

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – LEGISLATIVE SESSION
FEBRUARY 16, 2021 – 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. Eadicicco.

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Law Director Dave Stevenson, Auditor Sabrina Smith & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – None.

COMMUNICATIONS – None.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Anthony Gertz

- Gave the Treasurer's report: February, Month-to-Date Tax Collection update: As of close of business today we have collected about \$460,700. We are running slightly behind as compared to 2020 for the same time period, approximately \$56,000. However, we ended up January about \$165,000 ahead. We are still in good shape for now.
- Have not received anything from the Budget Commission regarding the 2021 Budget but this usually comes out closer to the end of March each year.

UTILITIES, LANDS & BUILDINGS: Don Lindeman

- **RECYCLING:** A public meeting was held about 6 years ago about curbside recycling. At that time, we had 374 residents participating in voluntary curbside recycling. Today we have 880 residents signed up. This is a nice increase but it would be great if we had everyone in the City recycle. Recycling is important for our community and for future generations!

I would like this to be put on the ballot for the citizens of Reading to decide if this should be citywide. An option is we could set it up for every other week pick up and it would be a slightly less cost. We will soon be renegotiating our contract for trash and recycling pickup. It would be a good time to consider curbside recycling for everyone.

WATER METERS: We only have about ½ dozen residence that we still need to set up with the new water meters. With the new water meters it only takes about ½ day to read all the meters in the city. In the past it took 2 people 10 days to read them all! Presently Cincinnati is not increasing the charge for water. That may change before the end of this year.

CLEANING OUT? The City of Reading has an overnight truck courtesy service for residents for only \$100 fee per night. The truck is dropped off by 3pm and picked up around 7am the next day. Please do not overload the truck! Some items that cannot be placed in the truck are: NO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, MOTOR OIL, OLD TIRES CAR BATTERIES, ANTIFREEZE, PAINT, BRAKE FLUID, DIRT, CONCRETE OR CONCRETE BLOCKS REFRIGERATORS (freon containing appliances require special handling procedures prior to pick up).

ZONING, PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT: Dave Powell

- All rental property owners in Hamilton County are required to register their properties with the county Auditor's office. I reached out to the Auditor and was directed to a spot on their website where I could download all of the properties in book 671 (Reading). I am in the process of analyzing the data.

I am waiting on information as to what fee schedule the building department is supposed to be using for various permits.

Once I receive that information I will compare it to what is published on the City's web page and request the information to be corrected if I find it to be incorrect.

LAWS AND CONTRACTS: Katie Eadicicco

- I'm having a Laws and Contracts Committee meeting on Thursday, February 25 at 6:30 in the caucus room at City Hall to discuss rental properties within our city.

As I mentioned at our last meeting, I would like to look at enacting the guidelines mentions in our City's master plan, such as registering rental properties and having yearly inspections done. I would also like to include Air BnB's and short-term rentals in our discussion. I also want to look at what other cities have in place.

I asked Mark Bishop to attend. He's on the Legislative Committee of the Greater Cincinnati Northern Kentucky Apartment Association and should have some good ideas and insight for us.

I received a list of all the rental properties in Reading from Chief Owens and Mr. Powell received a list from Hamilton County so it will be interesting to cross reference these lists.

Another issue is that these companies quickly buy up the housing stock. I've had a realtor tell me that happens and it's not just foreclosures. I've had someone else that was looking for a home tell me that one of these companies bought a house before they could even schedule a tour.

That said, I look forward to our committee meeting and moving forward with this issue.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY: Randy Fischesser

- The Public Health and Safety Committee met with Chief Edens on February 9th. The main reason for the meeting was to discuss the Police Department's Capital Needs for the coming year.

The first item was the annual purchase of two cruisers. If you recall, Last year Ford retooled the model resulting in our replacement program being pushed back almost a full year. Although this delay was a setback; it did allow us to reevaluate the 3-year replacement program. Chief Edens noted that the additional year saw a drastic increase in down time and maintenance costs; reaffirming the need to continue the 3-year program. Additionally, last year two of our units were totaled further decreasing the fleet to the point that there are no spare vehicles to rotate in during routine maintenance. The committee was in agreement that this purchase was a high priority and would like to see the purchase by the end of the second quarter. The total estimated cost would be \$80,500.00.

Also requested are 4 radar units to complete the replacement of the old units. Keep in mind that these units, indirectly, pay for themselves. This cost would be \$8,100.00.

In addition, he would like to continue the taser replacement program. This, just like the cruisers, will be an ongoing replacement expense with the purchase of three per year. Presently, the tasers have a 5-year life expectancy. The anticipated cost is \$8,021.00.

Our next discussion centered around body cameras. This program has been on the table and discussed with both Chief Edens and Chief Snow for at least the last 6-8 years. Although everyone can easily see the need, it is a major financial commitment not only for the initial startup, but also for the annual storage and maintenance costs and potentially a data request processing person. Fortunately, this technology has improved, and costs have decreased over the past several years. It should be noted that in Governor DeWine's Executive Budget proposal for the 2022 – 2023 biennium is the recommendation for \$10 Million in grant money for departments without a body camera program. Considering this still has to be approved by the legislature and could be two years out before availability, the committee feels the whole of council needs to evaluate this as a potential purchase this year. I would like to have Chief Edens invited to make a presentation to council on this program in the near future.

Chief Edens also had 9 office chairs listed as a capital need. He explained that the majority of the chairs are 10-20 years old. He does not have the money in his budget to replace them in the foreseeable future. I am hoping to work with administration and/or the finance committee to see if this can be accomplished without tapping the 340 fund.

Lastly was the purchase of a RUVIS fingerprint kit. This kit can decrease the time it takes to process a crime scene by elimination the need to dust entire objects. However, once the prints are detected, they still need to be dusted and lifted for processing. At a cost of close to \$23,000.00, the committee feels this purchase would not be the best use of the money at this time.

SERVICE: Dennis Albrinck

- Congratulated the Service department on all their hard work in the past week with the snow plowing and salting of the roads. We had 650-700 tons of salt available at the beginning of the year and we have used all of it. We now have 300

tons and we're going to get 250 tons tomorrow. He's ordered another 1,000 ton to be delivered and have 400 ton left to go. We usually use about 1800 ton per year. The last 2 years we've only used we've only used about 250 tons each year.. In effect we've saved over \$100,000 in salt thanks to the mild winter. Also, in an effort to help our Service crews, if possible please remove your cars from the street so they can have an easier time plowing the snow.

- Truck we ordered will be coming in June – this replaces the 25 year old truck.
- We recommend giving a test for mechanics since we are down one and have no eligibility list.
- Reminder: Committee meeting next Tuesday, Feb 23 @ 6:30 in the Caucus room.

RECREATION: Tom Lynd

- The Recreation Committee met on Tuesday, 2/9, and discussed the future needs of the parks. The Committee is interested in getting new picnic tables for Koenig Park and a new roof for the small shelter house at Vorhees Park. We are in the process of pricing those out.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

REPORTS OF OFFICIALS

MAYOR: Robert “Bo” Bemmes

- No Report (Absent)

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Patrick Ross

- No Report (Absent)

LAW DIRECTOR: Dave Stevenson

- Annual Report

To the Council of the City of Reading:

The following is the annual report of the activities of my office for the year 2020, as required by Ohio Revised Code section 733.62. All statements, unless otherwise indicated, reflect activities as they appeared at year-end, December 31, 2020.

Monies Received

No funds were received in connection with litigation or collection by this office in 2019.

Mayor's Court

Data regarding prosecutions and fines collected has previously been provided to Council by Mayor Bemmes and Police Chief Edens.

Sex Offenders

I continue to monitor offenders who establish residences within the City in violation of RC 2950.034 which prohibits such offenders from residing within 1000 feet of school premises or day care premises. Most choose to relocate voluntarily when notified that they are in violation.

Pending Litigation

The City initiated litigation against the Reading Community School District regarding the placement of above-ground utilities in violation of the POD granted the School for the construction of the of the new combined school facility. The case was filed in the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas under case no. A2001996. The School and the City have since resolved their differences and the case has been dismissed.

The matters that remain pending:

Reading remains a party in the matter of the Duke Central Corridor Pipeline Expansion; case no. 2020-511 before the Ohio Supreme Court. The case is currently set for oral argument on March 31, 2021.

Duane Mount v. Reading Community School District and the City of Reading, case no. A2100418, Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas. This lawsuit involves the placement of utility poles on the property of the Reading Community School. Mr. Mount's motion for a temporary restraining order was denied, as of this date the matter is still pending. Joe Braun is handling the litigation for the City.

Potential and Threatened Litigation

None

Other

Council, when necessary, will be asked to approve the employment of attorneys who may handle specific matters on an as needed basis. In the past, the following attorneys have handled matters involving Mayor's Court appeals and conflicts of interest, specific legal opinions on individual matters, land appropriations advice, and economic development. The list does not include others who consult directly with the Administration and Civil Service Commission on employment, collective bargaining, and civil service matters. Matt Broo, John Meckstroth & Joe Braun.

Other issues will be addressed as they arise.

Sincerely yours,
David T Stevenson
Law Director

TREASURER: Mel Gertz

- Tony Gertz gave report (above)

AUDITOR: Sabrina Smith

- Still working on the 2020 Audit.

READING OF RESOLUTIONS None

READING OF ORDINANCES

(1) The following is a/an Ordinance enacted by the City of Reading of Hamilton County, Ohio, hereinafter referred to as the Local Public Agency (LPA). [Summary: participation with ODOT on Sidewalks south of Ronald Reagan exit to Sunnybrook on the west side of Reading Road.]

Motion made by Mr. Fischesser, seconded by Mr. Gertz to suspend the rules requiring a second and third reading. Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote. Motion made by Mrs. Lindeman, seconded by Mr. Gertz to adopt the ordinance. Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-08

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gertz: Mentioned that he'd like to resume Council Meetings in the Council Chambers.

Mr. Lindeman: Fish Fry's during Lent ARE happening. Please help your local organizations by attending/purchasing.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:20 pm.

X Carla Kacher
CARLA KACHER
Clerk of Council

X Cris Nesbitt
CRIS NESBITT
President of Council