

**City of Reading City Council**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**April 25, 2016**

Council President Waltman called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Pastor Junior Oriol, Freedom Gate.

All present pledged to the flag.

The Committee of the Whole meeting included an executive session on matters pertaining to personnel matters.

**ATTENDANCE**

Council President Waltman  
Councilor Daubert, District 1  
Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2  
Councilor Twyman, District 3  
Councilor Reed, District 5  
Councilor Slifko, District 6  
City Auditor D. Cituk  
Acting City Solicitor T. Coleman  
City Clerk L. Kelleher  
Acting Managing Director C. Younger  
Mayor W. Scott

Council President Waltman explained that Councilor Marmarou was excused from the meeting due to a conflicting appointment.

**PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

- Council commendation celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fightin Phils affiliation with the Philadelphia Phillies, accepted by General Manager Scott Hunsicker
- Council commendation recognizing Fair Housing Month, accepted by Executive Director Kim Talbot

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Waltman stated that there are eight (8) citizens registered to address Council on non-agenda matters. He inquired 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 speaking rules that were adopted by Council.

**Rick Mountz, of South 10<sup>th</sup> St.,** was not present.

**Ricardo Nieves, of Douglassville,** asked that the City consider auditing the Liquid Fuels fund over the past four (4) years. He noted that although the City receives a large contribution from the State annually that is to be used for street related purposes, the streets are in horrific condition. He questioned how these funds are spent.

**Ed Terrell, of Franklin Street,** expressed the time limits applied to those who register to speak are insulting. He noted that a recent Reading Eagle article reports on the discovery of a \$26M fund balance. He congratulated the full time Auditor for making this discovery. He stated that if Council members were also full time they may make similar discoveries. He expressed the belief that the City has flaws in various collection practices.

**Tim Evans, of South 19<sup>th</sup> Street,** stated that he is the President of East Ends Social Club, which has existed since 1872. He stated that the club began on Cotton Street and moved into the Mineral Spring Hotel in 1924. He stated that East Ends initiates programs that support the community. He explained that financial mismanagement by a prior board of directors prompted a "Save the Club" movement during the last administration. He explained that the former mayor attended the meeting and told the club not to make the lease payment in place of maintaining the facility. He asked the City to reconsider evicting them from the property.

**Sheila Perez, of Weiser Street,** stated that there is an epidemic in Reading that harms the financial wellbeing of some businesses and that Reading Green is one of the businesses harmed. She expressed the belief that Reading Green can bring sensible and responsible solutions to recycling and environmental issues. She also stated that trash haulers are also economically harmed. She stated that she is tired of various discriminatory practices by various parties and agencies and she questioned why the City's Environmental Advisory Council meets at a time that prevents the public from attending.

**Evelyn Morrison, of Church Street,** stated that she speaks as a minister who is responsible for encouraging people to work together. She expressed the belief that many City contracts are subject to bid rigging. She expressed the belief that those officials who have broken the law, even if was to support family, should come forward and confess. She also encouraged citizens who know of wrong-doing to report it.

**Lana Fick, of West Oley Street,** stated that she has lived at her home for 50 years and raised her family in this quiet neighborhood. She stated that recently the neighborhood is plagued by loud music, drinking and hookah smoking at a neighboring property. She stated that the noise begins around 2:30 in the afternoon and continues through the evening. She stated that

the noise is so loud it makes the windows rattle. She requested relief from this quality of life issue.

**Terry Fick, of West Oley Street**, stated that he disagrees that with the mayor's belief that cars that do not move on street sweeping day should be towed. He stated that there are people with health issues who cannot move their cars. He noted that a variety of issues can prevent someone from moving their car on street sweeping day. He described the parking problems within his neighborhood which require people in the block to park up to six (6) blocks away. He stated that neighbor's park incorrectly to save spaces. He suggested re-installing the painted stall lines to define parking spaces. He noted the need for an innovative solution.

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

Council President Waltman called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading and the minutes from the April 11<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council. He noted the need to withdraw Resolutions A and B listed on the Consent Agenda and add an ordinance for introduction amending the purchasing policies. There were no objections to the modifications.

**Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Twyman, to approve the minutes from the April 11<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda, as amended, including the remaining legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **Consent Agenda**

### **Withdrawn at the Administration's request**

**A. Resolution No. 34-2016** – authorizing the execution of an agreement with the Community First Fund to create a loan program for Reading businesses, replacing the Microloan Program

**B. Resolution No. 35-2016** – authorizing the Public Works Director to execute and submit a traffic signal application at North 4<sup>th</sup> and Washington St. to PennDOT

**C. Resolution No. 36-2016** – authorizing the Public Works Director to execute and submit a traffic signal application for intersections along the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor to PennDOT

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

The mayor did not provide a written report to Council. He described the committee he is putting together to address trash. The committee will include trash hauler representation and the meetings will be public. He noted his support for the ordinance that will add provisions for contract change orders.

## **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

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

- 2016 Admissions tax
- 2012-16 Real Estate Transfer Tax

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz asked the Auditor to explain the “discovered” fund balance.

The Auditor explained that the City has been working to build a reserve or fund balance for many years. He stated that the fund balance is reported in the annual financial report required by the DCED. He stated that the 2014 report filed in 2015 had a \$22M fund balance and the 2015 report filed in 2016 had a projected \$30M fund balance. He stated that the report contains unaudited figures. The external audit will provide the actual fund balance.

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

None.

## **ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE**

None

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES**

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz read the following ordinances into the record:

**A. Ordinance** – authorizing Berks EIT, as the City's tax collector, to engage one or more third-party collection agencies to pursue and collect delinquent Tax and apply a fee for the use of a third-party collection agency provided that the fee does not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount of Tax collected from any such Taxpayer.

**B. Ordinance** – amending the City's Purchasing Policies by adding language regarding placing restrictions on contract change orders.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**A. Resolution No. 37-2016** – appointing Lucy Cortez to the Main Street Board

**B. Resolution No. 38-2016** – reappointing Sean Moretti to the Main Street Board

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Slifko, to adopt Resolution Nos. 37-38-2016.**

Councilor Slifko noted the experience and skills of the candidates being appointed and reappointed this evening. Councilor Reed concurred and noted the commitment of both to

the downtown.

**Resolution Nos. 37-38-2016 were adopted by the following vote:**

**Yeas: Daubert, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Reed, Slifko, Twyman, Waltman President - 6**

**Nays: None - 0**

## **COUNCIL COMMENT**

Councilor Twyman thanked all who participated in the Great American Cleanup and Earth Day. He also thanked those who commented at this evening's meeting. He stated that he looks forward to developing innovative solutions to the trash and parking issues. He noted the importance of public comment.

Councilor Slifko suggested referring the parking issue to the Standards of Living Committee.

Councilor Reed stated that the blue ribbons on the Council tables this evening are to thank and celebrate all public safety officials from police and fire to prison guards and probation officers, etc. She stated that the ribbons are provided by Crime Alert.

Councilor Reed described the restoration event planned for the Lauer Statue located within City Park. She stated that this is the first monument ever installed in the City. She thanked the City Clerk for assisting to organize the event. She noted that the Brewers Association is a national organization that voluntarily donated \$25K for the restoration efforts. She stated that Frederick Lauer was the first president of this organization.

Councilor Daubert noted the importance of the Great American Cleanup and Earth Day celebrations. He urged people to learn from these events.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she and some neighbors cleaned up the Neversink Playground on Saturday morning. She stated that later in the day people dropped litter in a way that made it impossible to enjoy the aftereffects of the cleanup work completed earlier. She stated that she organized another group of neighbors and educated them about littering and that those neighbors assisted by cleaning the area the next morning. She noted the need for people to respect the properties they use.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she is holding another community meeting the first Thursday in May at St. Matthews Church located at South 18<sup>th</sup> and Cotton Streets at 7 pm. She stated that the complaints from this group are similar to those heard from residents at tonight's meeting.

City Auditor Cituk urged all to vote in the Primary election tomorrow.

Councilor Twyman noted that the Duryea bike race down Mt. Penn is this Saturday. He encourage all to attend.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz described the various users of the mountain.

Council President Waltman commended the mayor for creating a trash and litter committee with Councilors Slifko and Twyman.

Council President Waltman stated that some citizens are confused about the fund balance. He explained the work to build the fund balance since the City went into Act 47 on both the expenditures and revenues.

**Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Slifko, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.**

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