

**City of Reading City Council
Regular Business Meeting
Monday, April 9, 2012**

Council President Francis G. Acosta called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Pastor Mel Sensenig from Christ Presbyterian Church.

Council President Acosta asked all to remain standing for a moment of silence in memory of the firefighters who lost their lives in Philadelphia.

All present pledged to the flag.

ATTENDANCE

Council President Acosta
Councilor Corcoran, District 1
Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2
Councilor Sterner, District 3
Councilor Marmarou, District 4
Councilor Reed, District 5
Mayor V. Spencer
City Auditor D. Cituk
City Solicitor C. Younger
City Clerk L. Kelleher

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Mayoral Proclamation recognizing Bike Month, accepted by Emily Weidner.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Acosta announced that one (1) citizen was registered to address Council on non-agenda business. He inquired if any Councilor objected to suspending the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the Council meeting. As no one objected, the rule to require non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting was suspended. Council President Acosta reminded the citizen registered of the remaining public speaking rules.

Steven Keiser, of North 8th Street, described the recent shooting at his investment property on Spring Street. He expressed the belief that the decrease in Police manning has caused an increase in crime. He suggested that Council reduce Codes staffing to support increases to the police manning. He expressed the belief at the lack of proper police deployment is making people and businesses move from the City. He made the observation that the City of Reading is dying.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council President Acosta called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting and the minutes for the March 26th Regular Meeting of Council and the Special Meeting of April 2nd. He noted the need to amend the agenda to place an Award of Contract to ADP for Payroll Services to the Consent Agenda.

Councilor Sterner moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to approve the agenda as amended, including the legislation under the amended Consent Agenda heading and the minutes from the March 26th, 2012 Regular Meeting of Council and Special Meeting of April 2nd, 2012. The motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Award of Contract – to ADP for Payroll Services 1125 Virginia Drive, Ft. Washington, PA 19034, for a one time fee of \$29,100 and a yearly fee of \$185,000.04

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Mayor Spencer read the report distributed to Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting with highlights as follows:

- Congratulating Sergeant Brian Rogers on his recent appointment
- Noting his meeting with the Easton Mayor regarding the improvements to the Codes Division
- participating in the naturalization ceremony
- Reviewing the Codes sweep
- IT upgrades to the Fire Marshall and Building Trades areas

Councilor Marmarou inquired about the resident's reaction to the Quality of Life tickets on the sweep. Mayor Spencer stated that Codes Inspectors did knock on doors before giving tickets but the majority of residents were not home. He stated that he observed that the Codes Inspectors used a common sense and a balanced approach prior to issuing a Quality of Life ticket.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that the Quality of Life ticketing program needs additional review. She suggested that Codes enforcement use a triage approach. She noted the correlation between Codes violations and crime.

Mayor Spencer expressed the belief alley enforcement and set out of trash receptacles are major issues.

Councilor Reed expressed the belief that the City should require properties to have addresses identifying the rear of properties. She suggested that the City provide the citizens with one

year notice to make this adjustment.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

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

- 2011 DCED Financial Report Submission
- Start of the 2011 External Audit
- Submission of the AG385 State Pension Report
- 2002 Liquid Fuels Receipts

Councilor Acosta announced that MAC Channel 99 is having technical issues this evening; however, the meeting is being taped and will be replayed later.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Bill No. 36-2012 - authorizing the Mayor to execute the third addendum to the lease and operating agreement between the City of Reading, Pennsylvania and the Reading Area Water Authority, in the form attached hereto as Exhibit "A", and such other documents necessitated thereby, including, without limitation, (1) a deed conveying to the Reading Area Water Authority an approximately one hundred twenty (120) acre parcel of land located in Ontelaunee Township owned by the City and (2) a deed conveying to the Reading Area Water Authority an approximately two and thirty-nine one hundredths (2.39) acre parcel of land owned by the City and located at 1801 Moss Street in the City of Reading (**Man Dir**) *Introduced at the March 12 regular meeting; Tabled at the March 26 regular meeting; Tabled at the April 2 special meeting*

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Corcoran, to table Bill No. 36-2012.

Bill No. 36-2012 was tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Corcoran, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President
- 6
Nays: None- 0

Bill No. 42-2012 - amending the City of Reading Codified Ordinances §1-122. Ordinances, Part 5 Recording (**Council Staff/Law**) *Introduced at the March 26 regular meeting*

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 42-2012.

Bill No. 42-2012 was enacted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Corcoran, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta,
President - 6
Nays: None - 0**

Bill No. 43-2012 - amending §1-119 of the Administrative Code, Public Participation (Council Staff/Law) *Introduced at the March 26 regular meeting*

Councilor Corcoran moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 43-2012.

Ms. Kelleher explained that this amendment would require citizens to register with the City Clerk's office by 5pm on the evenings of the regular business meetings.

Council President Acosta stated that this amendment is not intended to limit the City's ability to participate in meetings but just to provide some improved structure.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that the ways that the City will improve a citizen's ability to register to address Council.

Bill No. 43-2012 was enacted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Corcoran, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Acosta, President
- 6
Nays: None- 0**

Bill No. 44-2012 - amending the City of Reading Codified Ordinances Chapter 1 Administration and Government, Section 186 G Fiscal Provisions by reducing the amount of expenditures and allocations requiring Council's approval from \$25,000 to \$10,000 (Council Staff) *Introduced at the March 26 regular meeting*

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to enact Bill No. 44-2012.

Councilor Sterner stated that he will not support this amendment due to the fact that the decrease to \$25K was just enacted four (4) weeks ago. He suggested allowing the first amendment to stand until abuse is noted.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that Council should more closely monitor expenditures that fall outside the budget allocations.

Councilor Reed expressed the belief that unpalatable patterns are taking place. She suggested tabling the ordinance.

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to table Bill No. 44-2012.

Bill No. 44-2012 was not tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Goodman-Hinnershitz, Reed - 2

Nays: Corcoran, Marmarou, Sterner, Acosta, President – 4

Council President Acosta announced that the main motion is on the floor.

City Auditor Cituk noted the recent reduction from \$50K to \$25K. He expressed the belief that the amendment to \$10K will not be cumbersome; however, he noted the need for improved trust between the Administration and Council. He noted that State and local provisions prohibit partial contract values to avoid receipt of Council approval. He agreed with the need for improved monitoring, but suggested that Council and the Administration find some level of agreement.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for improved accountability.

Council President Acosta stated that he voted negatively to reduce to \$25K, in part due to the lack of good communication between Council and the Administration and the process and procedure used by the Administration. He expressed the belief that the problem will not be solved by this further reduction.

Councilor Reed requested that the Auditor provide improved reporting on contracts at Finance meetings.

Councilor Sterner agreed that the issue is not with the number but with trust between the bodies. He also agreed with Council President Acosta's statement.

Bill No. 44-2012 was not enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Corcoran, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Reed - 3

Nays: Marmarou, Sterner, Acosta, President – 3

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

None

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 56-2012- In accordance with Section 1203 of the City of Reading Home Rule Charter, the majority of Council authorizes the formation of a Charter Review Commission to be appointed (**Council Staff**)

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to adopt Resolutions 56-2012.

Council President Acosta explained that the Charter requires a review of the Charter at least once every ten (10) years. He stated that 11 people will be appointed to the Charter Review Commission. He stated that Council will be appointing five (5) City Officials/Employees and seven (7) residents. He stated that within six months (6) of appointment the Commission is to make a report to Council and the Mayor.

Resolution 56-2012 was adopted by the following vote:

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

Nays: None- 0

Resolution 57-2012- removing William Hall Jr from the Recreation Commission (**Nom & Appts**)

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to adopt Resolution 57-2012.

Councilor Marmarou stated that Mr. Hall needs to step away from the Rec Commission due to health issues.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted Mr. Hall's valuable contributions to many City organizations. She wished him the best for a speedy recovery.

Resolution 57-2012 was adopted by the following vote:

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

Nays: None- 0

Resolution 58–2012 - reappointing Paul Hoh to the Library Board (Nom & Appts)

Resolution 59-2012 – reappointing Andrew Molteni to the Environmental Advisory Council (Nom & Appts)

Resolution 60–2012 - appointing Valerie Zelle Phelps to the Human Relations Commission (Nom & Appts)

Resolution 61–2012 - reappointing Lee Olsen to the Blighted Property Review Committee (Nom & Appts)

Resolution 62–2012 - appointing James Radwanski to the Redevelopment Authority (Nom & Appts)

Resolution 63-2012 – appointing Donald Taddei to the Recreation Commission (Nom & Appts)

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adopt Resolutions 58-2012 – 63-2012.

Councilor Marmarou noted that Mr. Taddei will replace Mr. Hall on the Rec Commission. He stated that Mr. Taddei is a qualified candidate. Council Reed concurred.

Councilor Corcoran noted his appreciation for all the citizens who volunteer in a variety of ways to assist the City.

Council President Acosta noted the recent attempted break in at one of the City’s branch libraries.

Resolution 58-2012 – 63-2012 was adopted by the following vote:

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

Nays: None- 0

COUNCIL COMMENT

Councilor Corcoran stated that Reading is home to many professional sports organizations that provide great family activities.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the improvements at Neversink Playground. She also noted the upcoming downhill bike race on Duryea Drive.

Councilor Marmarou noted the achievements of the Northmont Community Group.

Councilor Reed noted the lack of public outrage regarding the shooting noted by Mr. Keiser this evening. She stated that the public was able to support increases to the Mayor's staff; however, they are absent for the shooting of an innocent man. He expressed the belief that Mr. Keiser statement regarding the death of Reading speaks more to the apathy of its residents.

Councilor Reed also noted the sudden passing of Gene Burkholder who was the backbone of the Goggleworks.

Councilor Reed also noted that the Executive Session referred to during the March 26th Public Comment was legal as per the City Solicitor.

Councilor Reed also noted the new system by volunteers to improve the City's pole planters.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the upcoming Years for Tears event at Mineral Spring Park on Wednesday, April 25th at 7pm. She noted the difficulties neighborhoods have dealing with crime.

Council President Acosta expressed Council's sympathy to the Kulp family. He also noted the Easter event held by non-profits at City Park.

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

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk