

City of Reading City Council
Regular Business Meeting
Monday, April 25, 2011

Vaughn D. Spencer, President of Council, called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by a representative of Msgr. Thomas Orsulak from Saint Peter's Roman Catholic Church.

All present pledged to the flag.

ATTENDANCE

Council President Spencer
Councilor Acosta, District 1
Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2
Councilor Sterner, District 3
Councilor Marmarou, District 4
Councilor Reed, District 5
Councilor Waltman, District 6
Managing Director C. Geffken
City Auditor D. Cituk
City Solicitor C. Younger
City Clerk L. Kelleher
Sergeant at Arms Captain R. Schafer

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

City Council issued the following commendations:

- Recognizing AFSCME Week, accepted by Willie Frymoyer, Vice President of Local 2763 and George Fultz representing Local 3799

Mayoral Proclamation was issued:

- Recognizing Public Service Recognition Week, accepted by Michael Reese

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Spencer announced that four (4) citizens were registered to address Council on non-agenda topics. He inquired if any member of Council objected to suspending the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting. As no one objected the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting was suspended. Council President Spencer reminded those registered to speak of the remaining public speaking rules.

George Stichter, of Moss Street, stated that he is representing the "T" Party, who is working to protect the citizens of Reading. He described the difficulty the "T" Party had in obtaining an event permit for an event scheduled for May 9th and 10th in front of City Hall on Washington Street. He stated that he called into Codes several times and was transferred to the Police Department, Traffic Division where he left voice messages. However, no one from Traffic returned his calls. He stated that due to the requirement to apply for a permit sixty (60) days before the event, the previously advertised day of the event is no longer viable. He requested permission for three (3) "T" party members to demonstrate in front of City Hall to advertise the new date of the event. He also reminded the City that they are also required to remove snow as required by local ordinance. He displayed photographs of 11th & Pike playground.

Manuel Valentin, of Windsor Street, was not present.

Carlos Zayas, of South 11th Street, noted the need for Council to begin the redistricting process. He expressed the belief that since the Hispanic population is now the majority-minority; the Council appointed Commission should have a majority of Hispanic appointees.

William Davis, of Spring Street, distributed materials on the "Providing Second Chance Program" for those citizens seeking employment who have a criminal history. He described the legislation and expressed the belief that the "Second Chance Program" will increase employment and reduce the recidivism.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council President Spencer called Council's attention to the minutes for the April 11th regular meeting of Council and the agenda for this meeting, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading. He noted that no additions to the agenda are required.

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Sterner, to approve the minutes from the April 11th Regular meeting of Council and the agenda as amended, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading. The motion is approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda Legislation

Resolution 59-2011 – promote Lt. Stephen Powell to captain (**Police**)

Resolution 60-2011 - promote Sgt. Madison Winchester to Lieutenant (**Police**)

Resolution 61-2011 – promote Sgt. David Shilling to Lieutenant (**Police**)

Resolution 62–2011 - promote Sgt. Damond Kloc to Lieutenant (**Police**)

Resolution 63-2011 – promote Sgt. Mark Spotts to Lieutenant (**Police**)

Resolution 64–2011 - promote Criminal Investigator Matthew Schappell to Sergeant (**Police**)

Resolution 65-2011 – promote Officer Richard Tornielli to Sergeant (**Police**)

Resolution 66–2011 - promote Officer Andrew Winters to Sergeant (**Police**)

Resolution 67–2011 - promote Officer Paul Reilly to Sergeant (**Police**)

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Managing Director Geffken read the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- Creation of an Act 90 work group to implement the new blight tools authorized by State Act 90
- Appointment of Ron Natale as Codes Manager
- Appointment of Kevin Kulp as Fire Chief
- Great American Clean Up scheduled for Saturday, April 30th at Riverfront Park followed by Earth Day on Sunday, May 1st

Council President Spencer questioned if the newly appointed Codes Manager will also receive a salary increase. Managing Director Geffken stated that the newly appointed Codes Manager will receive a small increase of approximately \$2,500 which is the same that will be provided to the newly appointed Fire Chief.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Managing Director Geffken for arranging the educational meetings for Council on the Quality of Life ticketing.

Councilor Reed requested that in the future, that Council be provided with a courtesy notice about management promotions. She stated that it would have been beneficial to learn about that promotion in advance, as she and Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz met with the newly appointed Codes Manager earlier in the day for the Quality of Life Education Session.

Managing Director Geffken expressed the belief that the Administration has the authority to make managerial promotions and does not need to share this information with City Council.

Councilor Reed repeated her request for quick courtesy notification that can be distributed via email.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

City Auditor Cituk read the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- 2011 Admissions Tax Collection
- 2011 Real Estate Transfer Tax Collection
- City properties that have sold that are valued at over \$1M

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Ordinance 19–2011 - amend 2011 Full Time Position Ordinance by adding a Planner II in the Community Development Department who will focus on the Ricktown Project (**Mayor**) *Introduced at the April 11 regular meeting*

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to table Bill No. 19-2011.

Bill No. 19-2011 was tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer, President – 7

Nays: None – 0

Ordinance 20–2011 - amending Ordinance 3-2011 (Investigation of any Unauthorized Use of Sewer Funds) by deleting the word “independent” in Section 1 Paragraph 1 first sentence and Section 1 Paragraph 2 in its entirety (**Law/Council Staff**) *Introduced at the April 11 regular meeting*

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to enact Bill No. 20-2011.

Councilor Reed stated that through the enactment of this ordinance, Council is merely seeking a communication about the transfers that can be disclosed to the public.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that by providing this documentation, public and future elected officials will have an understanding of the unfunded debt transaction that occurred.

Bill No. 20-2011 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Spencer, President – 6

Nays: Waltman – 1

Ordinance 21–2011 authorizing the Mayor to execute the lease between the City of Reading and the Reading Area Fire Fighters Museum, Inc. for premises located at 501 South 5th Street, Reading, Berks County, PA **(Law/Mayor)** *Introduced at the April 11 regular meeting*

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 21-2011.

Councilor Acosta stated that he is pleased with the work of this organization to collect and preserve the history of firefighting in Reading.

Councilor Sterner noted the dedication of these volunteers to support this organization and its collection.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz also thanked the organization for their dedication to preserve the historic building located on 5th and Laurel Street. She stated that she is pleased to support and promote their efforts.

Council President Spencer noted that Reading has the oldest volunteer firefighter program in the country.

Bill No. 21-2011 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer, President – 7

Nays: None – 0

Ordinance 22-2011 setting forth the salary of the Chief of the Department of Fire and Rescue Services at \$80,000.00 per annum **(Man Dir)** *Introduced at the April 11 regular meeting*

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to enact Bill No. 22-2011.

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to amend the Fire Chief’s salary to \$77,500 per annum.

The motion to amend Bill No. 22-2011 was adopted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Waltman, Spencer,
President – 6**

Nays: Sterner – 1

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 22-2011, as amended.

Councilor Sterner stated that he supports the reduced salary due to the City's tough financial times. He also noted that the City has sometimes gotten burned in the past by bringing on new Department Directors at a higher salary before they show that they can handle the position. He noted the need to remember other City workers who have been taking salary reductions and who have been in a pay freeze for almost three (3) years.

Council President Spencer stated that the reduced salary is no reflection on the qualifications of the candidate. He stated that the reduction only reflects Council's concern for those City employees who have been working without Cost of Living increases. He expressed his belief that the newly appointed Fire Chief should receive the same level salary as the previous Fire Chief.

Councilor Waltman expressed the belief that the City is fortunate to have a qualified candidate that can be moved up from within the Fire Departments ranks. He expressed the belief that the capabilities of candidates should be awarded a fair salary.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed her belief in the appointment of this Fire Chief is a good investment in the Fire Department. She expressed her belief in the qualifications and the capabilities of the candidates.

Councilor Acosta noted that the expectations placed on the new Fire Chief are high, as the Fire Department needs to have a good leader to move the Department forward.

Bill No. 22-2011, as amended, was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Waltman – 5

Nays: Sterner, Spencer, President – 2

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

There were no ordinances introduced at this meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 68–2011 - appointing Alan Shuman to the Downtown Improvement District Authority (**Admin Oversight**)

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adopt Resolutions No. 68-2011.

Councilor Marmarou noted the qualification and skill of Mr. Shuman.

Councilor Reed described the appointment process and the skill Mr. Shuman will bring to the Downtown Improvement District.

Resolutions No. 68-2011 were adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer, President – 7

Nays: None – 0

Resolution 69–2011 - appointing Kevin L. Kulp to the position of Chief of the Department of Fire and Rescue Services (**Man Dir**)

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adopt Resolutions No. 69-2011.

Managing Director Geffken noted the selection process.

Councilor Sterner expressed his belief in the qualifications of Mr. Kulp.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed her belief in the structure of the search process. She also expressed her belief in the views and planned approach described by Mr. Kulp in the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Council President Spencer noted that the City has not selected a new Fire Chief since 1997. He stated that it is nice to see promotions come from within.

Resolutions No. 69-2011 was adopted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,
President – 7
Nays: None – 0**

Newly appointed Fire Chief Kevin Kulp thanked City Council for their support.

COUNCIL COMMENT

Councilor Acosta noted his positive experience dealing with the Reading Police Department in the recent break-ins that occurred at Fulton Bank.

Councilor Waltman suggested that all citizens become involved in the Great American Cleanup scheduled for Saturday, April 30th at Riverfront Park. He stated that the event runs from 8am to approximately 1pm.

Councilor Marmarou noted the upcoming fundraiser planned by the College Heights Community Council to assist with the legal fees associated with the Orangestone lawsuits.

Councilor Sterner thanked tonight's speakers and those who were promoted and appointed. He also noted the Outlet Community Group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 27th at 6pm at St. Marks located at 10th and Windsor Streets. He also noted the upcoming Hillside Carnival.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted upcoming community meeting in District 2 scheduled for Wednesday, May 4th at 6pm at St. Paul's church.

She reminded all citizens to visit the annual Pagoda Skyline Chicken Bake after they participate in the Great American Cleanup on April 30th.

Councilor Reed described the centennial celebration of the City's ownership of the Pagoda landmark.

Council President Spencer described the Redistricting Commission.

Council President Spencer also noted his issue with salary rate when the Administration provides salary increases to management employees who do not have to be approved by Council. He stated that City Council approved management salaries when the Home Rule form of government began; however Council deferred after the request came by the Managing Director during that time period. He suggested that Council reconsider authorizing the salaries of all the management employees.

Council President Spencer announced the upcoming Council meeting schedule.

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk