



CITY COUNCIL

Nominations & Appointments Committee

**Monday, August 18, 2014
Meeting Report**

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

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

I. Interviews

Robert Heebner (reappointment – Stadium Commission)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Heebner was interested in continuing to serve. Mr. Heebner stated that he grew up in Reading and he wants to help preserve the jewel of the stadium.

Mr. Marmarou noted that the community became involved in the rehab of Baer Park. He stated that many people ask him why there is a Stadium Commission. He stated that he explains that the Stadium Commission represents the City at games. Mr. Heebner agreed and stated that the representation at games is lax right now but that Stadium Commission shirts are worn to identify members.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned what Mr. Heebner felt was the main function of the Stadium Commission. Mr. Heebner expressed the belief that members act as liaison between the City and those in attendance. He stated that they work as ambassadors.

Mr. Denbowski joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Marmarou stated that the transition at the stadium effected the Commission. He stated that the City is no longer in control of the stadium. He stated that in the past the Commission was granted \$5000 annually to use for a project. Mr. Heebner explained that the \$5000 continues but that members do not have a choice of how to use it. It is earmarked by the ownership for improvement projects at the stadium.

Mr. Sterner questioned interaction with fans. Mr. Heebner stated that 99% of the time the interaction is positive and that the fans love the experience.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned the priorities of the Commission. Mr. Heebner stated that six meetings are held during the year – 2 to prepare for the upcoming season, 3 during the season and 1 after the season ends.

Mr. Denbowski stated that he plans to attend the October meeting to report on work at the stadium that is completed by Public Works. He noted the need for better communication between the Commission, the City and the stadium ownership.

Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that the Commission lost many of its duties after the transition of ownership. Mr. Heebner stated that the Commission was included more under the leadership of Mr. Stein but that that it has been less under Mr. Hunsicker.

Mr. Marmarou stated that there were big changes when the RBI room was removed from Commission control. He stated that the RBI room was used to host VIPs in the past. He questioned if members had keys to the RBI room. Mr. Heebner stated that they have keys but that the locks were changed four times. He stated that the Commission tries to meet when the team is away but then they lose access to the facility.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she would request the Commission also work to ensure that the franchise remains in Reading. Mr. Heebner suggested that this is not an issue as the ownership understands they have a large stake in Reading.

Mr. Marmarou stated that many artifacts that were once housed in the RBI room have been removed and may be missing or have been taken.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that the team is using a new business model. Mr. Heebner speculated about the size of payroll as there are many paid workers and few volunteers.

Mr. Marmarou stated that Mr. Heebner has been involved in sports for many years and suggested he remain on the Commission. He questioned if Mr. Heebner had any suggestions. Mr. Heebner stated that the meeting schedule is set in the by-laws but that members are human and need flexibility to increase participation. He stated that there is no flexibility at this time.

Mr. Sterner suggested that there is a lack of coordination and cooperation. Mr. Denbowski stated that he will address this in October.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested amending the by-laws.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the use of the \$5000. Mr. Heebner stated that the City allots the \$5000 but that the ownership chooses how it is used. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that the Commission should choose how it is used.

Mr. Heebner stated that under past ownership the Commission would receive old, unsellable inventory to give out along the Labor Day parade route. He stated that they must now purchase these items if they wish to continue the tradition.

Mr. Marmarou stated that there is also some internal conflict. Mr. Denbowski stated that he will assist.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of Robert Heebner to the Stadium Commission.

Robert Reimer (reappointment – Shade Tree Commission)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Reimer was interested in continuing to serve. Mr. Reimer stated that the Commission is doing good work. He stated that during his first term there were no funds and no authority. He stated that things are much better now. He stated that the City has an arborist and the Commission has a budget.

Mr. Reimer stated that over the past five years the Commission has planted 525 trees, removed 133 hazardous trees, and that residents removed an additional 65 hazardous trees. He stated that improvements have been made to the bike trail (Baer Park to city line) and that they have received many compliments. He noted his surprise that many use the trail to hike and walk in addition to biking. He stated that trees have been topped at two Skyline Dr overlooks and a tree inventory is almost complete. He stated that the inventory information will be loaded into the City's GIS system. He stated that an inventory of trees in City parks and playgrounds will also be performed if there is enough time. He noted his shock that the City maintains 34 parks and playgrounds.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if Mineral Spring Park would be inventoried. Mr. Reimer stated that parks are being done if time allows.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz reported a tree issue at Neversink Playground. Mr. Reimer stated that he will inform Mr. Ruyak.

Mr. Reimer stated that the Commission planted 44 trees along N 6th St and 45 trees near the Stadium.

Mr. Sterner questioned if the arborist selects the type of tree to be planted. Mr. Reimer stated that he does. He noted that in the past many inappropriate trees were planted in inappropriate places.

Mr. Sterner requested additional information about the inventory. Mr. Reimer stated that the location, type and condition of each tree are noted.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the Commission received complaints about trees. Mr. Reimer stated that Public Works deals with complaints. He stated that most people don't realize that the street trees are the responsibility of the property owner. He stated that the City maintains them only if they are creating public safety hazards such as blocking traffic signals, street lights, or security cameras.

Mr. Marmarou described a problem with trees at the RSD softball field causing issues with a property owner. He stated that the RSD promised to take care of this issue but has not. Ms. Katzenmoyer suggested that the RSD be contacted again.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of Robert Reimer to the Shade Tree Commission.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk