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. Report re Homelessness – Homeless Coalition

II. Repository Bids – 221 Hudson St & 1728 Cotton St

III. 9th and Marion Facility Assessment

IV. Bernhart’s Dam

V. Update re Status of Public Works Projects

VI. Review Finance Reports (15 mins)
   • Review Expenditures/Revenues – Executive Summary
   • Review Bank Statement Activity
   • Review Transfers not requiring Council approval
   • Review Investments (March, June, Sept, Dec)
   • Review list of unfilled positions
   • 2018 Per Capita collection update
     o Info Keystone uses to determine billing
• Info provided by the City and Berks EIT
  • 2018 BPT collection update
    o Info Keystone uses to establish billing
    o Info provided by the City and Berks EIT
    o Number of bills sent by Keystone
  • Collection of non-tax revenue

Follow Up Issues
• $2M Budget Gap in EMS
• Appointments to Strategic Planning Task Force re economic development

VII. Executive Session re contracts and litigation
Dana South re Sunshine Act 708 a 3 real estate
Bookbindery re Sunshine Act 708 a 3 real estate – revisit Sept 15
Petition & UGI Litigation re Sunshine Act 708 a 4 litigation
Managing Director Appointment re Sunshine Act 708 a 1 personnel
East Reading Pool re Sunshine Act 708 a 3 real estate – Update September 3
RPA Personnel re Sunshine Act 708 a 2 collective bargaining

VIII. Adjourn
COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:
S. Marmarou, B. Twyman, D. Reed, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, L. Sihelnik

OTHERS PRESENT:

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm by Mr. Twyman. He stated that Mr. Waltman will arrive shortly.

I. Update on Public Works
   a) Personnel
   Mr. Twyman stated that there has been staff turnover and resignations. He questioned if Public Works continued to work on the City’s streets and the sidewalk repair program. Mr. Johnson stated that the City is in the process of hiring a new Operations Manager. He stated that CareerLink has provided summer workers for parks and fleet but it is a fraction of what had been provided in the past. He stated that the workers are doing great work.

   b) Projects
   Mr. Johnson stated that he does not have the paving map with him but he recalls that N. 13th St, N 8th St, Reed St, and City Park will be repaved. He stated that he will provide the 2018 paving list. He stated that the 2019 paving is still in the design phase. He stated that curbs and ramps will be replaced/installed prior to the paving. He stated
that Chris Elia is the foreman of Streets and that routine pothole repair, curb painting, etc. is moving forward.

Mr. Johnson stated that the River Road extension, 2nd and Washington, Hill Rd, the Schuylkill River Trail, several roof replacements, the WWTP, 6th & Canal, and the 42” force main are all moving forward. He stated that there will be an update on Bernhart’s and Egelman’s dams in the near future.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz arrived at this time.

Mr. Johnson stated that Public Works has been responding to the storms and flooding events.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz requested a presentation on the facility assessments. She stated that this is a large amount of information. She suggested that staff be mindful about releasing this information until after it is presented to Council. She noted the need to use these assessments when planning capital expenditures.

Ms. Kelleher stated that a presentation is scheduled for August 5.

Mr. Johnson stated that he has shared the Pagoda assessment with the Foundation and the First Energy Stadium assessment with the Stadium Commission.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if assessments would be shared with the Mt. Penn Preserve. Mr. Johnson stated that the assessments have been on the City’s website for some time. He stated that he shares assessments with those who share financial responsibility for facilities with the City.

Mr. Twyman requested the entire report. Mr. Johnson stated that each facility has a separate report. He stated that the reports on are the website. Ms. Kelleher stated that it is too much information to email or to print.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that the reports were done very well. Mr. Johnson stated that the assessment was paid with a grant that is available through Act 47.

Ms. Sihelnik stated that there have been many storm issues recently. She questioned if projects were being delayed as a result. Mr. Johnson stated that he had hoped that some projects would be further along. He stated that he can provide more detailed information next week after the WWTP tour.
Mr. Twyman requested that this report be in writing.

II. Update on the RFP for Independent Legal Counsel
Mr. Waltman arrived at this time.

Mr. Lachat stated that he has reviewed all the responses. He stated that he is likely to approve all but one but he is still considering that.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned when Council would receive the list of eligible attorneys. Mr. Lachat stated that it will be provided tomorrow.

III. Update on the East Reading Pool/ Update on Repair of Schlegel Park Pool
Mr. Waltman stated that this property remains on the repository bid list. He questioned the estimate to make improvements. Mr. Johnson stated that he estimates that to stabilize the property and install a passive park it would cost approximately $635,000.

Mr. Waltman stated that he recently visited the site. He stated that the property is larger than he remembers. He stated that a skate park has also been suggested at this property. He noted the need to obtain the property and add it to the capital list.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned the cost to keep the pool open. Mr. Johnson stated that a spray park would cost approximately $1.2 million. Mr. Deming stated that 2-3 years ago $1.6 million was quoted to keep the pool open. He noted the need for the City to be prepared to purchase the property.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz noted her concern that Schlegel is the only pool. She suggested that there is a need for additional pools. She questioned if there were plans for another City pool. Mr. Johnson reminded all that $300,000 was scheduled to improve Schlegel Pool but that $200,000 of that was used to purchase the Hillside property. He stated that the remaining $100,000 is being used to fund the pool’s feasibility study. He stated that there is also a study City-wide on the need for pools, spray parks and splash pads.

Mr. Waltman questioned when this study would be complete. Mr. Johnson stated that the study would be complete in 2020 and programming beginning 2021.

Mr. Waltman noted the need to remove this property from the repository list. He noted the need to work with the next administration. He expressed the belief that if the
problems at Schlegel Pool are not repaired by the beginning of next season it will be very problematic.

Mr. Twyman stated that he reviewed the plan for the East Reading Pool site. He stated that he likes the plan. He noted the need to re-examine Hillside to see if this could also remain a pool. He encouraged the City to have multiple pools.

Ms. Reed stated that there were many people in the river this weekend during the heat wave. She noted her agreement with the need for another pool. She noted the location of Schlegel Pool and the difficulty of walking/biking to this location. She questioned the revenue received at Schlegel Pool. Mr. Johnson stated that he will obtain this information from the Recreation Commission.

Ms. Reed stated that she is willing to spend a little more to provide more pools.

Ms. Sihelnik noted her support of these studies. She stated that storms have caused a repeated need to drain and repair Schlegel Pool this summer. She questioned if this was being addressed in the study. Mr. Johnson stated that the storm issues are more relative to storm water management but that it may affect the pool. He praised the work of Matt Lubas at the pool. He stated that the recent storm water has not been coming in where it had before.

Mr. Waltman stated that he is glad to hear that Council is open to adding pools.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the fiscal reports of the Recreation Commission show the income and expenses at each location. She stated that she will provide this information to Council. She stated that many times Schlegel Pool fills to capacity and people are turned away. She agreed that it is unsafe to travel to the location for those who bike and walk.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the East Reading pool was very community centered. She stated that residents financed its building. She noted that there is an increase in home ownership and the number of children in the neighborhood. She agreed with the need for a feasibility study. She expressed the belief that no one who would buy this property at a repository sale would refurbish the pool.

Ms. Sihelnik noted the need to work with neighboring communities on an inter-municipal agreement admitting Reading residents to their pools. She suggested that a list of pools be posted on Facebook.
Mr. Johnson stated that he, the Schuylkill River Trail professionals and Berks Nature have all noted that the proposed new interchange at 422 and Lancaster Ave did not take pedestrian access to the 18th Ward area into consideration. He stated that they are currently working with the designer to have safe access. He stated that there is a national movement away from pools to reduce insurance and operating costs.

Mr. Marmarou questioned where the East Reading records are. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that this is a private association that went bankrupt. She stated that she does not know where the records are.

Mr. Waltman requested that Mr. Deming and Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz work on a strategy for this property.

IV. Charter Review Commission Appointments
Mr. Waltman stated that Council has chosen their applicants. Mr. Deming stated that he has spoken with the Mayor but that he has not chosen appointments.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for the public to understand that these meetings are open to the public. She stated that this will also take place during the administrative transition.

Ms. Sihelnik stated that the link to the Charter on the City’s website needs to be updated.

Ms. Kelleher stated that the best way to look at the Charter is through the link to the Code of Ordinances. Mr. Deming agreed.

Ms. Kelleher suggested that the link to the Charter redirect viewers to the Code. Mr. Deming stated that he will work with Mr. Tangredi to get this corrected.

Mr. Twyman noted his agreement that residents need to be educated about the issues and participate in local government.

Mr. Waltman noted the need to finalize the membership the first week of August.

V. Agenda Review
Council reviewed this evening’s agenda including the following:

- Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute the contribution agreement for the construction of the 2nd and Washington Sts intersection improvements
Mr. Johnson reminded Council that the Wyomissing Foundation suggested improvements at 2nd and Washington and 2nd and Penn. He stated that the 2nd and Penn improvements have been included in the bridge project. He thanked Tim Krall for bringing 2nd and Washington to PennDOT’s attention while they were reviewing improvements to this intersection as part of the Route 183 paving project. He stated that the cost to the City has been reduced to $120,000 and that liquid fuels funds will be used. He expressed the belief that this is a win-win situation.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz requested an overview of the project. Mr. Johnson stated that the City would install bump-outs that would make it easier for pedestrians crossing from the parking garage to the movie theater. He stated that additional parking will also be added on the garage side of the street.

Mr. Twyman questioned the timeline for the project. Mr. Johnson stated that PennDOT will be letting the bids out in 2019.

- Administrative Report

Mr. Deming stated that he will highlight the fire fighter graduation and that settlement on the Hillside property is complete.

- Auditor’s Report

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she will review the Admissions Tax and liquid fuels audit.

- Report from Department Directors, boards, authorities and commissions

Ms. Sihelnik expressed the belief that it is crucial to have as many reports as possible. She suggested that this be an open floor to encourage any Department Director or BAC to make a presentation as issues arise. She noted the need to also share the good work of the City.

Ms. Kelleher suggested that she work on a schedule with the administration. Mr. Deming agreed.

Mr. Waltman stated that most times the Department Directors attend the Committee of the Whole meetings. He stated that this time could also be used to bring issues forward. He stated that the Administrative Report could also be used. Mr. Deming
agreed and suggested that he provide an executive summary of the work of the departments during this report.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the Committee of the Whole meetings are not televised. She noted the need to plan agenda items strategically.

Mr. Waltman noted the need for highlights.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned why Committee of the Whole meetings are not televised. Mr. Kelly stated that this is a working session. Ms. Reed stated that work sessions were televised in the past.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz noted the need for transparency and engagement. She questioned if Spanish subtitles were possible for regular meetings. Ms. Reed stated that she will speak to the BCTV Board about this. She stated that she will also question closed captioning.

Mr. Twyman thanked Mr. Deming for his full summary at the last meeting.

Mr. Marmarou questioned how the public can learn what will be discussed at the meeting beforehand. Mr. Waltman stated that the agenda is available on the City’s website for the public to review.

Mr. Waltman stated that he is going to begin recapping Council’s discussions before reviewing the upcoming meeting schedule. He noted the need for Councilors to be informed to help constituents understand the issues and stay engaged.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that it is important to post documents publicly.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if BAC vacancies would be filled after the administrative transition. Mr. Deming stated that this would be the case as the Mayor has not changed his position.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if interviews would continue. Ms. Kelleher stated that when Council makes an appointment the applicant moves forward.

Ms. Sihelnik noted the importance of continuing to recruit volunteers.
Mr. Marmarou questioned who would be next to present after the Plumbing Board. Ms. Smith stated that she follows a set list. She stated that she can provide the information to Mr. Marmarou.

Mr. Waltman stated that many times personal schedules cause last minute changes. He noted the need to educate the public to view the agenda online.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for Council to plan their discussions, especially with budget season approaching.

Mr. Twyman agreed. He stated that he would work with Ms. Kelleher to plan discussions.

Mr. Waltman stated that Council is working on many big ticket items. He stated that progress is being made.

- Ordinance amending the Personnel Code defining the elected officials who are eligible for City benefits

Mr. Waltman stated that this affects the Mayor and Auditor. He stated that this would codify the current process.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the ordinance on the agenda is not updated. Ms. Kelleher stated that the agenda is not changed after it is posted.

Mr. Deming stated that there is an issue with pensions for officials who are former employees. He stated that this is being reviewed by legal and that this issue may need to be revisited.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that it is important to know that there may need to be additional amendments.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he can collect his pension and be an official. Mr. Deming stated that the issue is being reviewed.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the O & E Pension solicitor has opined in the past that employees and officials are eligible for pension. Mr. Deming again stated that the issue is being reviewed.

- Ordinance authorizing the execution of the Act 47 Exit Plan prepared by PFM
Mr. Mann stated that the City has three years from the end of 2019 to exit Act 47. He stated that he is available for questions.

Mr. Twyman thanked Mr. Mann for his thorough response to his inquiries.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Mr. Mann for amending the plan based on public input. She questioned if all the protections of Act 47 remain. Mr. Mann stated that they do remain.

Mr. Waltman noted his hope that Reading would exit Act 47 as soon as possible. He stated that he participated in a panel with Senator Argall on the need for state reforms.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that this three years allows strategic legislative actions.

- Ordinance amending the Position Ordinance by reclassifying the Property Maintenance Specialist to Property Maintenance Supervisor

Mr. Deming stated that the salary and title will be adjusted to reflect the duties performed by the employee.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned if this position is vacant. Mr. Deming stated that it is not. He stated that currently the employee is not being compensated for her duties.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that Property Maintenance still has an acting manager. Mr. Deming stated that he has been examining this position. He stated that he can provide more detail in executive session.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz noted the need for the City to be fair. Mr. Deming agreed. He stated that he is always willing to meet individually with Councilors. He stated that he strives for fairness.

Ms. Sihelnik requested an updated organizational chart when these types of changes are made. She expressed the belief that Property Maintenance is a crucial office and that its operations must be efficient.

Mr. Waltman stated that the organizational chart is reviewed during budget season.
Ms. Sihelnik stated that budget review is once annually. She requested the department organizational chart when these types of amendments are made. Mr. Deming stated that he will ask Mr. Reigner to provide an updated organizational chart.

- Ordinance amending Chapter 600 Zoning by restoring the R-3 designation to properties located north of Buttonwood St and south of Lafayette St between Gordon St and Tulpehocken St and along Johnson St on the Zoning Map

Mr. Hunter stated that this is within the Buttonwood Gateway. He stated that the development area expired in 2018 and this would allow the zoning to revert from M-C back to R-3 as it was prior to the development plan.

Mr. Waltman stated that this will be discussed more thoroughly at the next meeting.

- Resolution approving the appeal of the application for two (2) internally illuminated lights for Lighthouse Christian Center at 37 S 5th St but reducing the intensity of the lumens to 6500, from 7500

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that this is a good compromise.

- Resolution honoring and remembering the Stonewall Riots and supporting the LGBTQ community in Reading

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that it is also the 10th anniversary of this community’s inclusion in the City’s anti-discrimination regulations.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz questioned the raising of the flag. Mr. Johnson stated that the flag is now up.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz stated that she was confused about why this happened. She stated that she was very disturbed. Mr. Deming stated that he made an error. He stated that he shared Ms. Reed’s email with Mr. Johnson but not the Mayor. He stated that the Mayor has now reconsidered and reversed his position. He stated that the Mayor’s Facebook video explains his decision. He stated that he is glad for the change.

Mr. Waltman stated that it was a communication breakdown.

Ms. Cepeda-Freytiz thanked Mr. Deming for his accountability. She expressed the belief that the Mayor is not in touch with the community and that this sent the wrong message.
Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she does not accept what is in the video. She stated that the Mayor has blamed her and Ms. Reed of being political. She stated that she was not involved and was out of the area during this situation. She stated that raising the flag was empowering the community. She questioned if anyone was invited to attend the flag raising today. Mr. Johnson stated that he is unsure if anyone was invited today.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for a public answer to this question.

Mr. Waltman noted the need for a City flag policy to prevent this situation in the future. He expressed the belief that it was embarrassing.

VI. Other Matters
• Shooting in the 100 block of W Oley St
Ms. Reed questioned if Council could have an update. Chief Dominguez stated that it was an accident. He stated that the child was not targeted. He expressed the belief that the entire incident was a complete misunderstanding from the beginning.

Ms. Reed questioned if the shooting was gang related. Chief Dominguez stated that it was not. He stated that the child is still hospitalized.

Mr. Waltman stated that the alleged shooter is a convicted felon with a handgun.

Chief Dominguez stated that the shooter did not realize who he was shooting at.

VII. Executive Session
Mr. Waltman announced the need for executive sessions on the following topics:  
• Dana South re Sunshine Act 708 a 3 real estate  
• Petition Litigation re Sunshine Act 708 a 4 litigation  
• Managing Director Appointment re Sunshine Act 708 a 1 personnel

All exited the meeting except for the seven members of Council, Mr. Lachat, Ms. Kelleher, Ms. Smith, Mr. Deming, and Mr. Hunter.

Council entered executive session on Dana South at 6:32 pm.

Council entered executive session on Petition Litigation at 6:48 pm. At the conclusion of this discussion, Mr. Deming and Mr. Hunter left the meeting.
Council entered executive session on the Managing Director Appointment at 6:51 pm.

At the conclusion of this topic, the meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Linda A. Kelleher, CMC, City Clerk
1728 Cotton St
Reading, PA 19606

- Beds
- Baths
1,316 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size: 871 Sq. Ft.
Status: Not For Sale Source: Public Records

Is This Your Home?
Track this home's estimate & nearby sales activity

I'm the Owner

Sell your home for more, pay a 1% listing fee when you sell and buy

Talk to Redfin About!

Redfin Estimate for 1728 Cotton St
Estimate Not Available
Unfortunately, we don't have enough data to generate an accurate Estimate at this time.

Homeowner Tools

Edit home facts
Review property details and add renovations.

Manage photos
Update home photos or make them private.

View Owner Dashboard

https://www.redfin.com/PA/Reading/1728-Cotton-St-19606/home... 8/8/2019