



CITY COUNCIL

Nominations & Appointments Committee

**Monday, July 7, 2014
Meeting Report**

Attendance: S. Marmarou, D. Sterner, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

I. Interviews

Melissa Eggert (reappointment – Board of Ethics)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Ms. Eggert was interested in continuing to serve. Ms. Eggert stated that she enjoys working with this Board and that she has learned a great deal about local government.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Ms. Eggert understood the mission of the Board of Ethics. Ms. Eggert stated that she does.

Mr. Marmarou questioned who Ms. Eggert represented on this Board. Ms. Eggert stated that she felt she represented all the citizens of Reading.

Mr. Sterner questioned the term of office. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that it is a three year term. She stated that Ms. Eggert completed a partial term due to a resignation and if reappointed will begin a full three year term.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned the most difficult issue the Board has recently faced. Ms. Eggert stated that there is a lot of legal jargon. She thanked Ms. Katzenmoyer and Mr. Stock for helping the Board work through it.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if Ms. Eggert believed ethics training would help the members of the Board. Ms. Eggert stated that she would appreciate ethics training.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if Ms. Eggert was comfortable asking questions at meetings. Ms. Eggert stated that she is and that the other members are as well. She stated that the Code of Ethics is difficult to read for those unfamiliar with government.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she will work with Ms. Katzenmoyer to arrange ethics training. She noted that there is a difference between the Charter and the Code of Ethics. She expressed her appreciation to Ms. Eggert for her time and commitment to this Board.

Mr. Sterner expressed his gratitude that Ms. Eggert is willing to continue to serve.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of Melissa Eggert to the Board of Ethics.

Catherine Cadwell (appointment – DID Authority)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Ms. Cadwell was interested in serving on this Authority. Ms. Cadwell stated that she is facing challenges trying to do business downtown. She stated that Entech does a lot of specialized engineering and that it is difficult to convince recruits to work in the City. She expressed the belief that those outside the City have a bad perception of Reading. She admitted that she felt the same way before working downtown. She stated that she now loves working in the City but that she continues to hear negative comments from others in the County. She stated that she enjoys walking downtown and having many restaurant options. She stated that she does not feel threatened downtown and noted the need to enhance the perception of Reading and make it attractive to others.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that many downtown workers are unaware of their options. She stated that many workers do not leave their offices. Ms. Cadwell expressed the belief that the DID ambassadors give a sense of order and security to the downtown. She stated that in addition to the great restaurants there are performing arts, galleries, museums and sports teams.

Mr. Marmarou stated that Reading was always known for its good food.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the DID funding challenges due to the relocation of CNA. She questioned how the funding could be rebuilt. Ms. Cadwell stated that she attended a recent DID meeting and that this is a big challenge that they are currently discussing. She stated that this is a large revenue loss for the Authority.

Mr. Marmarou stated that it is a large revenue loss for the City also.

Ms. Cadwell stated that DID is concerned with traffic and student safety issues that will be created by the relocation of I-Lead. She stated that the answer to the loss of funding is not increasing the assessment to others.

Mr. Marmarou stated that the City was always good to CNA for many years. He stated that he was disheartened when they relocated. Ms. Cadwell stated that there were also losses to the area businesses, restaurants, and the parking authority.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that the County has planned around Reading, not keeping it as the County seat. Ms. Cadwell agreed and noted that there are several pockets now.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that Council is facing a decision about a developer for the 5th and Penn St properties. She stated that the choice of developer will determine the project and will greatly affect the rest of the downtown. She noted the need to address Maria's Restaurant. Ms. Cadwell stated that she works in the American Housing building at 4th and Penn. She stated that there are always issues in the building. She expressed the belief that those who own real estate in the City should locate their offices there. She noted the need to preserve Reading's history.

Mr. Sterner stated that he was glad that Ms. Cadwell was willing to get involved. Ms. Cadwell stated that she was pleasantly surprised by Reading. She noted the need for more frequent code inspections.

Mr. Sterner noted the need for the City to know about problems with buildings. Ms. Cadwell stated that the City is not aware of the problems and is not to blame for them.

Mr. Marmarou stated that downtown problems began during the 1970's when demolition for redevelopment occurred between 6th and 10th St along Penn. He stated that many property owners made a profit from the sale of the property but were not Reading residents. He stated that this is beginning to occur again.

Ms. Cadwell stated that she loves the ability to shop and eat downtown without having to drive.

Mr. Sterner questioned if Ms. Cadwell was a Reading resident. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she works at a downtown business and has the recommendation of the DID Authority Board. Ms. Cadwell stated that she also questioned her residency. She stated that she resides in Gilbertsville.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the purse that was stolen from her at 6th and Penn Sts was returned to her via mail.

Mr. Sterner expressed the belief that DID should be working together with Main St. Ms. Cadwell stated that there is a strong foundation in place. She noted the need for perseverance and resilience.

After Ms. Cadwell left the meeting, Mr. Marmarou stated that she is an employee of a downtown business but is not a business owner. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that the residency requirement will kill Reading.

Mr. Sterner and Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz requested a legal opinion. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she will contact Mr. Younger.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of Catherine Cadwell to the DID Authority pending the opinion of the Solicitor.

(Note: members of the DID Authority may be representatives of businesses in the downtown.)

Jack Gulati (appointment – Main Street Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Gulati was interested in serving on this Board. Mr. Gulati stated that after retiring he began working with Mr. Boscov and Our City Reading. He stated that he is interested in improving the downtown. He stated that he is an investor in the Doubletree project. He stated that he invested in the hotel because he felt that the hotel will benefit the area for conventions. He stated that he attended a Royals game and had a great time. He stated that he was encouraged to buy the team soon after.

Mr. Daubert arrived at this time.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed the belief that Mr. Gulati will bring a fresh perspective to the downtown. Mr. Sterner agreed and stated that Mr. Gulati's 50+ years of business experience will be helpful.

Mr. Sterner questioned if the Royals' affiliation with the Flyers would benefit the team. Mr. Gulati stated that season ticket sales have increased 25% over last year since the affiliation was announced. He expressed the belief that the Royals would win the Kelly Cup again this year. He noted the need for DID and Main St to work together for forward momentum.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted her concern with the acts that are appearing at the arena. She stated that when the area first opened there were many headliners. She stated that these headliners now appear less frequently.

Mr. Daubert left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Gulati explained that the Royals have lost money the last several seasons.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that she is also concerned about the opening of the arena in Allentown. She stated that there will now be direct competition for acts and attendees. She noted the confusion of visitors to the arena not knowing what other attractions are nearby. She

stated that she has done an informal survey of those who visit the mountain. She noted the need for strategic planning to tie downtown and mountain activities.

Mr. Gulati stated that he is pleased to be considered for membership to this Board.

Mr. Sterner and Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Mr. Gulati for his willingness to serve.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of Jack Gulati to the Main Street Board.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 5:06 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk