

City of Reading City Council
Special Meeting
Friday, January 6, 2012

Jeffrey Waltman, Vice President of Council, called the meeting to order. He announced that the purpose of this meeting is to appoint a President and Vice-President of Council.

ATTENDANCE

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
City Solicitor Younger
City Clerk Kelleher

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice President Waltman announced that no one was registered to address Council this evening.

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution 1-2012 – appointing a President of Council, with a term expiring January 6, 2014.

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to nominate Councilor Acosta as Council President.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the process to make this appointment was challenging. She stated that talented individuals applied for this position. She noted the need for the candidate appointed to be able to move the body of Council forward. She stated that she looks forward to moving forward successfully with the new Administration.

Ms. Reed noted that the process to make the appointment was not easy. She agreed that all candidates were well qualified. She noted the need to remember that it is a changed City and a changed time. She stated that supporting one candidate does not overshadow the respect people have of the candidates who are not appointed. She noted the difficulty of making the choice and noted her respect and admiration of all who applied. She stated that although she intends to support Councilor Acosta, she values the experience Councilor Waltman brings to the body of Council.

Councilor Sterner noted his respect for Councilor Acosta, but expressed the belief that Councilor Waltman is the most qualified candidate. He stated that a great disservice occurred to the applicants for this position as some Councilors had already made a decision regarding appointment before the interviews were held. He noted that an election is the fairest way to fill this position. He noted the work Councilor Waltman has given to the City over the past 12 years and expressed the belief that he should be appointed. He stated that he means no disrespect to Councilor Acosta and noted that he expressed these same thoughts to Councilor Acosta months ago. He noted the dedicated leadership of Councilor Waltman and added his perception that the majority of Council made their decision about this appointment months ago.

Councilor Marmarou stated that the selection was not clear from the beginning. He stated that a tied vote on this appointment could cause the Berks County Court system to make the appointment. He stated that he wanted to avoid an appointment by the court system. He stated that he decided to support Councilor Acosta to prevent a tie vote.

Vice President Waltman thanked Councilor Sterner for his remarks and noted that Councilor Sterner always speaks to the heart of an issue. He stated that being appointed to this Council President position is not about gaining control of the throne but about providing leadership to get things done. He stated that he appreciates all members of Council and that he was not seeking this position for personal gain. He stated that leadership is about getting results even if done quietly. He stated that although the various members believe the process was open and fair, it was not as interviews were conducted after the collective decision was already made. He again noted that being appointed to this position is not about getting control of the throne to cut deals and isolate the body. He stated that he will remain on board to hold this body accountable and protect the citizens of Reading.

The motion to nominate Councilor Acosta as Council President was adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed - 4.

Nays: Sterner, Waltman – 2.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou to adopt Resolution 1- 2012, appointing Councilor Acosta as Council President and to close nominations.

The motion to adopt Resolution 1-2012 and appoint Councilor Acosta as Council President was adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed - 4.

Nays: Sterner, Waltman – 2.

Resolution No. 2-2012 – appointing a Vice President of Council.

Councilor Sterner moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou to nominate Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz as Vice President of Council.

Councilor Sterner noted the leadership and experience of Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz and his belief in her ability to lead the body due to her dedication city-wide and her eight (8) years on Council. He noted her positive outlook on the City.

Councilor Acosta noted Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz's passionate dedication to the City and stated that her passion is a great example of public leadership.

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adopt Resolution 2-2012 appointing Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz as Vice President of Council and to close nominations.

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman – 6.

Nays: None – 0.

Councilor Marmarou noted the difficulty he had responding to Councilor Waltman's request to meet with him before this evening.

Councilor Acosta announced that he plans to lead the group as a team.

Councilor Reed warned Councilor Acosta and Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz to provide open communication with the body of Council and to avoid making back room deals. She noted her respect for Councilor Waltman.

Councilors Goodman-Hinnershitz and Acosta agreed that the position will be challenging but promised to work as a team with the body of Council. They noted the value and dedication of Councilor Waltman over the past 12 years. They noted their respect for Councilor Waltman.

Councilor Sterner congratulated Councilors Acosta and Goodman-Hinnershitz and stated that he looks forward to working with them. He also thanked all applicants who applied to fill the Council President position.

Councilor Waltman noted that respect is something that is earned and that once lost respect is hard to regain. He stated that he appreciates all comments; however, he stated that the process used to fill the Council President position created a loss of faith. He promised to hold

the body of Council accountable.

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

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk