall Office Upgrades

K. Award of Contract – for the trash (all materials), accumulated nuisance, weed removal and securing necessary properties project to Hope Works Reading, PA and Stubbs Cleaning Services. Reading, PA at the total cost of **\$100,000** split between the two companies from the ~~Public Works~~ **CD budget**

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

The mayor reported on the events and activities he attended since the September 26th regular meeting. He added that COVID testing, COVID vaccine and flu vaccine sites in Reading are being arranged.

The finance director highlighted the report which was distributed electronically and attached to the agenda. He announced the following two meetings scheduled for October 25th:

- Downtown Reading Transportation Plan Meeting in the Reading High School LGI Room from 4-6 and 7-9 pm
- EPA meeting regarding the contamination at the Exide Plant on Montrose Avenue at 6:30 pm at the Muhlenberg High School Auditorium

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that meetings were conducted with the non-profits that were approved for ARPA grants. She inquired how the City will communicate with these groups moving forward. The finance director stated that the non-profits were told that all communication should occur via email message. He added that the non-profits need to submit budgets by December 31, 2022.

Councilor Miller thanked the administration for information about the Transportation meeting tomorrow.

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz thanked the administration for their report on activities and events. She inquired if the City is still seeking employees for vacant positions. The finance director stated that the City is still seeking applicants and he invited interested parties to obtain the application on the website or visit HR on the 3rd floor of City Hall.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, regarding the City's successful exit from Act 47 covered in the administrative report, stated that the City's successful exit was due to the work of prior administrations and City Council over a 12 year period, noting the 1,000s of hours

City Council spent working on Act 47 related issues. She stated that the successful exit was not accomplished through the work of one administration.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: City Council
FROM: William M. Heim, Managing Director
PREPARED BY: Maritza Loaiza, Special Assistant
MEETING DATE: October 24, 2022
AGENDA MEMO DATE: October 19, 2022

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- The Community Development Director continues to work on the City's scope of work for the development of the Transient Oriented District (TOD). The City submitted ten potential locations for passenger rail stations for review by the executive committee composed of members from Berks Alliance, GRCA, and Berks County Community Foundation. The list was narrowed to eight locations after further review. The next step is the development of the RFP.
- Community Development submitted a grant application through the **Lincoln Institute of Land Policy**. It is an 18-month grant that would start in January 2023 if awarded. The grant will help improve quality of life through stewardship of land use, such as creating accessible, livable wage employment and affordable and safe housing. We can achieve this through targeted blight remediation strategies to improve access to housing and increase property values, as well as streetscape and façade programs to beautify the neighborhood and promote public safety.

FINANCE:

- The Finance Director met with all organizations awarded ARPA Grant Funding from the City on October 13th and 14th. Day and evening sessions were offered to accommodate all recipient's schedules. During the session, ZA reviewed the funding agreement, process, and expectations before funding is released.

The Finance Department's Citizens Service Center provided the following updates:

- CSC Manager attended the Berks Earned Income Tax Collectors meeting on September 29th, in which all municipalities shared that taxes continue on an upward trend.
- The CSC Manager shared that the City's 2021 Public Utility Realty Tax (PURTA) distribution of \$57,676.84 was received.
- The CSC will forward the City's 2022 unpaid Business License information to collections within the next month to proactively take care of delinquencies before the upcoming software conversion. The 2023 Business License billing will begin before the end of the year, as done in the past.
- The Finance Department's Accounting Division provided the following updates:
 - The Accounting Manager and Accounts Payable Clerk attended and completed the new form 1099 reporting training.
 - The Accounting Division electronically collects all internal lease and rental contracts to comply with FASB statement 87, which goes into effect in 2022.

- The Accounting Division continues to prepare for:
 - 1099 filing required by January 31, 2023
 - Year-end closeout process
 - 2023 budget - general ledger posting process
- The Finance Department's Purchasing Division provided the following updates related to projects:
 - Penn Square Properties RFP – The Committee is reviewing the Letter Of Intent with legal counsel.
 - City Hall Radio Booster Project (Fire Department) – Bids are due on November 1st.
 - General Engineering Services – Technical specifications will mainly be for Public Works as needed for upcoming City projects. Bids are due on October 28th.
- The City Controller continues work on various items, such as:
 - Prep work for impending State pension audit
 - Lessor and lessee accounting information
 - Software Accounting for 2023
 - Propriety funds cleanup
- The Finance Department provided the following updates on the AHL Grant activities:
 - Community-Accessible Testing & Education (CATE) vaccine clinic is scheduled to run through November.
 - Health Literacy Questionnaire (HLQ) survey is ongoing. 400+ paper responses have been collected. The goal is set at 1,000.
 - The Community Engagement Coordinator continues to do outreach with community organizations, scheduling approximately three per month in addition to Latino Connection coordinated events.
 - Social media content creation is an ongoing collaborative effort with Latino Connection. The official logo design is almost finalized. Website development is in progress, and planning for the unveiling/go-live of the website is currently underway.
 - Upcoming Grant-related activities include:
 - October 20th – Glenside Housing Complex – food distribution event
 - October 28th – Halloween on Penn Street with Mayor Moran

FIRE:

- The Reading Fire Department was in attendance at the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial service in Emmitsburg, MD, on the weekend of October 7th. Firefighter/EMT Mark “Dewey” Kulp was one of 148 firefighters added to the national memorial.
- RFD conducted oral interviews for the 2nd Deputy Chief and Lieutenants positions at the Fire Training Center on October 4th. A final list was completed and certified on October 18th. RFD Entry-level interviews will be held on October 17th at the Fire Training Center from 8am-2pm.

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION:

- Since last reported, HRC has:
 - 483 total rent and utility assistance applications were received.
 - 358 applications for rental assistance were facing evictions.
 - 5 applications were withdrawn by tenants
 - 9 applications were denied due to not meeting the program requirements
 - 20 applicants were not actively facing eviction
 - 6 applicants resided outside of the City but within the County

- 78 applications for utility assistance.
 - 2 applications were denied for exceeding HUD's income guidelines
 - 4 application was denied due to not meeting program requirements
 - 1 application was withdrawn by the applicant

HUMAN RESOURCES:

- The Human Resource Department would like to welcome the following new employees to the City of Reading organization:
 - Dahiana Artiles-Hernandez, Secretary/Building & Trades, as of October 3rd.
 - Margaret DeAntonio, Paralegal/Office Manager, as of October 10th.
 - Michael Bendetti, Engineering Aide III, as of October 17th.
- On October 1st the entry written exam for the Police Department was administered. Of 36 that took the test, 23 passed the exam with a 70% or higher. Applications were due to Human Resources by October 14th, and the physical agility exam will be held on October 23rd.

LIBRARY:

- The Reading Public Library Children's Play Spaces at the Main Branch are increasingly popular. Parents, therapists, and playdates utilize the play areas. In September, 445 children used this play area at the library, the highest use in 2022.
- The RPL's Senior Outreach services added two new locations; Hummingbird Hill and The Villa. Services were provided to 239 patrons in the month of September.
- The RPL's Reference Librarians visited Alvernia's Collegetowne campus to provide students with a presentation of library resources they have available for students to access.
- \$147,175 was raised during the Reading Public Library's Annual Cocktails and Classics fundraiser, which is a 9% increase from prior years. \$20,000 of the money raised will go toward hotspots for public use.

POLICE:

- The Reading Police Department continues to work on the VSU Expansion project. New cameras and equipment sites have been identified, and agreements with the community partners to host the equipment are being completed.
- The Reading Police reports the gate to block access to the trail near the Buttonwood Street Bridge has been ordered, and delivery and installation should occur in 2-4 weeks.

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Public Works staff has also completed:
 - 35 sites were cleaned up, primarily illegal dumping sites, which resulted in 232 bags of trash and litter, 15 bags of yard waste, 34 bulk items, 47 tires, and 12 televisions.
 - 16 graffiti abatement projects from various locations throughout the City
 - 11 dead animals were picked up
 - 32 storm drains were cleaned out
- Public Works Clean City Coordinator reports:
 - 3 cleanup events with 9 volunteers were held, which resulted in the collection of 27 bags of trash and litter, 5 televisions, 8 tires, 4 bulk items.
 - 23 new Adopt-A-Block program participants were identified. Of those 23 signed up, 20 are residents and 3 are businesses.
- Public Works Sustainability Manager:
 - Attended the PA Association of Environmental Professionals (PAEP) Communities, Corridors, & Connections Conference in State College.

- Appeared on “Building Greener” with Bill Vitale (City EAC board member) and Amanda Hanbury (Met Ed/CLEAResult) to discuss energy efficiency programs and support offered through Met-Ed for single-family and multifamily homes.

CITY AUDITOR’S REPORT

Monday, October 24, 2022

User Fees Revenue – Update as of September 30, 2022

User Fees revenue is money collected from the EMS services that the City offers to its citizens. In 2022, the City budgeted \$3 million for this revenue item, and as of September 30, 2022, \$2,323,573.02 has been recorded. If the revenue received through year end continues along this path, User Fees will likely reach its budget target for 2022.

The chart below illustrates User Fees Revenue Actual vs. Budget from 2018 to 9/30/2022

	YTD 9/30/2022	12/31/2021	12/31/2020	12/31/2019	12/31/2018
User Fees/EMS- YTD Revenue	2,323,573.02	3,287,855.40	2,405,142.53	3,333,157.10	2,808,204.15
Budget	3,000,000.00	3,033,500.00	3,196,000.00	3,095,000.00	2,900,000.00
Over/(Under) Budget	(676,426.98)	254,355.40	(790,857.47)	238,157.10	(91,795.85)

Business Privilege Tax/Business Privilege Tax Prior Year – Update as of September 30, 2022

In 2022, the General Fund’s combined budget for Business Privilege Tax and Business Privilege Tax Prior Year revenue was \$1,789,600. This amount represents an increase of \$323,200 over its 2021 budget amount. Despite the budget increase in 2022 for Business Privilege Tax, as of September 30, 2022, the combined total for these two revenue line items has already generated \$1,923,727 and exceeded its budget target by \$134,127.

The chart below compares the Business Privilege Taxes Budget to Actual for 2021 & 2022:

	2022 Budget	YTD 9/30/2022	Variance	2021 Budget	YTD 9/30/2022	Variance
Business Privilege Tax	1,708,800.00	1,867,784.08	158,984.08	1,385,600.00	1,622,163.86	236,563.86
Bus Priv Tax - Prior Year	80,800.00	55,942.92	(24,857.08)	80,800.00	58,341.35	(22,458.65)
Total	1,789,600.00	1,923,727.00	134,127.00	1,466,400.00	1,680,505.21	214,105.21

Earned Income Tax (EIT) / Earned Income Tax Prior Year – Update as of 9/30/2022

The City's General Fund has recorded a combined total of about \$18.2 million in revenue for EIT and EIT Prior Year as of September 30, 2022. EIT Prior Year revenue, which was approximately \$5.9 million as of year-end 2021, has already recorded almost \$6.6 million as of September 30, 2022 and has exceeded its budget target by \$1,082,801.91 as of this date. And even though the combined budget for these two revenue line items was \$770,000 higher for 2022 than it was for 2021, \$954,022.28 more in EIT Prior Year revenue has been recorded as of September 30, 2022 than had been recorded as of the same time in 2021.

Earned Income Tax Revenue - Comparison Between 2021 and YTD 2022:

	2022 Budget	YTD 9/30/2022	Variance	2021 Budget	YTD 9/30/2021	Variance
Earned Income	15,512,120.00	11,625,282.22	(3,886,837.78)	15,512,120.00	9,858,048.52	(5,654,071.48)
EIT Prior	5,500,000.00	6,582,801.91	1,082,801.91	4,730,000.00	5,628,779.63	898,779.63
TOTAL	21,012,120.00	18,208,084.13	(2,804,035.87)	20,242,120.00	15,486,828.15	(4,755,291.85)

Miscellaneous:

- The Department of Community and Economic Development's Keystone Communities Program granted the City \$234,266 at the end of 2019 with a deadline of June 30, 2022 to use the funds. The North Courtyard at Penn Street was renovated with the help of this funding. And the state audit that was required to be completed for this grant has been completed by Herbein + Company and will be submitted to the State on October 28, 2022.
- The 2021 Single Audit for the City of Reading that was submitted on September 30, 2022 by Herbein & Company has been accepted by the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (FAC).

REPORT FROM DEPT. DIRECTORS, BOARDS, AUTHORITIES, & COMMISSIONS

Jim Schlegel, Chair of the Stadium Commission, stated that the Commission currently has six of seven members serving and two City liaisons – Donna Reed from City Council and Carlos Torres from Public Works. He stated that when former Councilor Marmarou left office the Commission installed Councilor Marmarou as a Stadium Commission emeritus member for life. He stated that the Commissioners performed 200 hours of volunteer ambassador activities at the stadium this year.

Ms. Schlegel stated that in the spring of 2021, General Manager Scott Hunsicker briefed the Commission about the new MLB requirements to upgrade the stadium or risk losing the franchise. He explained the plan to meet the stadium upgrade requirements required a revision after the receipt of the first estimates. The upgraded facility will cost approximately \$22M funded through the partnership of the City, County, Phillies

organization and State. He explained that the bricks from the original wall that was removed will be used to pave a walkway at the stadium's entrance.

Mr. Schlegel described the agreement with the Reading School District allowing the RHS baseball team to play home games at the stadium and use some of the training facilities. He noted that this will be a huge boost to Reading High baseball. He added that the agreement will also provide Reading High students with internships and other opportunities.

Mr. Schlegel stated that the former Citizen's Bank property, sitting behind the stadium, submitted applications for a banquet hall and accessory uses, noting that he is unsure where the applications are in the zoning process. He stated that the property owner is seeking parking on the Stadium property, but the General Manager is unsure if a parking agreement can occur due to the parking needs of the Stadium. Mr. Schlegel expressed the belief that it would be best to acquire the former bank property.

Councilor Reed thanked Mr. Schlegel and the Commission members for their work and dedication. She inquired if it will be possible for local residents to purchase World Series Tickets at the Stadium. Mr. Schlegel stated that he is unsure, noting that depending on the phase of the construction project, it may be possible to show the games on the big screen at the Stadium.

The mayor thanked the Commission for their work and new focus on RHS baseball. He also thanked the Fightin Phils General Manager for hiring a diverse group of individuals as staff for baseball season.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the Commission and the Fightins for their work and dedication. She stated that she is impressed with the wide range of activities that occur at the Stadium. She inquired if World Series gear will be for sale at the Stadium. Mr. Schlegel stated that he is unsure.

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz thanked the Commission and Fightins for their work and partnerships across the community. She questioned if it would be possible to see pictures of the construction project as it occurs. Mr. Schlegel stated that he will look into that possibility and he noted Mr. Hunsicker's willingness to schedule tours with Council members as the construction progresses.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Pending Legislation

Bill 50-2022 – amending the Charter Board Ordinance by making various alterations such as

eliminating Advisory Opinions, creating an administrative body, eliminates the confidentiality of complaints, etc. to establish reasonable guidelines on Charter Board spending ***Introduced at the May 23 regular meeting; Tabled at the June 13, June 27, July 11, July 25, August 8 regular meetings; Discussion held August 15; Discussion scheduled for Oct 3***

A. Bill 80-2022 – amending Code Section 91-101, Salaries of designated elected officials assuming office on and after the 1st Monday in January 2024 as follows:

- A. Mayor. The Mayor of the City of Reading shall be compensated at an annual salary of:
- (1) For the period beginning the first Monday in January ~~2008~~, and ending the first Sunday in January ~~2009~~ **2024**: ~~\$68,100~~ **\$99,000**.
 - (2) For the period beginning the first Monday in January, and ending the first Sunday in January ~~2010~~ **2025**: ~~\$69,600~~ **\$102,000**.
 - (3) For the period beginning on the first Monday in January ~~2010~~, and ending the first Sunday in January ~~2011~~ **2026**: ~~\$71,100~~ **\$105,000**.
 - (4) For the period beginning the first Monday in January ~~2011~~ **2027**, and annually for each year thereafter: ~~\$72,600~~ **\$108,000**.
- B. President of Council. The City Council President for the City of Reading shall be compensated at an annual salary of ~~\$5,500~~ **\$8,750** per year.
- C. Councilmen. The District Councilpersons for the City of Reading shall be compensated at an annual salary of ~~\$5,000~~ **\$8,000** per year.
- D. City Auditor. The City Auditor of the City of Reading shall be compensated at an annual salary of:
- (1) For the period beginning the first Monday in January ~~2008~~ **2024**, and ending the first Sunday in January ~~2009~~ **2025**: ~~\$80,000~~ **\$80,000**.
 - (2) For the period beginning the first Monday in January ~~2009~~ **2025**, and ending the first Sunday in January ~~2010~~ **2026**: ~~\$54,600~~ **\$81,000**.
 - (3) For the period beginning on the first Monday in January ~~2010~~ **2026**, and ending the first Sunday in January ~~2011~~ **2027**: ~~\$56,100~~ **\$83,000**.
 - (4) For the period beginning the first Monday in January ~~2011~~ **2027**, and annually for each year thereafter: ~~\$57,600~~ **\$84,000**.

Introduced at the August 22 regular meeting; Tabled at the September 12 regular meeting

A. Ordinance – 2023 Real Estate Tax Rate

B. Ordinance – 2023 Position Ordinance

C. Ordinance – 2023 General Fund Budget

D. Ordinance – 2023 Capital Budget

Councilor Ventura questioned when the pending legislation will be considered.

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz stated that the budget related ordinances will be considered when the review process is completed. The Charter Board ordinance amendment is scheduled for discussion at the COW on November 7th. The ordinance increasing the salaries of elected officials will be discussed after the budget review process has been completed.

A. Bill 120-2022 – amending fee schedule in the City Code by increasing the fee for solid waste collection from \$190.92 per unit per year in 2022 to \$196.65 in 2023, for a total of \$340 for solid waste, recycling and clean city ***Introduced at the October 10 regular meeting***

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Miller, to enact Bill No. 120-2022.

Councilor Daubert stated that this 3% increase is required by the contract with Republic.

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz inquired if the administration has surveyed the Reading residents regarding their satisfaction with this service and made them aware of the required price increase. The finance director stated that a survey has not occurred but those arrangements can be made with RAWA. He stated that a 3% increase is quite reasonable when considering that the CPI is currently between 8-10%.

The City Solicitor added that the increase is applied only to the trash collection service and that Republic is overall operating at a loss as the cost of the recycling collection could not increase due to the settlement of the recycling litigation.

Councilor Reed agreed that a 3% rate hike is reasonable when considering the increase in other costs.

Councilor Ventura inquired if the collection costs can increase 3% annually. The finance director stated that the five (5) year contract allows a 3% increase annually.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed that a 3% increase is reasonable, noting the major increase in the cost of other services.

Due to some technical difficulties, Councilor Butler lost his connection with the meeting.

Bill No. 120-2022 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Miller, Reed, Ventura, Cepeda-Freytiz, President

- 6

Nays: None – 0

Councilor Butler reconnected with the meeting.

B. Bill 121-2022 – authorizing the conveyance of 131 and 133 Schuylkill Avenue to the City from Berks County Conservancy Properties, Inc (a subsidiary of Berks Nature that is being dissolved) ***Introduced at the October 10 regular meeting***

Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Miller, to enact Bill No. 121-2022.

Councilor Reed inquired if the City has engaged any of the neighboring property owners about assisting with the upkeep of this parcel to avoid increasing the overworked Public Works crews, noting the proximity of the Goggleworks.

Councilor Miller agreed with the need to maintain this lot, noting the poor appearance of similar lots in other locations.

The City Solicitor stated that conversations about the maintenance of the lot have not started but the administration will take that into consideration.

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz requested an update in 30 days.

Bill No. 121-2022 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Butler, Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Miller, Reed, Ventura, Cepeda-Freytiz, President - 7

Nays: None – 0

C. Bill 122-2022 – authorizing a budget transfer within the Public Works Sewer Fund in the amount of \$75,000.00 from Vehicles 540743-48003 to Gas 540743-45001 (\$25,000) and Sewer Repair Supplies 540743-45016 (\$50,000) to cover projected increased costs for the rest of 2022 ***Introduced at the October 10 regular meeting***

Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 122-2022.

Bill No. 122-2022 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Butler, Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Miller, Reed, Ventura, Cepeda-Freytiz, President - 7

Nays: None – 0

The mayor left the meeting at this time.

10. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

Councilor Butler read the following ordinances into the record:

A. Ordinance – authorizing a budget transfer from Public Works Solid Waste Legal Services to General Plant Supplies in the amount of \$20,000 for the purchase of recycling carts

B. Ordinance – authorizing a budget transfer in the amount of \$165,000 from Community Development to Human Resources to repay the IRS for COVID sick leave that is not being reimbursed because we are a government entity

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution 153-2022 – to Approve or Disapprove the Certificate of Insufficiency issued by the City Clerk on the Freedom from Toxic Trespass Petition ***Tabled at the Oct 10th regular meeting***

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Ventura, to approve the Certificate of Insufficiency issued for the Freedom from Toxic Trespass Petitions.

Resolution 153-2022 was adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Butler, Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Miller, Reed, Ventura, Cepeda-Freytiz - 7

Nays: None – 0

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz explained that the actions taken by the City Clerk were proper as she was following the directions mandated by the City's Home Rule Charter. She also explained that Council's action to support the approval of the Certificate of Insufficiency is also proper as Council took an oath to uphold the City's Home Rule Charter.

Relocated from the Consent Agenda

B. Award of Contract – for the Sole Source Purchase of services to replace the Peace Dove in City Park with a Cast Stone replica created by Kreilick Conservation at the cost of \$81,048 allocated from ARPA funding

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to award the contract for the replacement of the Peace Dove to Kreilick Construction as recommended.

Councilor Reed noted that the iconic Peace Dove was created and installed in City Park in the 1970s; however, the materials used were not able to withstand exposure to the

elements. She thanked the Capital Projects Manager for his research to find the best approach to responsibly restore this sculpture.

Councilor Miller agreed, noting that the materials chosen for the restoration of the Dove will replicate the original appearance of the Dove.

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz and Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the community for the continued push to make this restoration occur and she thanked the Capital Projects Manager for his work to respect the work of the artist who created this sculpture.

The contract was awarded by the following vote:

Yeas: Butler, Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Miller, Reed, Ventura, Cepeda-Freytiz - 7

Nays: None – 0

Withdrawn by Council

B. Resolution 158-2022 – making appointments to the Planning Commission

C. Resolution 159-2022 - reappointing Cathy Curran Myers to the EAC

D. Resolution 160-2022 – appointing Stephan Thompson to the EAC

Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to adopt Resolutions 159 and 160-2022.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the expertise these two applicants bring to the EAC's work and mission.

Resolutions 159 and 160-2022 were adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Butler, Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Miller, Reed, Ventura, Cepeda-Freytiz - 7

Nays: None – 0

COUNCIL COMMENT

Council President Cepeda-Freytiz noted the Trick or Treat event on Penn Street on October 28th and she reviewed the upcoming Council session schedule.

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk