

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION
FEBRUARY 7, 2023 – 7:30 PM**

For the full detail of this evening's Council Meeting, please visit www.watchreadingohio.com.

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:

Mayor Bo Bemmes, Safety Service Director Patrick Ross, Law Director Dave Stevenson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve January 17, 2023 (Legislative) Council Minutes made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mr. Thamann. Motion carried by a voice vote.

AUDIENCE ASKING PARTICIPATION:

(1) Bob Ashbrock (221 Walnut): West Benson trees being cut down. Citizens were only notified 4 days ahead of schedule. Should have gotten citizen input. Odd timing because of the ordinance from Mark's committee and the state enacted the ban 2 days before the trees were cut down. Didn't consult an arborist or horticulturist. Could we have used grant money? Is this paid for out of the parks fund? Missed opportunity to review the Benson Street streetscape. Need better communication.

(2) Travis Calsbury (works at 8740 Reading Road) – New manager of the Reading Branch Library. Let him know if there's anything more the library could do. They offer free faxing, printing and copies (no library card needed) and will be offering computer classes for senior citizens soon.

Patrick Ross – Glad he was able to speak tonight. WeThrive team recently spoke about adding an AED in the library.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion made by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Thamann to enter into Executive Session at 7:40 p.m. for purposes of discussing the sale or disposition of unneeded property. Motion carried by 7-0 roll call vote. Motion made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mrs. Eadicicco to come back from Executive Session at 7:56 p.m.

GUEST ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL REPORTS:

MAYOR: Robert "Bo" Bemmes:

- For Mayor Bo Bemmes' report, please visit www.watchreadingohio.com

SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR: Patrick Ross:

- Aggregation Update(Electric)
 - Ordinance authorizing agreement with supplier not to exceed \$0.075/KwH for 24 months starting in May
 - Projected Duke rate starting in June around \$0.095 which during summer months could save residents \$20 or more based upon 1000KwH usage
- Hunt Road/Sidewalk
 - Engineer company to perform some test borings in the area and report will be prepared.
 - Contacted Geotechnology(formerly Thelan) for reports from nearly 20 years ago.
 - Will report more when have additional information...but we will look into potentially applying for emergency or normal funding through Ohio Public Works

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- Begun work on preparing permanent 2023 appropriations and will have draft for finance committee by their next committee meeting.
- Payroll/Finance Software Conversion through Software Solutions is nearing conclusion. Staff are beginning training on new software
- Flooring project complete at city hall. Public Works also made some fixes in caucus room at same time.
- Met with Mr. Ormond and looking forward to having 34 sets of recycling/trash containers for parks and Benson street.
- Benson Street Trees
 - This has been looked into since September of 2022
 - Public works brought topic because the Bradford Pears were overgrown, very hard to maintain, were going to be banned by state. Instead of pruning them as was done several years ago, they asked if they could look into cutting down and replacing with trees better suited
 - Before got started, mayor asked Bridal District and Chamber for any input since their businesses were most impacted, their response was they were city's trees and would be ok with whatever solution we decided
 - Seth Redwine spent months researching trees. Spoke to arborists and walked the entire length of Benson discussing types of trees
 - He also discussed with nurseries in the area before deciding on 4 different types of trees that were strategically placed as determined by the overhead wires as well as building proximity
 - Ivory Silk Lilac-H 20' S-15'
 - Winter King Hawthorn -H 20' S-25'
 - Lace Bark Elm- H 40' S 35'
 - Fire Starter Black Gum H 35' S 18'
 - Timing of this well thought out in discussions with Arborists and Nursery that planting in later winter/early spring best
 - Cost for trees and stump grinding approximately \$20k
- Tax-REMINDER to E-FILE

Mr. Daum: Does the council need to vote on the money spent for the tree removal and replanting?

Mr. Ross: No it's under the threshold.

LAW DIRECTOR: Dave Stevenson: *(No Report)*

TREASURER: Brenda Owens *(Absent, report given by Safety Service Director, Patrick Ross)*

January Income Tax Receipts Summary:

- Overall up 0.3%.
- Business Profits: down 56.4%. (Smallest line item for income tax)
- Individual Residents: up 24%.
- Payroll Withholding: up 1.6% (Largest line item for income tax)

Reminded everyone that you can electronically file your income taxes this year. There is a link on the City's website (<https://www.readingohio.org/page/tax-department>)

AUDITOR: Sabrina Smith: *(Absent, No Report)*

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE: Andy Bronner

Next Finance committee meeting will be held Tuesday, February 21st at 6:30 in the Council Chambers before our regularly scheduled legislative session. We will be discussing 2023 appropriations.

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UTILITIES, LANDS & BUILDINGS: Mark Bishop

The following statistics on viewership of the City Council meeting from the previous meeting:

Reading January 17 Meeting Analytics

69 live unique viewers (Jan 3: 128)
147 impressions of live broadcast (Jan 3: 278)
44 archived views on YouTube (Jan 3: 61)
156 listeners to this meeting on (16) audio podcast platforms (Jan 3: 122)

Archived meeting update:

2015, 2017, 2018 are now archived on the new City of Reading YouTube page.
2016, 2019, 2020 are to be loaded in the next 2 weeks.

Stats Provided by Rob Ebel, ESP Media, LLC.

ZONING, PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT: Dave Powell *(No Report)*

- Been looking into the zoning issues that were brought up at the last committee meeting as they are still gathering information on it. Hopes to schedule another committee meeting at the next Council meeting to further discuss the matter.

LAWS & CONTRACTS: Katie Eadicicco

I met with Patrick Ross on January 23 to discuss some questions my committee had about the updated Property Maintenance Codes and we had a good discussion. I would like to schedule a committee meeting on Monday, February 13th at 6:30 PM here in Council Chambers.

I would like to further discuss moving forward in finalizing the property maintenance codes and updates and bringing it to a vote.

The DORA Committee is nearing completion in getting the application ready to be presented to council. Quick reminder: once that application is presented then it will be available for public review and input for no less than 40 days and no more than 60 days. After that time, my committee will bring the legislation to council for vote.

One note about a comment that was made about DORA and the 2nd Amendment. I have looked into this and spoke with our police chief. There are no laws or rules in a DORA specific to this. It should also be noted that state laws will supersede DORA laws. Currently, state law says that firearms are prohibited to be carried in a courthouse, or police station and but are permitted in restaurant and bar BUT prohibited while consuming alcohol. These laws are already in place and those who have permits should be aware.

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY: Shelly Kroeger

Police Department run count for January, 2023

- Calls for service 923
- Auto Accidents 29
- Booking Original Charges 106
- Total Criminal Charges 146

Citations Issued

- Hamilton County 7
- Arlington Heights 9
- Juvenile 0

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- Reading Mayor's 82

Total Citations 98

Fire Departments run count for January, 2023

- EMS Responses 178
- Fire Responses 77

Total Responses 255

The Public Health and Safety committee meet on January 23. Those in attendance were Chief Edens, Chief Owens, Mrs. Eadicicco, Mr. Thamann, myself and Ben Kroeger. We discussed the purchasing of 2 new police cruisers. We are hoping to find some left over 2023 models. As they would be about \$6,000 cheaper than the 2024 model. We also talked about expanding the police residency area from the abutting counties to also include southwest Indiana and Northern Kentucky. We feel this will give us a bigger pool in order to find new officers. We also talked about the body worn cameras and dash cams and how they are working out. So far so good, but like with anything new, there are some glitches to be worked out. We also talked about purchasing fire hydrant adaptors to make it easier for mutual aid companies coming into Reading to connect to our hydrants. Chief Owens informed us that the new quote is only good for 30 days and there was a mistake by the company on the quote, but they were going to honor their quote which makes each adapter about \$60 less than the original quote. We also discussed the pay increase for our part time FF/EMTs. This will make us comparable to other departments.

We talked about Burkhart Ave. And the amount of traffic that uses it as a cut through. The speed signs were in place down there for approximately 3 weeks. What was found was there wasn't as much speeding as originally thought, however, the number of cars is the issue. Over the course of the 3 weeks, there were about 4500 cars that went up and down Burkhart. We discussed the possibility of making Burkhart a dead end on the south end, the Galbraith Rd. end. Of course we would speak to residents to get their opinions before anything would be done.

SERVICE: Bob Boehner

- Had a Service Committee Meeting on January 31st in which 3 items were discussed:

(1) Sunken sidewalk on Hunt Road. This is getting longer by the months. There is a high pressure gas main that could be affected so we're going to be looking at possibly Duke throwing some money and help us get a grant due to exorbitant costs. A wall that will be 60-70 ft tall and 90 to 100 feet in length is guestimated by Mr. Boehner as being needed. JMS is looking at this.

(2) Service Department Driveway. MSD contractor will probably assist in this project. We would use COVID funds to match any grant we might receive.

(3) Repaving Observatory Avenue & Bunny Court. Bunny Court is a private drive and the people that own that street will have to pay to fix that street. Observatory Avenue we're looking to use COVID money because it's a very small street, we'll never get a grant for it and it needed work for a long time.

RECREATION: Scott Thamann

- We have hired everyone for the pool and those hired have been contacted. We are still taking applications for part-time parks for the summer. Applicants must be 16 or older, and have their driver's license to work in the parks.

- Easter Egg Hunt will be April 8 at the Fieldhouse @ 11am.

- Pool sign ups will be May 6, 13 & 20 from 10-Noon at the Fieldhouse.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Daum: Went over why we need to explain an ordinance being declared an emergency.

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LEGISLATIVE SESSION

READING OF RESOLUTIONS: None

READING OF ORDINANCES:

- (1) AN ORDINANCE IDENTIFYING THE REQUIREMENTS, LIMITATIONS, PROVISIONS, AND COMPENSATION FOR PART-TIME (PT) FIREFIGHTER/EMT EMPLOYEES OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, THIS ORDINANCE SUPERCEDES AND REPLACES ORDINANCE 2017-02, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

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

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-08

- (2) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF STORZ HYDRANT ADAPTORS FOR RETROFITTING EXISTING FIRE HYDRANTS.**

Motion made by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Boehner to amend the ordinance to include “and declaring and emergency” in the title (emergency clause is in section III of the ordinance). Motion carried by 7-0 roll call vote.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF STORZ HYDRANT ADAPTORS FOR RETROFITTING EXISTING FIRE HYDRANTS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-09

- (3) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR TO PURCHASE TWO (2) POLICE VEHICLES THROUGH THE STATE COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Motion made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mr. Bishop to suspend the rule that requires a second and third reading. Motion carried by 7-0 roll call vote. Motion made by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Bronner to adopt the ordinance. Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-10

- (4) AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONS EMPLOYED AS PEACE OFFICERS IN THE READING POLICE DEPARTMENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Motion made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mr. Bishop 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 Mrs. Kroeger to adopt

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the ordinance. Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-11

(5) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OR SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AN ELECTRIC AGGREGATION AGREEMENT WITH AN ELECTRIC SUPPLIER RECOMMENDED BY THE CITY'S AGGREGATION CONSULTANT, ENERGY ALLIANCES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mr. Bronner to suspend the rule that requires a second and third reading. Motion carried by 6-0 roll call vote (Mr. Bishop recused himself). Motion made by Mrs. Kroeger, seconded by Mr. Powell to adopt the ordinance. Motion carried by a 6-0 roll call vote (Mr. Bishop recused himself).

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-12

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Dwight Daum: Explained the definition of "Recusal" as "abstinence for cause" and confirmed that Mr. Bishop had correctly exercised "recusal" for the 5th ordinance passed this evening.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Boehner moved to adjourn. Mrs. Kroeger seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

X _____
Respectfully submitted by:
Katie Eadicicco
Clerk of Council, Pro-Tem

X _____
Dwight Daum
President of Council