

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION
DECEMBER 07, 2021 – 7:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President 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, Treasurer Mel Gertz, Auditor Sabrina Smith & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

October 5 (Regular), October 19 (Legislative Council of the Whole), November 2 (Legislative), November 16 (Regular)

AUDIENCE ASKING PARTICIPATION:

Patrick Ormond 2720 Maple Tree Ct

- (1) Thanked the City for the passing of the recycling ordinance. Informed Council and city residents that a “Welcome” Mailer from Rumpke detailing all the items that can be recycled is on its way to our homes. It will also discuss how to replace the smaller, 35 gallon, standard recycling tote (which will be delivered to all homes in Reading according to the recent contract) with a larger, 65 gallon rolling bin at no extra cost to the resident. Residents interested in this larger bin just need to call 1-800-828-8171. As a reminder, beginning January 2, 2022, recycling will now be collected on your garbage collection day.
- (2) WeThrive: Still selling luminaries for the Sunday, December 12 city-wide event. Cost is \$10 a kit and will provide you with 5 bags, battery powered tealights and sand.

COMMUNICATIONS: *None*

GUEST SPEAKER: *None*

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *None Requested*

GUEST ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL REPORTS

LAW DIRECTOR: Dave Stevenson *(No Report)*

TREASURER: Mel Gertz

- November Collections: \$582,925.00 (ahead of 2020 by 0.9%)
YTD Total: \$7,706,786.00 (ahead of 2020 by 10.5%)
- Will be presenting an ordinance for a salary increase for the Deputy Treasurers. They’ve not had any raises in 5 years.

Auditor: Sabrina Smith

- Any extra expenditures of the Department Heads (or the communication of them) were due to her office
- Was able to close end of the month today
- Getting ready for 2022
- Thanked the current Council members for all of their help and the mentoring she’s received over the years since she was elected 6 years ago.

MAYOR: Robert “Bo” Bemmes *(Read by Clerk of Council, Carla Kacher)*

- As always we remain very busy at City Hall. We work very hard every day to provide the best possible services for our Residents, Businesses, Schools and Organizations.
- Our Police Dept received more than 1100 calls for service in the last month
- Our Fire/EMS department had 245 total responses in the month of November including 200 EMS responses
- Our Public Works department provides a multitude of different services for our City, including leaf collection which has begun and will go well into December, weather permitting. Please keep leaves between the sidewalk and curb

and please do not park a car in front of them so our leaf truck can't get to them. Also please don't put the leaves into the street as they can find their way into and clog our catch basins and storm water pipes.

- Light up Reading is this Sunday December 12 get your luminaries via We Thrive or at 2720 Maple Tree Court
- New construction of sidewalks and curbs on South Reading Road continues. This is a project that we have cooperated with ODOT, Sycamore Township, Amberly and the City of Cincinnati to accomplish at very little cost to us (approximately \$7,000)
- We have been told that the new Ohio Department of Transportation bridge on Reading Road over Cooper Creek as you head into Evendale will take approximately two more weeks
- Water Main work on Thurnridge Drive is ongoing. Thank you for your patience.
- Engineering for the 3rd Street water main and road reconstruction project is ongoing. Reminder Duke Energy is paying for \$461,000 of this work
- Our Fire Departments wants to thank everyone who attended their annual Turkey Raffle as it was a successful event. Proceeds from this event go towards Fire Prevention, Public Education and Public and Firefighter Safety
- Our Police Department wants to thank everyone who donated to their Shop with a Cop Program as they will be able to help make Christmas more special for quite a few young kids
- Congratulations to Patrick and Tracy Ormond and we Thrive, Serendipity, the planning committee for the Reading Bridal Districts "Fall in Love" event, and the incredible new Reading Community Arts Center for being recognized by our Chamber of Commerce at our annual Christmas party. We also thanked Brad Daniels for being a productive proactive President for our Chamber for the last seven years.
- Congrats to Rachel Grein as she was named our Police department employee of the year, to Rob Huneck our Public Works employee of the year and Eric Fischesser our fire/EMS employee of the year. We are incredibly blessed in Reading to have outstanding City Employees who work very hard for us every day
- Nitto Avecia and the City have entered into purchase agreement for the sale of the former Nivison property. This great company has added over 100 new jobs and vital new tax revenue for our City with more to come. Patrick has been heavily involved in the negotiations and discussions with the General Manager in charge of the Cincinnati site.
- Demolition of the old Drake motel and Carrousel buildings in Sycamore Township should start within the next several months to begin the process of bringing this high potential real estate back to its highest and most productive use. This will help promote new development and job creation on properties across Reading Rd. in Reading
- On November 8, I attended a Mill Creek Yacht Club meeting where they planned multiple events for 2022 to continue their excellent work in cleaning up our Mill Creek. This incredible group of volunteers has removed tons of garbage from the creek. As a City our efforts with MSD have also paid off removing millions of gallons of raw sewerage from getting into the Mill Creek each year and now we are seeing more varieties of fish and wildlife with plans of planting more bank stabilizing trees
- New recycling 18 gallon bins should be delivered by Rumpke to all one and two family houses in our city before Jan 1. Households can request a 65 gallon recycling cart at no extra charge by calling Rumpke at 1-800-828-8171
- Our Reading Community Fine Arts Center is open and was featured recently in the Cincinnati Enquirer. The Hall of Grace, named in memory of Gracie Lynn Rack, will provide a unique venue with elegant ambiance in which to host weddings, receptions and other public gatherings The Reading Fine Arts Center will offer private and group lessons for dance, voice and theater as well as weekly piano and strings lessons. There will be visual arts lessons tailored to meet the needs and interests of people of all ages and abilities
- Our Crib Dedication and Christmas tree lighting ceremony went very well and was very well attended
- PLEASE SLOW DOWN AS YOU DRIVE AND KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ALL PEDESTRIANS
- It is my very strong recommendation that we set aside the majority of any additional monies we receive from the American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery funds in a fund to protect payroll as tough economic times could be ahead.
- If we as a City are going to be as safe as we can be it will take all of us doing our part. Please get to know your neighbors and look out for them and please call our Police at 733-4122 anytime you see suspicious or illegal activity. If anyone wants to become involved in a neighborhood watch program please contact me at 513-509-8619
- I want to thank everyone who work so hard to make our City better. Reading continues to be home for a lot of wonderful individuals and families who do incredible things day in and day out. We as a City have a lot to be thankful for.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Anthony Gertz

- Temporary Appropriation runs through April 2022. Permanent Appropriation for 2022 was approved this past September but there are some items that are being researched before passage.
- 10% increase for Council members is what is being presented in tonight's ordinance for the new salary of Councilmembers. You cannot raise your salary for yourself so the decision to raise salaries must be made before new Council members are on their way in. This ordinance must be passed before the end of the year.
- We're ahead in 2021 from 2020 but we are also ahead of 2019.

UTILITIES, LANDS & BUILDINGS: Don Lindeman

- Gave background as to why the Council salary increase ordinance is being presented for passage tonight. Council has not received a raise (other than a "Cost of Living" raise) in 10+ years. Mr. Lindeman commented that the current salaries are in no way "exorbitant" and these positions definitely deserve the increase.

SERVICE: Dennis Albrinck

- Salt Bin structure has been ordered. Concrete floor has been formed and the footers have been poured.
- The Mini-Excavator is on order. Service Department ordered a "No-Trim" attachment to trim hillsides.
- Still picking up leaves. Some residents still placing leaves in the gutter. This could be dangerous and detrimental to drainage needs.
- Five staff members have contracted COVID and are off work severely reducing staff members.
- Robbie Hunech was named Service Department Employee of the year. He was presented this award at the Chamber of Commerce Christmas Party.

ZONING, PLANING & ENVIRONMENT: Dave Powell

- Will be meeting with Administration regarding the parking situation on Dottie Court and what can be done about the poor condition of the sign at Popeyes. Mr. Fischesser strongly suggested no parking on one side of the street. Mrs. Eadiccio added that Patrick Ross said Dan Brooks has written them a letter and he physically stopped in there so they have been contacted about the issue.

LAWS AND CONTRACTS: Katie Eadicicco (No Report)

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY: Randy Fischesser

Police:

For the month of November, the Police Department had 1104 calls for service, 36 auto accidents, 212 total charges filed with 151 being original charges. Citation issued: 20 to Arlington Heights, 7 to Hamilton County Court, and 162 to Reading's Mayors Court for a total of 189 citations.

Congratulations to Rachel Grein, one of our dispatchers, who was named employee of the year for the Police Department.

Fire:

For the month of November, they made 200 EMS responses, 45 Fire responses - of which 19 were all-calls, for a total of 245 calls for service.

Please keep fire safety in mind as you go about the hustle and bustle of the holidays. Keep children out of the kitchen while you are cooking or baking; if you have a live tree, keep it watered and dispose of once it starts drying up and losing its needles. Check all of your Christmas lights and dispose of any frayed or worn-out sets. Keep candles away from combustibles and never leave them unattended. And finally, after the festivities have ended, please do a final check to make sure everything is safely out or unplugged for the evening.

Since this will be my last report to council as chairman of the Health and Safety Committee, I would like to thank Tom and Dennis for their work as members of this committee. I would also like to thank Mayor Bemmes, SSD Patrick Ross, Fire Chief Owens and Police Chief Edens for their cooperation and input on the various issues that were discussed in committee. We, as a city, have always had outstanding safety services because of the dedication and talent of every member of our police and fire departments. I am proud to have been involved with them for the past 14 years.

Finally, I would like to thank our citizens whom I have interacted with over the years. At times we may not have been in agreement; but know that I have always had the best interest of the city and its citizens in every decision made.

RECREATION: Tom Lynd

I want to thank everyone who planned the Christmas tree lighting and crib last Friday. The Service Department did a great job getting everything set-up for the tree and crib. Bo, Patrick, Susan, Diane, and Seth did an incredible job. They did Reading proud, and it looks great!

I just want to take this opportunity to thank the Reading Republican Club for asking me to complete Jim Champlins unfinished term 11 years ago and I want to thank the citizens of my ward for continuing to support me in 5 elections. As my time on council comes to an end, I can honestly say I have learned so much, not just about how a city council works, but how much time and effort it takes to run a great city like Reading. Unfortunately, I won't be at the installation of the new council on January 1st because I will be heading home from Texas after hopefully cheering on the Bearcats to a victory in the Cotton Bowl. But I wish the new council members well. I look forward to continued prosperity in Reading, the capital of the Universe!

Legislative Session

READING OF RESOLUTIONS – (NONE)

READING OF ORDINANCES

(1) AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SALARIES FOR CERTAIN ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022 AND THEREAFTER AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. *(First Reading)*

Motion made by Mr. Albrinck, seconded by Mr. Lindeman to suspend the rule that requires a second and third reading. Motion carried by 7-0 roll call vote. Motion made by Mr. Fischesser, seconded by Mr. Albrinck to adopt the ordinance. Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2021-45

(2) AN ORDINANCE to make appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Reading, State of Ohio, during the period ending April 30, 2022. *(First Reading)*

Motion made by Mr. Fischesser, seconded by Mrs. Eadicicco to suspend the rule that requires a second and third reading. Motion carried by 7-0 roll call vote. Motion made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mr. Albrinck to adopt the ordinance. Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2021-46

OTHER BUSINESS *None*

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:26 pm.

X _____
Carla Kacher
Clerk of Council

X _____
Cris Nesbitt
President of Council