

**City of Reading City Council**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**June 22, 2015**

Council President Acosta called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Rev. Althea France, Zion City of Truth.

All present pledged to the flag.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz requested a moment of silence for the people in Charlestown who experienced the recent tragedy.

The Committee of the Whole meeting held before the start of this meeting did not include an executive session.

### **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

Solicitor C. Younger

City Clerk L. Kelleher

Managing Director C. Snyder

Mayor V. Spencer

Council President Acosta announced that Councilor Daubert was unable to attend this evening's meeting due to a work commitment.

### **PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

The following were issued at the meeting:

- Council recognition certificates for the Reading Musical Foundation 2015 scholarship winners
- Council recognition certificates for the RHS Berks Best winner and candidates
- Mayoral recognition certificates for elders in the African American Community

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Acosta stated that there are three (3) citizens registered to address Council

on non-agenda matters. He asked if any Councilor objected to suspending the rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting. As no one objected, the rule was suspended. He reminded those registered of the public speaking rules adopted by Council ordinance.

**Nancy Scott, of South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street**, stated that she is a member of the Bingaman Park Association and she expressed concern about the large trucks and trailers that park in the South 2<sup>nd</sup> and Spruce area. She stated that these trucks create public safety hazards for this neighborhood. She stated that the area is marked "NO PARKING" and she asked the City to enforce the regulations.

**Lourdes Torres, of South 5<sup>th</sup> Street**, stated that she is a member of the Bingaman Park Association and she questioned when the new traffic light will be installed at South 5<sup>th</sup> and Bingaman Streets. She described the many hazards that were created when this signal was removed. She also noted the need for more traffic signs in the school zone area.

**Vince Rosato, of North 13<sup>th</sup> Street**, noted that municipal elections yield very low voter turnout. He noted the need for more registered voters to participate in elections. He expressed the belief that the City is in an abyss and should be preparing an Act 47 exit strategy.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES**

Council President Acosta called Council's attention to the minutes of the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, and to the agenda for this meeting, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading. He stated that the administration has withdrawn the resolution relating to the salary of Mr. Ruyak listed under the Resolution heading.

**Councilor Sterner moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to approve the agenda, as amended, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading and the minutes as listed. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **Consent Agenda**

**A. Resolution 61-2015** – Authorizing the promotion of Criminal Investigator Eric Driesbach to the rank of Sergeant effective July 6, 2015

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

The mayor read the report distributed to Council at the meeting. In summary:

- The need to fill seats on the Human Relations Commission
- The establishment of a transition team to assist mayoral candidates who request information
- The upcoming Duryea Hill Climb

Council President Acosta stated that the traffic light at 5<sup>th</sup> and Bingaman will be installed during the next 30 day pre-construction work scheduled prior to the closure of the Buttonwood Street Bridge.

Councilor Waltman noted that the closure of the bridge will impact many inter City neighborhoods. He inquired about how the community was educated about the closure.

Councilor Reed explained that meetings were held in West Reading and Reading with residents and the business community. Flyers and brochures were created.

Council President Acosta stated that the meeting at St. Mark's UCC was well attended and the flyers were prepared in English and Spanish. He also described the work of the Reading Bridges committee composed of representatives from every aspect of the community.

## **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

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

- 2015 Admissions Tax collection
- 2015 Transfer Tax collection

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

There were no reports issued at this meeting.

## **ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE**

**A. Bill No. 29-2015** – amending the City Code Chapter 295, Historical and Conservation Districts by reducing the size of the HARB Board

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to enact Bill No. 29-2015.**

Council President Acosta stated that this ordinance reduces the size of the HARB Board to nine (9) members.

**Bill No. 29-2015 was enacted by the following vote:**

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

**- 6**

**Nays: – None - 0**

**B. Bill No. 30-2015** – amending the Charter Board Ordinance to provide an informal resolution of a complaint [as provided by the Rules of Administration and Procedure implemented by the Board]

**Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 30-**

2015.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the importance of this amendment to provide an informal settlement process that attempts to reduce the need for costly litigation expenses and more quickly resolve complaints. She thanked the Charter Board, the City Clerk and Legal Specialist Coleman for their work to prepare the mediation policy for the Charter Board's use.

**Bill No. 30-2015 was enacted by the following vote:**

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

**Nays: – None - 0**

**Pending for Further Review**

**C. Bill No. 33-2015** – Amending Chapter 5 Administrative Code of the City Code Part § 5-303 entitled "Severance" by addressing accrued vacation time for Department Directors

**D. Bill No. 34-2015** – Amending Chapter 70 Personnel of the City Code by adding a new part § 70-716 entitled "Severance" for career employees and renumbering the section accordingly.

**E. Bill No. 35-2015** – authorize the refunding of the Redevelopment Authority's 2006 Lease Revenue Note and the execution by the City of a Guaranty of a new 2015 Lease Revenue Note. *(The final principal amount of the 2015 Note will be established upon receipt of the proposals from local banks for the purchase of the 2015 Note. Exhibit A to the Ordinance will be created and circulated at that time)*

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 35-2015.**

Council President Acosta stated that this transaction is required by the Act 47 Recovery Plan and that the transaction will yield over \$600K in savings.

**Bill No. 35-2015 was enacted by the following vote:**

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

**Nays: – None - 0**

**F. Bill No. 36-2015** – amending the City Code Chapter 70 Personnel Part 701 G Salary Administration by modifying the approval process for salary increases

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to enact Bill No. 36-2015.**

The Managing Director explained that this amendment will allow the mayor and Managing Director to consider salary increases above 3% if the employee's supervisor and Department Director disagree on the increase.

**Bill No. 36-2015 was enacted by the following vote:**

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

**- 6**

**Nays: – None - 0**

### **Pending Additional Review Required**

**C. Bill No. 31-2015** – Amending Chapter 5 Administrative Code of the City Code Part § 5-303 entitled “Severance” by addressing accrued vacation time for Department Directors *Introduced at the June 8 regular meeting*

**D. Bill No. 32-2015** – Amending Chapter 70 Personnel of the City Code by adding a new part § 70-716 entitled “Severance” for career employees and renumbering the section accordingly *Introduced at the June 8 regular meeting*

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES**

No ordinances were enacted at this meeting.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**A. Resolution 62-2015** – reappointing Joseph Amprey to the Board of Ethics

**Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to adopt Resolution No. 62-2015.**

Councilors Marmarou and Goodman-Hinnershitz described the attributes that Mr. Amprey brings to the Board of Ethics. Council President Acosta noted the broad expanse of Mr. Amprey's public service.

**Resolution No. 62-2015 was adopted by the following vote:**

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

**- 6**

**Nays: None - 0**

## **COUNCIL COMMENT**

Councilor Waltman noted the success of the Centre Park Garden tour, held over the past weekend.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the upcoming Duryea Hill Climb and its positive impact on our community.

Councilor Reed noted the success of the Flag Day dedication for the new flag at the Pagoda. She thanked everyone who contributed to the event and the project, especially former Mayor Tom McMahon.

Councilor Reed thanked Lori Kaplan for her tireless work to beautify the medians on Penn Street. She stressed the need for a permanent solution that will improve all public areas in the downtown. She noted the need for the downtown to shine.

Councilor Sterner congratulated those honored with certificates this evening.

Council President Acosta noted the need to pay attention to the plaza behind the Outside Inn building.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with the need to develop a permanent solution for the care of the downtown public areas. She noted the need for the public, including those sitting at this table, to provide volunteer labor to improve public areas.

Council President Acosta noted the importance of City Council's work and their celebration of the community.

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

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