

City of Reading  
City Council  
Work Session  
Monday, August 18, 2008

**Council Members Present**

Vaughn Spencer, President  
Stephen Fuhs, District 1  
Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz District 2  
Dennis Sterner, District 3  
Stratton Marmarou, District 4  
Jeffrey Waltman, District 6

**Others Present**

R. Hottenstein  
L. Kelleher  
C. Younger  
R. Albert

**Call to Order**

President of Council Vaughn Spencer called the work session to order.

**Managing Director's Report**

Mr. Hottenstein highlighted the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- A synopsis of the Clymer Street fire
- Update on the search for a Community Development Director
- Update on Maximus User Fee Study

Mr. Hottenstein added that the City will be sending a notification letters to the residents residing in illegal rentals later this week informing the tenants that their landlords are not in compliance with the housing permit process. The letter will notify tenants that they may be evicted from the unauthorized rental unit.

Mr. Hottenstein also provided an update on the Caum Home issue. He stated that a notice of violation was issued to Firetree-Orange Stones

Corp. on August 17<sup>th</sup>, along with a stop work order. The building was also placarded. The organization was given until today to file an appeal with the Zoning Hearing Board. He stated that the appeal form filed with the Zoning Administrator late this afternoon was incomplete and did not include the required fee. Therefore, it was rejected. He noted the need for residents to monitor this property and inform the City if any activity on the property occurs.

Mr. Fuhs asked Mr. Hottenstein if illegal activity at the property would result in arrest or a fine. Mr. Hottenstein stated that he was unsure but believed that a fine would most likely occur before arrest.

Mr. Marmarou noted the formation of a task force by the College Heights Community Council to oppose the proposed use of this building. He stated that the concern of this neighborhood group also may extend to Albright and the Reading School District.

Mr. Fuhs thanked Rec. Superintendent Mike Zuber for working to spruce up the playgrounds for the anti-drug march held this past weekend.

Mr. Waltman expressed that some unavoidable delays and situations caused problems leading to the three alarm fire at Clymer Street. He questioned if the Administration has arrangements for multi-jurisdictional support.

Mr. Waltman also asked Mr. Hottenstein to provide an update within the next week on the financial arrangements being negotiated with the Reading Parking Authority and the Reading Area Water Authority. He stated that these two decisions must be made before the budget is prepared and brought forward.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the receipt of a memorandum in response to questions raised about 161 Clymer Street. She requested further discussion about this issue at the Public Safety meeting.

Mr. Spencer questioned if the letter going out to tenants of rental properties will be bilingual. He also inquired if tenants will have the ability to contact codes to see if their landlord is in compliance with the City's regulations.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Mr. Hottenstein stated that through United Way arrangements have been made to assist tenants who will be displaced when illegal rental units are shut down.

## **2009 CDBG Action Plan**

Mr. Hottenstein distributed a draft of the proposed 2009 CDBG Action Plan.

Mr. Fuhs questioned allocating \$354,000 for improvements to City Park as the Administration is not allocating funding to address the needs of the Blighted Property Review Committee. He suggested that the Administration provide matching allocations for park improvement and efforts to demolish or rehabilitate blighted buildings.

Mr. Hottenstein stated that this first draft does not include an allocation to the Blighted Property review Committee; however, the allocation will be made in the next draft.

Mr. Fuhs also questioned the \$500,000 allocation to Our City Reading which includes an \$8,500 developer fee. He also inquired about the section 108 loan to Reading's Future.

Mr. Sterner requested Council support for the allocation to renovate the Hillside Playground. Mr. Waltman noted the difficulties associated with HUD IDIS system and the difficulties drawing money down to meet HUD timelines.

## **2009 General Fund Budget**

Mr. Waltman noted the need to get through the negotiations with the Reading Parking Authority and RAWA before other budget components and steps can be defined. He stated that the 2009 budget will attempt to clean out past errors and address the needs of 2010.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the public's misunderstanding regarding last year's surplus and this year's deficit.

Ms. Kelleher stated that originally Council was told that the results of the Maximus Fee Study be presented in August 2008. Mr. Hottenstein stated that there was a misunderstanding concerning this issue. He stated that Maximus will be providing the Administration with guidance on the necessary adjustments to revenue line items but the final report will not be presented before the end of the year.

## **Updates**

Mr. Hottenstein stated that he would obtain the survey results from the anti-gang task force. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the importance of this information contained in the survey.

Respectfully submitted by,

---

Linda A. Kelleher, City Clerk