



CITY COUNCIL

Standards of Living Committee

Monday, August 15, 2016
Council Office
5:00 pm

The Standards of Living Committee's responsibilities and topics include but are not limited to Housing Planning strategies, Building, Trades and Property Maintenance Inspection and Enforcement, Public Safety, Public Works, Police, Fire, Neighborhood Parks, Neighborhood Revitalization, Community Development, Customer Service, Graffiti Abatement, Community Group Organization and Support

Committee Members: Ms. Reed, Mr. Daubert and Mr. Marmarou

Although Council committee meetings are open to the public, public comment is not permitted at Council Committee 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 Committee Chair.

All electronic recording devices must be at the entry door in all meeting rooms and offices, as per Bill No. 27-2012

- I. Trap, Neuter, Release or Discounted Neutering Programs - ARL**
- II. Reinstatement of requirement for local property manager for rental properties**
- III. Fire Department "Do Not Enter" List**
- IV. Idling Trucks/Buses (PA Act 124 of 2008 attached)**
- V. Lease Agreement Update**
 - Fire Tower - Pagoda Skyline
 - Reading Redevelopment Authority
 - Blacktop Basketball
 - Berks County Emergency Services area of City Hall

Pending Topics

- UGI Meters
- East Ends
- City Cleanliness



CITY COUNCIL

Standards of Living Committee

Monday, July 18, 2016
Meeting Report

Committee Members Attending: D. Reed, C. Daubert

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, D. Klahr, M. Lubas

The meeting was called to order at 6:28 pm by Mr. Daubert.

I. Angelica Baseball Field Agreement with Alvernia

Mr. Lubas stated that the fields are available to rentals after Memorial Day unless the Alvernia teams advance in the NCAA tournament. He stated that the Rec Commission had zero requests to use these fields in 2015 and only one so far in 2016.

Mr. Waltman joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Daubert questioned if the public understands that these fields are available and that they should reserve them through the Rec Commission. Ms. Klahr stated that the public may feel these fields are cost prohibitive. She stated that the fee is in line with the caliber of the fields.

Mr. Palacios arrived at this time.

Ms. Klahr stated that other City fields are utilized more frequently and are at a lower cost. Mr. Lubas agreed and stated that Alvernia does a great job maintaining these fields.

Mr. Waltman questioned if the fields were available for public use. Ms. Klahr and Mr. Lubas stated that they are. Mr. Lubas stated that both CYO and Olivet reserve the fields directly with Alvernia.

Mr. Daubert stated that he recently spoke with Doug Smith from Alvernia about this issue. He stated that Mr. Smith wants to cooperate with the City and resolve this issue.

Ms. Reed expressed the belief that this is a non-issue.

Ms. Klahr stated that each field is designed for a specific use. Mr. Lubas agreed. He described how the fields used to be multi-purpose but that they are not any longer. He also stated that if a baseball game is underway the softball field cannot be used (and vice versa) due to the design and layout of the fields.

Mr. Waltman questioned if Baer Park's fields still had lights. Mr. Lubas stated that the lights do not currently work. Ms. Klahr stated that Public Works has been looking into why. She expressed the belief that it would cost a lot to repair them. Mr. Lubas noted the need to evaluate the cost of repairs versus the cost of new lights.

Mr. Waltman noted that in the past there were many tournaments held on all City fields. He questioned why this has decreased. Mr. Lubas stated that many adult leagues lost members and sponsors. He stated that they are making a comeback. He stated that the Rec Commission is keeping the fields in better condition.

Mr. Lubas expressed the belief that Alvernia has always been cooperative. He again stated that no one is contacting the Rec Commission to reserve the fields.

Ms. Klahr stated that the Lantern Parade will be held on August 3 at 5:30 pm in City Park.

Mr. Lubas and Ms. Klahr left the meeting at this time.

II. Reinstatement of Requirement for Local Property Manager for Rental Properties

Mr. Palacios stated that he has reviewed this issue and that the information will be requested as part of the registration form.

Mr. Waltman suggested that the regulations not be changed until the new Codes Manager is hired. He noted his hope that this would once again be built into the regulations but that it be delayed.

Ms. Reed expressed the belief that many property owners do not live in the Reading area. She stated that this was the case for many owners before the Blighted Property Review Committee. She stated that blighted rental properties are destroying neighborhoods.

Mr. Daubert questioned the next steps. Mr. Waltman suggested that the Committee keep this topic on its agenda to discuss with the new Codes Manager when he/she is hired.

Ms. Reed agreed with this approach but noted the need to address it quickly. She questioned when the new Codes Manager would be hired. Mr. Palacios stated that resumes have been received and reviewed. He stated that there are several good candidates and that a candidate will be hired within the next few weeks.

Mr. Waltman stated that Mr. Palacios and Mr. Steckman are reviewing the resumes and overseeing the hiring process.

III. Fire Department “Do Not Enter” List

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that there was no one present to address this topic.

IV. Summit Chase Drive Lighting Project

Mr. Daubert stated that Mr. Johnson is not present to address this topic.

V. Lease Agreement Updates

- Fire Tower

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that Mr. Coleman is waiting to hear from Pagoda Skyline.

- Reading Redevelopment Authority

No report.

- Blacktop Basketball

No report.

- County Emergency Services

No report.

VI. Pending Topics

- UGI

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that Mr. Coleman has a meeting on this topic on Thursday. She stated that there is nothing new to report at this time.

- East Ends

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that Mr. Coleman had no new information at this time.

VII. Other Matters

- Reading Risk Reduction

Mr. Daubert requested an update. Ms. Reed stated that the Committee suggested that Ms. Pagan meet with Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Mayor Scott.

- Baseball Tournaments

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that there should be more tournaments throughout the City. Mr. Daubert agreed and suggested that the City should be a regional hub for tournaments.

- City Cleanliness

Mr. Waltman stated that he has been attending Blacktop games and that the City Park basketball court area is filthy with trash and litter. He stated that it is the worst he’s ever seen it.

Ms. Reed stated that the downtown area also is horrible with trash and litter. She showed a video that was posted online showing litter strewn on the sidewalk in the 300 block of Penn St.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that the litter in the video looks as if it was strewn deliberately.

Ms. Reed requested that DID be part of this Committee's next agenda to address this.

Mr. Daubert described the litter he saw when he attended the last Downtown Alive concert.

Ms. Reed stated that she was picking up litter before the Ringo Starr concert while DID Ambassadors watched her.

Mr. Waltman noted how some neighborhoods are spotless and others are not.

Mr. Daubert expressed the belief that the downtown should be spotless every time there is an event downtown so that visitors don't see all the litter and trash.

Ms. Reed suggested that this topic appear on the next Committee of the Whole agenda so that all of Council can hear the information.

- Reading Police in Kenhorst

Mr. Daubert stated that he saw a Reading officer and vehicle in Kenhorst this weekend. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that Reading contracts police services with Kenhorst.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Katzenmoyer, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

Pennsylvania's Diesel-Powered Motor Vehicle Idling Act (Act 124 of 2008)

Diesel vehicles are a significant source of emissions that contribute to elevated ozone and fine particulate matter concentrations in Pennsylvania. The Diesel-Powered Motor Vehicle Idling Act (Act 124) became effective on February 6, 2009. The act reduces unnecessary idling of the main propulsion engine in diesel-powered motor vehicles, including trucks and buses, by imposing time limits and sign requirements. The act applies to public and private locations, statewide. While the requirements of the act will not be incorporated into any permit issued by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), those requirements remain independently enforceable by DEP.

Q. Who is subject to the requirements of Act 124?

A. Owners and operators of any diesel-powered motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of 10,001 pounds or more, engaged in commerce, must comply with the provisions of Act 124. Additionally, owners and operators of locations where subject vehicles load, unload, or park must comply.

Q. What are the requirements of Act 124?

A. Act 124 prohibits the owners and operators of any diesel-powered motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of 10,001 pounds or more, engaged in commerce, from causing the engine of the vehicle to idle for more than 5 minutes in any continuous 60-minute period, except as provided in the act. Act 124 also prohibits the owners and operators of locations where subject vehicles load, unload, or park from allowing the engine of the vehicle to idle for more than five minutes in any continuous 60-minute period, except as provided in the act. In addition, owners and operators of locations where subject vehicles load or unload, or where 15 or more parking spaces are provided for vehicles subject to the act, must erect and maintain at least one permanent sign to inform drivers that idling is restricted in Pennsylvania. A posted sign does not relieve the owner or operator of the site of its other responsibilities under the act.

Q. What is meant by the term 'engaged in commerce' as used in Act 124?

A. A motor vehicle is „engaged in commerce“ under Act 124 if it has a business name or logo visible on the outside of the vehicle. The term includes, but is not limited to, vehicles carrying a load or a trailer and vehicles on their way to pick up a load or trailer. School buses and other types of vehicles specifically referenced in the act are also considered to be „engaged in commerce“ for purposes of Act 124. A diesel-powered motor vehicle used exclusively for private use is not considered to be engaged in commerce.

Q. What types of vehicles are exempt from the requirements of Act 124?

A. Motor homes, commercial implements of husbandry, implements of husbandry, farm equipment, and farm vehicles are not covered by Act 124. The definitions of these types of vehicles can be found in Title 75, Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Section 102 (relating to definitions). DEP does not consider vehicles identified as „off-road“ or „non-road“ to be subject to Act 124, either.

Q. Are there exemptions to allow idling longer than five minutes?

A. Yes. Buses, school buses and school vehicles may idle for 15 minutes in a continuous 60-minute period when passengers are aboard. Other exemptions address excess idling due to factors outside the drivers' control, such as traffic or mechanical issues. There are also exemptions addressing idling during maintenance, vehicle equipment inspection, and emergency or utility service functions and idling for security reasons. Additionally, the restriction on idling does not apply if a vehicle exhibits a label issued by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) under Title 13 California Code of Regulations, Section 1956.8(a)(6)(C), showing the vehicle's engine meets the optional NOx idling emission standard. Additionally, subject vehicles equipped with auxiliary power units (APUs) can idle the APU unrestricted. Although not explicitly listed in the law, transportation refrigeration units (TRUs or reefers), which are subject vehicles that use the main engine to operate refrigeration equipment, may also idle unrestricted. See Act 124 at www.legis.state.pa.us. Navigate to the „Legislation“ tab, select 2007-2008 Regular Session under „Bills and Resolutions,“ and search for Senate Bill 295, Printer's No. 2485, for the full listing and details of exemptions.

Q. Can trucks idle during rest periods if the outside temperature is outside a certain range?

A. No, unless the vehicle exhibits a label issued by CARB indicating it meets CARB's optional NOx idling emission standard (13 CCR §1956.8(a)(6)(C)). The exemption relating to idling during rest periods when the outside temperature is less than 40 degrees or greater than 75 degrees Fahrenheit expired May 1, 2010.

Q. Who is required to post permanent idling restriction signs?

A. Owners and operators of locations where subject vehicles load or unload, as well as owners and operators of locations that provide 15 or more parking spaces for subject vehicles, are required to post approved signs. Information for the approved sign format is available on the DEP's website at www.dep.pa.gov, enter search term "Idling." Links available on the web page direct you to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PennDOT) Publication 236M, Sign R7-100, which is the PennDOT-approved sign. Signs must be manufactured by approved sign manufacturers; a link to a list of approved sign manufacturers is provided on the webpage.

Q. Who has the authority to enforce the idling restrictions imposed under Act 124?

A. State and local law enforcement officials are authorized to enforce Act 124. DEP personnel are also authorized to enforce Act 124. Act 124 was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a State Implementation Plan revision and, as a result, is also federally enforceable by EPA.

Q. What are the penalties for violating the requirements of Act 124?

A. Drivers and owners of vehicles and owners and operators of locations where subject vehicles load or unload, or where 15 or more parking spaces are provided for vehicles subject to the Act, found to be in violation of this Act commit a summary offense. A conviction will result in a fine ranging from \$150 to \$300, plus court costs. When prosecution of an offense under this Act is the result of local law enforcement action, one half of any fines assessed will be received by the local municipality. DEP is also authorized to assess civil penalties, not to exceed \$1,000 per day for each violation of Act 124, in accordance with the procedures and factors specified in Section 9.1 of Pennsylvania's Air Pollution Control Act.

Q. Will local idling ordinances (laws, rules, etc.) still be enforced?

A. Act 124 pre-empts and supersedes local anti-idling ordinances or rules, unless the local ordinance or rule meets specific requirements listed in the Act. Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties are the only counties with ordinances or rules that are affected. DEP understands that the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) has determined that Act 124 preempts Allegheny County's local ordinance. DEP understands that ACHD will provide compliance assistance for Act 124 to citizens and companies, and will refer complaints requiring enforcement action to local or state police, or the DEP regional office. ACHD will continue to enforce its off-road anti-idling ordinance. Philadelphia Air Management Services, a division of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, and the Philadelphia Parking Authority will continue to enforce their regulation and ordinance, respectively. Links to the anti-idling requirements in Philadelphia County are available on DEP's website at www.dep.pa.gov, enter search term "Idling."

Q. What options are available to reduce idling?

A. The simplest way to reduce idling is to turn off the engine. Modern diesel engines do not require long warm-up or cool-down periods or constant idling in order to operate efficiently. The most common alternatives for main engine idling are auxiliary power systems and stationary idle reduction technologies. APUs are devices installed on vehicles to provide power for cabin temperature control and other electric needs typically provided by main engine idling. Stationary idle reduction technology provides some type of plug-in system at locations where subject vehicles park.

Q. Who can respond to questions or complaints?

A. For questions on Act 124, please contact the Pennsylvania DEP, Bureau of Air Quality, by telephone at 717-787-9495 or visit DEP's website at www.dep.pa.gov, enter search term "Idling." If someone is idling illegally, get in touch with a DEP regional office by calling the statewide Citizen's Complaint Line toll free at 1-866-255-5158. Local or state law enforcement officials may also take idling complaints. State police telephone numbers are available on the Pennsylvania State Police website at: www.psp.pa.gov. Local law enforcement non-emergency numbers can be found in the local telephone book.

For more information, visit www.dep.pa.gov.