

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
September 8, 2008
7:00 pm

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

Jesse C. Woodring, Mayor
Kevin Troup, Director of Public Safety
James R. Eister, Director of Parks/Recreation and Public Buildings
John Shipman, Director of Accounts and Finance
Mark Walberg, Director of Public Safety

Other City officials in attendance:

Stephen Mazzeo, Chief of Police
Michael Apfelbaum, City Solicitor

Cheryl Delsite

There were four (4) visitors present.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

Reports of the Police Dept., Fire Dept., City Engineer, Code Office, Public Works Dept., and Planning Commission were accepted on a motion by Woodring, second by Eister – unanimous vote.

MONTHLY LEGAL SEMINAR

Mike Apfelbaum spoke about how the federal government relates to City of Sunbury as a local government. There are two principal areas where there is federal involvement at the local level. They are constitutional protections. They are freedom of speech and the freedom of religion. The use of the parks and sidewalks for protest, events or parade would fall under the freedom of speech. People do have the right to use the parks and the sidewalks to express themselves.

Under freedom of religion, there are two aspects. The first is the local government will not interfere with a religion and the second is the local government will not sponsor a religion. What that means is the city can not put a church in the middle of city property, hold religious services as part of city government or provide tax money to promote religious services.

The second part is the City of Sunbury won't stop a religion from operating for religious purposes. This could come into play where places of worship want to have parking as part of their property. As long as it is on their private land, the city can not interfere. But if they want to have public space dedicated to a specific house of worship, the city would have to decline the request.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PAVING

Mr. Troup noted he met with representatives from UGI who informed him that UGI ran out of money and would be unable to pay for the street cut repairs. Mr. Troup made a motion to hold off paving until next year and to place this year's funding in a Certificate of Deposit. Mr. Eister seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

HILL NEIGHBORHOOD STREET PLANTER

Councilman Troup also noted the Hill Neighborhood group is building a planter at 12th and Race Street. This planter will sit on the road. Mr. Troup offered his thanks to the group for improving that section of town.

STROH ALLEY

Councilman Eister noted the demolition of Stroh Alley was completed and should be open to the general public by the end of the week. He also mentioned ideas are being gathered for new construction to begin next year.

Mayor Woodring commended the Public Works crew for doing a fabulous job. He recommended sending the crew a letter of commendation from the council.

NEW BUSINESS

EXPENSES

Councilman Shipman moved to pass the 1st Accounts Payable run in the amount of \$152,695.03. Seconded by Councilman Eister. Unanimous vote.

TAX EXONERATION

Councilman Shipman moved to accept the tax exoneration as provided by Statewide Tax Recovery. Second-Mr. Troup. Unanimous Vote.

BUDGET

Councilman Shipman noted the budget was on track until June. At the end of July, the City of Sunbury was over budget by about 10%. He asked the department heads to keep in mind the budget is tight when approving expenses for the rest of the year.

Mr. Shipman also noted revenue in some areas has fallen short.

The worksheets for the 2009 budget process will be passed out shortly. He is requesting they be returned to him by mid October. A balanced budget must be in place by the end of the year.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Brad Hare questioned where the paving money comes from and if UGI is obligated to repair the streets they tear up. Councilman Troup explained the monies come from the state through the liquid fuel fund. He also noted that the City of Sunbury also sends out a letter in March to the utility companies notifying them of the streets the city is planning on paving and asking which streets they may be working on in the next five years. UGI generally will take care of what they tear up but lately they have not been. Councilman Troup does not want to waste the money on street paving to have it be torn up by UGI and not fixed properly.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be a River Front Project public meeting on September 23rd at the Shikellamy High School at 7 pm. The panel will consist of the mayor of Lock Haven, a vice president of Buchart Horn, an engineer from Sasaki, Jim Brozena from Luzerne County, Greg Wilt and Tom Deans.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl E. Delsite
City Clerk's Office Clerk