



COMMITTEE of the WHOLE

CITY COUNCIL

SUMMARY

December 27, 2021
5:00 P.M.
Hybrid Meeting

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

S. Marmarou, D. Reed, J. Cepeda-Freytiz, J. Waltman (in person), L. Sihelnik, M. Ventura, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, (electronically)

OTHERS PRESENT:

L. Kelleher, M. Rodriguez, M. Gombar, (in person), S. Smith, J. Kelly, E. Moran, R. Tornielli, S. Rugis, M. Bausher, F. Lachat, C. Winters, J. Ruiz, K. Royer, N. Phillipides (all electronically)

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm by Mr. Waltman.

I. Youth Police Academy

Police Chief Tornielli stated that the Youth Academy was re-established in 2021. He stated that the Police Dept is partnering with Olivet and will include youth who are interested in law enforcement careers. He stated that the program will begin on January 11 and will run for 40 weeks. He stated that 45 youth will be in the program in 2022.

Chief Tornielli stated that there is City funding in the 2022 budget and that funding will also be provided by the Berks County Community Foundation. He stated that there is no cost for Olivet's services. He noted his hope to add the Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center to the program in the future.

Chief Tornielli noted his hope that those who participate in the Youth Academy will be hired as dispatchers after graduation from high school and then apply to be an officer after turning 21. He noted his hope that these youths will see law enforcement in a different light.

Mr. Marmarou questioned how recruiting was done. Chief Tornielli stated that it was through Olivet and that it will also be done through the Reading School District in the future.

Mr. Winters stated that Mr. Phillipides and Ms. Bausher will coordinate the program at Olivet. He stated that they worked with the Chief and Deputy Chief and that the program will be run out of the Pendora clubhouse.

Ms. Bausher stated that prior to COVID recruitment did occur at the schools. She stated that this year recruitment occurred at Southern Middle School and RHS. She stated that 45 cadets are enrolled. She noted her hope to recruit at all Reading schools in 2022 for the 2023 program.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned when the program will begin. Chief Tornielli stated that the program will begin on January 11.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if the cadets were already identified. Chief Tornielli stated that they are.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if AmeriCorps is involved. Ms. Royer stated that 17 is the minimum age for AmeriCorps participants. She stated that the Youth Academy is not part of the AmeriCorps grant.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz suggested that AmeriCorps participants provide leadership and assistance. Ms. Royer stated that AmeriCorps participation is down due to COVID. She stated that there is potential to involve them in the future.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the team for their work. She expressed the belief that this program has great potential. She noted the importance of diversion programs and the need to present this information to the cadets. She stated that incorporating diversion into the curriculum will get the cadets familiar with this option.

Mr. Oppenheimer arrived at this time.

Chief Tornielli stated that diversion programs will be covered. He stated that Ms. Bausher has developed the training agenda. He stated that the program is very intensive and covers many aspects of law enforcement including diversion programs and use of force. He expressed the belief that the program will provide a deep understanding of law enforcement.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the importance of setting a good framework. She stated that she is willing to be a resource if needed.

Ms. Sihelnik noted the importance of this topic and of strong partnerships. She noted the program's potential. She suggested that the City outline the partner's roles and draft agreements to keep the program effective.

Ms. Reed stated that this program started several years ago. She expressed the belief that it now has great partners and that this program will serve as a bridge for youth and will be a

career starter. She expressed the belief that this will be a great program and is glad that it has been revitalized.

Mr. Waltman agreed with Ms. Reed.

Mr. Winters thanked the team for their work. He stated that the program has been modeled after the program in Philadelphia. He stated that an MOU is in place and that a team approach will be used. He stated that he is looking forward to getting started and praised Ms. Bausher's work.

Mayor Moran thanked all for their work on the program. He stated that he agrees with all the comments and noted that youth is very important to him. He stated that he is pleased to hear that the program is moving forward. He stated that he is a product of the Police Athletic League in New York.

II. Police Shift Change

Chief Tornielli stated that an MOU with the FOP has been signed. He stated that 12 hour shifts will begin on January 3. He stated that this shift change will provide better working conditions for officers. He stated that they will work three days in a row followed by several days off which will provide a better work / life balance. He stated that this approach will also increase minimum staffing and reduce overtime.

Mr. Winters and Ms. Royer disconnected from the meeting at this time.

Chief Tornielli stated that officers are prone to increasing their use of force when they are fatigued. He stated that there is a one year trial period and the agreement allows opting out if it is not successful. He stated that overall the Department is short staffed until new hires arrive in January. He stated that moving to a 12 hour shift will allow an increase in specialty positions and will assist with recruitment and retention. He thanked the FOP, Mr. Lachat and Mr. Kelly for their assistance.

Mr. Phillipides disconnected from the meeting at this time.

Chief Tornielli expressed the belief that the shift change will serve both the Department and the City well.

Mr. Waltman stated that he supports using a trial period for the program.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz congratulated the Chief. She questioned if he would check in with officers through the year. Chief Tornielli stated that he will have check-ins. He stated that this approach also reduces the size of patrol districts. He stated that district boundaries will also be studied to see if adjustments are needed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the Chief for his work on this innovative approach. She questioned if other Police Departments use this approach. Chief Tornielli stated that others use this approach and he spoke with their chiefs about the pros and cons.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that time off will help recharge officers and will be an advantage. She stated that a similar approach is used by hospital staff.

Chief Tornielli answered Ms. Kelleher's question in the chat and stated that the shift change only applies to patrol officers. He stated that other divisions will remain on their M – F schedule. He stated that other divisions may be added in the future after the program is evaluated.

III. Agenda Review

Mr. Waltman stated that Police items will be reviewed at this time to allow Chief Tornielli to return to his family since he's on vacation.

- Resolution authorizing an agreement with Kenhorst Borough for police services dated December 2, 2021 for the year 2022 for \$475,922.29 as attached

Mr. Waltman stated that Reading police patrol Kenhorst and Kenhorst pays the City for this service.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned how often this agreement is updated. Ms. Kelleher stated that generally it is for several years but the FOP contract expires in 2022 and future costs are not yet known. She stated that the agreement will be updated at the end of 2022.

- Resolution authorizing conditional offers of employment for the hiring of 21 people as probationary patrol officers effective January 10, 2022

Ms. Reed questioned if any females will be hired. Chief Tornielli stated that there are no females in this class.

IV. Downtown Public Private Partnership Amendment

Chief Tornielli disconnected from the meeting at this time.

Mr. Waltman suggested that this topic be deferred to a January meeting.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz noted the need to table the ordinance this evening.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the ordinance may need revisions after further discussion.

Mr. Waltman stated that the Administration plans to form a Steering Committee, including members of Council, to create a Downtown Action Plan and make a formal presentation on the Stantec Plan.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that a new Council will be seated in January. She reminded all of the enormous learning curve for new Councilors and noted the need to spend as much time on topics as needed so they get a full understanding. She noted the need to schedule extra time if needed.

Mr. Waltman agreed with Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and suggested holding a retreat.

Ms. Reed noted the need to have everyone at the table for this discussion.

Ms. Sihelnik noted the need to set a timeline. She reminded all that delays will slow movement on the Stantec Plan which includes critical priorities. She agreed with the need for a retreat. She cautioned against restructuring the P3 until after the full discussion has been held and to use current members as resources moving forward.

Mr. Waltman agreed with Ms. Sihelnik.

Ms. Reed again noted the need for everyone to be at the table, otherwise there will be no progress.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that she has reviewed the proposed amendment and noted the need to be mindful of downtown goals.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need to review the proposed amendment and to put comments in writing to get everyone's viewpoints before the retreat.

Mr. Waltman agreed with Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz.

V. Salary Adjustments

Mr. Waltman noted the need to manage Council staff since the Charter referendum makes them Council employees. He stated that this is new and needs definition. He suggested forming a Committee in 2022 to work with Ms. Kelleher and Mr. Gombar to create policies in response to the referendum.

Deputy Fire Chief Stoudt joined the meeting at this time.

Ms. Sihelnik stated that she approached his subject two months ago. She noted the need for salary adjustments and stated that the referendum requires a new approach. She thanked Mr. Gombar for his assistance navigating staff oversight. She noted the need for a thoughtful conversation and performance evaluations. She also noted the need to address

communication issues within Council and to involve HR in this process. She expressed the belief that there are critical aspects that need to be addressed. She noted the need to compare the outputs of the Clerk's Office with outputs of other offices. She stated that the work done by the Clerk's Office is critical. She noted the need for Council to take care of their employees and give them the resources they need. She asked Council to consider the additional work done by the Clerk's Office since the beginning of COVID and their new responsibilities. She noted her concern with proper oversight of these unique positions. She expressed the belief that staff is producing exceptional outputs and that Council could not do what they do without them.

Mr. Waltman noted the need to work with Mr. Gombar. He agreed that staff already has structure and that staff needs Council's support. He stated that oversight should not only be by the President but by all of Council. He noted the need to not get political and for the Clerk's Office to function well.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that she agrees with all comments she's heard. She noted the need for all to understand their roles and what services the Clerk's Office can provide to Councilors.

Mr. Waltman stated that Council staff takes on many responsibilities.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz agreed and stated that there are three staff members and seven Councilors. She questioned if a staff member could be assigned to a Councilor for consistency with assistance.

Mr. Waltman noted the need to allow staff to drive processes that work best.

Ms. Kelleher stated that generally, Councilors should approach her with their needs and she will assign to staff as necessary depending on the project / need.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Council staff for their consistency throughout their tenure. She expressed the belief that they serve the City as a whole and not only Council. She stated that they also work with many boards and commissions which are foundational to government operations. She expressed the belief that the current model works well. She stated that Council staff can be depended on to do whatever is needed and to attend meetings and functions as necessary. She noted the need to examine their salaries.

Mr. Waltman noted the need for continued discussions and for Ms. Kelleher to be involved in the discussions.

Ms. Kelleher stated that there is much detail about staff responsibilities in the Council Handbook. She stated that she and Ms. Smith are updating the Handbook at this time. She expressed the belief that an employee who has been with the City for one year should not earn the same salary as an employee who has been with the City for a longer period of time.

Ms. Sihelnik suggested that the current form of government should also be evaluated. She suggested that Council take the opportunity to consider a Government Study Commission.

Ms. Reed stated that she would support a Government Study Commission. She expressed the belief that this form of government is ineffective and is not advancing the City. She expressed the belief that it is not working.

Mr. Waltman questioned who would initiate the Commission. Ms. Kelleher stated that it can be initiated by Council or by citizens.

Mr. Waltman requested that the Commission be discussed at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

Ms. Sihelnik stated that it was discussed several years ago but was delayed by the Charter Review Commission and COVID. She expressed the belief that it is time to begin.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz noted her agreement with Ms. Kelleher about salaries and fairness. She expressed the belief that the Clerk's Office does tremendous work. She stated that they work long hours and spend a large amount of time on their responsibilities. She stated that if she was on Council staff she would be disgruntled at the disparity.

Mr. Marmarou noted the need to examine the Clerk's Office staff wages compared to other City wages.

Mr. Waltman stated that he supports staff. He noted the need to provide structure and draft policies. He stated that Council has hired its solicitor and can now move on to working on staff issues.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz noted the importance of performance evaluations for City employees. She stated that she is disturbed that they are not being done. She expressed the belief that evaluations help employees grow and should be used when considering salary increases.

Mr. Waltman stated that evaluation occurs even if not in written form. He expressed the belief that written evaluations are better.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with the need for performance evaluations. She stated that she is astounded that they are not used by the City. She requested a memo from the Managing Director to describe what is being done by the City to begin a formal performance evaluation process. She expressed the belief that verbal evaluations are not acceptable. She noted the need to set timelines through a Council resolution. She stated that COVID did not affect the work of the Clerk's Office and should not continually be used as an excuse by others. She

stated that she will pick up where Ms. Sihelnik has left off to complete this process. She also noted the need for Council to evaluate themselves for their effectiveness.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned how timeliness and processes would be enforced and questioned if an ordinance was needed. Mr. Waltman stated that Council cannot force the Administration to do their duties. He stated that there are also risks in written evaluations. He noted the need to review these issues with the Administration and requested the topic be revisited at a Committee of the Whole meeting in late January.

Mr. Gombar stated that he will review the referendum question and develop a draft framework before the discussion in January.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that ideally evaluations helps employees grow and will help fill staff vacancies.

Mr. Waltman noted the need for discussions with the Mayor and Managing Director and to work with Mr. Gombar.

Mr. Marmarou noted the need to ensure the two new Councilors understand the issue.

Ms. Sihelnik suggested that this issue, reorganization and possible Capital project reallocations should be Council's priorities.

Mr. Waltman stated that he is hoping to have lunch with the two new Councilors. He stated that the Administration has new plans for downtown. He suggested that a retreat be held in the first quarter of 2022 for Council input. He thanked Ms. Sihelnik for bringing this issue forward. He noted the need for Council to address their priorities in the first quarter as well, including downtown and Council staff.

VI. Agenda Review (Continued)

Mr. Marmarou stated that Mr. Waltman should cut the Vasilopita.

Council reviewed this evening's agenda including the following:

- Public Comment

Ms. Kelleher stated that one person has submitted written public comment on a non-agenda topic.

- Resolution authorizing the Solicitor to execute the forms to approve Repository Bids for 813, 817 and 821 Eckert St

Ms. Kelleher stated that these parcels will be purchased by the Parking Authority.

Mr. Ruiz and Ms. Bausher disconnected from the meeting at this time.

- Ordinance amending Code of Ordinances Chapter 23 Section 101 by changing the number of members of the Planning Commission from five to seven members

Ms. Kelleher stated that no updated effective date was provided.

Mr. Waltman noted the need to table this ordinance.

- Ordinance amending Code of Ordinances Chapter 396 Parks and Recreation, Part 3 Park Use, Section 305 Rules of Conduct to prohibit the dumping of yard waste in City parks, playgrounds, preserves and public spaces

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the illegal dumping has been horrendous lately. She questioned how this would be implemented on land that does not belong to the City.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that this is already covered elsewhere in the Code.

Ms. Kelleher stated that this clarifies the dumping of yard waste and does not affect other provisions. Mr. Waltman agreed and stated that dumping is already illegal.

Mr. Gombar read the enforcement section aloud.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that not all of the preserve is owned by the City. Mr. Rugis stated that in many instances the City removes the items that have been dumped. He expressed the belief that there is a major clean up somewhere in the City at least once a week. He stated that Public Works often receives thanks for this work.

Ms. Sihelnik noted her appreciation for Mr. Rugis and his team. She noted the need to be conscience of the money spent on removal of dumped items. She also cautioned that repeatedly removing dumped items makes residents expect it and it becomes a larger burden to the City. She noted the need for education and outreach to residents. She noted the opportunity to work with the 18th Wonder on their street sweeping project to assist with litter and dumping.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that enforcement is always a concern.

There was a discussion about street sweeping and how that has trained residents that the City will clean up after them.

Ms. Smith entered into the chat that this amendment addresses the dumping of yard waste only and no other provisions are changing.

Mr. Kelly stated that CD can lien properties for trash abatement costs and recoup the funds when the property is sold.

- Ordinance amending the City Code Chapter 496 Solid Waste Part 2 Storage and Collection to clarify that yard waste is collected by the City at no extra fee for residents

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned why this is being done. Ms. Kelleher stated that the issue was noted by the EAC and is a companion to the amendment to the Park Code. She explained the problems caused by dumping yard waste in preserve areas.

- Ordinance amending City Code Chapter 212 Fees, Part 136 Curbside Waste Collection setting the fees for 2022

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz requested clarity that the ordinance shows a decrease in the recycling fee but that in reality the fee is not changing. Mr. Lachat explained that there was a fee in the past to residents who had their own trash hauler and City recycling. He stated that this fee is no longer charged since most residents have the City hauler. He stated that the Clean City fee is now part of the full fee and has been removed from recycling only.

Mr. Marmarou noted the need to further explain the senior discount to include that there are also income requirements. Mr. Lachat stated that this is explained in the Solid Waste regulations. Mr. Rugis stated that this information is shared via a RAWA insert and through the CSC.

Mr. Marmarou commended Mr. Harrity and his staff on their work.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned the appeal fee. Mr. Lachat stated that this fee applies to residents who wish to appeal a citation.

- Ordinance authorizing the sale of Wool Alley to John H. Miller and / or Real Food Farm LLC for \$500

Ms. Sihelnik stated that this sale went through a very long process. She stated that she is glad to see it moving forward and thanked Mr. Lachat for his work on this project.

- Ordinance authorizing the required construction easements to PennDOT for the rebuilding of the Schuylkill Ave Railroad Bridge; PennDOT project SR 183-05B

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned the impact of this project.

Ms. Reed stated that the bridge height needs to be increased to accommodate a double stack of shipping containers. She stated that Schuylkill Ave will be closed during the project.

Mr. Rugis stated that the timeline has changed and there is good cooperation on the project.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if anyone would be displaced. Ms. Reed stated that no one will be displaced and that PennDOT is working to address the food dessert that will be created.

- Ordinance amending the CIP Budget to provide \$500,000 in funding to cover the cost of the Schlegel Park Pool project

Ms. Rodriguez questioned if ARPA funding could be used instead. Mr. Kelly stated that it cannot because this is to pay a past due invoice.

Mr. Waltman questioned if this would finalize the project. Mr. Kelly stated that additional invoices will be received for the project. He stated that this does not address the cost of the new baby pool.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the City has received ARPA funds in 2021. Mr. Waltman stated that this work was done prior to the receipt of ARPA funds. Mr. Kelly agreed and stated that using ARPA funds will further delay payment of this invoice.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if the Pool would open on time in 2022. Mr. Rugis expressed the belief that the Pool will open Memorial Day weekend. He explained that using ARPA funds will add time to the payment of this invoice. He stated that it is already past due and the City has a reputation in the community that it doesn't pay its bills on time.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for the Rec Commission to understand the Pool opening. She questioned if it can open even if work is not complete. Mr. Rugis stated that it can open. He stated that the contractor has assured him that the sidewalks will be completed by that time.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz requested that this be put in writing and provided to Ms. Klahr so she can budget for pool staff and other needs.

Ms. Sihelnik recalled discussing a splash pad and a baby pool. She stated that she does not recall the final decision. She questioned if that portion of the project would be complete by Memorial Day. Mr. Rugis stated that Council did not support the splash pad and a baby pool will be installed. He reminded all that the pool was built in a flood zone and stated that the baby pool will need its own lifeguard. He stated that there may be other future opportunities at this property and suggested that future options be provided to Council before bids are solicited to provide them with greater input.

Mr. Waltman noted the need for small children to get acclimated to being in water. Mr. Rugis stated that the contractor has the necessary supplies and that a splash pad can be added in the future if Council wishes.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that splash pads are available free at City parks and that those using Schlegel pay admission.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if the baby pool would be operational by Memorial Day. Mr. Rugis noted his hope that it would be operational before opening day.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned what could be done to improve the City's reputation to pay its bills on time. Mr. Rugis stated that he signs invoices within 24 hours after they are presented to him. Mr. Kelly stated that delays occur when funds are spent that are not budgeted.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if a policy is needed so bills are processed in a uniform manner. Mr. Kelly stated that this would require additional staff.

Mr. Waltman left the meeting at this time.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that these critical functions start at the top. She noted the need for internal controls to address missteps. She requested that this topic be added to Council's list for further discussion. She noted the need for a streamlined process for ARPA spending. She expressed the belief that this is a timely topic and thanked all for their work.

Mr. Waltman returned to the meeting at this time.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she works with Mr. Kelly when she discovers missteps. She noted the need to work together.

Mr. Kelly stated that the next three ordinances on the agenda address past due invoices.

Mr. Moran noted the need to clarify that employees are not spending unbudgeted funds on their own. He stated that many times these projects are pending but are moving forward slowly.

- Ordinance amending 2021 Capital Improvement Fund Budget by transferring \$200,000.00 to the LED Lighting Project Fund

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if this finalizes the project. Mr. Rugis stated that the project is approximately half complete.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned when the project would be completed. Mr. Rugis stated that the lighting design changed after the project started and caused delays. He stated that COVID

caused further delays. He noted his hope that the project would be complete by the end of 2022.

- Ordinance authorizing the transfer of \$40,000 from the Public Works Admin Contracted Services to Maintenance Repair Street Lights for the purpose of year end Street Lighting repairs

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if this was part of the LED lighting project. Mr. Rugis stated that it is. He stated that Public Works is also working with Met Ed to repair their lights more quickly.

- Ordinance authorizing the transfer of \$50,000 from the Public Works Admin Contracted Services to Contracted Services for unforeseen maintenance and repair to public facilities

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that Ms. Sihelnik requested specificity around which facilities would be repaired.

Ms. Sihelnik stated that she agreed when explained about the need for vagueness to use the funds as needed. She stated that she is satisfied with the ordinance and is satisfied that it can proceed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed that the ordinance needs to be vague and flexible to address unforeseen issues. She stated that Public Works knows what needs to be addressed.

- Ordinance allocating \$3 million in ARPA funding to First Energy Stadium for the required stadium improvements

Mr. Kelly stated that this is the same format used for the Arena.

- Ordinance authorizing a budget amendment for unscheduled demolitions by transferring \$152,000 from Finance IT to CD Trades

Ms. Kelleher stated that generally this is for emergency demolitions. Mr. Kelly agreed and stated that this funding will be used for one emergency demolition and three small properties. He stated that the work is complete and invoices need to be paid. He stated that CDBG funds are used for scheduled demolitions and Trades funds are used for unscheduled demolitions.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that the vote will occur in 2022 but be applied to the 2021 budget. Mr. Kelly stated that this is correct.

- Ordinance authorizing a budget amendment to cover Self Insurance expenses through the end of 2021 – Liability claims in the amount of \$155,200; Premium payments in the amount of \$101,100 and Other Insurance Premium in the amount of \$63,700; funded by an increase in Transfer from Fund Balance in the amount of \$320,000

Mr. Waltman stated that these costs are estimated at the beginning of the year and the actual costs must now be paid. Mr. Kelly agreed.

- Ordinance authorizing a transfer of \$100,000 from the Sidewalk Repair / Replacement to Solid Waste to provide a funding incentive to assist with costs incurred to construct and / or purchase approved screening for dumpsters and trash receptacles located in the right of way, as per the newly enacted dumpster ordinance

Mr. Waltman suggested this be discussed at next week's Committee of the Whole meeting.

Ms. Reed also noted the need for an update on the Sidewalk Replacement Program.

- Ordinance amending the 2022 Position Ordinance as per the Mayor to reflect a change to the title of the position of Executive Assistant in the Mayor's Office to Special Assistant and to reflect an increase in the base salary of the Special Assistant position from \$53,000 to \$63,652.50 per annum

Mr. Waltman noted the need for this ordinance to be discussed at the January 10 Committee meeting as well.

- Ordinance amending the City Code by creating Chapter 317 Invasive Plants and Noxious Weeds to regulate and provide guidance to landowners to responsibly control invasive plants and noxious weeds to allow the re-establishment of native plants and to implement the City's obligations under the Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Act

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Ms. Smith and the EAC for their work on this ordinance. She stated that the damage to native plants is very visible in the City's forests.

VII. Other Matters

Mr. Moran stated that he is on vacation and with his family so he will not be attending the regular meeting. He stated that he wished to publicly thank Council for their commitment to Reading and stated that he is looking forward to a fruitful and productive 2022. He thanked Mr. Marmarou and Ms. Sihelnik for their work and stated that it was a pleasure and an honor working with them. He stated that the City is grateful for them and that they will be missed. He encouraged them to remain active in the community. He stated that their work did not go unnoticed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the Mayor for his comments. She gave special recognition to Mr. Rugis for his service to the City and his work with the Public Works Department.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

*Respectfully Submitted by
Linda A. Kelleher, CMC, City Clerk*