

**City of Reading City Council  
Regular Business Meeting  
Monday, February 24, 2014**

Council President Francis Acosta called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Rev. Robert Brookins, Holy Trinity Church of God.

All present pledged to the flag.

**ATTENDANCE**

Council President Acosta  
Councilor Daubert, District 1  
Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2  
Councilor Sterner, District 3  
Councilor Marmarou, District 4  
Councilor Reed, District 5  
Councilor Waltman, District 6  
City Auditor D. Cituk  
City Solicitor C. Younger  
City Clerk L. Kelleher  
Managing Director C. Snyder  
Mayor V. Spencer

**PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**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. No one objected therefore the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting was suspended. He reminded those registered to speak of the remaining rules.

**Robert Heebner, of North 13<sup>th</sup> Street**, stated that the winter storms over the past month represent the City's good, bad and ugly. He stated that during one of the storms he was having difficulty moving his wife's vehicle and a City employee stopped to assist him. He expressed the belief that all City employees should provide the same care. He stated that also after a snow event he observed Public Works plow truck #23 speeding down North 13<sup>th</sup> Street, traveling way over the posted speed limit. The vehicle was moving so fast that it was causing slush to be thrown over the parked cars and onto the recently cleared sidewalks, drenching

pedestrians. Lastly he expressed the belief that rather than using City employees to collect chairs, workhorses, and other objects used to reserve cleared parking spaces, it would have been more beneficial to have these employees working to actually remove the snow from areas. He expressed the belief that applying actual snow removal would have residents much happier and less stressed about parking.

The public comment period was closed.

## **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 from the February 10<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council. He noted the need to add the following legislation to the agenda:

- One Consent Agenda Resolution to approve a sewage planning module for 702 Oley Street
- Two Resolutions to make appointments and reappointments to the City's Trades Boards

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Sterner, to approve the minutes from the February 10<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda as amended, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **Consent Agenda**

**A. Resolution 19-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 454 Schuylkill Avenue, owned by the City of Reading, with an account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**B. Resolution 20-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 456 Schuylkill Avenue, owned by the City of Reading, with an account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**C. Resolution 21-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 108 Plum St, owned by the City of Reading, with an account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**D. Resolution 22-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 112 Plum St, owned by the City of Reading, with an account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**E. Resolution 23-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 516 Gordon St, owned by the City of Reading, with an account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**F. Resolution 24-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 1709 Mineral Spring Road, owned by the City of Reading, with an account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**G. Resolution 25-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 722 Lance Place, owned by the City of Reading, with An account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**H. Resolution 26-2014** - authorizing the exoneration of all outstanding City Property Tax, Penalties and Interest for the year 2012, for 72818 Muhlenberg Street, owned by the City of Reading, with an account number (PIN) of 06-5307-64-42-7626. (Law)

**I. Award of Contract** - for the collection of Act 511 and Per Capita Taxes to Berks Earned Income Tax Bureau (Berks EIT), Wyomissing, PA for a charge of 2.5% of the amount collected (Purchasing)

**J. Resolution 27-2014** – ratifying the declaration of local disaster emergency on February 13, 2014, as recommended by the Emergency Management Coordinator (Council Staff)

**K. Resolution 30-2014** – approving a sewage planning module for the Big Mill property, located at 702 Oley Street (Pub Works)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

The mayor read the report distributed to Council at the meeting, in summary:

- Update on 2014 Police statistics showing the department fielded approximately 225,000 calls for service and had officers respond to approximately 85,000 calls for service.
- Snow removal reminder to residents
- Notification that the Comp Plan and Penn Street Property RFPs were sent out

## **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

City Auditor Cituk read the report distributed to Council at the meeting in summary:

- Collection of the 2014 Admission Fee/Tax
- Collection of the Real Estate Transfer Tax
- 2011 Sewage Penalties of \$150,000 paid to the PA Dept of Environmental Protection agency

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

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

**Request from the Administration to table the following:**

**A. Bill No. 5-2014** - authorizing the mayor to execute an easement between the City of Reading and UGI Utilities, Inc., thereby conveying unto UGI Utilities, Inc. a non-exclusive, perpetual easement in gross upon that portion of premises known as TAX PARCEL # 531702762194 as shown on drawing number D-4900213 sheet 1 (SEE ATTACHED) **(Law)** *Introduced at the Jan 13 regular meeting; Tabled at the Jan 27 and the Feb 10th regular meeting*

**B. Bill No. 10-2014** – authorizing the temporary easement on city-owned land in Perry/Richmond Townships to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania **(Law)** *Introduced at the Jan 13 regular meeting; Tabled at the Jan 27 and the Feb 10th regular meeting TO BE DISTRIBUTED on MONDAY*

**C. Bill No. 11-2014** – authorizing the sale of city-owned land in Perry/Richmond Townships to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania **(Law)** *Introduced at the Jan 13 regular meeting; Tabled at the Jan 27 and the Feb 10th regular meeting TO BE DISTRIBUTED on MONDAY*

**A. Bill 19-2014** – Requesting the transfer of \$40,000.00 from Contracted Services; \$13,000.00 from General Plant Supplies; and \$9,000.00 from Maintenance / Repair. With an overall total of \$62,000.00 to be transferred to Vehicles (20-07-02-4803) to cover cost of new vehicle purchase for the Shade Tree Commission **(Pub. Works)** *Introduced at the Feb 10 regular meeting*

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 19-2014.**

Councilor Reed inquired if this purchase will be covered through the Shade Tree tax millage or by the General Fund.

City Auditor Cituk stated that the transfer made to cover the purchase is through Fund 20, which is the funding coming from the Shade Tree tax millage.

**Bill No. 19-2014 was enacted by the following vote:**

**Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Acosta, President - 7**

**Nays: None - 0**

**B. Bill 20-2014** – amending City Code Section 496, Part 2 by creating a curbside waste collection program **(Law)** *Introduced at the Feb 10 regular meeting; Advertised 3-3-14*

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to table Bill No. 20-2014.

Bill No. 20-2014 was tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Acosta,  
President - 7  
Nays: None - 0

**C. Bill 21-2014** – amending City Code Chapter 212 by creating a curbside waste collection fee **(Law)** *Introduced at the Feb 10 regular meeting; Advertised 3-3-14*

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to table Bill No. 21-2014.

Bill No. 21-2014 was tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Acosta,  
President - 7  
Nays: None - 0

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES**

The following ordinances were read into the record:

**A. Ordinance** – consolidating the telecom expenses in the amount of \$240,000 by transferring this amount from the Public Works budget to the telecom account within the IT Division budget. **(Adm Services)**

**B. Ordinance** – authorizing the transfer of no more than \$500,000 from the General Fund (Fund 01) to the Department of Community Development (Fund 32), pending the receipt of Federal Funds for the 2014 program year **(Bus Analyst)**.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**A. Resolution 28-2014** – reappointing Anthony Spadafora to the Plumbing Board (Nominations)

**B. Resolution 29-2014** – appointing Brian Miller to the HVAC Board (Nominations)  
Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to adopt Resolution Nos. 28 and 29-2014.

Councilor Marmarou made remarks concerning the skills and abilities of these appointees.

**Resolution Nos. 28-29-2014 were adopted by the following vote:**

**Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Acosta,  
President - 7**

**Nays: None - 0**

**COUNCIL COMMENT**

Councilor Marmarou described his "In Your District" program last week which was taped with Acting Public Works Director Ralph Johnson. He stated that the program went very well and he noted Mr. Johnson's ability to speak directly and honestly. He encouraged other councilors to invite members of the administration to be on their programs.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked all Police, Fire and Public Works employees for their efforts through the repeated winter storms. She noted the need to learn from these storms and to develop a phased plan to improve the City's ability to plow and remove snow. She also noted the need for the City to provide snow removal instructions to residents, as many are unsure of how to react to a snow storm.

Councilor Reed thanked BCTV for agreeing to once again begin recording and airing the City Planning Commission and HARB meetings. She explained that the re-establishment of these recordings was made available due to the Councilor President's leadership in getting some Councilors give up their "In Your District" programs to do a joint program rather which frees BCTV staff to record other government meetings. She stated that this change will restore some level of transparency to government operations. She announced that BCTV will be moving their offices from Penn Street to the Albright College campus.

Councilor Reed described the snow related problems around the Glenside Elementary School.

Councilor Daubert described the touching celebration for Dominican Independence Day held on Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> in front of City Hall and at Reading Senior High School.

Councilor Waltman described some of the problems relating to curbside parking during winter weather events. He noted that clearing a parking space does not guarantee title to the space if the car is moved. He suggested that residents group together to assist each other in clearing snow from the parking lanes.

Councilor Sterner noted the start of several promising economic development efforts in Reading.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz made remarks about the beautiful surprise fireworks display during a past weekend at Stokesay Castle.

Council President Acosta described the downhill fallout that occurred when he posted “Good morning#Reading is a great city” on his Facebook page. He stated that he was shocked at how quickly the comments turned negative. He suggested that everyone develop a more [positive attitude.

Councilor Reed noted that Reading England was recently honored for their resurgence as a “come back city”.

Councilor President Acosta described the wonderful celebration of Dominican Republic Independence Day, held yesterday at City Hall and at Reading High School.

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

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