



# CITY COUNCIL

## **Nominations & Appointments Committee**

**Monday, March 21, 2016  
Meeting Report**

**Attendance:** S. Marmarou, J. Slifko, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz

**Others Attending:** S. Katzenmoyer

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

### **I. Interviews**

#### **Frank Gromis (appointment – Stadium Commission)**

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Gromis was interested in serving on the Stadium Commission. Mr. Gromis stated that he is friends with two current members and they recruited him. He stated that he is a huge baseball fan and that he would like to give back to the community.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Mr. Gromis would be able to regularly attend meetings. Mr. Gromis stated that his schedule is flexible and that he would have no problem attending meetings.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned what Mr. Gromis understood was the purpose of the Commission. Mr. Gromis stated that he believes the Stadium Commission members act as liaisons between the Reading Fightin Phils and the City and between the Reading Fightin Phils and the Philadelphia Phillies. He stated that they are also involved in community events held at the Stadium.

Mr. Marmarou expressed the belief that Commission members should also be ambassadors to those attending games. He suggested that a Commission member be present at each game and that attendees should know who Commissioners are. He stated that in the past the Commission had funds but that they are now depleted. He explained that this is one reason why he is interested in serving as the Council liaison to the Commission. Mr. Gromis agreed and stated that customer service is important and that the Reading Phillies do that well.

Mr. Slifko stated that there should be interaction between the public and the Fightin Phils. Mr. Gromis agreed.

Mr. Marmarou stated that in the past the Commission ran the operations of the Stadium as well. He noted the need for members to remain visible.

Mr. Slifko questioned if the Commission made financial decisions. Mr. Marmarou stated that they do not but that they can report problems and issues to management.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz voiced concern with the presence of the vaping lounge at the stadium as the establishment should be smoke free. She stated that stadium management is proud that they are pioneering the availability of vaping at the stadium. Mr. Gromis agreed that it was odd that they added this area and stated that it is in a highly visible location. Mr. Marmarou stated that he was told that the Council on Chemical Abuse was handling this issue and did not pursue it further.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that vaping is not specifically banned by the City's Park Code but that this is very controversial and expressed the belief that it was not a good fit at the stadium.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned what Mr. Gromis would like the Stadium Commission to accomplish. Mr. Gromis stated that he will definitely address the vaping lounge. He stated that they should also work to keep the stadium safe and ensure attendees enjoy themselves. He noted the need for reasonable prices to attend. He suggested that clinics and tournaments be arranged for direct interaction with players.

Mr. Slifko questioned if the Commission meets regularly with management. Mr. Marmarou stated that he is unsure and that this is another reason he is interested in serving as Council liaison.

Mr. Gromis questioned if concerts and events held at the stadium provide additional revenue to the City. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained that the lease agreement provides for flat payments to the City and that extra revenue is kept by the Reading Phillies. Mr. Marmarou suggested that this lease agreement be reviewed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that if the City exits Act 47 and goes into receivership that the stadium is a major asset that may be lost.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he played at the stadium, served as an umpire and served on the Commission in the past.

Mr. Slifko noted the need for the Commission to structure their meetings to have regular interaction with management and to increase community input.

Mr. Gromis stated that he is a good organizer and noted his hope that the Reading Phillies would have a greater presence on social media.

**The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of Frank Gromis to the Stadium Commission.**

**Steven Fisher (reappointment – Plumbing Board)**

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned the number of terms that Mr. Fisher has served. Mr. Fisher stated that this would be his fourth term. He stated that the Plumbing Board impacts resident health via the Plumbing Code. He stated that they also interview Master Plumber candidates and review the Code for amendments for new materials.

Mr. Marmarou questioned what issues the Board considered recently. Mr. Fisher stated that there has been an increased number of applicants for Master Plumber who are outside the local apprenticeship programs, many from foreign countries. He stated that they support the City Plumbing Inspector. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that there are different standards in foreign countries.

Mr. Slifko questioned the possible Code amendments. Mr. Fisher stated that the Board meets quarterly. He stated that when a resident requests installation of pex that the Plumbing Inspector must work with the Electrical Inspector to ensure that the electric is grounded without the use of copper piping. He stated that the Board also reviews applicants to ensure that they have the proper qualifications and supporting documentation.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the Board had any requests for training. Mr. Fisher stated that there are programs at the location vocational schools. He stated that some Board members are also instructors.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the area had enough plumbers. Mr. Fisher expressed the belief that there are currently many Master Plumbers but that there is a significant decrease in apprentices as most students believe college is the only option after high school.

Mr. Slifko questioned how Council could assist the Board. Mr. Fisher stated that Mr. Montgomery has been trying to amend the Plumbing Code but that there has been no support. He noted the need for this amendment.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Mr. Fisher for being proactive. She requested that Ms. Katzenmoyer follow up with Mr. Montgomery about the amendment.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the City's water lines contained lead. Mr. Fisher expressed the belief that it is mostly the waste lines and not the water lines.

Mr. Slifko questioned if there was lead in the solder used on the pipe connections. Mr. Fisher stated that new solder does not contain lead but that many older homes contain lead solder. He again expressed the belief that it was mainly waste lines and not water lines.

**The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of Steven Fisher to the Plumbing Board.**

**Tom Lynam (reappointment – Fire and Building Code Board of Appeals)**

Mr. Slifko questioned the number of terms Mr. Lynam has served. Mr. Lyman stated that this is his third term. He explained that this Board contains trades professionals from different backgrounds to review appeals. He stated that his focus is fire protection.

Mr. Slifko questioned the purpose of the Board. Mr. Lynam stated that they review requests for leniency on the Codes during rehab projects. He stated that the Board works to find other alternatives while keeping with the intent of the Codes.

Mr. Slifko stated that it is similar to a zoning variance. Mr. Lynam agreed.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the number of appeals heard recently. Mr. Lynam stated that there haven't been any lately but that he was notified that one is upcoming to address a property on Penn St. He stated that older buildings were built to older code requirements and must be brought to current code to reuse. He stated that this can be problematic. He stated that the Board reviews photos and drawings and that this can be a costly process. He stated that the professionals serving on the Board are very familiar with City properties.

Mr. Slifko noted that this is a retrofit. Mr. Lynam agreed and stated that some can be very difficult and very costly. He stated that the Board's decisions at the appeal must still be justified by the Code language.

Mr. Slifko questioned how Council could assist the Board. Mr. Lynam stated that each appeal is different. He stated that Board members are open minded and that the City official's hands are tied in a way that the Board's are not. He stated that they look for reasonable compromise and flexibility.

**The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of Tom Lynam to the Fire and Building Code Board of Appeals.**

Mr. Lynam expressed the belief that there is lead in the City's water pipes at the joints.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that this has become a very public issue with the current situation in Flint, Michigan. Mr. Lynam agreed and stated that rubber gaskets are the newer style.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 4:44 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
*Shelly Katzenmoyer*, CMC  
Deputy City Clerk