

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – LEGISLATIVE SESSION
JANUARY 21, 2020 – 7:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

President of Council Cris Nesbitt called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Nesbitt led those in attendance in a prayer and then the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Mr. Powell, Mr. Gertz, Mr. Lynd, Mr. Albrinck, Mr. Lindeman, Mr. Fischesser & Mrs. Eadicicchio.

Other City Officials Present:

Mayor Bo Bemes, Law Director Dave Stevenson, Treasurer Mel Gertz, Auditor Sabrina Smith & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Justin Feldman (1415 Market) – Update to Justin’s comments two weeks ago: (1) It was confirmed by Councilman Dennis Albrinck that there were 5 dead trees were removed from Quiet Park. (2) Comprehensive Plan still not at the Library. President of Council Cris Nesbitt will make sure this is completed.

Bob Ashbrock (221 Walnut) – Markings are appearing on the streets around Market and the Stadium relative to an MSD project that Council was made aware of about a year ago. Asked if one of the Councilmen could obtain the proposed plan and communicate to the public.

Nick Roth (1324 Market) – Issue with the crosswalk at the Library. Curb keeps getting hit and the post is knocked down. Suggested the Bus Stop at the curb could be moved back 100 ft so that drivers can see the kids.

James Shelton (302 E Benson St) – Wanted to know if Council had discussed any further the Commercial traffic on Riesenber Lane. Last year Mr. Shelton was in favor of not limiting the amount of commercial activity and this year, now that the site will not be ready for new ownership for a couple years, he is in favor of restricting the traffic while children are using the ball fields.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Anthony Gertz

- Hasn’t received anything yet from the Budget Committee (not expected just yet).
- Has distributed an ordinance about extending the sidewalks (install new sidewalks) on the west side of Reading Road North to the Corporation line. Asked every Councilmember to review for consideration next week.
- Would like his committee meeting to start evaluating what will be an appropriate fee be for field usage, establish a budget for Council Chamber changes/renovations for improvement.
- Thinks we’re looking healthy in each of our funds going into 2020.
- Committee meeting scheduled for next week.

UTILITIES, LANDS & BUILDINGS: Don Lindeman

Water Meters

The changeover to the new water meters continues to go at a good pace. I last reported that 1300 meters were installed, since then another 1079 meters have been installed. For a total of 2379 meters. **Unfortunately a number of residence have not responded to NECO’s letter to make an appointment for the change.** Yesterday 300 notices to comply were hand delivered. An additional 10 days from that date will be allowed before **your water will be shut off.** NECO made

50 new appointments yesterday. If you have any extraordinary circumstances please call 733-3725 and ask to speak with the Safety Service Director.

Water/Sewer Increase

Cincinnati Water Works has increased our cost by approximately 10 cents per unit. The actual usage rate is also increased by the same amount due to increase in labor costs and materials. Hopefully this will help cover the cost of water main breaks, catch basin repairs, and other water related issues. Unfortunately, MSD may also raise their rates this year.

Millcreek Valley Alliance Bench Project

- **No formal meeting in January. Dirt removal should begin in March.**
- Quiet Park. Dead trees were cut down and additional general clean up.

ZONING, PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT: Dave Powell

- Next committee meeting Tuesday, February 4 @6:30 pm to discussion acceptance of the master plan and the right of way ordinance that failed recently.

LAWS AND CONTRACTS: Katie Eadicicco

- Working with Patrick Ross with updating the Code of Ordinances.
- Stadium Update: Reading through the latest contracts and all communications. The school wants a long-term plan.
- Committee meeting being held on Thursday, 23 at 6:30 pm.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY: Randy Fischesser

- My committee met on January 7th to review and discuss several issues:

First was a concern by Mr. Gertz regarding the need for a convex mirror at Jefferson & Walnut.

On my request, Matt Morgan and Kevin Knisner from the Service Dept. were present to share their professional opinion on having a mirror at the intersection. They gave the committee a report of six concerns with this installation and recommended against the installation.

Acting Police Chief Lundsford stated that, to his knowledge, there has not been a serious accident at that intersection in the past several years.

Additionally, there are far worse intersections in the immediate area including Pike & Jefferson, Pearl & Market, Pearl & Reading, Walnut & Reading, and Halker & Reading to name a few.

After reviewing all the information, it is this committee's recommendation that no mirror be installed at this time.

We also discussed potential Capital needs for the Police and Fire Departments. Chief Owens advised that his department is looking at the following capital purchases in the coming year.

SCBA mask fit-test unit (\$12,000) clear Denied grant application.

LUCAS CPR compression device (\$16,000) Grant applied for, should know status in next few weeks.

Body armor/helmets (+/- \$15,000--still researching) for active shooter "Rescue Taskforce Response"

Police Capital Planning:

I met with AC Lundsford to generally offer him the Safety Committee support during this transition time. During the meeting the ordering of new cruisers was discussed. He indicated that he was attempting to get with the state bid purchasing rep for the area. He said they would need 2 for sure, but would like to order three since both 2016 cruisers were totaled last year.

Finally, we discussed Police Dispatch potential changes:

A letter from Denise Driehaus explaining why the county commissioners decided to continue the increased sales tax from the museum center restoration and putting it toward county projects. Part of this plan is to decrease the per-call fee assessed communities for county emergency dispatch.

The current rate is \$16. The new rate will be \$10 in 2020 and \$5 in 2021. Reading is expected to save \$33,000.00 over the next two years on just Fire/EMS dispatching.

Current committee feeling is to start looking at our current in house police dispatch and what would be needed should we switch to county. However, it is our recommendation to hold off on any changes until 2021. This would give us time for the testing and promotion of the new chief and give him time to settle in before having to take on this undertaking.

I would like to congratulate Paul Naehring on his retirement from the Fire Department after 29 years of service.

SERVICE: Dennis Albrinck

- New Truck (with the plow and spreader) is in, fitted and gorgeous.
- Leaf collection has stopped. Mulcher is still out.

RECREATION: Tom Lynd

- Proud to announce that new tables and chairs have been purchased for Haffey Fieldhouse through grant money.
- Committee Meeting held earlier today to discuss fees and charges for Parks, Programs and Recreational facilities in 2020. We also discussed an ordinance to employ temporary; seasonal and part-time help for 2020 because minimum wage increased \$0.15. The committee also discussed parks needs.

NEW BUSINESS - No new business was offered or discussed.

REPORTS OF OFFICIALS

MAYOR: Robert "Bo" Bemmes

- Gave the "State of the City" address. For the full address please visit <http://www.icrctv.com/communities>, click on "Reading," and then click "Reading City Council 01-21-2020"

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Patrick Ross

- Absent. Report sent via e-mail and communicated by President of Council Cris Nebitt:
- City's legal counsel will be filing briefs regarding dismissal of City Employee. Our legal counsel will attend a meeting next month (February) to give Council an Executive Session update on this case.
- Met with MSD regarding their Storm Water project within the City of Reading. They will be delivering to City the Permanent and Temporary easements that they need for this project. There will be a monetary amount associated with this. Council may choose to accept this dollar amount or donate. Council shall decide this upon receiving this from MSD. Their project's anticipated start date is the latter part of 2020.
- Gave Mr. Lindeman an update on Bench Project from Bennett Kottler of the Mill Creek Alliance. Anticipated start date is late March.
- Water Meter project is progressing well. 2379 meters out of approximately 3550 have been changed. If you have not scheduled your appointment, please call 1-800-624-6975 to do so. NECO has mailed out letters to properties. Failure to respond for the change out will result in water disconnection.
- The new updated website is now live. We are still working on fixing some issues and have to add and fix several forms which will make more information available for residents. New calendar is also being configured. Any suggestions for additions can be sent to: pross@readingohio.org.
- Mr. Ross is participating in a task force with MSD, Hamilton County Administration, Hamilton County Storm Water District, Hamilton County Planning and Development, City of Cincinnati Stormwater Management, Mill Creek Valley Conservatory District, Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District. The purpose of the task force is looking into a Countywide, Watershed Impervious Surface Fee. At this time there is nothing to report regarding this, but when there is more he will report to Council.
- I appreciate Members of Council who have texted, called, or e-mailed me with questions while I've been recovering from surgery. While I can't be around as much physically, I am able to answer any questions or look into matters if I am contacted. Please don't wait for Tuesday night if you have a matter you want looked into.

LAW DIRECTOR: Dave Stevenson

- Ohio Power Siting Board ordered a re-hearing. He is not getting his hopes up that it will change their proposed route.

TREASURER: Mel Gertz

- January Month to Date: \$608,669.25 (\$58,000 behind last year but still have 8 business days remaining)
- Cost the state is charging to collect business taxes is down to .50%. Businesses can file with the state and the state then reimburses the individual communities. The state does take this small percentage.

AUDITOR: Sabrina Smith

- The 2018 and 2019 Audit has started. Plattenburg will be on site the week of March 23. Another week will be in April.

READING OF RESOLUTIONS: None.

READING OF ORDINANCES: Four previously passed Ordinances from the January 14th Council Meeting were read (Title Only). These were Ordinances 2020-01 thru 2020-04. No new ordinances were introduced.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gertz – Explained to the audience as to why we pass these Ordinances allowing the Auditor to move funds (not to exceed \$2,000,000.00) quarterly. Ms. Smith still has to communicate to Council when she moves the funds.

- Would like to see the Flashing Speed Limit signs on Clark Road as were promised by Mr. Ross.
- Are we charging the correct rate for the new school building workers?
- Council had passed an ordinance during the 20180828 meeting to complete a study of the Bolser Road engineer report. Mr. Painter had promised this report in the 2Q19 last year but now expects the report to be finished by mid-February 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 9:09 pm.

X 
CARLA KACHER
Clerk of Council

X 
CRIS NESBITT
President of Council