

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION
OCTOBER 4, 2022 – 7:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

President Mr. Daum called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Mr. Powell, Mr. Bronner, Mr. Bishop, Mr. Boehner, Mr. Thamann, Mrs. Kroeger & Mrs. Eadicicco.

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT: Law Director Dave Stevenson, Auditor Sabrina Smith, Safety Service Director Patrick Ross, Mayor Bo Bemmes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Boehner indicated that he had not received a copy of the October 18, 2022 meeting minutes, so he had not read them. He requested that Council wait to approve the previous meeting's minutes until next meeting. The President of Council passed a printed copy to Mr. Boehner.

A video recording of the October 18, 2022 minutes can be viewed at <https://www.icrctv.com/video/reading-city-council-92022>.

A video recording of this meeting (October 4, 2022) can be viewed at: <https://www.icrctv.com/video/reading-city-council-10422>.

AUDIENCE ASKING PARTICIPATION:

Don Lykins of 8415 Reading Road spoke regarding a lack of policing, burglaries, and thefts in the area. He spoke of the police refusing to do fingerprints after a break-in with damage that was caught on video. Mr. Lykins said that the summary of police activity reported at council meetings is obfuscation. He is using open records requests to expose violations of sunshine laws. Mr. Lykins also spoke of retaliation by the administration and the need for a safety committee. He said that follow-up and investigations are dead under the current police chief. The previous police chief (Scott Snow) "was on it." There was an arson in April, but there has been no return call from Mr. Ross. He also stated that Mr. Ross has ignored his emails. He wants to fund an independent investigation to analyze felonies, stating that 15 felonies have occurred on his properties with no arrests.

Mr. Lykins' 5-minute time expired. Mr. Boehner motioned, and Mr. Powell seconded, to extend Mr. Lykins' time by 5 more minutes. The motion carried by voice vote.

Mr. Lykins continued by saying that he was told by the mayor that accusations of a police stand-down of investigations are false. Mr. Lykins indicated again that he has sent emails to the administration with no response. He said that the 911 call response times were good, but that there is no response on other actions. Mr. Lykins indicated that he has contacted the Ohio Attorney General's office and received instructions for initiating an investigation. He may also contact the DOJ. He stated that there was no arrest when a suspect was identified on camera. He stated that 62 years of business in the city deserves better.

Robin Packer of 238 Burkhart spoke in support of Mr. Lykins. She stated that many residents feel the same way. Her garage was burglarized 3 weeks ago with \$2,000 of tools taken. She has lived in Reading for 20 years but does not feel safe any more. Her video system captured the burglar's face and the places where the burglar would have left fingerprints, but the police officer made her feel guilty just for asking for fingerprint evidence to be collected. She stated that the police officer had imposed on her time and was not respectful. She feels that the police don't care and wants a follow-up.

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Sue Renderle of 160 Siebenthaler spoke regarding her dissatisfaction with the no parking signs on both sides of Siebenthaler. (This is in regard to the traffic issue caused by the startup of the Cincinnati Classical Academy that now occupies the old Our Lady of the Sacred Heart building.) She said that OLSH had parking on both sides of the street and said that the lack of communication regarding the no parking signs has been horrible and that she never heard back from Patrick.

Councilman Boehner, who lives on that street, confirmed the situation. He said that a street survey needed to be conducted at 7:30 am (on a school day). He said that parents are speeding. He observed that there has always been no parking on the west side of the street and can understand the issues caused by making the east side a no parking area as well and has spoken with the police chief regarding the signs, since the street has become a race track since the signs went up. He said that a yellow line may solve the problem, but he still had concerns regarding fire truck access. He observed that the radar speed sign was up, but it indicated a 25 MPH limit instead of a 20 MPH school zone limit.

Safety Service Director Patrick Ross provided a background for the no parking signs. He said that the street was backing up at the end of the [school] day. There were problems with residents accessing driveways, and the signs were supposed to help residents. He said that “5 cars minimum” would fit in most of the driveways on that street. He said that the administration was continuing to look at traffic flows and that changes at the school have helped alleviate issues. He said that he was responding to residents.

Mr. Boehner replied that the residents did not know about the signs until they were up. One resident was already parked before signs went up and got a \$30 parking ticket.

Sean McGinnis of 150 Siebenthaler spoke regarding parking on Siebenthaler. He said that the radar sign was in his yard and that the solution to the problem has made it worse for the residents nearer to the school. He said that it caused more headaches and that his driveway would fit only 1 or 2 cars unless it was widened. He has to figure out driving and parking rotations for his driveway. He said that the city administration needs to work with the school and residents to address the signs. Pickup times are still an issue for [after school] activities and that the problem was solved for people who don't live [on Siebenthaler].

Mayor Bemmes said that the administration was responding to a safety issue and that he had talked to others and had returned calls. He said that they were looking for safety issues to be solved and that the signs would come down soon. He said that the city got the signs quickly due to the lack of ability to get fire trucks and ambulances through. He said that safety is the first issue and that he will wait for the [police and fire] chiefs to confirm that the issue is solved.

Deacon Muse of the Cincinnati Classical Academy spoke regarding the parking situation on Siebenthaler. He referred to himself as the culprit who called for the signs and was working with 52 school districts on the problem. He said that CCA was taking fewer busses than OLSH did. He said that dismissal on the first day of classes had been 1 ½ hours, but now it's about 15 minutes. He had asked for 100 feet of signage, since parking in the cul-de-sac chokes bus traffic. He opined that the school may need to station a police officer from 7:20 am to 8 am to keep the end section [of the cul-de-sac] free by getting cars off Siebenthaler. He said that he wants to work with the neighbors and reiterated that the first two days of dismissals but that dismissals are now down to 15 minutes.

Councilman Bishop asked about the “choke” area, meaning the last 2 to 3 houses.

Mayor Bemmes jumped in to say that the signs head down into the hill and told the story of Ruth Bush asking for no parking on the west side due to the inability to see cars around parked cars and that he appreciates the [phone] calls.

Mr. Ross said that someone had been pulled over near Darion last night.

Mr. Boehner mentioned that he had seen quad runners at night with no lights on.

Mr. Bishop asked about speed humps being an option. Mr. Bemmes said that option was not good for downhill traffic.

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James Sheldon of 2401 Carol Drive indicated that [CCA] had done a good job after the first few days. He also said that as traffic improves in one direction on Siebenthaler that it gets bad going the other way with 20 minute waits resulting twice a day.

Mr. Boehner indicated that a large percentage of traffic was from Blue Ash down Hunt Road and that during dismissal it is difficult to get back to Hunt Road as only about 1 car per minute can turn left on Hunt. He suggested the posting of a sheriff's deputy to regulate traffic, but there's no issue getting out of his driveway, since the drivers are generally courteous.

Mr. Ross said that traffic on Hunt Road shows things down.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS:

A printed communication from the Cincinnati Classical Academy was given to council, but would be incorporated in the CCA presentation later.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

1. **Kim Hauck of the Cincinnati Classical Academy**, accompanied by Tim Wechter, U.S. Army, Retired spoke regarding the upcoming Veterans' Day Ceremony on November 10, 2022 at 1 pm. CCA is requesting that reservations be made at <https://www.cincyclassical.org/event/veterans-day-school-assembly-celebration>. The ceremony will take place in the gym at 170 Siebenthaler Avenue, Reading, Ohio 45215. The focus of the event is to deliver the message of appreciation for those people who have served or are serving in the U.S. military.

2. **Tim Nieuman of ICRC** spoke in defense of the current arrangement between the City of Reading and ICRC for ICRC to provide video recording and broadcasting services for the City. He was accompanied by Jason Dunlee, the current production manager. Both presented talking points to encourage Council not to switch service providers. Councilmen Boehner and Bishop spoke regarding history and cost of the service.

3. **Luke Rednick** of the Hamilton County Reconnecting Project addressed Council regarding the need to approve the resolution in support of a study to identify ways of connecting the east side of Hamilton County with the west side of Hamilton County which was read at the previous meeting. He reminded Council that the deadline to pass the resolution was October 13, 2022 and said that Lincoln Heights, Lockland, and Evendale had already passed the resolution and that only Reading and Arlington still had not passed the resolution. Discussion with Councilmembers and the Mayor followed.

Mr. Powell motioned to go out of order on the agenda to read the resolution related to the Reconnecting Project. Mr. Thaman seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Powell, yes; Mr. Bronner, no; Mr. Bishop, yes; Mr. Boehner, yes; Mr. Thaman, yes; Mrs. Kroeger, yes; Mrs. Eadicicco, yes. 6 yes. The motion carries.

The president read the resolution title:

A Resolution of Support for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Grant Application by Hamilton County Planning and Development to Secure Funding for a Planning Study to Identify Ways and Means of Evaluating East-to-West Mobility and Connectivity Problems in Central Hamilton County

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Mr Powell moved to suspend the rule requiring the third reading. Mr Boehner seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Powell, yes; Mr. Bronner, no; Mr. Bishop, yes; Mr. Boehner, yes; Mr. Thaman, yes; Mrs, Kroeger, no; Mrs. Eadicicco, yes. 5 yes. The motion carries.

Mr Boehner moved to adopt the resolution. Mr Powell seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Powell, yes; Mr. Bronner, no; Mr. Bishop, yes; Mr. Boehner, yes; Mr. Thaman, yes; Mrs, Kroeger, no; Mrs. Eadicicco, yes. 5 yes. The resolution is adopted. Resolution number **2022-27R**.

Mr. Powell motioned to go out of order on the agenda to read the second ordinance on the agenda [regarding easements]. Mrs. Eadicicco seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote.

The president read the ordinance title:

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE EASEMENTS AND AGREEMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY (first reading)

Mr Boehner moved to suspend the rule requiring the second and third readings. Mrs. Kroeger seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Powell, yes; Mr. Bronner, yes; Mr. Bishop, yes; Mr. Boehner, yes; Mr. Thaman, yes; Mrs, Kroeger, yes; Mrs. Eadicicco, yes. 7 yes. The motion carries.

Mrs. Eadicicco moved to adopt the ordinance. Mr. Powell seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Powell, yes; Mr. Bronner, yes; Mr. Bishop, yes; Mr. Boehner, yes; Mr. Thaman, yes; Mrs, Kroeger, yes; Mrs. Eadicicco, yes. 7 yes. The ordinance is adopted. Ordinance number **2022-28**.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

GUEST ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL REPORTS

MAYOR: Robert “Bo” Bemmes:

The mayor spoke regarding upcoming events, such as General Tool Company’s 75th birthday in Reading, the Reading High School homecoming parade, Reading youth football, Reading High School’s 100th year, the November 6 tailgate party at Haffey Fieldhouse, elections on November 8 and general comments regarding Don Lykins’ earlier portrayal of the police department.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Patrick Ross

Mr Ross spoke regarding the 3rd Street construction for this week and indicated that water pipe is now available for that project. He spoke of the MSD sewer separation project from the Fieldhouse to the Creek Road, including the North Street Bridge and that pipe would be run down the middle of the road. They are having weekly meetings on Fridays at the Fieldhouse.. He also spoke of the Port Authority’s property going into phase 1 this Wednesday, but that they are waiting on the Ohio EPA. Phase 1 completion is targeted for summer of 2023. It will include 7 new monitoring wells.

LAW DIRECTOR: Dave Stevenson: no report

TREASURER: Brenda Owens: Absent. Report provided by Patrick Ross

All tax receipts are up 12.9%, and Mrs. Owens recommends a reserve fund for the excess.

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AUDITOR: Sabrina Smith:

The annual report is being worked on. Mrs. Smith recommended that Council plan ahead to avoid late spending in December.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Andy Bronner:

\$40 thousand dollars were transferred to the account to be used for purchase of the leaf machine. There were also 3 other transfers from the general fund.

UTILITIES, LANDS & BUILDINGS: Mark Bishop

The committee has been working on 3 ordinances for tonight's meeting. One is the ordinance for easements for Duke's work at Ridge and Furhman Roads. One is for cancelling the contract with ICRC, and another is for entering into a contract with ESP for video services.

ZONING, PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT: Dave Powell

The committee is helping with the Laws and Contracts committee and the Utilities, Lands & Buildings committee regarding zoning issues.

LAWS & CONTRACTS: Katie Eadicicco

There was a Laws and Contracts committee meeting on September 27. During that meeting, the DORA was discussed, but no updates are available. Jacobs Engineering is updating the Exterior Property Maintenance ordinances for a future Council vote. There are ongoing issues with the football field and stadium. The mayor and safety service director are meeting with representatives from the school to address the issues. A zoning issue on Hill Street is affecting the building of a CBD dispensary there.

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY: Shelly Kroeger

Police Department run count for September, 2022

Calls for service 977

Auto Accidents 31

Booking Original Charges 98

Total Criminal Charges 131

Citations Issued

Hamilton County 4

Arlington Heights 10

Juvenile 0

Reading Mayor's 93

Total Citations 107

For the month of September, we had 8 theft charges, most of which have ended in an arrest. The police responded to several overdoses, auto accidents, which were mainly caused by a driver under the influence, and a few reports of domestic violence. I know I say it every month, but please be vigilant, and if you see something, say something. Remember you need to call 911 as we only have a dispatcher during certain hours. You can still call the non-emergency number at (513)733-4122 and it will be transferred to the county who will then dispatch officers if needed.

Fire Departments run count for September, 2022

EMS Responses 174

Fire Responses 58

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Total Responses 232

Congratulations to the new career personnel that were sworn in on September 24.

Members of the fire department attended the Arlington Heights Blue Grass Fest/Car Show on September 24, 2022.

The fire department also assisted with the homecoming parade and provided ambulance coverage for the Reading High School football game on September 30th.

SERVICE: Bob Boehner

City crews were busy repairing 3 water main breaks. Street painting is done for the year. Thurnridge residents should keep watering their new lawns to prevent the sod from needing to be replaced. He announced that on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 7 pm there will be a meeting of the Service Committee in Council Chambers. Mrs. Eadicicco asked about leaf pickup. Mr. Boehner responded that it will be the day after trash pickup. Mr. Bishop added that Thurnridge residents should pull any mesh from the lawns when the grass is 2 inches tall.

RECREATION: Scott Thamann

We have been in the process of pricing new picnic tables for Koenig Park, for both pavilions. They are over 20 years old and showing their age. I hope to have a bid for our next council meeting. We are also exploring grant opportunities for updated water fountains in our parks, and new bleachers for Koenig Park.

We would like to invite the community to join us in the Pool Parking lot for a football tailgate on Sunday, Nov. 6. Come celebrate all things football before the big game. Please bring an appetizer or a snack to share, and your own drinks. It should be a great Sunday for football, fun and community.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

READING OF RESOLUTIONS: Completed earlier in the meeting

READING OF ORDINANCES: Partially completed earlier in the meeting; the remaining ordinances to be read follow:

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF READING AND THE BOARD OF HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RELATIVE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF FUHRMAN ROAD, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mr. Boehner moved to suspend the rule requiring the second and third readings. Mrs. Kroeger seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Powell, yes; Mr. Bronner, yes; Mr. Bishop, yes; Mr. Boehner, yes; Mr. Thaman, yes; Mrs. Kroeger, yes; Mrs. Eadicicco, yes. 7 yes. The motion carries.

Mr. Bronner moved to adopt the ordinance. Mr. Boehner seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Powell, yes; Mr. Bronner, yes; Mr. Bishop, yes; Mr. Boehner, yes; Mr. Thaman, yes; Mrs. Kroeger, yes; Mrs. Eadicicco, yes. 7 yes. The ordinance is adopted. Ordinance number **2022-29**.

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AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR TO TERMINATE THE VIDEO AND BROADCASTING SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF READING, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY
(first reading)

AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A TWO (2) YEAR AGREEMENT WITH ESP MEDIA TO PROVIDE VIDEO AND STREAMING SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF READING BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 2023, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY (first reading)

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Mr. Bishop congratulated Mrs. Kroeger's son on becoming a firefighter for the City of Reading. He also mentioned that Tom Wilkinson asked about the possibility of arrows being painted at the intersection of Columbia and Reading.

Tim Nieuman of ICRC made a final point that additional services are not at additional cost and appreciates that Council is attempting to be good financial stewards.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Boehner moved to adjourn. Mrs Kroger seconded. Motion carried by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 pm.

X _____
Dwight Daum
Clerk of Council Pro Tem

X _____
Dwight Daum
President of Council