

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
August 13, 2018
6:15 pm

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Council of the City of Sunbury was called to order with the Honorable Mayor Kurt Karlovich, presiding. There was a quorum with the following in attendance:

Kurt Karlovich, Mayor
Elizabeth R. Kremer, Director of Accounts and Finance
Richard L. Reichner, Director of Public Safety
Christopher Reis, Director of Public Works
James R. Eister, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings

Other City officials in attendance:

Kevin Troup, City Treasurer
Joel Wiest, City Solicitor
John Bakowicz, City Engineer
Brad Hare, Officer in Charge/Police Department
Michael Rhoads, Zoning Officer
Paul Brown, Fire Chief
Terry Specht, City Clerk

Visitors present: 35

A moment of silent reflection was held prior to the beginning of the meeting.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Mr. Slade Shreck explained Ashley Wertman and Madison Moody were instrumental in refurbishing, designing and painting the welcome sign near the Hamilton Ball Field. Mayor Karlovich presented Ashley Wertman and Madison Moody with a Certificate of Appreciation for the work they did with the sign. He also thanked Ms. Ingrid Howard, art teacher at the Shikellamy High School for allowing the girls to work on the sign (see attached).

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Mayor Karlovich stated that he received a threat of violence against one of the city departments and he wants the public to be aware and understand that any form of threat of violence against any City of Sunbury entity or employee will be taken seriously with zero tolerance and the police department will be notified and the matter will be looked into.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

The Minutes of 7/9/18 and 7/23/18 and available departmental reports of the Police Dept., Treasurer's Office, Controller, Health Dept. (quarterly), Fire Dept., City Engineer, Code Office, Park and Recreation Department, Park and Recreation Board, Public Works Dept., Planning Commission, Redevelopment Authority (bi-monthly) and Police Pension Board (quarterly) are in the City Clerk's office for review. Motion to accept by Karlovich. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote. Minutes will be posted at sunburypa.org.

PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA ITEMS

Regina Russell: Why is Councilman Reis looking into the change of insurance when his department is streets? Councilman Reis explained insurance is his profession so he was asked to look into it.

CHESTNUT ST. PROJECT

Councilman Eister said Phase 3 of the project has started. They will begin on the south side at 3rd St. working east. He also said paving was delayed due to the Environmental Review starting late. It is now being completed by SEDA-COG and they should be back on schedule for October paving.

CHANGE NON-UNIFORM STD/LTD INSURANCE

Councilman Reis explained a request came to the office in regard to changing the city's short/long term disability insurance to another carrier. That carrier offered a lower premium for the identical/better coverage. The new coverage would help the older employees retain STD/LTD for a longer period of time and saves the city \$2,204.16/annually. Councilman Reis moved to change from Met Life Insurance to One America through PHMIC/Benecon at a lower premium rate. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote. Mr. Wiest asked Councilman Reis if he works for either of these companies or whether his insurance company has anything to do with either company. Councilman Reis answered, no, he only deals with State Farm Insurance. Ms. Russell said a lot of time a company will give a very low rate and then raise it after that. Councilman Reis said that would be listed under new customer discount and there was nothing like that in the new policy.

HARB APPROVAL

Councilman Reichner moved to approve the recommendation by HARB to replace windows at the property at 208 Chestnut St. Second – Karlovich. Unanimous vote.

APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES

Councilwoman Kremer moved to pay the invoices reported on the voucher's payable report in the amount of \$160,042.25 from the General Fund and \$4,847.93 from Liquid Fuels. Second – Reis. Unanimous vote.

TAX EXONERATION

Councilwoman Kremer moved to pass the tax exoneration as requested by Statewide Tax Recovery. Second – Karlovich. Unanimous vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Applications will be accepted until 4:00 pm August 22nd to test for the Police Civil Service List for Hire with the Sunbury Police Department. Applications are available at www.sunburypa.org or at the city clerk's office.

Valley's Got Talent – Thursday August 16th at Shikellamy High School Auditorium at 7:00 pm

River Festival – Friday and Saturday August 17th and 18th on Market St. Cardboard boat regatta at riverfront on Saturday at 3:00 pm has been postponed to a later date.

Music in the Park August from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

August 14 – Odyssey

August 21 – Galactica Sound

August 28 – Blue River Spell (rescheduled from July 17)

Mayor Karlovich received notice from Officer Michael Vognetz declining the offer of full-time employment with the police department until such time as he applies through the normal civil service testing channels.

Mayor Karlovich read a letter of retirement from Terry Specht. The retirement date is 1/31/2019. Mayor Karlovich moved to accept Ms. Specht's retirement. Second – Reis. Unanimous vote.

Mayor Karlovich read a letter of resignation from Cheryl Delsite, Administrative Assistant. Ms. Delsite's last date of work will be August 8th, however, she is willing to work nights or weekends with her replacement and also on grants, or other work as needed.

Mayor Karlovich expressed his thanks for the work Terry and Cheryl have done for the city. Terry has 24 years and Cheryl has 22 years of dedicated service to the city. Advertising for the positions will begin soon.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

Regina Russell: What is the amount of the tax exoneration? Councilwoman Kremer said that is unnecessary but she will see that she receives it. Mr. Troup said the amount is \$1,400. Ms. Russell also asked Councilman Reichner about the mess and trash they have at the #1 Fire Company. He said he already spoke to the code officer to check that area out.

Bill Staley: Has lived on Race St. for 13 years. The neighborhood has declined because of the rentals in the area of Race St. and Speece St. 208, 210, 212 and 214 Speece St., 338 Short St., 324-326 Race St. All are bad properties. The code and police are in the neighborhood all the time. Last night there was a drunk driver doing donuts in the street. He has seen child abuse in the neighborhood. The kids saw a dead body on the railroad tracks last summer. There was an overdose at an apartment near his home the other night. Mr. Staley said he will be back until he gets help in his neighborhood.

Richard Stahl, Jr.: His neighbors are feeding cats in the neighborhood. The yards smell and he can't sit on his back porch because of the odor and his grandchildren can't play in the yard. There are about 30 strays in the area. The SPCA can't help him unless he captures them and takes them to the SPCA. He said he will be back until there is something done to help him also.

Eldridge Valteau: Has been to many council meetings to complain about the trees next to his home. The property owner at 275 N. 12th St. fixed his sidewalks but did nothing about the trees causing the problems. The trees have never been trimmed or pruned. Branches are falling out and the roots are causing havoc underground with sewer and water lines. He feels the code office picks on people without money but this property owner could afford to have the tree taken care of but is not forced to. He had to spend his own money to repair his sewer lines because of the trees. Mr. Valteau asked the mayor to come and look at the tree. Councilman Reis asked where the trees are – they are between the curb and sidewalk. There are 3 trees. Mr. Wiest asked for the address and said this sounds like a right-of-way issue. He can't answer questions without looking some things up. If any of the branches are on Mr. Valteau's property he can remove them himself. Mr. Wiest will research the problem and get back to Mr. Valteau.

Beverly Mercer: What kind of weed pesticides does the city use because she witnessed employees spraying near the Good Will playground when children were playing there? Councilman Eister explained the employees that spray take courses and have to be certified and can only spray certain types of pesticides on grass and weeds. She lives near the wetlands where it was sprayed. She uses no chemicals on her property and does not want chemicals that would float onto her property.

Julie Brosius: Most communities have cat issues due to irresponsible pet owners. PA PETS has done a lot with trap, neuter and release. The cats do keep the rodent population down. Ms. Brosius also said to the gentleman complaining about Race St. that the mayor has no assistance and cannot do things on his own without the vote of council so change will probably not happen. She also said they now know why Steve Mazzeo was not asked to stay on with the city police department – because he was harassed.

Richard Stahl, Jr.: Is there an ordinance for high grass? His neighbor has high grass. Councilman Reichner said the code office was in that area today.

Mayor Karlovich said the wetland project is not a priority, the entire city is his priority. The grants that have been applied for the wetland project cannot be used for other purposes.

The next city council meeting will be held on August 27, 2018 at 6:15 pm.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht, City Clerk