

**City of Reading City Council  
Regular Business Meeting  
Monday, June 9, 2014**

Council President Francis Acosta called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Rev. Calvin Kurtz, Reading Berks Conference of Churches.  
All present pledged to the flag.

**ATTENDANCE**

Council President Acosta  
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

Council President Acosta announced that Councilor Daubert is excused due to a work conflict.

**PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

City Council issued the following:

- Council Commendation recognizing Berks Area Mountain Biking Association, accepted by Fred Moreadith, Director
- Council Commendation recognizing the Champion 2014 RHS baseball team

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Acosta stated that there were three (3) citizens registered to address Council on agenda matters. He reminded those registered about the public speaking rules.

**Alan Shuman, of North 5<sup>th</sup> Street**, stated that he recently spent time in Harrisburg state offices reviewing Reading's 2013 CRIZ application and while there he learned that state officials see the current dysfunction between the mayor and Council. He noted the need for improved leadership and he suggested that all the elected officials and RAWA participate in a moderated session to work through the differences. He suggested using Ellen Horan, Executive Director of the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce or Senator Judy Schwank

as moderators. He also suggested working out a solution to the redevelopment of the Penn Square properties.

**Daniel Giandomenico, of Mulberry Street**, described the methods used by RAWA when they plan a meter change out. He stated that the letter sent provides the user with 15 days to set an appointment with RAWA, failure to set the appointment could result in the termination of water service and fees to reestablish water service. He expressed the belief that RAWA uses an unfair and selective process for the meter change outs. Regarding the water lease issue, he noted that Allentown handled the same issue last year and that deal generated \$200M for Allentown. He questioned where RAWA would get \$200M without increases in water rates, which will have a negative impact on rate payers and that the disagreement about this issue is having a negative impact on the RAWA employees. He also expressed the belief that Council should have more control over RAWA.

**Mary Jane Smith, of Perkiomen Avenue**, expressed the belief that RAWA is a poor steward of customer service. Regarding the water lease issue, she agreed that an alternative approach should be used, such as approving a two (2) year lease extension until a new administration is in place. She noted the dramatic increase in the service charges on the water/sewer bills. She stated that she lives alone and her water usage is approximately \$8 and her service charges come to \$45 monthly. She suggested eliminating the service charges and raising the rate on the usage alone as doing that will allow the user more flexibility in controlling their consumption and charges.

## **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 May 27<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council. He noted the following adjustments to the agenda:

- Moving the Housing Amendment Ordinance from the pending box for Council consideration
- Placing the Curbside Collection MOU Resolution into pending

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Sterner, to approve the minutes from the May 27th Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda, as amended. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **Consent Agenda**

None.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

The Managing Director reviewed the Administrative report distributed to Council, in summary:

- The roof repairs at the 9<sup>th</sup> and Marion Fire House are finished. Work on the interior will be handled by Public Works.
- The Fire Department EMS Division received the bronze award by the American Heart Association Mission Lifetime Award.
- The city-owned dams are currently being assessed.

Councilor Marmarou thanked the Managing Director for repairing the roof at the 9<sup>th</sup> and Marion Fire House.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the Managing Director for the update on the dam assessment and the repairs to Hill Road. She also thanked Public Works for replacing the worn flags at the locations identified. She suggested that Public Works work with the Rec Commission to replace worn flags at public buildings. She also questioned the replacement of the flagpole at the Pagoda.

Councilor Reed agreed that flags need to be replaced before they reach a tattered state and that a coordinated approach be used to identify flags in need of replacement. She also agreed with the need to replace the flagpole at the Pagoda.

Councilor Reed stated that several years ago citizens in the Glenside area opposed the removal of the Bushong Dam; however, overall some sentiments have changed. She suggested that the City coordinate public outreach on the recommendations stemming from the dam assessments and suggested that public meetings take place. She also noted the need for the maintenance of Confluence Park. She suggested working with the County on the management of this park due to its proximity to Stone Cliff and the County trail system.

## **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

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

- 2014 Unemployment Compensation
- Upcoming report on the actuarial information for the three (3) pensions

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the Auditor received the requested copies of the RAWA external audits. Mr. Cituk stated that he was told to make the request via Right to Know and that he assumed he received that response because he made the request on behalf of City Council. He stated that he made the request two (2) weeks ago. He stated that the City posts external audits on the website but RAWA does not.

In response to a question from Councilor Reed, Mr. Cituk stated that he assumes that RAWA's response is spurred by the current tensions over the water lease issue.

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

None.

**ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE**

*Pending – Further Legal Review Required*

**Bill 41-2014** - creating the Reading Regional Water Authority (**City Council**) *Introduced at the April 14 regular meeting*

**Ordinance** - authorizing a project labor management agreement for building projects in the City (Mayor's Office) *Introduced at the May 12 regular meeting; Additional review required*

*Charter Required 14 Day Layover Period Incomplete Until June 23<sup>rd</sup> Mtg*

**Ordinance** - authorizing the transfer of \$20,000 from the Salary line of the Fire-Prevention Education Division (Fire Marshal) to the Contracted Services line of the same division (**Fire**)

**Ordinance** - amending the City Code Chapter 141 Animals, Part 2, Animal Control, by updating sections throughout, by adding Section 141-213 Limited Number of Animals Allowed Without Registration and renumbering as necessary (**Board of Health/Council Staff**)

**Ordinance** -amending the 2014 Budget for the Department of Fire and Rescue Services, authorizing the transfer of funds to avoid a late payment penalty on the purchase of a refurbished ambulance (**Managing Director**)

**Bill 39-2014** - amending the City Code Chapter 308, Housing, of the Codified Ordinances to eliminate the tenant listing requirement and provide for injunctive relief (**Man Dir**) *Introduced at the April 14 regular meeting; Advertised April 22*

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Sterner, to enact Bill No. 39-2014.

Bill No. 39-2014 was enacted by the following vote:

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

- 6

**Nays:** None - 0

**POTENTIAL OVERRIDE OF THE VETO OF BILL NO. 44-2014 AND BILL NO. 46-2014**

Council President Acosta stated that when the agenda was created, Bills No. 44 and 46-2014 were neither approved nor vetoed by the mayor. On Friday, Bill No. 44, the Purchasing Policies was approved by the mayor and Bill No. 46, Dissolving RAWA, was vetoed. Therefore Council only needs to consider the override of the veto of Bill No. 46-2014.

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to override the veto of Bill No. 46-2014.**

**The override of the veto of Bill No. 46-2014 was approved by the following vote:**

**Yeas: Goodman-Hinnershitz, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Acosta, President - 5**

**Nays: - Marmarou - 1**

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES**

There were no ordinances introduced at this meeting.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**A. Resolution 69-2014** - appointing Laura Cooper to the Downtown Improvement District Authority (Council Staff)

**B. Resolution 70-2014** – reappointing Lisa Blount to the Human Relations Commission (Council Staff)

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adopt Resolution 69 and 70-2014.**

Councilors Marmarou and Sterner noted the skill and ability of those being appointed and reappointed this evening.

Council President Acosta added that Ms. Cooper has decided to keep her law practice downtown and that she restored a building on North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, where her practice is in the upper floors and an art gallery is on the first floor.

**Resolution 69 and 70-2014 were adopted by the following vote:**

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

**Nays: None - 0**

## **COUNCIL COMMENT**

Councilor Waltman stated that he left the meeting on Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup> to assist his daughter with her broken-down car. He stated that some assume that he left the meeting due to anger; however that is not the case. He expressed the belief that he and Council have the skill and ability to work through the complicated water lease issue. He noted the need for the mayor to work with Council on the water lease matter.

Councilor Waltman questioned why State officials would be following local issues in Reading when they should be more concerned with correcting broken State legislation.

Council President Acosta stated that the City Clerk will be contacting the Administration about arranging a meeting on the Penn Square Development proposals on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup>. He described the various proposed amendments to the State CRIZ legislation, which could end the program after next year.

Council President Acosta encouraged citizens to use the public comment period to bring City issues to Council's attention.

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

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