

City of Reading City Council
Regular Meeting
August 22, 2016

Council President Waltman called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Rev. Danny Moore, Holy Trinity Church of God.

All present pledged to the flag.

ATTENDANCE

Council President J. Waltman

Councilor Daubert, District 1

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2

Councilor Twyman, District 3

Councilor Marmarou, District 4

Councilor Reed, District 5

Councilor Slifko, District 6

City Auditor D. Cituk

City Solicitor C. Younger

City Clerk L. Kelleher

Managing Director G. Steckman

Mayor W. Scott

There was an executive session on litigation at the Committee of the Whole meeting.

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

No commendations were issued at this meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Waltman stated that there are six (6) citizens registered to address Council, three (3) on agenda matters and three (3) 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.

Shelia Ehram, of South 15th St., stated that she circulated a petition in the East Reading area seeking support for the City's purchase of the East Reading pool and for the City to retain the swimming pool. She noted that she and some neighbors made an offer to purchase the pool which was accepted by all taxing authorities except the City. She expressed the belief that the

City should fix the pool, as a splash park is better suited for young children and not teenagers and adults. She implored Council to purchase the property and allow it to remain as a swimming pool.

Richelle Smith, of South 15th St., stated that she and her husband were attracted to purchase their home in East Reading due to the home's proximity to Neversink Mountain and the East Reading Pool. She expressed the belief that a splash park will not be used by teenagers and adults. She noted that the pool offers employment opportunities to teenagers, as well as recreation. She agreed that the City should purchase the pool and continue operating it as a swimming pool.

Josh Smith, of South 15th St., echoed the comments made about the East Reading Pool and stated that the City should purchase the property and retain the pool.

Ralph Nieves, of North 8th St., stated that 146 North 5th Street was recently condemned by the City due to the property owner's failure to properly maintain the property. He stated that the condemnation required him to close his small business and seek space elsewhere. He noted that his past record has prevented him from moving to a new location. He stated that he learned from poor decisions he made in the past and changed his lifestyle. However, he is still unable to find a new location.

Joel Jenkins, of Weiser St., spoke in support of the senior citizen discount that the City used to apply to the trash and recycling program. He questioned why the discount was discontinued and asked that it be restored. He also suggested adopting legislation to reduce the leachate that comes from trash trucks.

Carmen Mares, of Cherry St., presented a petition requesting improved traffic control for the 10th and Cherry Street area due to continued vehicular speeding and a skate park. She described the difficulties children have safely crossing the street in this area.

Jason Orth stated that he missed the opportunity to register to speak and asked permission to comment. Council President Waltman allowed Mr. Orth to speak for three (3) minutes.

Jason Orth, of Cherry Street, agreed with the need for improved traffic controls in the 10th and Cherry Street area due to speeding vehicles and line of sight issues that makes crossing difficult and unsafe for children.

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 August 8th Regular Meeting of Council. Council President Waltman stated that the administration wishes to withdraw Consent Agenda item G Resolution pertaining to Berks

Nature.

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to approve the minutes from the August 8th Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading. The motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

A. Resolution 66-2016 – authorizing the RAWA Board to approve the collective bargaining unit with AFSCME

B. Award of Contract – for Laboratory Services 2016 to M.J. Reider Associates INC., 107 Angelica Street, Reading, PA 19611 who is not the lowest bidder, because this was an RFQ it was based on qualifications rather than price. The estimated total bid price is \$45,975.00.

C. Award of Contract – authorizing the purchase of a ladder truck for the Fire Department from Seagrave Fire Apparatus at the cost of \$1,030,575 (*to be distributed Monday*)

D. Award of Contract – for Traffic Signal Maintenance in order that the contract may be awarded to Telco, Inc, 1224 Cross Keys Road Reading, PA 19605 at the cost of \$33,048

E. Award of Contract – for furnishing Bituminous Materials and Asphalt Cements for pick-up to South Reading Blacktop, Division of Reading Materials, Birdsboro, PA at an estimated total bid price of \$106,900.00. This contract is from date of award of contract until May 31, 2018

F. Award of Contract – for the 2015 PennDOT Repaving Project to H&K Group Contractors, Skippack, PA. The total amount is \$772,304.95 subject to Penn DOT approval

WITHDRAWN G. Resolution 67-2016 – waiving the financial security on a Municipal Improvement Agreement for Berks Nature at Angelica Park -

H. Award of Contract – for streetlight maintenance to Hirneisen Electric Inc., Reading, at the cost of \$57,254.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

The managing director and the mayor thanked the Public Works Department for their tireless work on various projects during the extreme heat during the summer months. He noted that the administration will soon be making a recommendation for an award of contract for the WWTP project.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

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

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

The City Auditor noted that the presentation of the 2015 external audit will be delayed for approximately 30 days.

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

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Pending Legislation

Bill No. 2016 – creating the Reading Regional Water Authority *Introduced at the May 23 regular meeting*

Ordinance – amending the City’s Zoning Ordinance, Section 600-800, Districts, Section 600-1203 Conditional Use, Section 600-2100 Telecommunications Towers and Antennas, and Section 600-2206 Telecommunication Definitions *Introduced at the August 8 regular meeting*

A. Bill 34-2016 – amending the City Code, Chapter 5 Administrative Code, Section 5-806 Fiscal Provisions to provide improved clarity by providing a new Section 807 covering the Annual Budget and Capital Program, incorporating the Purchasing Policies currently identified as Section RE3117-005a-Ex A within Section 809, adding reserved sections for future use and renumbering Section 800 in its entirety, as attached in Exhibit A *Introduced at the August 8 regular meeting*

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Slifko, to enact Bill No. 34-2016.

Councilor Slifko explained that this amendment cleans up Section 806 and provides improved clarity for the users. He noted that our Home Rule form of Government started in 1996 and over the past 20 years, this section has become muddled with amendments.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the City Clerk and Assistant Solicitor Coleman for their hard work to reorganize these sections over the past few months.

Bill No. 34-2016 was enacted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Daubert, Marmarou, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Reed, Slifko, Twyman, Waltman,
President - 7
Nays: None - 0**

B. Bill 35-2016 – authorizing the purchase of the East Reading Pool site *Introduced at the August 8 regular meeting*

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to enact Bill No. 35-2016.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz provided background on the financial problems experienced by the East Reading Pool resulting in the property going on the tax sale list. She thanked the administration for taking a proactive approach and performing a study to assess the condition of the pool and its potential reuse as a splash park. She agreed that the purchase of the property is the first step and the decision for the reuse will follow separately.

Councilor Reed stated that she will most likely be the lone dissenting vote. She noted that around 2001 the City used approximately \$300K in CDBG funds to aid the pool and later the Chamber of Commerce dedicated resources to help reshape the management of the pool. She noted that privately run swimming pools are developing financial problems and closing elsewhere. She noted that over the past years, the Northwest Swimming Association, Hillside Swimming Association and Muhlenberg Swimming Association have all closed. She also noted that although the majority of Council will support the purchase of the pool, there is no guarantee that reuse will be a pool, a splash park or a parking lot.

Councilor Slifko stated that he supports the acquisition of the property to secure it and prevent it from becoming blighted; however, he will consider the reuse recommendation separately.

Councilor Daubert stated that he supports purchasing the property to secure the site and he supports a reuse that will benefit the community.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked the members of Council for their support.

Council President Waltman expressed the belief that the City should have stepped in to secure Northwest and Hillside. Unfortunately, the City's financial position at the time prevented the City from assisting those organizations at their time of need. He agreed that the reuse of the property should provide a recreational resource for our youth and he suggested that the City consider a partnership with Olivet.

Bill No. 35-2016 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Daubert, Marmarou, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Slifko, Twyman, Waltman,

President - 6

Nays: Reed - 1

C. Bill 36-2016 – amending the 2016 budget by adding the PA DCNR Reimbursement Grant for the Keffer Park Playground ***Introduced at the August 8 regular meeting***

Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 36-2016.

Councilor Slifko explained that the next three (3) ordinances will add these transactions to the City's USL system which will allow the administration to track the financing of these projects.

Bill No. 36-2016 was enacted by the following vote:

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

Nays: None - 0

D. Bill 37-2016 – amending the 2016 budget by adding the PA DCNR Reimbursement Grant for the 11th & Pike Playground Phase II Rehabilitation Project ***Introduced at the August 8 regular meeting***

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Daubert, to enact Bill No. 37-2016.

Bill No. 37-2016 was enacted by the following vote:

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

Nays: None - 0

E. Bill 38-2016 – amending the 2016 budget by adding the PA DCNR Reimbursement Grant for the Pandora Park Playground Rehabilitation Project ***Introduced at the August 8 regular meeting***

Councilor Daubert moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 38-2016.

Bill No. 38-2016 was enacted by the following vote:

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

Nays: None - 0

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

No ordinances were introduced at this meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution 68-2016 – reappointing Kelly Christman to the Shade Tree Commission

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Slifko, to adopt Resolution No. 68-2016.

Councilor Marmarou spoke of the skill and experience Ms. Christman brings to this board and the amount of work she contributes to the board's mission.

Councilor Slifko noted that Ms. Christman is a long term board member and he encouraged citizens to apply for the two (2) openings on this board.

Resolution No. 68-2016 was adopted by the following vote:

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

President - 7

Nays: None - 0

COUNCIL COMMENT

Councilor Marmarou thanked the Police Chief and Lt. Reilly for attending the community crime meeting in District 4 last week. He noted that 114 community members attended.

Councilor Daubert thanked the Public Works Department for their hard work during the extreme heat we have experienced this summer. He agreed with the need to consider traffic issues from a pedestrian's perspective.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked tonight's speakers and those who attended the entire Council meeting. She noted the upcoming race which will travel through Reading.

Councilor Reed noted that the Phightin Phils currently have the best record in baseball. She reminded everyone that school is starting next week and she asked everyone to be aware of the increased pedestrian traffic before and after school.

Councilor Twyman stated that he appreciates the positivity of the remarks about the East Reading Pool. He thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and for the comments made at the meeting.

Councilor Slifko thanked Steve Harrity and the Clean City program for performing over 74 cleanups with volunteers since the start of the warm weather season.

Councilor Marmarou announced that the College Heights Community Council will be meeting on Sunday, September 11th at 7 pm at Nativity Lutheran Church.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz noted that the uniforms worn by the US Gymnastic team were supplied by Elite Sportswear, a Reading based company.

The managing director stated that he has started meeting with the public works director about the City's snow plow routes and equipment.

Council President Waltman reviewed the upcoming Council meeting schedule.

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

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk