

**City of Reading City Council  
Regular Business Meeting  
Monday, September 23, 2013**

Council President Francis Acosta called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Rabbi Minna Bromberg, Keshar Zion Synagogue.

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  
City Auditor D. Cituk  
City Solicitor C. Younger  
City Clerk L. Kelleher  
Managing Director C. Snyder

City Clerk Kelleher stated that Councilor Waltman sent word that he is running behind schedule and will be late.

Council President Acosta stated that the Mayor is at a conference.

**PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

- Presentation of a plaque honoring the late Bob Batdorf by Chief Heim
- Council Commendation recognizing Kiddie Kar Collectibles, accepted by Michael & Joyce Appnel, owners
- Council Commendation recognizing W. H. Dance Academy, accepted by Wanda Holdren, owner
- Council Commendation recognizing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, accepted by St. Joseph Hospital
- Council Commendation recognizing the Reading Buccaneers, accepted by Bill Snook, Assistant Director

- Council Commendation recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month, accepted by the Hispanic Center
- Council Recognition of Dr. Ruben Flores
- Council Recognition of Dr. Raquel Yiengst
- Council Recognition of Marcelino Colon
- Council Recognition of Waldo Alvarado
- Presentation by Latin Flair

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Acosta reviewed the public speaking regulations and stated that one (1) individual is registered to address Council this evening on non agenda matters. He inquired if anyone objected to suspending the rule requiring non agenda comment at the end of the meeting. As no one objected, the rule was suspended. He reviewed the remaining public speaking rules.

Former County Commissioner Glenn Reber, of 631 Washington Street, thanked City Council for their service to the public, which he noted is at times a difficult job. He stated that he currently works for the Hope Rescue Mission and the YMCA during the evening hours on City streets, identifying people who require assistance. He suggested that removing parking meters in the commercial core area will revitalize the downtown. He recommended that the City use the methods applied by other municipalities to curb panhandling in the commercial core area. He suggested that the City create a Railroad Walk to mirror the River Walks used in other metropolitan areas. He volunteered to assist in creating the Railroad Walk.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES**

Council President Acosta called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading, and the minutes for the September 9<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council and the September 16<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting.

**Councilor Sterner moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to approve the minutes from the September 9<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council, the September 16<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting and the agenda, including the legislation under the Consent Agenda heading. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **Consent Agenda**

**A. Resolution 77- 2013 – exonerating the 2011 property taxes, interest and penalty for 112**

Mulberry St., owned by the Central PA African American Museum for a total of \$387.59. **(Council Staff)**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

There was no administrative report.

## **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

City Auditor Cituk stated that the 2012 external audit is completed and he introduced Mr. Turtell from Herbein & Co.

Mr. Turtell stated that the final audit distributed to Council is unchanged from the draft distributed last week. He stated that only the management letter containing the administration's responses to the findings are added.

Mr. Turtell stated that the audit contains a qualified opinion on the Reading Area Water Authority's accounts receivable. A qualified opinion is issued when the auditor encounters one of two types of situations which do not comply with generally accepted accounting principles, however the rest of the financial statements are fairly presented, with a certain exception which is otherwise misstated.

Mr. Turtell stated that the remainder of the audit is unqualified, or free of material misstatements. He noted that the General Fund closed 2012 with a loss of \$4M caused by the miss-booking of the Greater Berks loan payment which was recorded in 2011 and budgeted in 2012 and the 2012 unbudgeted debt payment. He stated that the fund balance of \$14M represents 19% of that expended.

Mr. Turtell stated that there were 14 findings within the audit and nine (9) of those were related to federal programs and accounts. He stated that Herbein will follow up with the Administration to work on resolving these findings.

Mr. Cituk thanked Herbein & Co. for their work to complete this audit, along with his assistant Beth Zimmerman.

Council President Acosta thanked Herbein for their work to complete the audit and prepare the report.

## **REPORT FROM DEPT. DIRECTORS, BOARDS, AUTHORITIES, & COMMISSIONS**

None.

## **ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE**

**A. Bill No. 41-2013** – amending the City’s Code by adding a new chapter regarding regulations for the permitting and inspection of tattoo and piercing establishments (**Board of Health**) *Advertised 9-15-13; Introduced at the September 9 regular meeting*

**Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to enact Bill No. 41-2013.**

Council President Acosta explained that this issue was brought to the Board of Health by the Property Maintenance Division Manager. The Board of Health studied and vetted the issue with owners of tattoo establishments.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the Board of Health and the Deputy City Clerk for their work on this issue.

**Bill No. 41-2013 was adopted by the following vote:**

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

**B. Bill No. 42-2013** – amending the City’s Code to add a Tattoo Establishment Inspection Fee of \$100 and an application fee of \$50 (**Board of Health**) *Advertised 9-15-13; Introduced at the September 9 regular meeting*

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Corcoran, to enact Bill No. 42-2013.**

**Bill No. 42-2013 was adopted by the following vote:**

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

**C. Bill No. 43-2013** – authorizing the execution of a tri-party lease agreement between the City of Reading, the Berks County Conservancy and Alvernia University; a lease agreement between the City of Reading and Alvernia University and a lease agreement between the City of Reading and the Berks County Conservancy to provide for the leasing of certain portions of Angelica Park, as more specifically identified in exhibit “A”. (**Law**) *Introduced at the September 9 regular meeting; Summaries of agreements attached*

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 43-2013.**

Council President Acosta explained that this lease agreement was drafted by attorneys

representing the City, the Conservancy and Alvernia over a multi year period. Councilors Corcoran and Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that this agreement represents a positive public-private partnership that will benefit all parties and maintain a valuable City asset.

Councilor Corcoran noted that residents surrounding the park were supportive of this agreement at a town meeting held about this topic.

**Bill No. 43-2013 was adopted by the following vote:**

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

**- 6**

**Nays: None - 0**

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES**

Council President Acosta read the following ordinances into the record:

**A. Ordinance** - Authorizing the transfer of \$56,363 from the General Fund account code (01-07-74-4101) Light and Power to account code (01-07-74-4216) Contracted Services for the purpose of payment to Susquehanna Municipal Finance for the Honeywell contract. **(Pub Works)**

**B. Ordinance** - Authorizing the transfer of \$33,900.00 from 54-07-44-4525, Minor Capital Equipment, to the following: \$22,200.00 to 54-07-44-4000 Salaries; \$1,700.00 to 54-07-44-4913 Social Security; and \$10,000.00 to 54-07-44-4900 Fringe Benefits **(Bus Analyst)**

**C. Ordinance** - Transferring two Municipal Aide II positions in the Citizens Service Center Division of the Department of Administrative Services to the Waste Water Treatment Division of the Department of Public Works. **(Bus Analyst)**

**D. Ordinance** - Authorizing the transfer of \$14,000.00 from the IT Salaries line item (01-06-23-4000) to the IT Consulting Services line item (01-06-23-4222). **(Bus Analyst)**

**E. Ordinance** - Amending Chapter 308, Housing, of the City of Reading Code to provide for Part 3, Abandoned Real Property Registration. (Law) Advertised Sept 30<sup>th</sup>

**F. Ordinance** – 2014 Property Tax at fifteen and six hundred eighty-nine thousandths mills (.015689) on the dollar **(Council President)**

**G. Ordinance** – 2014 Land Value Property Tax at twenty-two and nine hundred ninety-five thousandths mills (0.022995) on the dollar, or twenty dollars and ninety-nine point five cents (\$22.995) on each one thousand dollars is hereby levied and assessed on land, and a tax of twelve and five hundred fifty-nine thousandths mills (0.012559) on the dollar, or twelve dollars and fifty-

five point nine cents (\$12.559) on each one thousand dollars is hereby levied and assessed on improvements to land **(Mayor)**

**H. Ordinance** – amending Chapter 576 – Vehicles and Traffic, Part 12 Parades, Special Events, and Public Gatherings by making clarifications to the terms of the **ordinance (Bus Analyst)**

**I. Ordinance** – authorizing the execution of a First Amendment to Lease Agreement between the City of Reading and Alvernia University to provide for the leasing of certain portions of Angelica and the baseball field area, as more specifically identified in Exhibit “A”. **(Law)**

**PENDING**

**Ordinance** – 2014 General Fund Budget Advertised Sept 20th

**Ordinance** – 2014 Capital Improvement Program Budget Advertised Sept 20th

**Ordinance** – 2014 Position Ordinance

**Ordinance** – Resident Home Rule EIT; a tax of one and five tenths percent (1.5%) (Reduction of 0.1%) Advertised Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, Oct 7<sup>th</sup> and Oct 14<sup>th</sup>

**Ordinance** – Commuter EIT; a tax of up to a maximum of one and two tenths percent (1.2%) (Reduction of 0.1%) Advertised Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, Oct 7<sup>th</sup> and Oct 14<sup>th</sup>

**RESOLUTIONS**

**A. Resolution 75-2013** – appointing James McDevitt to the Human Relations Commission **(Nom & Appts)**

**B. Resolution 76-2013** – appointing Daniel Laws, Jr. to the Downtown Improvement District Authority **(Nom & Appts)**

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Corcoran, to adopt Resolutions 75-76-2013.**

Councilors Marmarou and Corcoran noted the skill and abilities these appointed will bring to the boards they are appointed to serve.

**Resolution No. 75-76 -2013 were adopted by the following vote:**

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

**Nays: None - 0**

**COUNCIL BUSINESS / COMMENTS**

Councilor Marmarou stated that he was originally displeased with the editorial in the morning Reading Eagle newspaper; however, Mr. Reber's remarks during the public comment period show the need for some people in the downtown to change their behavior.

Council Vice President Goodman-Hinnershitz described the event held yesterday at the Viet Nam Memorial in City Park. She stated that the location was selected due to the clear view of the Pagoda from this area. She noted that seeing the Pagoda means "home" to Reading residents.

Councilor Reed noted the dedication of the late Bob Batdorf as a community leader. She also noted the upcoming Pretzel Fest and Penn Street Bridge Centennial scheduled for this Saturday.

Council Reed stated that the County recently purchased Angora Farms, which is proximate to the Antietam area. She stated that this purchase ensures the preservation of the entire Antietam area.

Councilor Corcoran announced that the Charter Review Commission will be holding meetings in the six (6) Council Districts to obtain public comment from residents. The Mayor's office is assisting with the arrangements.

Councilors Corcoran and Sterner congratulated those honored with commendations this evening.

Councilor Sterner thanked former Commissioner Reber for attending the meeting and sharing his thoughts with Council.

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

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk*