

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION
MARCH 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. Thamann, Mrs. Kroeger & Mrs. Eadicicco. Motion made by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Bronner to excuse Mr. Boehner. Motion carried by voice vote.

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Mayor Bo Bemmes, Treasurer Brenda Owens, Auditor Sabrina Smith & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve February 21, 2023 (Legislative) Council Minutes made by Mr. Thamann, seconded by Mr. Powell. Motion carried by a voice vote.

AUDIENCE ASKING PARTICIPATION:

Bob Ashbrock (221 Walnut): Mr. Ashbrock is a proudly involved with the Mill Creek Alliance and the Mill Creek Yacht Club which improves water quality of the Mill Creek. There is an upcoming Spring project where they will be removing low head dams that are not only an obstacle to the fish but also folks trying to kayak. Mr. Ashbrock invites everyone to visit ICRCTV.com, scroll down to the "Events" section, and click on the "Mill Creek State of the Address – March 1, 2023" link. He also asks for support of this non-profit group. Mrs. Eadicicco also added that the Mill Creek Alliance has a Facebook page as well with lots of great information and a link to the "State of the Address."

COMMUNICATIONS: None

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

GUEST ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL REPORTS:

MAYOR: Robert "Bo" Bemmes:

On 2/15 I attended a Reading Community Schools building and grounds committee meeting where we discussed MND's new parking lot proposal adjoining RHS's auxiliary lot, Hilltop youth soccer fields and the possible use of the old Central school lot for soccer. I have since been notified that Reading youth Soccer teams will be allowed to use both Hilltop and the old Central School site for soccer which is awesome as we do all we can as a community to give our youth excellent opportunities.

On 2/16 I attended the Reading Bridal Districts board meeting where the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area or DORA, the Holiday Walk (which has been added to our City Crib Dedication and Christmas tree lighting on December 2 this year) and other Reading Bridal District issues were discussed.

I reviewed the Permanent Appropriations and unless anyone has any concerns I hope this ordinance will pass tonight.

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Our City and Wethrive have been awarded a \$15,000 mini grant through Hamilton County.

On March 1 I attended the “State of the Mill Creek” address at Gorman Farm in Evendale. The Creek is cleaner and healthier with more fish and wildlife than in quite some time. I want to thank the Mill Creek Alliance, headquartered here in Reading and the Mill Creek Yacht Club for their incredible efforts. I’d also like to thank the many incredible volunteers who collect samples of the water for testing and pick up litter and remove debris from the Creek. During my years as our Mayor we have worked with MSD to address the elimination of 52 million gallons of raw sewerage that was getting into the Creek each year through sanitary sewer overflows and we worked with the County and neighboring communities to address other Creek improvements. We installed a flood bench that reduces the chances of flooding and we passed legislation that protects the Creek. We also assist the Mill Creek Alliance and the Yacht Club on clean up and restoration projects.

On March 5 I attended a meeting at our American Legion to help get US Veterans 65 years and older signed up to be a part of the Honor Flight program that takes Veterans to 14 different Monuments and Memorials in Washington DC

On March 6 CPW Courtney, Jon Vance and myself met with MSD reps to discuss restoration work on their stormwater pipe project from the Mill Creek thru Haffey ball fields, behind Bernard ave, in front of our Pool, and on West street which will start soon. We then discussed their project on Reading road which will start soon with two lanes closed on Reading road for the rest of this year. The project goes from Cooper creek to Gahl Terrace with one lane of traffic open each way.

Hunt Road will be completely closed in Blue Ash past Waxwing Drive headed towards Krogers for 6-8 weeks starting as early as next week. Detour signs will be posted when we get the exact starting date.

On March 11 St Johns UCC will have their German Heritage Dinner from 5-7pm. \$12 for adults and 49 for kids under 12. The proceeds go to the Bob Christophel scholarship fund that goes to a RHS student.

On April 1 the American Legions Ladies Auxiliary will have their Casino night at the Haffey Fieldhouse with the proceeds going to the fireworks fund.

Our Easter egg hunt will be held on April 8 at 10 am at the Haffey Fieldhouse

Clean up Reading day will be on April 22 from 10am till noon and we will meet at Koenig parks small pavilion or at Saints Peter and Paul cemetery on Reading road. Special thanks to everyone who works hard to keep our City litter free every day.

Please consider joining or supporting one of our incredible organizations. Our American Legion, Eagles, Knights of Saint John, our Reading Historical Society, our Kiwanis are each outstanding organizations that do great things and need your help.

Congratulations and good luck to our RHS wrestlers, Gage and PJ Murphy and Dickie Engel who each advanced to the State Wrestling tournament. Over the winter RHS students have excelled in many ways including in girls and boys basketball, girls and boys bowling, Mock Trial, Dance, a State qualifier in diving, as well as in wrestling.

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RHS also had an outstanding group of students who raised \$6,500 as a part of the “Night for the Fight” program to find a cure for childhood cancer.

Congratulations to our assistant Fire Chief Paul Gallo who is retiring and his last day is this Friday. Paul has been an incredible part of our excellent Fire/EMS department and will be very much missed.

Our deepest condolences go out to Michelle Cranmer on the passing of her mom. Michelle and her family have been actively involved in making our City a better place for many years

Please slow down as you drive and keep an eye out for pedestrians especially our young students as they make their way to and from school.

Coyotes’ have been spotted in our city and surrounding neighborhoods. Please call our Police if you feel threatened at 911 and keep an eye on your pets. Don’t keep pet food outside and secure your garbage cans with tight lids.

Electric aggregation opt out letters will be going out starting the middle of this month. Do nothing if you want to be included. Call city Hall with any questions.

SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR: Patrick Ross: *(No Report, Absent)*

LAW DIRECTOR: Dave Stevenson: *(Absent, Annual Report Submitted)*

“To the Council of the City of Reading:

The following is the annual report of the activities of my office for the year 2022, as required by Ohio Revised Code section 733.62. All statements, unless otherwise indicated, reflect activities as they appeared at year-end, December 31, 2022.

Monies Received

No funds were received in connection with litigation or collection by this office in 2022.

Mayor's Court

Data regarding prosecutions and fines collected has previously been provided to Council by Mayor Semmes 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. Several have received letters notifying them that their residence is within 1000 feet of school premises. This problem largely exists near Bemmes field and the Memorial Stadium complex.

Other Litigation

The City has an interest as a class member in two class action lawsuits seeking to recover damages from

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pharmaceutical providers for the opioid epidemic. As a class member, Reading is a passive participant and the lead plaintiffs are handling the litigation.

Litigation pertaining to amounts owed to Police Officer Anthony Roth as a result of an arbitration award reversing his termination were resolved by court order entered July 6, 2022, and this matter is now closed. The matter was handled on behalf of the City by Schroeder, Maundrell , Barbiere and Powers.

Potential and Threatened Litigation

Resident Don Lykins has threatened litigation over several public record requests and other matters pertaining to his use of the VYO Haffey Fieldhouse. As of this writing, nothing has been filed. Attorney Joe Braun is handling matters pertaining to Mr. Lykins.

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.

Daniel Utt

Matt Broo

John Meckstroth

Joe Braun

Other issues will be addressed as they arise.

Sincerely yours,

David T. Stevenson

LAW DIRECTOR"

President of Council, Dwight Daum, asked how the payout to Mr. Roth was paid, which account the funds came from and the total amount. Auditor, Sabrina Smith, commented that she will wait for Law Director, Dave Stevenson to answer Mr. Daum's questions.

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TREASURER: Brenda Owens

**City of Reading
2023 January Income Tax Receipt Summary
With Prior Years Comparison**

Individual Residents Income Taxes

	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change 22 to 23
January	\$110,812	\$107,429	\$79,333	\$98,388	24.0%
February	\$67,807	\$45,896	\$37,035	\$62,179	67.9%
March	\$89,577	\$127,056	\$131,391		
April	\$109,428	\$221,576	\$457,756		
May	\$48,987	\$223,455	\$102,421		
June	\$99,289	\$134,637	\$107,043		
July	\$337,009	\$82,544	\$28,939		
August	\$71,990	\$39,361	\$36,571		
September	\$106,778	\$89,782	\$79,408		
October	\$93,081	\$56,061	\$63,966		
November	\$76,487	\$14,763	\$64,047		
December	\$96,708	\$86,298	\$46,897		
Yearly Totals	\$1,307,953	\$1,228,857	\$1,234,807	\$160,567	
YTD Progress	\$178,619	\$153,325	\$116,368	\$160,567	38.0%

Business Profits Income Taxes

	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change 22 to 23
January	\$22,258	\$11,981	\$48,907	\$21,312	-56.4%
February	\$18,896	\$58,854	\$24,719	\$17,868	-27.7%
March	\$77,585	\$23,641	\$210,097		
April	\$26,014	\$137,747	\$274,272		
May	\$21,905	\$60,812	\$42,806		
June	\$39,477	\$87,483	\$399,300		
July	\$95,430	\$43,735	\$15,804		
August	\$80,398	\$38,207	\$22,399		
September	\$77,959	\$85,263	\$336,599		
October	\$32,831	\$42,542	\$22,564		
November	\$17,874	\$22,412	\$15,798		
December	\$26,952	\$87,159	\$48,456		
Yearly Totals	\$537,579	\$699,835	\$1,461,720	\$39,180	
YTD Progress	\$41,154	\$70,835	\$73,625	\$39,180	-46.8%

Payroll Withholding Income Taxes

	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change 22 to 23
January	\$539,671	\$717,952	\$689,143	\$699,906	1.6%
February	\$530,926	\$462,760	\$441,735	\$483,701	9.5%
March	\$419,609	\$413,361	\$434,394		
April	\$590,089	\$801,135	\$752,396		
May	\$453,000	\$490,963	\$534,911		
June	\$441,487	\$484,864	\$470,151		
July	\$433,643	\$507,334	\$501,087		
August	\$519,886	\$566,411	\$591,928		
September	\$392,475	\$411,837	\$464,052		
October	\$449,639	\$549,184	\$606,041		
November	\$483,331	\$545,750	\$493,632		
December	\$429,457	\$432,363	\$462,692		
Yearly Totals	\$5,683,214	\$6,383,913	\$6,442,162	\$1,183,607	
YTD Progress	\$1,070,597	\$1,180,711	\$1,130,878	\$1,183,607	4.7%

Total Income Taxes Collected

	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change 22 to 23
January	\$672,741	\$837,361	\$817,383	\$819,606	0.3%
February	\$617,629	\$567,510	\$503,488	\$563,747	12.0%
March	\$586,771	\$564,058	\$775,881		
April	\$725,531	\$1,160,458	\$1,484,424		
May	\$523,892	\$775,230	\$680,137		
June	\$580,253	\$706,984	\$976,494		
July	\$866,082	\$633,613	\$545,830		
August	\$672,274	\$643,978	\$650,899		
September	\$577,213	\$586,882	\$880,060		
October	\$575,551	\$647,787	\$692,571		
November	\$577,693	\$582,925	\$573,477		
December	\$553,117	\$605,819	\$558,046		
Yearly Totals	\$7,528,746	\$8,312,605	\$9,138,690	\$1,383,353	
YTD Progress	\$1,290,370	\$1,404,871	\$1,320,871	\$1,383,353	4.7%

Total Refunds	2020 =	\$132,162	2021 =	\$115,450	2022 =	\$169,800	2023 YTD Refunds =	\$11,309
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Brenda A. Owens- City Treasurer 03/01/2023

AUDITOR: Sabrina Smith:

Many thanks go to the Service Department for renovating my office. Payables are going well, but there are new vendors and this set-up time can take some time. Still working to close the end of the month. I hope to have everything caught up in the next week.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE: Andy Bronner

We held a Finance Committee meeting last month on the 21st. Our Safety Service Director presented his appropriations draft and after discussion and a change the Committee recommended the appropriations for distribution and approval by Council.

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UTILITIES, LANDS & BUILDINGS: Mark Bishop

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

Reading February 21 Meeting Analytics Update

Live unique viewers: **49**

Impressions of live broadcast: **119**

Archived views on YouTube: **23**

Listeners to this meeting on (16) audio podcast platforms: **60**

History (2023)

	1/3/23	1/17/23	2/7/23	2/21/23
Live Unique Viewers	128	69	120	49
Total Impressions	278	147	302	119
YouTube Viewers	61	44	34	23
Listeners on Podcasts	122	156	82	60

Stats Provided by Rob Ebel, ESP Media, LLC.

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

LAWS & CONTRACTS: Katie Eadicicco

I held a Laws and Contracts Committee meeting on February 13. In attendance were me, Mr. Powell, and Mr. Boehner. In the audience were Bob Ashbrock, Don Lynkins, and Lisa Brauer.

During the meeting, we discussed the updated property maintenance codes and the issue of having the Board of Zoning Appeals review appeals from those whose properties have been condemned.

Since the meeting, I've been looking into what other cities do in this situation or what boards they have review these appeals. Dave Stevenson is going to look into this as well. Once I get some more information together and hear from Mr. Stevenson, I'll send that on to my committee and schedule another meeting.

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY: Shelly Kroeger

Police Department run count for February, 2023

- Calls for service 854
- Auto Accidents 31
- Booking Original Charges 94
- Total Criminal Charges 136

Citations Issued

- Hamilton County 6

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- | | |
|---------------------|----|
| • Arlington Heights | 12 |
| • Juvenile | 1 |
| • Reading Mayor's | 90 |

Total Citations 110

Fire Departments run count for February, 2023

- | | |
|------------------|-----|
| • EMS Responses | 145 |
| • Fire Responses | 62 |

Total Responses 207

In the month of February, the police had calls for hit-skip accidents, domestic violence, Overdoses, theft, vandalism and OVI. It all and all was a pretty quiet month. The next drug take back is scheduled for April 22, 2023.

Chief Owens reports that the Storz adaptors have been installed on all hydrants in Reading and Arlington Heights.

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SERVICE: Bob Boehner (*Absent, Report given by Mark Bishop*)

City crew was out patching potholes in the streets

The Mulcher has been out collecting branches.

City street sweeper has been out.

City crews have been doing water shutoffs

City crews have been replacing street signage throughout the city

City crews assembled 35 new park picnic tables

City crews are mapping lead water lines throughout the city

City crews trimmed doors at City Hall due to new flooring being installed

Training meeting was held for all personnel on the Valve turner we just received

Public Works donated a lot of fire wood to Reading feed mill to help clean up the service area

Public Works removed all of the trees on West Benson street as they were all overgrown and replanted new ones

City crew repaired a water leak on Bolser Dr at Thurnridge Dr

City crews repaired a water main break on Hunt Rd at McQuire Ln

City crews finished remodeling city hall offices for now

City crew cleaned up the alleyway btw Third and Fourth St from over grown brush

RECREATION: Scott Thamann

- Easter Egg Hunt will be April 8 at the Fieldhouse @ 11am.
- Clean Up Reading Day has been scheduled for April 22. More details to follow.
- Pool Pass sign-ups will be May 6, 13 & 20 from 10-Noon at the Fieldhouse.
- Opening day for the pool will be Saturday, June 3.
- We are still taking applications for part-time parks department employees for the Summer.
Applicants must be 16 or older, and have their driver's license to work in the parks.

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OTHER BUSINESS: None

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

READING OF RESOLUTIONS:

READING OF ORDINANCES:

(1) AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF READING, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Motion made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mrs. Kroeger to include the emergency clause.
Motion carried by 6-0 roll call vote.

Motion made by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Thamann to add a section to the ordinance explaining the need for the emergency clause addition. Motion carried by 6-0 roll call vote.

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

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-15

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Dwight Daum: Complaint from resident on the 2400 Block of Galbraith of trash getting blown all over their front yard.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Eadicicco moved to adjourn. Mr. Bishop seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

X _____

Carla Kacher
Clerk of Council

X _____

Dwight Daum
President of Council