

**CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION
OCTOBER 17, 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, Director Dave Stevenson, Auditor Sabrina Smith & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher.

Motion to add Kim Hauck (Office Manager, Cincinnati Classical Academy) to the agenda as a Guest Speaker made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mrs. Kroeger. Motion carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve the August 15 (Legislative) Council Minutes made by Mrs.

Eadicicco, seconded by Mr. Thamann. Motion approved by voice vote. Motion to add the Service Department Committee Report as an attachment and approve the October 3 (Regular) Council Minutes made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mr. Powell. Motion carried by a voice vote.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

KIM HAUCK (Office Manager, Cincinnati Classical Academy) – Invites everyone to the Veteran's Day celebration at the Cincinnati Classical Academy on November 9, 2023, at 1:00 pm in the gym. There will be an RSVP set-up on their website (www.cincyclclassical.org). Last year 84 Veterans attended and all branches of Service were represented. The school children will sing, the color guard from the Evendale Police Department will be present and Jerry Fritch will be bagpipng.

DON LYKINS (Speaking on behalf of "Reading Strong") (8415 Reading Road) – Gave a PowerPoint presentation to Council regarding crime, police, shipping container trucking nuisances, homelessness and other topical items such as the Fieldhouse, Stadium, etc.. The PowerPoint presentation provided information from an FBI Crime Data Explorer website (<https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/query>) and crime videos provided by Mr. Lykins' own security footage. Mr. Lykins' presentation discussed Reading Police morale, turnover and the need of Flock cameras. Mr. Lykins' quoted and sourced information from "NeighborhoodScout.com." The PowerPoint presentation displayed pictures of shipping Container Trucking Nuisances and also pointed out the problem of growing homelessness within Reading with specific areas such as behind the CircleK building and the woods under Cross County by Galbraith and Reading Roads. Facebook group he's started named "Reading Strong."

Bob Boehner response – Communicated retired Lt. Terry Zimmerman's comments that the FBI data reports that Mr. Lykins reported are incorrect.

Mayor Bo Bemmes response – The incorrect FBI data that was reported has been corrected and presented to Mr.

Lykins. With all the businesses moving to Reading and growing 105 million dollars in new payroll, contradicts Mr. Lykins' message. Mr. Bemmes asked Mr. Lykins which police officers have made the comments and Mr. Lykins refused to provide their names because the Police Officers asked him to keep their names anonymous due to fear of retaliation. Mr. Bemmes stated that Mr. Lykins' statements are absolutely wrong. Mr. Lykins suggested that we anonymously survey the Police department.

Scott Thamann response – Commented that the Police staffing issue is worth looking at. Mentioned that Reading could add another 10 Police officers and we still wouldn't be able to stop every crime. Flock cameras have been looked at in the past and they can still be discussed further. Regarding the topic of homelessness, he encourages everyone to call the homeless helpline at 381-SAFE (381-7233). Also provided that there are several free resources available at <https://www.strategiestoendhomelessness.org/>. It is Mr. Lykins' viewpoint that homelessness is growing due to the bus location.

Dave Powell response – Pointed out that since Mr. Lykins hires the homeless, if he doesn't want them to stay, maybe if he didn't hire them, they wouldn't be encourage to stay in the area as long. Mr. Powell mentioned that Mr. Lykins claims he is champion of the Police officers and then, very publicly, on record, makes very derogatory statements about Police officers. It's very disingenuous for Mr. Lykins to act like a champion for Police officers after having made such statements. Mr. Powell also addressed the FBI data that was provided, stating that there obviously was an anomaly and there's some years missing. Mr. Powell commented that if someone is truly into the data analysis instead of the shock value, they're going to look at the bigger picture.

Katie Eadicicco response – Explanations have been given and the actual numbers have been provided to Mr. Lykins several times. As far as a 966% increase in crime, Mrs. Eadicicco is not seeing it, as she and her family are very active and present all over the City of Reading. Commented that if Mr/ Lykins is not going to look or listen to the corrected numbers that have been provided, then there is nothing else to say.

Mr. Lykins wants the City of Reading to update the FBI data. He states that, if the City of Reading isn't going to update the data, he's going with the Federal source. Mr. Lykins also mentioned that if "somebody updates this data and it's wrong, that's fraud." Mr. Lykins will not accept a "Facebook answer" for this.

Chief Edens response:

His false information of when I was hired:

- Hired as patrolman 2000.
- Promoted to lieutenant 2011.
- Promoted to chief in 2020.

Taking a look at NIBERS information being used by Don Lykins;

- Looking back 30 years, not just 2011 - 2021, shows waves in crimes, not just a huge upswing, shown by Lykins.
- Addressed the issues with our internal RMS system and the issues with Pamet in the past.

Addressed the issues with our equipment that Don Lykins reported as a problem.

- RADAR, we have issue with only one unit at present.
- Incar radios, addressed the current situation with them.

Addressed the turnover in the police department.

Addressed the interest in FLOCK cameras and the cost associated with them.

Addressed the homelessness going on not just in Reading but in the state of Ohio.

AUDIENCE ASKING PARTICIPATION:

(1) Regina Richmond – Gave an update about the Chad Richmond Memorial Court – Phase 1 is completed. Very proud to be a citizen of Reading and is so thankful of all the community support. Phase 2 will start in the Spring.

(2) Anderson Morgan (newer resident to Marycrest) – Announced that he and his wife will be opening a new business early Spring of 2024 next to Larosas on Benson street. There will be 6 apartments on top and a coffee shop on the first floor.

(3) Angie Lattire & Sue Renderle (Siebenthaler Residents) – Received an email from Patrick Ross that the street study was in. Mrs. Lattire was under the impression that the study was going to be all of Siebenthaler, but it seems it was just at Dorian.

Mrs. Lattire asked if the School traffic study was back? Answer from Mayor Bo Bemmes: Does not know if it is back but he will find out. The recommendation was a stop sign at Dorian. Mrs. Lattire feels as though that will cause more traffic back-up. Mrs. Renderle wonders if an off duty police officer Mentioned that turning from Hunt onto Siebenthaler is horrible in both directions. In the morning it's more of an issue getting people off Dorian onto Siebenthaler. At 3:00 pm the traffic is so bad that there is no way an ambulance or police officers could get onto Siebenthaler off of Hunt Road.

Mayor Bo Bemmes commented that Administration would like to look into a traffic light at Hunt and Siebenthaler. He mentioned that there is another area of town in which a traffic guard has not worked very well. In that particular area the Hilltop Fire Station is blocked and can't get a fire truck out of it, which is why a traffic light is worth the study and consideration.

Mrs. Lattire stated that perhaps a turn right only during school hours would be helpful since the backup is people turning to the left.

Mrs. Renderle asked if there was any way to get the speed limit signs coming down and up the Siebenthaler hill?

They would like to have another meeting to solely discuss this issue with Council and the school. Mayor Bo Bemmes and Scott Thamann agreed with this idea.

Bob Boehner response – He has been in contact with the School. They send notes home to the school district all the time regarding speeding and bussing concerns. School has agreed to look into hiring off-duty Hamilton County Sheriff officers to patrol (1 for Hunt and Siebenthaler and another for the north end where Siebenthaler meets the school property). It's not the school's fault, but unfortunately for them, they are the ones who have to deal with this. The school is actively working on this idea. Mr. Boehner has been in contact with several people who have communicated their opinions regarding a stop sign at Dorian. It is Mr. Boehner's belief that there are 2 reasons why the stop sign is needed: (1) It is not just the school traffic commuters that are speeding, it is also the residents, and (2) when drivers are coming up Dorian and stop to turn left, they can't see people flying up the street. Mr. Boehner also brought up that Cincinnati Classical Academy is actively trying to negotiate with Our Lady of the Valley to move this year's seventh grade class and next year's eighth grade class down to old Sts Pete and Paul's school. That will reduce the number of kids there back to 450. Mrs. Lattire and Mrs. Renderle said that the school is expanding every grade next year. They also mentioned that the rezoning for Loveland failed.

Dave Powell response - The traffic study caught a picture of not only a bus going the wrong way but also an SUV.

If he recalls the reasoning correctly, the reason for the stop sign at Dorian was sight distance issue stated in the study. In relation to Carol, the proximity to the intersection with Hunt was not as big of a problem.

Andy Bronner response – Mentioned that another recommendation from the study was something we already tried - no parking on the curb lane during the school hours. Mr. Bohner added that when you eliminate parking on the east side of the street, people used that as an excuse to speed.

(4) Kyle Dietrich Hughes (Dorian Drive resident) – Please put the stop sign in on Dorian Drive. This is a vital issue and something has to be done. No one is allowing us to leave our driveways and there have already been accidents. Please listen to the residents.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS:

(1) Email from WeThrive Reading to Don Lykins

From: WeThrive! Reading <wethrivereading@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 8:22:56 PM

To: Don Lykins <dlykins@cinci.rr.com>

Subject: Council Meeting request

Don,

It has come to our attention that you have requested to be a guest speaker at the next council meeting to discuss projects on behalf of WeTHRIVE. In our last meeting, we agreed that you would gather information from the Parks Department about the availability of the Fieldhouse for open court nights and any potential fees and rules that need to be adhered to. We did not discuss taking the matter to council and do not feel that is appropriate at this time. Please do not speak on behalf of WeTHRIVE at council. Instead, please stick to the plan we discussed - contact the Parks Department regarding the information requested and report back to the team at the next meeting.

Thank you, WeTHRIVE! Leadership Team

(2) Email from Marc Zeuch regarding Dorian Stop Sign

I just read the letter left on my door. This has to be the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. The 1 stop sign that is at that location is more the adequate for the traffic flow. Obviously this issue is coming up do to the traffic issues in the morning and afternoon do to CCA. I live at 133 Siebenthaler and I'm very much opposed to this action.

Marc Zeuch (937) 657-2827

(3) Email from Maria Disbennett regarding Dorian Stop Sign

Pat,

I am not able to attend tonight meeting in regards to the stop sign at the intersection of Dorian and Siebenthaler. As I resident who lives on Dorian, I do not feel a stop sign is going to limit anything with the school traffic. I know the letter mentioned is not warranted due to volume of traffic but for the reason of safety which I get but in all reality with the amount of traffic from the school installing stop signs are just going to make the traffic worse.

I know the school did a traffic study. Have they gotten those results and or have they shared them with you? If they haven't, I think once those are received then we could collaborate on what would work best together.

If a stop has to be put in, I would highly suggest to the school that a cop will be needed for the intersection of Hunt Rd and Siebenthaler to keep the flow of traffic moving. Unfortunately there are many times that I pull off my street (Dorian) in the morning just to sit right after I turn due to many of the student parents trying to turn left onto Hunt. This would cause less backups if a cop was able to stop traffic and let out 20 cars off Siebenthaler. I know you can't make or force the school to pay for a cop but if they would ask for suggestions, this could help.

Thanks, Maria

(4) Communication from Retired Lt. Terry Zimmerman

Whoever is stating that there was an 833% increase in crime is misinformed and/or incompetent. I personally oversaw and compiled statistics from 2011-2018. Three categories were tracked (Violent crimes, Personal Crimes and Property Crimes) There were minor fluctuations between years, but no anomalies were ever noted. I will gladly place my name and reputation out there for anyone who wishes to challenge this. Numerous police agencies in Hamilton County and Ohio were gravely affected by the failure of the Records Management System (RMS) that agencies in numerous states had been using. Reading was one of many agencies.

Lt. Terry Zimmerman (Retired)

(5) Email from Lisa Shoenberger regarding Dorian Stop Sign

Hello,

I was planning to attend the council meeting this evening but something has come up and I'm unable to attend. I'd like to give feedback on the proposed stop signs to be placed at Dorian and Siebenthaler.

In my opinion, stop signs will only create more issues with the school traffic on Siebenthaler Avenue. As a resident of Dorian Drive, I'm likely in the minority on this issue but since the start of this school year, or shortly thereafter, I have not experienced any long delay in exiting Dorian Drive. In fact, I've actually had vehicles approaching from the CCA area, on more than one occasion, stop to let me exit Dorian Drive to Siebenthaler Avenue so I may be on my way. I would like to think it's because the traffic issues have been discussed at length with the current CCA families and staff. I'd prefer for the area to remain as is for the time being and re-visit this issue if CCA stays for the long term as they have not made an offer to purchase the property at this point in time.

I've heard that CCA will be leasing the old SPP school building on Vine Street for grades 5-8 for next school year. If this is not correct information, my apologies are extended. While I love having a school occupy the former OLSH property, I do believe it's not feasible to have a K-12 school in that area with only one entry and exit. I think the best thing they could do is have the lower grades at this property and look elsewhere for a permanent location for the higher grades.

Thank you for listening to my concerns regarding the traffic issue.

Lisa Schoenberger (Dorian Drive resident)

Motion to receive and file all communications made by Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mr. Bronner. Motion carried by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: NONE

LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

READING OF RESOLUTIONS:

(1) A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR

(Second Reading)

Motion made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mr. Bronner to suspend the rule that requires a third reading.
Motion carried by 7-0 roll call vote. Motion made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mrs. Kroeger to adopt the resolution.
Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2023-36R

(2) ADOPTION OF THE 2023 HAMILTON COUNTY MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Resolution was declared a first reading only.

READING OF ORDINANCES:

(1) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY/SERVICE DIRECTOR TO PURCHASE THREE PORTABLE RADIOS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Motion made by Mr. Boehner, 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 Mr. Boehner, seconded by Mrs. Kroeger to adopt the ordinance.
Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-37

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

- (1) Shelly Kroeger – Next Health & Public Safety Meeting will be held on October 18 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.
- (2) Dave Powell – Election day is in a few weeks and voting is ongoing. Please get out and vote.
- (3) Katie Eadicicco – Next meeting is scheduled for election night, November 7. Historically, Council members give shortened reports at this meeting.
- (4) Mr. Bishop – Gave the ESP Media stats from the 10-03-23 meeting (107 live viewers on Vimeo, 211 impressions, 1138 YouTube viewers).
- (5) Mr. Boehner – Please don't rake your leaves out into the street or on the sidewalks. This clogs up the storm sewers and causes problems all Winter long. City crews will be around to pick these up quickly, typically the same week you rake them up.
- (6) Mr. Thamann – Halloween is in 2 weeks – PLEASE look out for the kids!

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn came from Mr. Boehner and seconded by Mrs. Kroeger. Motion carried by voice vote. There being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:52 pm.

X _____

Carla Kacher
Clerk of Council

X _____

Dwight Daum
President of Council