

**City of Reading City Council
Regular Meeting
September 14, 2015**

Council Vice President Reed called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by District 1 Councilor Chris Daubert.

All present pledged to the flag.

The Committee of the Whole meeting held before the start of this meeting included an executive session on litigation and potential litigation.

ATTENDANCE

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 C. Snyder

Mayor V. Spencer

Council Vice President Reed announced that Council President Waltman is under the weather this evening.

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

City Council issued the following commendations:

- recognizing September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- recognizing National Recovery Month

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council Vice President Reed stated that there are two (2) citizens registered to address Council on non-agenda matters. She 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.

Councilor Daubert read the public participation regulations adopted by Council to those

present.

George Stichter, of Moss Street, was not present.

Rebekah Ritter, of Washington Street, stated that she is both a Reading resident and a Reading business owner. She described the problems she experienced at her Washington Street art gallery due to Saturday's bike race, the route and the street closures. She noted that the problems could have been avoided if communication about the race in advance had been better. She suggested that in the future the City should provide alternative transportation routes or detours when traffic needs to be closed on certain streets.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council Vice President Reed called Council's attention to the minutes of the August 24th meeting, the September 8th Special meeting and to the agenda for this meeting. She noted that the Award of Contract regarding the sale of the wheelchair vans is withdrawn and the need to add an agenda for introduction regarding a lease agreement for the Christmas in Reading group who is taking over the Hillside Holiday Light Display.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, 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. Award of Contract – sale of wheelchair vans – WITHDRAWN BY THE ADMINISTRATION, COUNCIL APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED DUE TO THE SURPLUS PROPERTY PROVISION LISTED IN THE PURCHASING CODE

B. Resolution 81-2015 – denying the Conditional Use permit for 4 rental units at 549 N. 10th Street and approving only 2 additional rental units at 549 N 10th Street

C. Resolution 82-2015 – authorizing and directing the Public Works Director to submit the attached application for Traffic Signal Approval for the Synchronization of the 2nd Street Improvements Project to PennDOT and to sign this application on behalf of the City of Reading

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

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

- Receipt of a \$5K grant by Reading Beautification from Santander
- Start of the ADA update in the 18th Ward area
- Upgrade of the Penn Street streetlights between 2nd and 7th Streets

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the City sponsored the bike race. The Managing Director stated that the City did not provide a monetary donation to the event but the City was recognized as a sponsor due to in-kind contributions that were available due to the cancellation of the annual Labor Day Parade. She explained that the cancellation of the parade freed up the services of Police, Fire and Public Works so they could be dedicated in part to this event. Costs that exceed that budgeted for the parade were billed to the organization that runs the bike race.

Councilor Marmarou asked the Mayor why City Council was not invited to attend or participate in the event when other elected officials were provided with invitations. There was no response to his question.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

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

- Results of the 2012-14 Liquid Fuels Audit
- Revenue collected from the Real Estate Transfer Tax for 2015

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she and the Auditor attended the round table held by the Auditor General on Pension Reform earlier today. She stated that the Auditor General mentioned the cost of Reading's administrative fees on a per employee basis. She asked the Auditor to confirm that amount as it may be incorrect. She noted that Pension Reform is needed by all municipalities, not just Reading.

Council Vice President Reed thanked Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz and the Auditor for attending to represent the City.

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

None.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Pending Additional Review Required

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***

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***

A. Ordinance 47-2015 – amending the City Code, Chapter 62, Part by aligning the police pension plan with the City’s Financial Recovery Plan and the 2012 collective bargaining agreement with the Fraternal Order of Police *Introduced at the August 24 regular meeting*

Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to enact Bill No. 47-2015.

The Managing Director explained that this is a housekeeping amendment to make the ordinance match the language in the collective bargaining agreement.

Bill No. 47-2015 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Slifko, Sterner - 6

Nays: – None - 0

B. Ordinance 48-2015 – authorizing the extension of the Downtown Improvement District (DID) for a five year period and authorizing the execution of the agreement between DID and the City *Introduced at the July 27 regular meeting; Advertisement scheduled for August 17th and 28th; Public Hearing Tuesday, September 8th*

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Marmarou, to table Bill No. 48-2015.

Bill No. 48-2015 was tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Slifko, Sterner - 6

Nays: – None - 0

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

Council Vice President Reed read the following ordinances into the record:

A. Ordinance – Authorize intra-department transfer of \$10,000 for the repair of the vehicle exhaust removal system at the City’s EMS station..

B. Ordinance – amending the Sidewalk Sales hours and making other clarifications

C. Ordinance – amending the City Code Chapter Street 508 Streets and Sidewalks, Part 7 Street Cut Permits, by adding provisions relating to the rejection of Street Cut Applications

D. Ordinance – amending the City Code, Chapter 23, Part 10 Diversity Board, Section 10 Membership Removal to provide clarity

E. Ordinance – authorizing the execution of a lease agreement with Christmas in Reading

to continue the Holiday Light Display at Hillside Playground

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution No. 83-2015 – appointing Richard Rosato to the Animal Control Board

B. Resolution No. 84-2015 – reappointing Jonathan DelCollo to the Board of Ethics

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to adopt Resolution No. 83 and 84-2015.

Councilors Marmarou and Goodman-Hinnershitz spoke of the merits and skills of the people being appointed and reappointed.

Resolution Nos. 83 and 84-2015 were adopted by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Slifko, Sterner - 6

Nays: – None - 0

COUNCIL COMMENT

Councilor Daubert noted the need for broader recognition and fundraising for pediatric cancer. He thanked those who fight for these young victims.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz spoke about the important pathway for those involved with the disease of substance and alcohol abuse. She also noted the sheer strength of the professional bicycle riders who rode in Saturday's race.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz announced the upcoming downtown concert scheduled for September 24th.

City Auditor Cituk congratulated the Fightin Phils for moving into the playoff season.

Council Vice President Reed noted the talents of the Fightin Phils team. She agreed with the remarks of Ms. Miller regarding the need to better communicate with residents and businesses about downtown events.

Carl Gethmann stated that he submitted a request to address Council on the City website and he questioned why he was not on the list. The City Clerk stated that she did not receive an email with Mr. Gethmann's request; however, she noted that a request was received from Ms. Miller.

Carl Gethmann, of Heine Street, noted the disintegrated condition of Heine Street. He suggested that the City share the cost of the repaving with Mt. Penn. He noted that his

requests for assistance from Mt. Penn were ignored.

Council Vice President Reed reviewed the upcoming Council schedule.

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

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk