



# *COMMITTEE of the WHOLE*

## *CITY COUNCIL*

**MINUTES**  
**May 9, 2016**  
**5:00 P.M.**

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

S. Marmarou, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, B. Twyman, D. Reed, J. Slifko, J. Waltman

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

L. Kelleher, S. Katzenmoyer, T. Colman, C. Younger

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm by Mr. Waltman.

### **I. Executive Session**

Mr. Waltman announced the need for an executive session to discuss personnel matters and potential litigation.

Council entered executive session at 5:06 pm.

Mr. Scott arrived during the litigation topic.

Council exited executive session at 6:21 pm

### **II. Towing Update**

Mr. Younger stated that Vince's Towing has agreed to a one year contract extension. He stated that Mr. Gagliardo was not agreeable to a month to month contract.

Mr. Johnson, Mr. Rivera, and Ms. Castner arrived at this time.

Ms. Reed questioned if Council approval was needed for the extension. Mr. Coleman stated that it was not as the worth is below the threshold.

### **III. Agenda Review**

Ms. Kelleher stated that the Administration requested an additional traffic signal resolution be added to this evening's agenda. She suggested that it be added to the consent agenda and distributed the agenda memo and the resolution for Council review.

Council reviewed this evening's agenda including:

- Resolution authorizing the Public Works Director to execute documents with PennDOT regarding traffic signals at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Penn Sts

Mr. Johnson explained that this is part of the Penn St Bridge project and that some signals would be relocated.

Mr. Slifko questioned if these improvements were funded by PennDOT. Mr. Johnson stated that they are. He also stated that the red lights will have the strobing feature to increase its visibility.

Mr. Twyman questioned when the work would begin. Mr. Johnson stated that he is unsure but that some items would be completed before the work on the bridge begins.

- Resolution authorizing the Public Works Director to execute documents with PennDOT regarding traffic signals at 4<sup>th</sup> and Washington Sts

Mr. Johnson stated that this intersection would be getting new crosswalks, new signals, freshly painted lines and directional painting and signage and would also be funded by PennDOT.

Mr. Twyman questioned when the work would begin. Mr. Johnson noted his hope that it would be completed before the end of 2016.

He explained that PennDOT is planning District-wide safety improvements.

Mr. Scott requested an update on the City Hall roof. Mr. Johnson stated that City staff has evaluated the City Hall roof and determined that it can be repaired in-house at a large cost savings.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the City's insurance would be covering the cost. Mr. Johnson stated that it would not as the only costs would be for materials since City staff would be performing the work. He stated that there is an adjuster evaluating the roofs of all City buildings but that is a separate project.

Mr. Slifko questioned when that report would be received. Mr. Johnson suggested that it would be several months.

- Ordinance authorizing Berks Earned Income Tax to engage a third party to collect delinquent taxes and apply a fee not to exceed 25% of that owed

Mr. Waltman questioned if this was to collect earned income tax only. Ms. Kelleher expressed the belief that it was for delinquent earned income tax only. She stated that this ordinance was requested by the TCC.

Mr. Waltman noted the need for Council to better understand this ordinance before it is passed. He recommended that it be tabled this evening and reviewed at next week's Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Scott noted his understanding that delinquent earned income taxes would be pursued by City employees.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with the need to table this ordinance for better understanding and a more thorough review at the Finance Committee meeting. She requested a member of the Administration attend the meeting to explain the ordinance to answer Council's questions.

- Ordinance amending the Purchasing Policies restricting change orders

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the article published in today's Reading Eagle outlining the County's policy change related to outside legal firm costs. Mr. Scott stated that he believes the City should follow a similar policy.

#### **IV. Other Matters**

- BAC Liaisons

Mr. Slifko stated that the Nominations & Appointments Committee requested that this issue be discussed at a Committee of the Whole. He questioned if it could be reviewed at this time.

Mr. Cituk arrived at this time.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she could review it now but that it may take some time.

Mr. Waltman suggested this be added to the May 23 Committee of the Whole agenda.

- Citizens Initiative Committee

Mr. Waltman stated that he has worked on an update. He suggested that this issue also be added to the May 23 Committee of the Whole agenda.

- Pension Reform

Mr. Waltman stated that if the State passes the pension amendment the City can establish a 401K for new employees instead of using the traditional pension system.

Mr. Slifko stated that the fire and police unions do not support this amendment. He stated that a cash balance defined benefit system hybrid is another option.

Mr. Waltman stated that he has met with Auditor General DePasquale and with Governor Wolf's staff about the pension issue. He expressed the belief that many fight this change because they don't understand the power they have with a 401K.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed and stated that many are afraid of change.

Mr. Waltman recommended a resolution supporting the pension amendments appear on the May 23 agenda.

Mr. Slifko expressed the belief that pension reform is a critical issue for the City to be financially sustainable after exiting Act 47.

- Labor Day Parade

Mr. Scott stated that the City's costs for the Labor Day Parade will be approximately \$50,000 and that the City cannot afford to make this contribution. He stated that AFSCME has agreed to make a contribution to cover these costs and that other unions will also be approached to contribute.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that parades may no longer be sustainable.

- East Reading Pool

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the City would be assisting with funding for the study of the pool. Mr. Scott stated that he has been in discussions with Ms. Klahr. Mr. Johnson explained that a site assessment is being completed and splash pool options will be reviewed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if Council would review this issue before action is taken. Mr. Scott stated that they would.

Mr. Johnson explained that all City parks are being assessed for water feature options.

Ms. Reed questioned if the new water features contain new technology. Mr. Johnson stated that they do.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

*Respectfully Submitted by  
Linda A. Kelleher, CMC, City Clerk*