

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
April 25, 2016
6:15 pm

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

David L. Persing, Mayor
Richard L. Reichner, Director of Public Safety
Dale L. Henry, Director of Public Works
James R. Eister, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings

Other City officials in attendance:

Michael Kula, City Solicitor
Russ Wertz, Fire Chief
Michael Bordner, Public Works Supervisor
Michael Rhoads, Zoning Officer
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were thirty (30) visitors present.

A moment of silent reflection was held after the Pledge of Allegiance.

An executive session was held at 5:30 pm before this meeting to discuss the police contract and new chief of police search.

PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Persing asked for comments on agenda items and there were none.

SRI

Mr. Slade Schreck said the Shikellamy Prom Walk will be May 7th in Cameron Park. Wake the Lake is June 4th. Councilman Eister said the docks will go in the river on May 13th.

COLE'S SUB-DIVISION/FINAL APPROVAL

Councilman Reichner moved to approve the sub-division for Cole's property located at 437-439 Market St. Second- Henry. Unanimous vote.

SUNBURY WETLANDS INC/TRANSFER DEED TO CITY

Councilman Eister moved to accept the deeds for the wetlands area to be used as wetlands and possibly a dog park. Ms. Julie Broscious asked who owns the wetlands now and Councilman Eister said he knows Penn Seiple and Montie Peters are on the board. Councilman Henry asked if the paved area goes with that and the answer is no, the paved area belongs to the state. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

OPEN CONTAINER RESOLUTION/LAKE AUGUSTA WINE AND BREW FESTIVAL

Councilman Eister moved to waive the open container law for the Lake Augusta Wine and Brew Festival on September 17th. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION/LOAN FOR 2 POLICE CRUISERS

Councilwoman Kremer moved to pass a Resolution to purchase 2 police cruisers and allow Terry Specht to sign all documents associated with the purchase. Councilman Henry asked about the GPS for the city vehicles and where that stands. Mayor Persing said someone will have to get with Verizon to get the devices ordered. A vote was taken when John Shipman was still on city council to

have them installed in city vehicles. Kevin Troup has the information. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

CLOSE STREET

Councilman Henry moved to close the street for the Catawissa Ave. Church from Cadawalder Ave. from Reagan to the end of their parking lot for an event they are holding on June 11th. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES

Councilman Reichner moved to pay the invoices reported on the voucher's payable report in the amount of \$229,698.99 from the General Fund and \$672.11 from the Liquid Fuels fund. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

Cpl. Brad Hare: Distributed a 3rd step grievance to council members.

Ms. Julie Broschious: What is the next step with the Ballard Spahr report? Mayor Persing said arbitration with the police contract on June 1st, the SOP's and Regulatory orders are being updated and a new chief will be hired after the contract issues are resolved. There are no more repercussions toward officers from that report. She also asked if the committee is still together that Mr. Shipman was on. Mayor Persing said no, that committee is no longer in existence.

Ms. Jan Dockey: What is going on with the railroad closures? Mayor Persing said they were originally discussing more than closures with the railroad but they are not interested in selling/giving any parcels to the city that they do not maintain. He said he wants to have more discussion with them regarding these issues. Ms. Broschious asked if there would be public involved in the railroad closure decisions. Mayor Persing said if it ever gets that far there may be discussion with the people affected.

Mr. Jim Snyder: Since the appeal was dropped he would like to get his \$100 commercial contractor license fee back. Mr. Kula said Mr. Snyder paid for 2014 and 2015 so there is no refund owed. Mr. Snyder said it cost a lot of money to hire his attorney and he still feels it is an illegal charge. The district justice in Milton said it is an illegal tax. Councilman Reichner said the original filing at the district magistrate's office was filed erroneously by Mr. Snyder's attorney. The license is not illegal for commercial businesses per the state. If you only do residential work you do not need a license to work in the city. Mr. Snyder said none of the utilities need licenses. Councilwoman Kremer said the public utilities pay differently because they are governed by the federal government. They would not be on the list of paid contractors because the fee is paid to the treasurer's office. Councilman Henry asked what the difference is between a waste hauler that can only be charged one fee and a contractor. Mr. Kula explained that the initial citation for Mr. Snyder was not having a license to do commercial work. Mr. Snyder's attorney argued that The Home Improvement Consumer Protection Act superseded the city ordinance. The event he was cited for was at the court house, which is not a residence. The appeal was dropped because Mr. Snyder had paid for the commercial contractor's license. It is his own responsibility to pay his own attorney fees. Councilman Eister said give them 2 weeks and they will research the matter and get back to Mr. Snyder.

Mr. Joseph Bartello: Should the loan have been handled under a public bid process for the police vehicles? Mayor Persing said there were written bids received since the lease from Ford was so high. Mr. Bartello also asked why the bills were unusually high. Councilman Kremer said she did not see anything unusual.

Ms. Julie Broschious: What did council find out about the control towers on Chestnut St. Councilman Reichner said the only tower they know about is in Upper Augusta Township. Ms. Broschious gave council members a copy of the ad that ran in the newspaper on April 8th. Councilman Reichner said he verified with the railroad and it was the one in Upper Augusta Township. Mr. Rhoads said the only ones the city was notified about were in Upper Augusta Township. They will contact the person in the ad.

Mr. Dave Whipple: With police arbitration pending, will the police department be better? Mayor Persing said it is a good police department now but will be restructured to make it better. Mr. Whipple said on his street there are vehicles parked under no parking signs and nothing is ever done. Ms. Julie Broschious asked if everyone is on the same page that the mayor is in charge of the police department and the others should stay out of it. Councilman Eister said the mayor has always been in charge of the police department. Mayor Persing said everyone wants to make the police department better. She said all “spats” between them is not good PR for the city.

Mr. Brad Hare: The musical at the high school “Big River” is an excellent show and he urged everyone to go see it. The shows are over the weekend on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:30 pm.

Mr. Justin Strawser: Are there any updates on fire escrow account regarding the Northumberland County Prison. Mayor Persing said they are trying to find out why the insurance company did not contact the city.

Ms. Julie Broschious: Is there an update on Sun Re Cheese? Mayor Persing said he is waiting for a call from the owner tomorrow and he may know more after that. Ms. Pat Wertz said there is a tank on the Sun Re Cheese property that smells horrible. They sent a petition to DEP about it. Will they be allowed to use that again and Mayor Persing said there are no plans at this time so he isn’t sure if they will. There may be a regulation by DEP if they rebuild. Mr. Drew Bingaman said that is a digestive system to digest waste and turn it into fuel. It is an environmentally friendly system, even though it smells.

SCULLIN PROPERTY

Mr. Kula said the city accepted a gift from Scullin Oil Co. at 900 Spruce St. That was the last property they owned and that corporation is winding up their business and dissolving the company. He gave the mayor letters showing the company is dissolving. Councilwoman Kremer moved to authorize the mayor to sign the documents. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring clean-up April 26 and 28 and May 3 and 5 from 8 am to 7 pm at transfer station

Free mulch give-away May 7th 7:30 am to noon

2016 swim lesson registration forms available in the city clerk’s office

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht, City Clerk