

CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – LEGISLATIVE SESSION
July 20, 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:

Mayor Bo Bemmes, Treasurer Mel Gertz & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 6 (Regular Meeting) & July 13 (Special Meeting)

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

(1) Brian Collins - 145 Eagleview Way

“Administration” = Mayor and Safety Service Director

(1) Fillable form for Rental owners may be a good idea but it will still have significant cost.

(2) Building Department Fees are still incorrect on our “new” website (new as of 2019).

This is one example of how the City of Reading is losing money.

(3) We lost \$6,400.00 for Recycling efforts because the forms weren’t submitted in time by the Safety Service Director.

(4) Safety Service Director getting paid extremely well (4th highest in the state) and is not doing his job well. He is also looking for another position.

Brian would like the Mayor to resign and Safety Service Director be demoted and have Council stick up for the City.

- Mayor responded that Mr. Collins’ information is incorrect and one particular point that is incorrect is that Patrick is one of the lowest paid SSD in the state.

- Mr. Gertz responded to Mayor Bo Bemmes’ comments by requesting the Mayor stop referring to Safety Service Director as a “City Manager.” He also pointed out that Council does not have control over the administration hiring more staff.

Mr. Gertz would like for Administration to stop chastising Council by saying we’re not allowing the hiring of more staff – this is aggravating and unfair. Is frustrated that Council is labeled as “lackadaisical; passive; don’t do our job” and inhibiting the administration from doing what needs to be done for the City.

(2) Tim Schmidt - 12215 Pickwick Place, Sharonville, Ohio

Member of PFT Enterprises LLC: 8633 Reading Road; 8643 Reading Road; 424 Jefferson Road & 426 Jefferson Avenue

Mr. Schmidt owns rental property in Reading and doesn’t know why the extra piece of legislation needs to be added. Who do we register to? Tax department and Water Works knows his name and contact information. He believes this is an extra burden and restriction on the property owner that doesn’t need to happen.

- Mayor Bemmes pointed out that this came about in order to locate the vacant landlords who don’t want to take care of blatant problems with their properties. The City has a very difficult time tracking down the owners and enforcing them to fix the problems. Mrs. Eadicicco clarified that she is striking that it’s needed to “list the tenants’ names.” Owner’s name and contact information only. Idea is that this will all be computerized through the City’s Website and we are not paying the Website company anymore – it’s built into the contract with them. Mr. Martin has clarified that this effort will cut-down on the man hours needed for these efforts. Mr. Gertz responded that “we’re just treating the illness.” Because we can’t find certain individuals we can’t punish everyone else. Mr. Albrinck asked if we need to designate what “timely registration” equals? Mrs. Eadicicco would want to discuss this with the building department. Mr. Schmidt

pointed out that Facebook postings are “not” official notifications. Mr. Powell responded, if we don’t know who the owners are, how can we properly notify them?

(3) Shirley Leech - 2621 Hunt Road

People need to be informed ahead of time. Mentioned that Golf Manor tried to get this type of action in place and the effort failed.

(4) Joseph Helton - lives in Montgomery, Ohio

Doesn’t think that this issue has not been advertised very well since this is the first he’s heard of this issue. His suggestion is to add this type of community communication to the water bill.

Response by Councilwoman Katie Eadicicco

I think it's interesting that Mr. Gertz had someone calling landlords about this ordinance. I have friends who are landlords who contacted me saying they received a phone call. And to give them misinformation. Mr. Gertz, you're on my committee. You could have come to me with questions. You could have directed landlords my way. As I've said, this wasn't done or discussed in secret. I've been discussing this since March. During public council meetings, whether in person or on zoom. I've had 3 committee meetings about this. Mr. Gertz was at one. He was there when the fire chief was discussing the need for such an ordinance. This ordinance has been discussed at length in meetings, read in its entirety, posted on the city's website, in meeting minutes, and on Facebook in its entirety. As I mentioned, I'm striking the part requiring the listing of tenants after some discussions. And again, this is something that is in our City's master plan. Actually, this is a simplified version of what is in our Master Plan. Our plan suggested requiring yearly inspections at a cost, citing another city that charges \$75 a year for inspections. We're not doing that. We are only trying to gather a list of the owners, and a contact person for the property so that we don't run into issues where we can't get a hold of someone to fix problems with a property. Mr. Gertz might say that we should be able to find out who the owners are, but obviously we can't. One such example would be the house on Gahl Terrace. Patrick tried for months and months, actually over a year this house was a problem because I know the couple that lives next door. We find that it's owned by a shell company within a shell company and one phone number takes you to another until you're disconnected. And the city is spending hours of manpower looking up such property. This will save that time and money. We also have situations where the city is cutting the grass for abandoned properties because we can't find the owner or who to contact. Again, this is using city resources. This ordinance seeks to eliminate that.

Motion made by Mr. Gertz, seconded by Mr. Lindeman to add the 4th reading of the ordinance to underground the wires on Bolser. Motion carried by voice vote. Motion made by Mr. Gertz, seconded by Mr. Fischesser to table the ordinance since Mr. Gertz was made aware this action is almost complete. Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

Motion made by Mr. Fischesser, seconded by Mr. Powell to add the late communication from Mr. Don Lykins. Motion carried by voice vote.

COMMUNICATION

I'm Don Lykins and live at 8415 Reading Road and own multiple rental units in reading.

I'm against the rental registration ordinance for many reasons as you know.

I feel you still have not proved why this is needed, other than some broad excuses such as a single pedophile one run down house.

This will be a huge burden for owners as you already collect this information from us.

Plus I know you will eventually charge us for this as you cannot support it without additional staff.

You have not consulted with any landlords who will be impacted, and if you had, would not have this sitting before a decision tonight. Include us landlords in decisions like this as we are your partners, yet you treat us like foes.

Please vote no. Thanks for your time.

GUEST SPEAKER

Gage Bradford (Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District)

City of Reading council meeting – 7/20/2021 – Target Community announcement

Reading 3-year waste diversion history – Followed by RRI Grant award

2018 – 7.59% - \$3,807.13

2019 – 8.44% - \$3,720.62

2020 – 4.56% - Did not apply

Target Community is meant to be a two-year project, with up to \$15,000 budgeted each year for the selected community. In general, these monies are spent on promotion (Such as mailers, banners, and educational material) and infrastructure needs (Recycling bins, building compost bins, public drop-off improvements)

Meant to include all aspects of the community – Government, schools, businesses, places of worship, residents, and public spaces.

Other resources include potential grants when appropriate, presentations by district staff, and partnerships with other communities or businesses on a project-by-project basis.

The upcoming process for the City of Reading to enter a new waste hauling contract – Crucial. The district strongly advises moving away from subscription-based recycling.

OTHER BUSINESS

(1) President of Council, Cris Nesbitt suggested forming an additional committee “Reading Bridal District Support” and nominated Mr. Lindeman to be the chairman of a new committee. Motion made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mr. Fischesser to add the committee and accept Mr. Lindeman as the Chairperson. Motion carried by 7-0 roll call vote.

(2) Mayor Bo Bemmes – no way we’d have enough time to fulfill the directive of the ordinance. Mr. Bemmes officially vetoed ordinance 2021-22 concerning paving and road improvements on Benson. Does not object to paving Benson street and will have bid openings August 5th. He pointed out that sections 3, 4 & 5 cannot be completed in time to comply with deadlines and we would lose money if we didn’t comply with the ordinance. This means we will NOT lose the CDBG money. This is the Mayor’s second veto in 17 years.

Mr. Gertz mentioned that this has been such a mix up of grant money and is an example of mismanagement.

READING OF RESOLUTIONS – NONE

READING OF ORDINANCES

(1) AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY AND ADULT TENANTS AND OCCUPANTS THEREOF (*Third Reading*)

Motion made by Mr. Albrinck, seconded by Mr. Lynd that this be a third reading only and that it be amended before the next meeting. Motion carried by a 5-2 roll call vote (Mr. Powell, Mr. Lynd, Mr. Albrinck, Mr. Fischesser & Mrs. Eadicicco voting “yes,” and Mr. Gertz and Mr. Lindeman voting “no.”) Ordinance was declared a third reading only.

(2) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE READING CODE OF ORDINANCES THAT ADDRESS COUNCIL MEETINGS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY (*Second Reading*)

Ordinance was declared a second reading only.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Gertz – Ward 2 advisory committee meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 27.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 9:20 pm.

5-Minute Break

COUNCIL MEETING OF THE WHOLE

The meeting was attended by Mr. Powell, Mr. Lynd, Mr. Albrinck, Mr. Fischesser & Mrs. Eadicicco with non-participation from both Mr. Gertz and Mr. Lindeman.

Topics briefly discussed covered the new Council Special Committee “Reading Bridal District Support”, near future invitations for Guest Speakers, and the evenings meeting ordinance discussions.

X _____
CARLA KACHER
Clerk of Council

X _____
CRIS NESBITT
President of Council