

**BOROUGH OF WEST READING  
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING**

**June 17, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.**

West Reading Borough Council held its regular monthly meeting at Borough Hall on Tuesday, June 17, 2025 with the following persons present: Council President Ryan Lineaweaver; Council Vice President Philip Wert; Council Pro-Tem Patrick Kaag; Council Members Denise Drobnick and Bethany Bower; Junior Council Person Brian Pascal; Solicitor Daniel Becker, Code Department Manager & Fire Chief Chad Moyer; Public Works Director Kerry Grassley; Chief of Police Richard Torielli; Recreation Director Michael Esterly; Main Street Executive Director Nick Price; Engineer Pamela Stevens; Borough Manager Randall Miller; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Council Members Zachary Shaver and Zanna Leiendecker and Mayor Samantha Kaag were unable to attend.

**VISITORS:**

James Rogers, Resident

Christina Shenk, Resident & Business Owner

Suzanne Thompson, Resident

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Ryan Lineaweaver called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.
2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** An executive session was not held this evening.
3. **AGENDA AMENDMENTS:** There were no amendments to the agenda.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Rogers spoke of a residence on Kline Street that is undergoing renovations with construction debris, including two mattresses, in the backyard since early April. He also made a recommendation to Borough Council to open the old Schweitzer lot during the Art on the Avenue event for additional event parking. Mr. Miller shared plans to display information and various bicycles in conjunction with the WalkWorks program grant requirements of public outreach. Mr. Price also noted that WEEU will be sharing this space during the event.

5. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Motion to approve May 21, 2025, regular meeting minutes. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

6. **ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. **Ordinance 1193 Vehicles and Traffic Amendments** – Consideration was requested to adopt various parking amendments that had been advertised.

Motion to adopt amendments to provide for motorcycle and compact vehicle parking regulations and designation of handicapped parking spaces in the 200 and 500 blocks of Chestnut Street, and the 700 block of Penn Avenue. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Resolution 2025-15 Sale of Municipal Owned Property** – This resolution lists the surplus Police Department vehicles to be sold through an online auction beginning June 27, 2025, and ending July 14, 2025 that can be viewed by appointment at the Borough Garage.

Motion to authorize the sale by public auction of four surplus Police Department vehicles. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- c. **Resolution 2025-16 Multimodal Transportation Fund Program Grant** – Authorization was requested to designate officials to execute all grant documents and agreements to improve curbing, sidewalks and ADA ramps along Playground Drive.

Motion to designate the Council President and Borough Secretary to execute all documents and agreements between the Borough and Commonwealth Financing Authority for the Playground Drive project. **Moved** by Ms. Bower and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

7. **CONSULTANTS' REPORT:**

- a. **Solicitor's Report** – Mr. Becker did not have anything new to report at this time.
- b. **Engineer's Report** – Ms. Stevens reviewed the following items:

- **DCED Green Light-Go Year 8 Grant** – A reimbursement request is being prepared.
- **Ann Street & Spruce Street Grant Funds** – Ms. Stevens shared plans to meet with Mr. Miller and Mr. Grassley to revise the scope of work to include funding of paving improvements of Ann Street and the 500 block of Spruce Street.
- **2025 Road Projects** – Contract documents have been prepared and are ready to be signed. Authorization to execute these documents was granted last month.
- **Pedestrian Crossing Multimodal Grant**– The Traffic & Infrastructure Committee made a recommendation to provide a 30% grant match to be more competitive in a grant application to install a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB), streetlight, and three ADA ramps at the Fifth Avenue and Pine Street intersection to improve pedestrian safety.

Motion to approve a grant match of \$56,591 for a grant application to install an RRFB at the Fifth Avenue and Pine Street intersection. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- **Playground Drive Multimodal Grant** – Approval was requested to apply for a grant application without matching funds to make concrete improvements to Playground Drive.

Motion to apply for a Multimodal Transportation Fund Program grant to be used for the Playground Drive curb, sidewalk, and ADA ramp replacement project in the amount of \$543,182. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to accept the Engineer's report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

8. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Mr. Lineaweaver shared his appointment during the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (PSAB) Conference as a representative for eastern Pennsylvania to the Pennsylvania Borough Council Association Board. Next year he will likely apply for the 2nd Vice President position upon PSAB's request. He intends to do a podcast with a number of boroughs in the state to celebrate all that we do and learn and share ideas.

Motion to accept the Council President's report. **Moved** by Ms. Bower and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

9. **BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:**

Mr. Miller reviewed the following:

- **Short-Term Disability Claim** – Consideration was requested to ratify reimbursement to an employee for a short-term disability claim that was discussed last month.

Motion to ratify reimbursement to an employee for an Aflac shortage for a short-term disability claim. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- **City of Reading Sign** – Replacement of the Welcome to Reading sign that was destroyed by a vehicle accident two years ago has gone through the process of insurance claims and PennDOT approval to replace the sign. An agreement has been drafted to replace and maintain the sign. Consideration was requested to waive permitting fees and enter into a municipal cooperation agreement that addresses construction, maintenance, term, indemnification, and insurance.

Motion to waive City of Reading sign replacement permitting fees and enter into a municipal cooperation agreement to install a Welcome to Reading sign in the cloverleaf area. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- **French Fry Festival** – Consideration was requested to approve the French Fry Festival event application and Penn Avenue closure of the 600 and 700 blocks. It was noted that the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation is working with West Reading Tavern on hosting this event.

Motion to approve the August 16, 2025 French Fry Festival event and road closure of the 600 and 700 blocks of Penn Avenue. **Moved** by Ms. Bower and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- **Reading Hospital Road Run** – Consideration was requested to approve the annual Reading Hospital Road Run event on October 19, 2025. Overtime wages are paid in association with this event, in the past barricades, cones and temporary no parking sign fees have been waived.

Motion to approve the October 19, 2025 Reading Hospital Road Run event and waiving of barricade, cone and temporary no parking sign fees. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- **Zoning Hearing** – Rescheduling of a public hearing for proposed zoning amendments was requested. The cause of rescheduling is due to the proposed zoning map inclusion of an overlay district. Neighboring municipalities and the Berks County Planning Commission have been provided with an updated map. To allow time for comments, it was requested to reschedule the hearing from July 2, 2025, to August 14, 2025. It was noted that the Finance Committee meeting will be cancelled on August 14<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Miller shared that cards have been created with a QR code to hand out to visitors to this weekend's Art on the Avenue event to direct them to the website for more information.

Motion to reschedule a public hearing to Thursday, August 14, 2025, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the West Reading Fire Department, authorization to advertise the hearing and preparation of an ordinance to adopt proposed zoning amendments that align with the comprehensive plans and constitute comprehensive rezoning. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to accept the Borough Manager's report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Ms. Stevens departed the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

10. **MAYOR'S REPORT:** The Mayor was unable to attend the meeting.

11. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

a. **Police Department** – Chief Tornielli referred to his written report and highlighted the following:

- Calls for service and officer-initiated activities increased this past month to 1,100.
- There were no incidents to report from a number of events this past month. Final preparations are underway for this weekend's Art on the Avenue event.
- On July 4<sup>th</sup> additional staff will be on hand to respond to firework related issues.
- The five-year strategic plan draft has been completed, department personnel are reviewing for completeness prior to presenting it to Borough Council.
- The two officers in training will graduate from the Reading Police Academy on June 27<sup>th</sup> and are scheduled to take the MPOETC certification test on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Officer Trainees will enter the field training program on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The new Parking Enforcement Officer has been released from training. The Parking Enforcement Officer schedule is now staffed for both shifts.
- Grant funding awarded by the Highway Safety Network resulted in a number of traffic stops, speeding citations and other traffic citations being issued for aggressive driving activities. The grant funded thirteen hours of overtime.
- Law enforcement memorandums of understanding that establishes policies and procedures in certain incidents that foster a relationship of cooperation and mutual support to maintain a safe school environment are renewed from time to time to include statutory changes.

Motion to designate Chief Tornielli to execute a law enforcement memorandum of understanding with the Wyomissing Area School District. **Moved** by Ms. Bower and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to designate Chief Tornielli to execute a law enforcement memorandum of understanding with the Berks County Intermediate Unit. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Becker expressed a job well done to Chief Tornielli during a recent court case.

Mr. Pascal inquired about the Paul Miller's Law that went into effect on June 5th and how that affects the Police Department. Chief Tornielli reported that it is now illegal to use a hand-held cell phone while driving and law enforcement can begin issuing written warnings for violations for a period of one year. Similar to drunk driving, a reasonable suspicion is needed to initiate a traffic stop for distracted driving. Chief Tornielli was appreciative of this new law since most accidents are caused by distracted driving.

Motion to accept the Police Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Public Works Department** - Mr. Grassley referred to his written report and offered to answer any questions. Samples of a replacement grate for the pool were on the table for Borough Council to view. He noted that original replacements could only be found in Australia at a cost of \$300 each, twenty are needed. The local vocational technical school created this plastic version at the cost of materials totaling roughly \$200. Mr. Grassley would like to foster relationships with these students as interns or summer staffing. A vinyl window covering of the old Schweitzer building window depicting images of the past and present were suggested until final plans are made for the lot. Mr. Grassley was encouraged to continue his conversations with the vocational technical school and when there is something actionable to bring it to Borough Council.

Motion to accept the Public Works Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- c. **Fire Department** – Chief Moyer referred to his written report and offered to answer any questions. There were no questions or comments.

Motion to accept the Fire Department report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- d. **Code Department** – Mr. Moyer referred to his written report and shared highlights of a property maintenance ticketing process, similar to the current snow fine regulations. The program would provide the ability to quickly issue a ticket to monetarily penalize tenants and property owners for common recurring nuisance and quality of life issues. The ticketing process creates a penalty step before citation that will hopefully gain faster action than waiting for a hearing. He intends to bring the draft ordinance information to either the Planning Commission or Traffic & Infrastructure Committee to possibly create new regulations.

Mr. Wert inquired about the 400 Block of Grape Street trash situation. Mr. Moyer shared the ongoing issue of illegal placement of trash near the Wyomissing Elementary School Playground and the difficulty in determining who is dumping the trash. Mr. Grassley communicated with school officials for permission to hard-wire two borough purchased cameras in the vicinity to monitor trash placement activity. Mr. Wert asked to identify the equipment needed and associated costs for approval to purchase and install before the school's playground renovation project is completed. Mr. Moyer was appreciative of the Public Works Department removing items that were dumped in a timely manner. The cost of disposal of these items then becomes the burden of taxpayers. The cameras would be an added tool for traffic incidents, and school pickup and drop off activities.

Motion to accept the Code Department report. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- e. **West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation** – Mr. Price shared the following highlights from his report:

- The new grant-funded planters have been placed and filled; most feedback has been positive. Additional grant funding will be pursued next year.
- Vendor participation for the upcoming Art on the Avenue event has shifted to more art and less alcohol. He is hopeful that the Fall Festival will follow the same pattern.

- The pole banner flags have been ordered.
- An insurance certificate has been requested for the French Fry Festival and will be submitted to PennDOT along with the road closure request.

Motion to accept the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation report. **Moved** by Ms. Bower and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Price departed the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

## 12. COMMITTEE / COMMISSION REPORTS:

- a. **Recreation Commission** – Mr. Esterly referred to his written report and offered to answer any questions. He noted that the pool season is off to a slow start with the cool and rainy weather. The playground program began last week; the first field trip is planned tomorrow at the Reading Public Museum Toytopia exhibit. The Recreation Commission has begun planning the 2026 calendar of events. Mr. Esterly requested consideration to hire an additional playground leader.

Motion to approve the hiring of a playground leader at a rate of \$10 per hour. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Ms. Drobnick noted that Yoga in the Park takes place on Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. with Nest Collaborative. Rides & Vibes is being brought back on Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 a.m. meeting at Kimberton Whole Foods/Sly Fox parking lot for a group bike ride around Wyomissing and West Reading.

Motion to accept the Recreation Commission report. **Moved** by Ms. Bower and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- b. **Planning Commission** – The June Planning Commission meeting was cancelled.
- c. **Economic Development Committee** – The June Economic Development Committee meeting was cancelled.
- d. **Environmental Advisory Council** – In the absence of meeting minutes, Mr. Kaag shared the review of a Free Market and Borough Cleanup event at the end of September.

Motion to accept the Environmental Advisory Council report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- e. **Traffic and Infrastructure Committee** – Mr. Kaag recapped topics of conversation such as Sidewalk Café safety and parking space removal at the Wayne Avenue and Lakeview Drive intersection. Mr. Grassley shared this information with the Borough of Wyomissing since they will inevitably receive calls as to why the parking space had been removed. Mr. Grassley communicated with privately owned parking lot owners to determine their interest in establishing a monthly paid parking program for employee or tenant parking. Lot owners along Reading Avenue have expressed an interest.

Motion to accept the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee report. **Moved** by Ms. Drobnick and seconded by Ms. Bower. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- f. **Shade Tree Commission** – The June Shade Tree Commission meeting was cancelled.

- g. **Safety Committee** – Mr. Lineaweaver noted review of a training video on housekeeping safety. There were no questions or comments.

Motion to accept the Safety Committee report. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

- h. **Finance Committee** – The June Finance Committee meeting was cancelled.

13. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- a. **Financial Statement Ending 5/31/2025** – There were no questions or comments.
- b. **Payment Approval Report 5/22/25 to 6/12/25 and 6/13/25 to 6/17/25** – There were no questions or comments.

Motion to approve the financial statement ending 5/31/2025, and Payment Approval Reports of 5/22/25 through 6/17/25. **Moved** by Mr. Wert and seconded by Ms. Drobnick. **Motion carried 5-0.**

14. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ms. Sherk noted business owners taking pride and sprucing up for this weekend's large event and the installation of new planters on the avenue. She inquired as to when the lights will be installed. Mr. Grassley stated in the next week or two the lights would be installed; this project was delayed due to a large maintenance project at the pool. She also asked if the large no parking sign could be removed from the old Schweitzer lot.

- 15. **ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Wert. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary