



# *CITY COUNCIL*

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## ***Committee of the Whole***

**Monday, April 13, 2015**

**5:30 pm**

**Agenda**

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

*All electronic recording devices must be located behind the podium area in Council Chambers and located at the entry door in all other meeting rooms and offices, as per Bill No.27-2012.*

- I. ADA Plan – T. Butler & L. Olsen**
- II. Reading iRequest Presentation**
- III. Agenda Review**
- IV. Other Matters**



# ***COMMITTEE of the WHOLE***

## ***CITY COUNCIL***

**MINUTES**  
**March 23, 2015**  
**5:30 P.M.**

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

D. Sterner, C. Daubert, J. Waltman, D. Reed, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

L. Kelleher, S. Katzenmoyer, D. Cituk, C. Younger, C. Snyder

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 5:24 pm by Mr. Waltman.

### **I. Plumbing Code Amendment**

Mr. Lachat had a personal conflict and could not attend this evening's meeting. There was no discussion about this amendment at this time.

### **II. Agenda Review**

Council reviewed this evening's agenda including the following:

- Award of Contract – to McCormick Taylor for the re-design of the River Road Extension Project

Mr. Waltman questioned where the City's portion of this project was budgeted. Ms. Snyder stated that this is part of the City's capital budget.

Mr. Sterner questioned if the project will include the area around Windsor and Ritter. Ms. Snyder stated that it would. She stated that this is a re-design of the original project and that the extension would loop to Route 183.

Ms. Reed expressed the belief that the loss of this open area will actually enhance the neighborhood.

Mr. Waltman suggested that trucks may still be problematic depending on this design as it will still go through neighborhoods.

Ms. Reed stated that she is glad that the project is moving forward.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that the road extension should also include the dead end area at the Buttonwood St Bridge.

Mr. Spencer arrived at this time.

- Ordinance – amending the Zoning Ordinance regarding the Conditional Use process and the zoning backlog process

The amendment will eliminate the Administration's and the applicant's ability to waive Council's approval or rejection of the hearing master's decision.

Mr. Waltman stated that the public hearing was held earlier this evening.

- Ordinance – amending the Plumbing Code to allow PVC and PEX

Mr. Waltman questioned if this would apply to all properties. Mr. Spencer stated that he is unsure. He stated that in the past PVC and PEX were only allowed if all electrical and plumbing were installed new.

Ms. Snyder stated that this is allowed in properties where the electrical system is no longer grounded to the copper piping.

Mr. Daubert stated that according to the ordinance it is any property, not just new construction.

- Resolution – increasing the salary of Pamela Hoffman, Confidential Secretary in the Police Department

Ms. Snyder stated that this is a part time position.

Mr. Cituk questioned why the increase was set forth as a salary rather than an hourly increase since this is a part time position. He questioned the intent of the increase. Ms.

Snyder stated that this would bring the hourly up to the lowest paid confidential secretary within the management category.

Mr. Cituk suggested that the hourly rate be increased instead as Ms. Hoffman's hours may fluctuate. Ms. Snyder expressed the belief that Ms. Hoffman's hours are consistently the same. She stated that she is willing to table this resolution for further review.

Mr. Cituk stated that if Ms. Hoffman works more hours than the collective bargaining agreement allows for part time employees, she should no longer be considered part time.

Mr. Waltman suggested that the resolution be tabled this evening.

### **III. Other Matters**

- Meeting between Council and School Board leadership

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz requested more detailed information than what was contained in the meeting summary. Mr. Waltman stated that most of the discussion centered around the safety of students before and after school. He stated that safe corridors were discussed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the City had a very safe corridor system in the past. Mr. Waltman agreed but stated that this is no longer the case. He stated that a small pilot area was discussed before addressing the entire City.

Ms. Reed agreed with Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz about the strength of this program in the past. She stated that there are very unsafe conditions at some City schools and noted her surprise that there has not been a tragedy at Glenside Elementary.

Mr. Waltman stated that the City has many areas which can be confusing to drivers. He suggested that two of the lanes on Centre Ave near Riverside Elementary become turning lanes to calm traffic in this area.

Ms. Reed stated that this is a State road and that PennDOT will need to be consulted. She suggested a meeting with PennDOT officials about City schools on State roads, especially with the impending detours from the bridge closings.

Mr. Waltman suggested that this be discussed at a future RATS meeting.

Ms. Kelleher stated that a bridge meeting will be held this week and that perhaps a separate meeting can be coordinated.

- Distracted drivers

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the recent increase in the number of accidents where drivers have run into buildings. She stated that distracted driving is increasing. She also expressed the belief that young people are not taught how to cross streets safely.

Mr. Waltman stated that school crossing guards were also discussed at the joint meeting. He stated that some crossing guards are creating additional hazards in the way that they interact with traffic. He stated that the City is liable if a crossing guard is found negligent or is injured.

- Potholes

Mr. Cituk stated that the City has received its liquid fuels funds and that they will be used quickly.

Mr. Waltman questioned if pothole repairs have begun. Mr. Spencer stated that they have already begun and that work will continue.

Mr. Daubert stated that the potholes on the Bingaman Street Bridge have been repaired.

- UGI

Mr. Waltman described a situation in Centre Park where UGI subcontractors relocated a meter to the front of the house even though this is an historic district. He stated that UGI is causing problems City-wide by damaging the streets and relocating gas meters.

Mr. Daubert noted his concern with the recent gas leaks.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the leaks were close together in time and location. She questioned if all the reconstruction was putting a strain on the system or if they could be weather related.

Mr. Spencer stated that UGI is still replacing the gas lines. He suggested that the issues are weather related. He stated that the weather is what initially caused the water main break in the 400 block of Washington St.

Ms. Katzenmoyer questioned when construction to repair this break would be complete. Ms. Snyder stated that it should be complete by the end of the week.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that UGI's patchwork is causing additional potholes and that the areas are sinking. Ms. Snyder stated that UGI is now paying the City's street cut fees. She stated that the fee covers the salary of the inspector and any costs of repaving. She stated that the fee is higher if the street had been recently repaved.

Mr. Waltman stated that UGI is not honoring their agreement not to relocate the gas meters to the front of properties in historic districts.

Ms. Snyder stated that utilities use a quick patch process and wait for the material to settle before coming back to perform permanent repairs.

- Code Blue

Mr. Daubert stated that he would like to begin work on Code Blue for animals that are kept outdoors in cold weather.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that there also be a Code Red for hot weather.

Mr. Spencer suggested partnering with the Animal Rescue League.

Ms. Reed suggested utilizing the Animal Control Board.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she has seen an increase in the number of chickens in the City.

- Strategic Planning Meeting

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the amended Recovery Plan would be discussed. Ms. Kelleher stated that it will be. She stated that State Rep. Rozzi will also be attending this meeting for a presentation on tax exempt properties. She stated that she suggested that he remain for the Act 47 discussion.

- Recreation Commission

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that Camille Stock and Kevin DeVera from Olivet were recently hired by the Commission. She stated that summer programming is planned and that the Commission will be receiving two State recreation awards.

Mr. Daubert stated that Ms. Stock will be a great asset as she understands the need for the Commission to raise funds.

Ms. Snyder stated that the current agreement expires in 2016. She stated that the City will begin preparing multi-year budgets beginning with the 2016 process.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that there is a lot of competition for recreational grant funding. She stated that the Commission has increased the number of programs and has upgraded many facilities. She stated that they are doing great work.

- Pagoda Foundation

Mr. Waltman requested an update.

Ms. Reed stated that the Foundation has a timeline for fundraising and for strategic planning. She stated that there have been some weather related delays.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that there has been an increase in the number of events held at the Pagoda and on the mountain overall. She noted the increase in active recreation.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that better signage is needed and that the mountain activities should include Egelman's Park, Mineral Spring Park and even Pendera Park.

Ms. Reed stated that this needs to be a cooperative and mutual organizational effort.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that there is still no formal agreement with Pagoda Skyline for the Fire Tower. She stated that this could become a liability issue for the City.

Mr. Spatz, Reading Eagle, stated that the Water Authority and Pagoda Skyline are working together to install security cameras at the Fire Tower.

Mr. Adair and Mr. Johnson arrived at this time.

- Potholes (continued)

Mr. Johnson stated that to date 2,209 potholes have been repaired and that 56 tons of materials have been used. He stated that the City has changed its cold patch material to

one that is a bit more expensive but saves on man hours by not having to complete multiple repairs to the same pothole.

Mr. Waltman questioned how many more potholes need to be addressed. Mr. Johnson stated that there is no record of a total number of potholes. He stated that they are addressed in sectors and special hot spot locations.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the poor condition of Kenhorst Blvd. Mr. Johnson stated that he has learned that UGI plans to replace the gas main within the next 2 – 3 years. He stated that repaving it now does not make sense strategically if it will need to be repaved again after UGI's work. He stated that this repaving will be coordinated with UGI as Cotton St was. He stated that he is also planning future repaving to guide UGI work in the future.

Mr. Johnson described the work needed to make repairs when the earth below the asphalt is exposed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned the process when the earth rises instead of sinking into a hole. Mr. Johnson stated that the area must be cut out and repairs made to the surface below the asphalt and then be repaved. He stated that the continuous freeze this winter has delayed the start of pothole season but that the crews are diligent.

Mr. Johnson stated that the repairs in the 400 block of Washington St are wrapping up and should be complete by the end of the week. He stated that this was a total rebuild and involved many utilities.

Mr. Johnson left the meeting at this time.

## **V. Executive Session**

Mr. Waltman announced that Council would be holding an executive session to discuss an EEOC complaint which is a personnel matter. Council entered executive session at 6:14 pm and exited at 6:41 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm.

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

