



CITY COUNCIL

Administrative Oversight and Land Use Committee

Monday, May 2, 2011
Meeting Report

Attendance: S. Marmarou, D. Reed, F. Acosta

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, F. Denbowski

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

I. Interviews

Edwin Stock (appointment – Fire Civil Service Board)

Ms. Reed apologized for the delay.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Stock was interested in serving. Mr. Stock stated that he saw the ad in the newspaper recruiting volunteers. He stated that he is not a resident of the City but that he is in the City daily as he is a partner in a City-based law firm. He stated that his practice has intentionally stayed within the City limits rather than relocate to the suburbs.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Mr. Stock served the City professionally. Mr. Stock stated that he is solicitor to the Reading Housing Authority and Board of Ethics.

Ms. Katzenmoyer questioned if Mr. Stock would be willing to serve the Police Civil Service Board. She stated that there is one opening on the Fire Civil Service Board and two applicants but that there are two openings on the Police Civil Service Board and no applicants. Mr. Stock stated that he would be willing to serve in either capacity.

The Administrative Oversight Committee recommends the appointment of Mr. Stock to a Civil Service Board.

Christopher Fegley (appointment – Citizen's Advisory Board)

Mr. Denbowski stated that Mr. Fegley would be a Mayoral appointment. He stated that Mr. Fegley has resigned from the Minority Business Procurement Board.

Mr. Marmarou questioned other committees on which Mr. Fegley currently serves. Mr. Fegley stated that he has recently resigned from the Minority Business Procurement Board. He stated that he has worked with the Poverty Commission and has past experience with Neighborhood Housing Services and Reading Beautification.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Fegley was interested in serving on the Citizen's Advisory Board. Mr. Fegley stated that he has read the recovery plan and that he has a large network and possesses excellent communication skills. He distributed his resume.

Mr. Marmarou stated that Mr. Fegley was helpful with a situation in College Heights. He questioned if Mr. Fegley read the recovery plan. Mr. Fegley stated that he had.

Mr. Marmarou questioned how many people were currently seated on this Board. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that two people have been appointed and others are pending appointment. She stated that no names have been brought forward by Councilors to date.

The Administrative Oversight Committee recommends the appointment of Mr. Fegley to the Citizen's Advisory Board.

Peter Delinko (appointment – Human Relations Commission)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Delinko was interested in serving on this Commission. Mr. Delinko stated that he was born and raised in Reading. He stated that he is involved in Neighborhood Housing Services and Reading Beautification. He stated that he has the capability to hear issues and remain neutral to find a solution. He stated that he is of Spanish heritage and has a good understanding of people.

Ms. Reed explained that there may not be an opening on the Human Relations Commission at this time. She questioned if Mr. Delinko would be interested in serving in another capacity. Mr. Denbowski stated that the Mayor also discussed the Citizen's Advisory Board during his interview with Mr. Delinko. He stated that the Mayor would support Mr. Delinko be appointed in that capacity. Mr. Delinko stated that he would be willing to serve on the Citizen's Advisory Board.

The Administrative Oversight Committee recommends the appointment of Mr. Delinko to the Citizen's Advisory Board.

Michael Lauter (reappointment – Planning Commission)

Ms. Reed questioned if Mr. Lauter was ready to serve another term. Mr. Lauter stated that he hesitated to reapply but feels he's ready to move forward. He stated that he is still upset about the issue with the Planning Commission Chair and that the Commission should have been consulted before the decision to move their meetings to Council Chambers occurred.

Ms. Reed stated that she would have intervened with the situation if she had known about it prior. Mr. Lauter requested better communication in the future. He stated that the Chair felt ignored.

Ms. Reed requested that Mr. Lauter inform Council of issues in the future.

The Administrative Oversight Committee recommends the reappointment of Mr. Lauter to the Planning Commission.

Jared Barcz (appointment – alternate Zoning Hearing Board)

Mr. Marmarou noted that Mr. Barcz resides outside the City. He questioned if there was a business interest in the City. Mr. Barcz stated that he has a shop and storage in the Canal Street building. He stated that the area is currently being renovated to include administrative offices.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Barcz was interested in serving this Board. Mr. Barcz stated that he is interested in the redevelopment of Reading. He stated that he is an advocate for zoning issues and noted that they are necessary to keep order in the City and have many benefits including increasing the quality of life of residents. He described Reading as a big ship that needs to be turned around.

Mr. Acosta requested Mr. Barcz explain how he would redefine changes to the Zoning Ordinance to accommodate new ideas or if he would prefer Reading remain the same as it was 30 years ago. Mr. Barcz stated that he would try to adhere to the regulations but that much of the City needs change. He noted his understanding that the Zoning Hearing Board would be hearing from those who need to alter the regulations and that he would remain neutral and objective. He stated that he is active in the Greater Reading Young Professionals and has been attending Council meetings. He stated that Reading currently has no specific plan for growth.

Ms. Reed noted that the City has only a few R-1 residential districts remaining. She described a recent problem with a billboard in an R-1 area where the residents' displeasure with the project was not considered. She questioned how Mr. Barcz would approach issues in R-1 areas and on Penn St prior to granting exceptions and/or variances in these areas. Mr. Barcz stated that the City already has enough billboards which are an assault on the eyes. He stated that projects that displease neighbors have many opportunities to locate elsewhere.

Mr. Marmarou described the problems with off-campus housing in his R-1 area. Mr. Barcz stated that many residents are unhappy in the City and need day-to-day improvements in quality of life

issues. He stated that this type of use is not serving the community well. He stated his belief that landlords making money is not a good reason to grant permission for this use.

Ms. Reed expressed her belief that the Sovereign building at 5th & Penn Sts should have more retail space.

Mr. Acosta noted the need to be conservative in some neighborhoods to preserve them.

The Administrative Oversight Committee recommends the appointment of Mr. Barcz as an alternate to the Zoning Hearing Board.

II. Reading Area Transportation Study Appointment

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that there has been a City vacancy on this Committee since the departure of John Giardiello in late 2009. She stated that the candidate should have a background in planning or transportation.

Ms. Reed suggested contacting Fritz Rothermel and Frank McGough.

Mr. Denbowski stated that the Mayor was considering serving.

The Administrative Oversight Committee adjourned at approximately 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk