

**City of Reading City Council
Regular Meeting
December 21, 2015**

Council President Waltman called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Councilor Daubert.

All present pledged to the flag.

The Committee of the Whole meeting included an executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

ATTENDANCE

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

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Mayoral recognition of students from I-Lead Charter School for their design and painting of murals
- Commendation to Travis Kaufmann, heavy weight boxer

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Waltman stated that two (2) citizens are registered to address Council on agenda matters and six (6) citizens are registered to address Council on non-agenda matters this evening. The rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting was suspended. Councilor Daubert read the public speaking rules adopted by Council ordinance.

Ernie Schlegel, of Pear Street, distributed an opinion from an independent attorney regarding the legality of several provisions negotiated in the 4th addendum to the Lease Agreement. Mr. Schlegel expressed that the addendum was negotiated under duress, as

Council was threatening to dissolve the Authority. As such the RAWA board does not agree with some terms negotiated such as language pertaining to contract awards, long term debt and the retention of a solicitor or other agents. He expressed the belief that RAWA is an independent authority and that the terms negotiated violate the Municipalities Authorities Act.

Mr. Schlegel described the success of programs used to assist people with financial hardships.

Angel Torres, representing Abilities in Motion on North 5th Street, described the organization's plan to inspect all City polling places to assure that the locations are accessible.

Carol Riley, representing Abilities in Motion on North 5th Street, described the problems with the paving at 6th and Penn Streets for all who travel in this area.

Glen Clark, of North 6th Street, described how the poor conditions on a City sidewalk caused him to fall during the summer months.

Evelyn Morrison, of Church Street, described the Land Bank workshop she attended to become educated on this initiative. She expressed concern that individuals will be left out of this process and that the process will cater only to organizations. She also expressed concern that the process will disrupt the tax sale process and treat properties like they are part of a Monopoly game. She noted the need for the Land Bank board to reflect the City's diverse community.

Jennifer Molina, of Emerson Avenue, deferred when she was invited to the podium.

Travis Kaufmann, of Emerson Avenue, deferred when he was invited to the podium.

Shelia Perez, of Weiser Street, read from the Voting Rights Act, Section 203 and expressed the belief that under this section, the City was required to translate the DID reauthorization materials into Spanish to suit the needs of the minority community. She stated that the law is required for primary, general and special interest elections. She put the City on notice.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council President Waltman called Council's attention to the minutes of the December 7th meeting and to the agenda for this meeting. He stated that the resolutions under the Consent Agenda heading will be considered under the Resolution Heading.

Councilor Sterner moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to approve the agenda as amended and the minutes as listed. The motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

There was no report provided.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Auditor summarized the written report provided as follows:

- Update on the collection of the 2015 Real Estate Transfer Tax
- History of the General Fund Balance 1991-2014

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

A. Bill No. 74 - 2015 – creating a Land Bank Board in accordance with the provisions of Act 153, enacted by the PA General Assembly on October 24, 2012, to return vacant property to productive status using a unified, predictable, and transparent process, thereby revitalizing neighborhoods and strengthening the City's tax base. ***Introduced at the 11-9-15 regular meeting; Advertised 11-16-15; Tabled at the November 23 and December 7 regular meetings***

Councilor Slifko moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to withdraw Bill No. 74-2015.

Bill No. 74-2015 was withdrawn by the following vote:

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

Nays: – None - 0

B. Bill No. 75 -2015 – approving the 5th addendum to the water system lease with RAWA ***Introduced at the November 9 regular meeting; Tabled at the November 23 and December 7 regular meetings***

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to enact Bill No. 75-2015.

Bill No. 75-2015 was enacted by the following vote:

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

Nays: – None - 0

C. Bill No. 85-2015 – authorizing an appropriations transfer within the Department of Public Works, Division of Utilities in the amount of \$30,000.00 for budget year 2015 ***Introduced at the December 7 regular meeting***

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Slifko, to enact Bill No. 85-2015.

The Managing Director stated that this interdepartmental transfer will cover the additional overtime expenses at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Bill No. 85-2015 was enacted by the following vote:

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

Nays: – None - 0

D. Bill No. 86-2015 - authorizing a loan and the transfer of funds from the general fund to the Department of Community Development in the amount of \$500,000 ***Introduced at the December 7 regular meeting***

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to enact Bill No. 86-2015.

The Managing Director explained that the need for this loan occurs annually to cover expenses while the City waits for the HUD allocation, approved by Council each November.

Bill No. 86-2015 was enacted by the following vote:

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

Nays: – None - 0

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

There were no ordinances introduced at this meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution No. 110-2015 – appointing Amy Crawford to the Animal Control Board

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to adopt Resolution No. 110-2015.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that Ms. Crawford is a veterinarian and she brings a wealth of experience and ideas to the table.

Resolution No. 110-2015 was adopted by the following vote:

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

Nays: – None - 0

B. Resolution No. 111-2015– approving the Land Bank Bylaws which authorizes the Land Bank Board to undertake specific activities identified in the Land Bank Ordinance

Councilor Slifko moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to withdraw Resolution No. 111-2015.

Resolution No. 111-2015 withdrawn by the following vote:

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

Nays: – None – 0

From the Consent Agenda:

C. Resolution 108-2015 – approving the appeal of the HARB COA for the installation of a fence at 1015 Rose Street

Councilor Slifko moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to withdraw Resolution No. 108-2015.

Councilor Slifko explained the legal background behind this decision. He stated that HARB denied the COA but did not base the decision on the Secretary of the Interior Guidelines.

Resolution No. 108-2015 adopted by the following vote:

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

Nays: – None – 0

D. Resolution 109-2015 – denying the appeal of the HARB COA for the installation of an aluminum awning at 1023 North 5th Street

Councilor Slifko moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to adopt Resolution No. 109-2015.

Councilors Daubert and Slifko announced their support of the denial of this appeal and they encouraged the property owners to apply for a façade grant and a low interest NHS loan.

Councilor Sterner stated that he will not support this denial due to the number of existing aluminum awnings located in this specific neighborhood.

Councilor Reed stated that she supports the denial of the appeal, as at the hearing the

property owners claimed to not know that the property was located in the Centre Park Historic District; however, they applied for a COA in 2008 for a front porch project.

Resolution No. 109-2015 adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Slifko, Waltman, President

- 6

Nays: – Sterner – 1

COUNCIL COMMENT

Each member of City Council thanked Councilor Sterner for his 13 years of dedicated public service and they noted the integrity Councilor Sterner brought to each task. They also noted his fairness and strong moral compass.

Councilors Sterner, Marmarou, Daubert and Council President Waltman thanked the mayor for his years of public service.

Councilor Sterner stated that he spent 13 long and short years on City Council. He stated that overall it was an enjoyable experience. He noted the many transitions the City went through over the past 13 years. He thanked his constituents for their support and he thanked the administration for their assistance. He also thanked Council Staff for their continual support.

The City Auditor thanked Councilor Sterner and the mayor for their years of public service and he thanked Councilor Slifko for his involvement over the past four (4) months.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk