



# CITY COUNCIL

## **Nominations & Appointments Committee**

**Monday, December 15, 2014  
Meeting Report**

**Attendance:** S. Marmarou, D. Sterner

**Others Attending:** S. Katzenmoyer

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

### **I. Interviews**

#### **Allen Webster (reappointment – HARB)**

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Webster was interested in continuing to serve on HARB. Mr. Webster stated that he enjoys working on HARB. He stated that he has gained much knowledge and has learned to compromise with property owners to allow improvements while preserving historic architecture. He noted his love of historic architecture.

Mr. Sterner questioned if Mr. Webster lived in an historic district. Mr. Webster stated that he lives within the Prince Historic District.

Mr. Sterner stated that HARB reviews many improvements. Mr. Webster agreed. He noted that it is much more difficult to work to a solution when owners begin work without having approval from staff or HARB. He stated that paint colors are easily changeable but that other improvements are not and owners are paying for the same improvement twice when they complete the improvement without HARB pre-approval.

Mr. Denbowski arrived at this time.

Mr. Denbowski and Mr. Marmarou discussed a trash issue in District 4. Mr. Denbowski stated that a letter and photos will be sent to the property owner. He stated that this type of situation is unfair to neighbors, attracts rodents, and causes litter.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Mr. Webster had any concerns about HARB. Mr. Webster stated that he did not. He stated that HARB works hard to ensure that owners truly understand their decisions and the work that must be done to their properties. He noted the need for better coverage in the media for education. He stated that the new historic district signs will also help with education.

Mr. Sterner expressed the belief that realtors should inform buyers when they purchase properties in the City's historic districts. Mr. Webster agreed and suggested that a disclosure or disclaimer should be signed at settlement and provided to the City noting that the buyer was informed about the historic nature of the property and the procedure for improvements.

Mr. Sterner noted that Mr. Webster indicated on his application that he is a youth volunteer. Mr. Webster stated that in the past he was involved in youth camping trips, day camps, and field trips.

**The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of Allen Webster to HARB.**

### **Joseph Eppihimer (appointment – Stadium Commission)**

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Eppihimer was interested in serving on the Stadium Commission. Mr. Eppihimer stated that he has been a baseball fan since he was a boy. He stated that he loves what the stadium does for the community. He showed the Committee his Reading Phillies championship ring. He stated that he was good friends with Mr. Stein and Mr. Domino and attended many games. He stated that his dream was to be a major league pitcher. He noted that the stadium was the best part of Reading for many years and noted that changes are needed to increase attendance.

Mr. Sterner questioned the changes needed. Mr. Eppihimer expressed the belief that Mr. Hunsicker does not have a good rapport with attendees and that he is not helpful. He noted the need to work together and to look out for the City's best interest and to make the games enjoyable.

Mr. Eppihimer stated that in 1950 when the stadium was first built, he was named the first MVP as an all-star for the Hillside midget little league. He stated that he played with Doug Clemens and Len Oxenreider. He noted that he has many baseball memories.

Mr. Eppihimer stated that while he was Mayor he had a favorite quote – "In the past people would kill to live in Reading, now they get killed in Reading." He expressed the belief that the City has made too many reductions in the Police Department.

Mr. Sterner brought Mr. Eppihimer back to the Stadium Commission. Mr. Eppihimer stated that he loves the City and has the highest respect for its Police Department.

Mr. Marmarou stated that when the Phillies organization took control of the stadium many things changed. He stated that this allowed the franchise to remain but that the franchise now makes the money.

There was a discussion of the Allentown franchise. Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that this does not affect Reading. He stated that he played and umpired at the stadium and was a commissioner.

Mr. Eppihimer stated that in the past he had season tickets. He stated that one year when he went to renew he was told that he must move seats because complaints had been made against him. He stated that he did not renew his tickets and others also dropped their tickets that same season. He noted the need for stadium management to be social. He stated that with his experience on Council, as Mayor and with baseball he has the skills needed to serve on the Stadium Commission.

Mr. Marmarou explained that the City has received more applications than there are openings on the Commission. He stated that all applicants will be interviewed and Council will then choose which candidates are appointed.

Mr. Eppihimer stated that since retiring he has become active with the Toys for Tots campaign and that he would love to volunteer for the City on the Stadium Commission.

### **Maria Rodriguez (appointment – Water Authority)**

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Ms. Rodriguez was interested in serving on the Water Authority. Ms. Rodriguez stated that she lives in Reading and worked for the City in the past. She noted that she would like to help the community that she has called home for the past 14 years.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Ms. Rodriguez had suggestions at this time. Ms. Rodriguez stated that she would need to make an assessment if she is appointed. She stated that she has no suggestions at this time.

Mr. Marmarou stated that there have been many changes over the last six months. Ms. Rodriguez stated that she understands. She explained that she monitored RAWA payments to the City when she was part of the Auditor's staff.

Mr. Sterner questioned the expertise that Ms. Rodriguez would bring to this position. Ms. Rodriguez stated that she has a financial background. She stated that she worked in auditing for the City and now for the County. She stated that to perform audits one must be able to review deep detail. She stated that she is also bilingual.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the number of vacancies on RAWA. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that there were three.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if there are other applicants. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she expects additional applicants.

Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that RAWA should accept payment at their offices. He stated that the security concerns can be addressed.

Mr. Sterner questioned if this was the first time Ms. Rodriguez volunteered to serve the City. Ms. Rodriguez stated that it was.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the Mayor recommended Ms. Rodriguez. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that he did.

Mr. Sterner questioned if Ms. Rodriguez was approached by anyone to apply. Mr. Denbowski explained that he contacted Ms. Rodriguez on the Mayor's request due to her financial background.

Mr. Acosta entered the meeting to announce that he has been appointed to the Governor's Transition Committee. He stated that this is a big honor. He stated that he will be working on the Safety, Drug and Alcohol Committee during the transition. He stated that if he is named as a director he will remain on Council and in Reading but that if he is named a deputy secretary he will be relocating and will only be present for 2 – 3 more months.

Mr. Marmarou noted the need for diverse applicants.

Mr. Marmarou explained that the City has received more applications than there are openings on RAWA. He stated that all applicants will be interviewed and Council will then choose which candidates are appointed.

### **Ronald Hatt (appointment – Water Authority)**

Mr. Marmarou stated that he reviewed the meeting summary from the Albright meeting. He stated that he took offense. He expressed the belief that Mr. McMillan gets his information second and third hand. Mr. Hatt stated that there is much misinformation.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Hatt was interested in serving on the Water Authority. Mr. Hatt stated that this is a great opportunity. He stated that his background is in sanitary engineering and he is very interested in serving. He stated that the City is very fortunate to have had people in its past who did the right thing for quality water.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Mr. Hatt had any suggestions. Mr. Hatt expressed the belief that the City should also turn over the sewer system and have a water and sewer authority. He stated that this is the approach that many municipalities take.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the number of employees this would affect. Mr. Denbowski stated that it would be many employees as this is a large part of Public Works. Mr. Hatt stated that water and sewer require many of the same skill sets.

Mr. Sterner noted that RAWA has become a political issue. He questioned how Mr. Hatt would handle that. Mr. Hatt stated that he would be able to keep out of the political issues. He noted the need for all to do what is best for water service to the City.

Mr. Sterner questioned how Mr. Hatt would stay focused. Mr. Hatt stated that doing what's best is not determined by who backs certain positions. He stated that the right thing is the right thing. He stated that he discussed privatizing the water system with former Mayor McMahon. He stated that Mr. McMahon favored privatization and Mr. Hatt argued against it. He stated that private firms perform the same work but add at least 20% for profit.

Mr. Marmarou stated that Mr. Hatt is qualified to serve in this position. He explained that the City has received more applications than there are openings on the Water Authority. He stated that all applicants will be interviewed and Council will then choose which candidates are appointed.

Mr. Denbowski stated that he will be contacting Mr. Hatt to meet with the Mayor about his possible appointment. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that a legal difference remains about who makes appointments to the Water Authority.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
*Shelly Katzenmoyer, CMC*  
Deputy City Clerk