



CITY COUNCIL

Public Works Committee

Monday, December 19, 2011

Agenda

5:00 p.m.

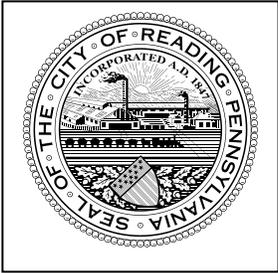
Committee Members: M. Goodman-Hinnershitz Chair, D. Sterner, S. Marmarou

Although Council committee meetings are open to the public, public comment is not permitted. However, citizens are encouraged to attend and observe the committee meetings. Comment from citizens or professionals during the meeting may be solicited on agenda topics via invitation by the Committee Chair.

- I. Update Egelman's Park and Dam Condition**
- II. Update Recreation Commission**
- III. Ordinance Regulating Utilities in City Streets**

Follow-up Issues:

- **Stormwater Utility**
- **Former Police Academy Building**
- **Establish and Enforce a Utility Cut Program (PW 15)**
- **Fleet Maintenance Contract with Neighboring Municipalities (PW 03)**
- **Inventory of Lease Agreements (PW11)**
- **Seek Sponsorships for parks and park maintenance - discuss in January**
- **Capital Repairs to Library - in progress**
- **Managing all street lights**
- **Installation of traffic device 5th & Bingaman - in progress**
- **Citadel Traffic Issues - C. Jones/M. Fizz/D. Campbell**



CITY COUNCIL

Public Works Committee

***Monday, November 21, 2011
Meeting Report***

Committee Members Attending: D. Sterner, S. Marmarou, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz Chair

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, D. Hoag, C. Jones

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, Chair, called the Public Works Committee meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

Update Egelman's Park Dam

Ms. Hoag reported that Gannett Flemming has submitted plans and specs for the road repair project. She stated that the project will be bid out shortly and will involve a major amount of stone work. She stated that the project will also include repairs to the upstream bridge and the upper stone dam. She expressed her hope that including all three areas would decrease the overall cost of the project and added that the project will address issues noted in the annual dam inspection report.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the City had a stone mason on staff. Ms. Hoag stated that the City does not have a stone mason on staff. She added that much of the stone can be reused and repointed.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the effect rainfall has on these dams. Ms. Hoag stated that rain flow has some effect but that a larger issue comes from the water that regularly runs off the mountain in this area and the lack of an emergency spillway.

Mr. Marmarou stated that some homes on Hill Road get water in their basements during heavy rain events. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the many underground springs in this area which causes basement issues.

Mr. Denbowski arrived at this time.

Mr. Sterner questioned the financing of the project. Ms. Hoag stated that the project will be paid through the sewer fund as it is related to storm water.

Ms. Hoag stated that she met with DEP regarding the project and that the project does not require DEP permits. She stated that DEP has noted that the dam does not meet current standards and that the need for a spillway will need to be recalculated for capacity. She stated that Gannett Flemming is also addressing this issue. She suggested a spillway similar to the one at Bernhart's Park

Mr. Sterner questioned if DEP will order the removal of this dam. Ms. Hoag stated that DEP likes this dam as it still serves a purpose.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that if the dam is removed, water will continue to flow and cause other related problems.

Mr. Marmarou noted the continual problems with the flooding of Delta Ave. He stated that these residents are upset and feel the City is not addressing the issue. Mr. Jones stated that the City has not received any reports of problems with flooding on Delta Ave. He stated that he visited the site during the flood event at Bernhart Creek recently. He stated that the basin was full but remained functional and that the flooding of Kutztown Road was not flowing into Northmont.

Mr. Marmarou invited Mr. Jones to attend the next meeting of the Northmont neighborhood group to explain.

Update Recreation Commission

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that two Rec Commission meetings have been held. She stated that there is much work to do.

Mr. Denbowski stated that the Board is now full. He stated that Mr. Spencer will need to be replaced in January as one of the Council representatives. He stated that the City continues to

assist as needed and has paid for the ad for Executive Director. A selection committee has been formed and there is a December 15 deadline for applications. Once the Executive Director is hired the Commission will need to set its 2012 priorities. Mr. Denbowski expressed his hope that the Commission will increase and improve the summer playground program.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for the Commission to apply for a federal EIN and 501 (c) 3 status in order to open bank accounts. She stated the accounts are needed to pay expenses and payroll. She stated that the Commission is working with the City to keep benefits for employees through the City program to alleviate the high cost of health benefits. She stated that the Commission would rather spend their funds on programming and not employee services.

Mr. Denbowski expressed his thanks to the City's Human Resources and Legal Departments for their assistance. He stated that the current recreation employees will be transferred to the Commission effective January 1. He noted that COBRA will be used to fill the gap for health benefits until the Commission is organized. He noted the excitement and enthusiasm of the Commission and the great cooperation between the City and the School District.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz reminded the Committee that the Commission is responsible for programming only and that maintenance responsibility remains with the City and the School District.

Mr. Denbowski noted the need to update the City's Park and Open Space Plan. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained that the Park and Recreation Advisory Committee has been working on this update. She noted the need for Council to address the future of the PARC. She noted the need for the Plan update to be prepared by professionals in order to qualify for State funding of projects.

Mr. Denbowski stated that the Update must be completed by a planning professional. He stated that Mr. Geffken suggested bidding this project with the update to the City's Comprehensive Plan and making the Park and Open Space Plan one chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that a new inventory is not needed as there have been no major changes. The chapter will include the vision and planning only.

Ms. Katzenmoyer questioned how this would impact on the work already performed by herself and the PARC. She stated that 18-24 months of work has already been invested. Mr. Denbowski stated that the survey results are current and will be used by the consultant to formulate the plan. He stated that none of the work or time will be lost.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned Ms. Katzenmoyer's suggestion for the future of the PARC. Ms. Katzenmoyer suggested that the mission of the PARC may change but recommended that the group not be disbanded.

River Tribe Project

Mr. Rhodes of River Tribe and Mr. Twyman of Perma Cultivate arrived at this time.

Mr. Rhodes reviewed the maps distributed and stated that he has spoken with Mr. McMahon about the project. He stated that the project would assist the City by clearing out overgrowth and would add a community garden and a healing garden.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if there was extensive vandalism in the area. Mr. Rhodes noted his hope that inviting the community to utilize the space would decrease vandalism. He noted his hope that schools would be involved as well. He described his vision of labeled plantings including descriptions of the uses of plants.

Mr. Marmarou noted the importance of community involvement in projects.

Mr. Rhodes explained that he is the owner of the River Tribe business, which rents kayaks for river tours. He stated that patrons are shuttled to Felix Dam and exit the river at this location. He stated that his business attracts people from New York, New Jersey and the Lehigh Valley. He stated that he is in the area daily and that an outfitter store will be opening in the Canal St building. This will add to the destination.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she walks this area and that it receives the least amount of illegal dumping.

Mr. Rhodes noted the work of the Reading City Church. He noted his willingness to prepare a 3-D walk through tour of the proposed project.

Mr. Sterner questioned what was in the area now. Mr. Rhodes stated that it is currently overgrowth and that he would plant raised beds and add trails.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that this could become a very active area. She questioned the impact on the City's facilities. Mr. Jones stated that portions of these parcels would not affect City operations. He stated that the City's 6th & Canal pump station and force main are contained on the parcels. He noted that there will be much construction in this area over the

next few years. Mr. Rhodes stated that this should not be problematic. He stated that work will begin by removing overgrowth. He stated that he would begin on the parcel marked "Community Garden."

Mr. Sterner noted that this would remove some work which would need to be done by the Public Works Department. He expressed support for the project.

Mr. Sterner questioned how this initiative should move forward. Mr. Denbowski stated that the Administration suggests that Council approve a lease or memorandum of understanding. He stated that this would become a destination for ecotourism.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz voiced her support of formalizing an agreement.

Mr. Sterner requested seeing the 3-D plan. Mr. Rhodes noted his willingness to provide this information.

Mr. Twyman noted that this project would continue beautifying an area that River Tribe and Perma Cultivate uses on a daily basis. He noted his hope that RACC will also become involved on the riverfront.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that this item be placed on the December Work Session agenda for the full body of Council to see the 3-D rendering. She suggested that this project move forward as the one with Perma Cultivate and begin as a memorandum of understanding and revisit it as necessary. Mr. Rhodes agreed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the work on the force main would affect business. Mr. Rhodes stated that he had to completely shut down during the emergency work as the river was a mess. Mr. Jones stated that the emergency work would differ from the project work. He stated that the river may need to be closed in portions to allow work on the underground force main as it crosses the river.

Mr. Rhodes noted his willingness to pull kayaks out near Penske. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested using the boat launch area. She noted the need for continued education about water safety. Mr. Rhodes noted his willingness to continue water safety education.

Ordinance Regulating Utilities in City Streets

Mr. Jones stated that the City has been planning a street assessment that would have only included street lighting. He stated that the Recovery Plan expanded the assessment. He stated

that responses to an RFP were currently received. The RFP requested a cost study and the items to be included in the assessment. He stated that the RFPs are being reviewed and that the preparation of this ordinance was included in the RFP. He stated that items to be regulated include backfill, depth of utilities, and updating of standards for driveways, curbs, etc. He stated that the award of this contract should be before Council shortly.

Mr. Marmarou questioned who would oversee underground items at the former Glidden property. Mr. Jones stated that it would depend on the project that is proposed for the area. He stated that it may fall on Public Works but may also fall on Trades Inspectors. He stated that this would be addressed during the environmental review of the planning process.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if access remained to the comfort stations at 5th & Penn. Mr. Jones stated that this underground area is a mess. He stated that some access remains and that there are many caverns downtown.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the caverns would be mapped during the mapping of the sewer system. Mr. Jones stated that they would not.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that many times utility companies damage curbing during their street projects. She questioned who is responsible for repairs. Mr. Jones stated that the responsibility lies with the company who caused the damage. He stated that not all utility companies will make repairs but that UGI does.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that many curbs are still made of slate. Mr. Jones stated that the City will be repairing and replacing curbs as necessary due to the sink hole at Walnut and Pear Sts.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need to continue monitoring Cotton St.

Mr. Sterner questioned if street lighting would be included in the assessment. Mr. Jones stated that it would be in addition to all the other items he noted. He stated that it may also include pothole repair and snow removal. He stated that this assessment would move these costs out of the City's general fund expenses.

Fire Tower

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the Fire Tower has been maintained by Pagoda Skyline who now wishes to purchase it. She suggested that this issue be discussed after the transition to the new Mayor. She stated that there is no current agreement with Pagoda Skyline. She

stated that Mr. Reinart should be contacted to inform him of the delay.

Follow Up Items

- Citadel Traffic Issues

Mr. Jones stated that Sgt Fizz has retired. He stated that the stop sign at 12th & Walnut Sts still does not have Council approval and is not enforceable. He stated that he has not heard from the School District with a formal plan for traffic changes. He stated that he will follow up with Mr. Campbell on this issue. Captain Powell is now overseeing traffic and he will also follow up with him.

- Flashing Warning Device at 5th & Bingaman Sts

Mr. Jones stated that construction is occurring. He stated that the signs will be installed and the project complete.

- Seek Sponsorships for parks and park maintenance

Mr. Marmarou noted that the Northmont neighborhood group is willing to become involved with their playground.

Mr. Jones stated that he will be working on this initiative during the winter months. He described his work to find sponsors for the medians on Hancock Blvd from Lancaster Ave to Museum Rd.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that the PARC examine this issue.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that this was part of her Six Sigma Greenbelt project and noted her willingness to share the results with Mr. Jones.

- Fleet Maintenance Contract with Neighboring Municipalities (PW 03)

Mr. Jones stated that he contacted municipalities which neighbor Reading. He stated that some have voiced interest and that he would be reaching out to additional municipalities. He stated that Public Works already performs this function for the County Sheriff and District Attorney.

Mr. Marmarou questioned partnering with the School District. Mr. Jones stated that he tried

this in the past but that collective bargaining issues could not be resolved. He noted the need for additional staff depending on the amount of municipalities willing to participate. He noted that this additional staff should be cost neutral.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Linda A. Kelleher, CMC City Clerk

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the successful completion of this Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Project. Special appreciation is extended to these people who served on the project committee:

Frank Denbowski, Chief of Staff, City of Reading

Marsha Goodman-Hinnershitz, Member, Reading City Council

Shelly Katzenmoyer, Deputy City Clerk, City of Reading

Linda Kelleher, City Clerk, City of Reading

John Santoro, Jr., Member, Reading School Board

Mike Schorn, Education Coordinator, City of Reading

Otis Smith, Chair, Reading Park and Recreation Advisory Council

Vaughn Spencer, President, Reading City Council

Yvonne Stroman, President, Reading School Board

Frank Vecchio, Former Acting Superintendent of Schools, Reading School District

Jim Washington, Vice-President, Reading School Board

Summary

The City of Reading has a long history of providing quality recreation services for its residents.

Less than 15 years ago, the City staffed 28 summer playground programs for children. By 2010, only five supervised playground sites operated. In 2011, the playground program was not held due to lack of funding. The City's parks are also beginning to fall into decline. The City's current financial situation calls for alteration in its approach to recreation programming in order to continue to provide public recreation for its citizens, in particular its children. Presently the City Recreation Division has just two full-time staff positions left, and few recreation programs are offered.

The long-term sustainability of basic services provided by Pennsylvania cities – police, fire, water, sanitation, public health, streets, parks and recreation, traffic control and so on – is in jeopardy. Dwindling resources are leaving cities such as Reading unable to deliver those basic services needed to support economic vitality and quality of life for residents.

Mayor Tom McMahon convened a municipal recreation work group in 2009 to explore forming new community partnerships to share the cost of providing high-quality, accessible youth recreation programming in Reading. In February 2010, the work group released a preliminary report recommending that the City pursue the establishment of a Reading Recreation Commission in partnership with the Reading School District. The non-profit status of a recreation commission will open up grant possibilities, business support and donations that government cannot access. A recreation commission would also be able to keep the revenue earned by programs to fund its operation and expand and improve its programs.

The other reasons to create a recreation commission are all quality of life reasons. Investing in public recreation is investing in solutions to help alleviate community problems, such as low high school graduation rates, inadequate early childhood care and education, crime and gang activities among youth, truancy, drug and alcohol use and teen pregnancy. When youth are involved in positive, constructive activities, these problems are lessened.

The City and School District realized that they had a special opportunity to foster a collaborative funding and facility relationship for public recreation, to primarily benefit City children.

With the help of DCNR, a preliminary meeting was held in October 2010 to discuss undertaking a peer study in order to sustain City-wide recreation opportunities, particularly for youth. The first meeting of the project committee was held in December. It was agreed that this was to be an action-oriented project, not a study-oriented project.

The purpose of the project committee's work was to explore forming a community partnership between the School District and the City, with a focus on sharing resources, to provide expanded youth recreation programming. The overall goal for the committee was to establish the Reading Recreation Commission as a 501 (c)(3) intergovernmental non-profit agency. An aggressive six-month timeline was set for completion of the project.

Six goals were adopted for the project committee's work:

1. Make it possible to expand, enhance and deliver City public recreation services more effectively through coordination between the City and School District.
2. Keep the effort as simple and straight forward as possible.
3. Focus the effort to form a recreation commission on expanded youth programming.
4. Create an agency with the structure and ability to keep the revenue earned from programs to fund the agency's operations and expand and improve the programs.
5. Share use of City and School District public facilities to provide more sports and recreation opportunities for youth at better maintained facilities.
6. Foster a close, collaborative working relationship among the City and School District to benefit the City's youth.

The project committee agreed upon the purpose of the potential recreation commission as follows: "Through a partnership between the City of Reading and the Reading School District, provide affordable sports, recreation and learning opportunities to Reading youth at schools, parks and playgrounds."

The project committee also identified how forming a recreation commission would benefit the City and School District, and ultimately, the residents of the City of Reading. These benefits were shared with City Council and School Board members:

1. City and School District community recreation facility assets will be better used. For example, a recreation commission could operate the School District's indoor swimming pools for youth swimming lessons and community use.
2. Neighborhood-based sports and recreation program opportunities will be offered at school locations and City park and playground facilities. Continuing the programs that exist and expanding programs at school locations and City park and playground facilities throughout the City's neighborhoods will help to make the programs accessible to children (within walking distance).
3. Youth will have a purpose through expanded sports and recreation programs. Programs will be a "hook" to keep kids in school. Problems such as crime and gang activities, low high school graduation rates, truancy, drug and alcohol use and teen pregnancy are lessened when youth are exposed to and involved in positive, constructive activities. Research has shown that children who are involved in sports and recreation programs perform better in school, helping them meet state standards in academic areas and reinforce classroom learning. Sports and recreation programs help to meet children's needs for belonging, recognition, achievement, adventure, excitement, creativity and competition. They also help children develop self-

confidence, increase self-esteem, improve social and communication skills and be more physically active.

4. Kids will stay active and keep learning during the summer months at neighborhood playground programs. By working together, the City and School District can bring the summer playground programs back to many locations, getting thousands of children out of the house and involved in constructive activities.
5. Youth sports programs will coordinate with the School District athletic programs to better prepare youth for middle and high school sports. Reading youth have tremendous athletic potential which isn't being developed to the extent it could be. School District teams could be dominant if children were involved in structured sports programs at younger ages. Some of the volunteer youth sports groups are struggling. With support from the recreation commission with items such as fundraising, scheduling use of facilities and recruiting and training coaches, the existing youth sports groups could continue to operate and strengthen their programs.
6. The operation of youth recreation programs will be supported through revenue earned, business support, grant funding, donations, and other sources rather than rely heavily on tax support. Intergovernmental cooperation increases the City's chances of receiving future grant funding for park and recreation facility improvements, plus a state grant is available to hire another full-time employee once a recreation commission is officially put in place. Obtaining 501(c)(3) status will open the doors to many more grant and foundation sources. A partnership with the School District will open up more grant possibilities. Businesses and individuals will donate funds to a non-profit agency that is not considered 'government.' The ability to spend the revenue earned to improve the programs offered for children will give the staff the incentive to raise money. Many programs will be able to be self-supporting.

In January 2011, work began on a list of 23 decisions that would need to be made to draft an intergovernmental agreement of cooperation. The items were discussed at length and consensus agreement was reached over the next few months. The peer consultant met with the School Board to present the Recreation Commission concept and answer questions in March 2011. The intergovernmental agreement was reviewed by City and School District solicitors, and suggested changes were incorporated. In July 2011, the School Board and City Council approved the intergovernmental agreement to create the Reading Recreation Commission. In large part, this was made possible by the great work of the project committee members, who remained focused on the goal and positive throughout the process. They kept the City and School District elected officials well informed, answering questions and addressing concerns about project progress. Above all, the project committee members were very willing to compromise and work together.

Recommendations

These recommendations to the City of Reading, Reading School District and Reading Recreation Commission are not in order of priority, and are not meant to be a comprehensive listing. The recommendations should be used as a guideline to begin operations. The Recreation Commission is

expected by DCNR to develop a strategic plan with goals, objectives, action steps, timelines and success indicators. These recommendations should be used as a starting point to develop a strategic plan. Each recommendation should be evaluated and prioritized by the Recreation Commission, and specific actions to accomplish the tasks should be developed.

Administrative Issues

1. Create three executed, original copies of the intergovernmental agreement that are signed and sealed by the City and School District. Provide original executed copies to the City, School District and Recreation Commission. Make additional copies for Recreation Commission members, and City and School District administrative staff.
2. Submit the Circuit Rider grant application to DCNR for the executive director position.
3. Appoint the 11 members to the Recreation Commission and coordinate the first meeting. The citizen appointees should be qualified individuals who are supportive of recreation and are willing to give their time and talents.
4. The City should determine if its Park and Recreation Advisory Council will be needed once the Recreation Commission is functioning.
5. Finalize the salary ranges for the executive director and full-time program staff positions.
6. Draft a job description for the executive director, and review and revise job descriptions for the full-time program staff positions.
7. Run clearances on all existing full and part-time staff, if they have not been done.
8. Determine benefits for the full-time staff, such as vacation, sick leave and holidays.
9. Obtain health insurance, life insurance and pension plan for full-time staff.
10. Obtain worker's compensation insurance coverage.
11. Determine if the two existing full-time Recreation Division staff want to be employed by the Recreation Commission.
12. Recruit and hire an executive director with the help of the City or School District personnel department. Utilize DCNR staff for assistance and advice throughout the hiring process.
13. Join the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS). Include the costs for the executive director to attend the PRPS State Conference in the budget.
14. Apply to the IRS for a federal employer identification number.
15. Open a bank account for the Recreation Commission.
16. Transfer the City Youth Fund and the City Tennis Fund to the Recreation Commission.
17. Contract with a payroll processing company. Develop timesheets and timekeeping policies.
18. Develop an accounting system with the help of an auditing firm familiar with nonprofit agencies. Decide whether to use the accrual or cash method of accounting. Establish a system of controls (checks and balances) for collection and deposit of funds and paying of bills.
19. Purchase accounting software and set up purchase order system.
20. Set up email and voice mail systems.
21. Obtain an auditor to perform the yearly audit.
22. Develop a record-keeping system to save Recreation Commission documents, minutes, financial statements and other important documents.

23. Develop a letter to send to the City and School District requesting contribution payments on a quarterly basis for the Recreation Commission.
24. Develop a detailed first-year operating budget for 2012. This will include complete breakdowns of hours and staff needed to operate existing programs. Start the budgeting process by figuring out how much money there is to spend – the total income the Recreation Commission will have to work with.
25. Have Recreation Commission added to City and School District general liability insurance policies as a named insured.
26. Obtain general liability insurance coverage and directors and officers insurance coverage as needed.
27. Process paperwork to obtain nonprofit 501(c)(3) status. Seek the assistance of the City or School District solicitor when preparing this application.
28. File for state and local tax exemption with the help of solicitors or accountants.
29. Apply for a nonprofit mailing permit, which will allow for reduced postage rates on bulk mailings.
30. Develop employment application form.
31. Develop process for criminal history and child abuse clearances to be obtained for all Recreation Commission employees.
32. Develop employee performance evaluation system.
33. Revise all existing forms used by the Recreation Division – such as accident reports, incident reports, rental forms, program evaluation forms, and registration forms – with Recreation Commission as the agency name.
34. Develop a mission statement for the Recreation Commission. It should be a concise one or two-sentence expression of who the organization is, what it does, for whom and where. It should be compelling and portray how the Recreation Commission is distinct from other organizations.
35. Inventory the supplies and equipment owned by the City Recreation Division.
36. Determine the supplies and equipment that will transfer to Recreation Commission ownership. Determine where equipment will be stored.
37. Develop a personnel policy manual to include items such as employee conduct and disciplinary action, leaves of absence, work conditions and hours, timekeeping and payroll, employee benefit programs, employment status and records, etc.
38. Begin the strategic planning process shortly after the executive director is employed.
39. Establish a process to keep lines of communication with the City Council and School Board open. Ask for a standing report on their meeting agendas. This can be done as a written report, introduced by Recreation Commission member(s) who represent each entity, or as a verbal report.

Recreation Commission Board Development

1. Set monthly meeting dates, times and locations for the Recreation Commission and place a public meeting notice advertisement in the local newspaper.

2. Elect officers for the Recreation Commission.
3. Draft and approve by-laws for the operation of the Recreation Commission. Have them reviewed by the City or School District solicitor prior to approval.
4. Prepare a contact list for Recreation Commission members. Include the term expiration dates for members on the contact list.
5. Activate the Recreation Commission committees (program, property, finance, personnel) and divide responsibilities among members.
6. Identify the roles and responsibilities of Recreation Commission members.
7. Adopt a communication and decision making outline for Recreation Commission members and staff members to follow.
8. Adopt a code of ethics that Recreation Commission members must sign.
9. Have Recreation Commission chair and executive director meet prior to each Recreation Commission meeting to develop the meeting agenda.
10. Have executive director provide a written report for each Recreation Commission meeting.
11. Develop an orientation manual for new Recreation Commission members and implement an orientation process.
12. Keep politics out of the operation of the Recreation Commission. Put the community and cooperative effort first.

Recreation Programs

1. Evaluate the existing City-sponsored recreation programs and determine what changes need to be made.
2. Track program enrollment and attendance.
3. Place a priority on resurrecting the supervised summer playground program at as many sites as possible.
4. Meet with all existing recreation providers in the City to develop a thorough understanding of what programs currently exist and how many children are being served.
5. Meet with all organizations that use City-owned facilities to run recreation programs, such as BlackTop Summer Basketball, Rising Sun Athletic Association, etc., so that it is clear who is using facilities and who is responsible for maintaining facilities.
6. Identify days and times when School District facilities may be available for community recreation programs.
7. Meet with School District representatives to coordinate use of school facilities including the supervision required and how the Recreation Commission will access the facilities.
8. Visit all City and School District recreation facilities and determine what programs may be possible at each facility.
9. Begin discussion with the School District to assist with any recreation-related programming currently sponsored by them.
10. Implement a scholarship system to allow those who are in financial need to participate in fee-based recreation programs.

11. Explore state licensing for summer day camps and after school programs.

Park Operation and Maintenance

1. Evaluate park and recreation areas and facilities for safety concerns and maintenance needs.
2. Meet with the City Parks Superintendent to gain a clear understanding of staffing levels for maintenance, what maintenance is currently being provided, and where help may be needed.
3. Standardize rental costs and procedures for City park facilities such as recreation centers, field houses, ball fields and picnic facilities.
4. Determine who is responsible for reservation, scheduling and permitting of ball field and park facility use.
5. Determine who is currently using and maintaining each City recreation facility.
6. Undertake a thorough study of the maintenance of City-owned parks, grounds and recreation facilities, with the aim to make decisions about who can best operate and maintain the facilities.

Public Relations

1. Secure a domain name that matches the name of the organization - Reading Rec if available.
2. Develop a website for the Recreation Commission. Include links to City and School District websites and ask the City and School District to include links on their websites to the Recreation Commission website.
3. Develop a logo for the Recreation Commission. Create letterhead, envelopes and business cards.
4. Develop a tag-line for the Recreation Commission that represents its mission and distinguishes it from other organizations.
5. On all written materials, highlight the partnership between the City and School District.
6. Develop a seasonal recreation guide to inform the public about Recreation Commission programs. Strive to produce two editions each year, Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter.
7. Post program information at all City offices and school buildings.
8. Distribute flyers for recreation programs through the schools.
9. Hold in-school assemblies to promote programs.
10. Set up a schedule for the executive director to attend City Council meetings and School Board meetings to provide status reports on the Recreation Commission.

Partnerships and Citizen Involvement

1. Identify those citizens who are currently active in their neighborhoods. Meet with these citizens to inform them about the Recreation Commission and ask for their input on recreation

programs they feel are needed. Begin to involve citizens in parks and programs and to help spread the word about new programs.

2. Identify potential partners to help maintain parks and playground sites.
3. Meet with all City youth and adult sports associations and determine how the Recreation Commission can assist and support their efforts.
4. Schedule meetings with civic groups, neighborhood groups, church groups, youth serving agencies, school athletic booster clubs, school parent-teacher organizations, etc. to get their input on recreation opportunities and to discuss possible cooperative efforts.
5. Establish a network of park facility and recreation program providers to improve communication and help them understand their role as part of the City's recreation and parks system.
6. Coordinate public-private partnerships with area businesses to benefit recreation and parks opportunities for the City.
7. Schedule regular meetings with key City and School District staff to keep partners well informed about Recreation Commission.

Revenue Development

1. Expand sources of revenue through business sponsorships, donations, in-kind contributions and fund raising activities.
2. Set cost recovery goals for each recreation program and service offered.
3. Evaluate facility and equipment rental fees for the potential to increase them.
4. Institute a non-resident fee for recreation programs that is at a minimum 25% higher than City resident fees. This would include the existing youth tennis program.
5. Meet with hospitals and colleges/universities about program funding possibilities.
6. Produce more recreation program revenue through existing programs and by adding new programs.
7. Consider instituting a per child/adult fee for sports groups and associations utilizing City outdoor recreation facilities, to assist with providing proper maintenance.
8. Evaluate summer swimming pool admission fees for potential increases.

Final Thoughts

The new Reading Recreation Commission has many challenges ahead.

While the City and School District have agreed that cooperation for recreation makes sense, developing a new agency isn't going to be easy. There is much work to do internally, before improved programs for the City's children can even be considered.

New recreation programs and better maintained park areas and recreation facilities won't happen overnight. The Recreation Commission should be patient and move slowly. It's best to do things right,

rather than fast! Growth needs to be at a pace that will allow new recreation programs to be of high quality and will start partnerships to maintain facilities on a solid foundation.

To attract the caliber of candidates with the experience and know-how to successfully develop the new Recreation Commission, offer a competitive salary for the executive director position. Hiring an experienced, professional leader is extremely important.

Sharing resources is also critical to the success of the new Recreation Commission. The agency should be considered as an extension of the City and School District. In-kind support should be provided whenever possible. This reduces the costs for the Recreation Commission, which ultimately reduces costs for the City and School District.

Lastly, keep the focus on the benefits to the City's children and to the quality of life in the City through expanded and improved recreation programs. Always highlight the positive partnership among the City and School District that is making this Recreation Commission's services possible.