

CITY COUNCIL  
Sunbury PA 17801  
August 8, 2011  
7:00 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  
Todd E. Snyder, Director of Accounts and Finance  
Joseph J. Bartello, III, Director of Public Safety  
Kevin E. Troup, Director of Public Works  
James R. Eister, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings

Other City officials in attendance:

John R. Bakowicz, City Engineer  
Stephen Mazzeo, Chief of Police  
Michael Bordner, Public Works Supervisor  
Michael Rhoads, Property Maintenance Officer  
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were twenty (20) visitors present.

### **MINUTES AND REPORTS**

The minutes of 7/11/2011 and the available departmental reports of the Police Dept., Treasurer's Office, Health Dept., Fire Dept., City Engineer, Code Office, Park and Recreation Department, Public Works Dept, Planning Commission and Police Pension Board are in the City Clerk's office for review. On motion by Eister, second by Troup, the available minutes and reports were approved as presented. Unanimous vote. Minutes will be posted at [cityofsunbury.com](http://cityofsunbury.com)

### **SRI UPDATE**

Ms. Kristen McLaughlin explained that PA DOT approved Larson Design Group, as recommended by the Selection Committee and voted on by council, as the engineering firm for the PCTI/Wolverton St. project. The design costs for the project were approximately \$200,000. The selection committee met with Chris King of PA DOT to discuss the proposal. There were some changes regarding storm drainage work that will be completed during this project by the Municipal Authority. The revisions were received Friday August 5<sup>th</sup> and forwarded to the committee members and no additional comments were made by them or PA DOT. The next step is for council to accept the proposal which will then be turned into an Agreement with PA DOT, the City and Larson Design Group. Kristen is asking, on behalf of the selection committee, for council to approve the price proposal. Lighting will be added which was not originally in the plan. Councilman Eister said the cost of the design work is about 20% of the project. He thought that was high. Larson is not doing the engineering work for infrastructure for drainage – they are doing the landscaping, designing the sidewalk and curbing and some bump-outs. He said construction must be started before the end of August 2012. Everything must be in the PA DOT ECMS system by June 30, 2012. The timeline is very tight for this project and if the timeline is not met the funds will be given to another project. Councilman Eister said the PA DOT job on the old trail in Monroe Township was \$65 linear foot for sidewalks and curbing and the job was several miles of sidewalk and curbing. He would like to question Larson Design Group about the amount which is \$213,100. Mayor Persing asked if anyone has seen what the actual project will look like. Ms. McLaughlin explained that some PSU students drew up an initial concept design and that was used to apply for the PCTI grant. There are basic enhanced photographs that several consulting firms submitted to show what they were thinking about. There is no actual design at this time. Mayor Persing said if council is voting to spend \$213,100 he would like to know exactly what the City will be getting. Mr. Bakowicz asked how the RFP went out and did it include cost and Ms. McLaughlin explained that it was all done per PA DOT specifications and cost was not one of the items considered. He said they should ask for a breakdown of what components the figure includes such as surveying, design, inspection, etc. Mr. Bakowicz said 20% sounds high but if it includes everything the engineer will be doing, it is not out of line. He also said he would help negotiate with Larson Design if needed. Councilman Snyder said he and council have not seen the proposal and he is not comfortable voting on something he hasn't had a chance to see. It was agreed this item would be tabled until the next meeting so council and Mr. Bakowicz have a chance to read all the documentation regarding the project.

### **RIVERFRONT PROJECT**

Councilman Eister moved to make payment #11 to HRI for Phase II of the Riverfront Project in the amount of \$346,693.28 as requested by Buchart Horn, Inc. Second – Troup. Unanimous vote.

## **STREET LIGHTING REDUCTION IN PRICE/NEW CONSTELLATION ENERGY**

Mayor Persing explained that through PLCM, the City can gain a savings on street lighting PPL bills by switching to Constellation New Energy. The PPL cost per kilowatt hour is 12.17 cents and with Constellation New Energy it is 6.3467 cents per kilowatt hour.

## **APPOINTMENT TO REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD**

Mayor Persing moved to appoint Mr. Gary Wolfe to the Redevelopment Authority Board to fill the unexpired term of Brian Betz who resigned. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **ZONING CHANGE**

Councilman Bartello stated that he has looked at some areas of the City and he feels the area on S. Front St. and S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. should be rezoned to Neighborhood Business. It would border Walnut St. to Bainbridge St. There are a lot of undeveloped lots and several places that will be recommended to council to add to the nuisance property list. Councilman Bartello moved to pass on a 1<sup>st</sup> reading the proposed zoning changes listed above. Second – Snyder. Unanimous vote.

## **HIRE FULL-TIME PUBLIC WORKS/ JOHN WIGGS**

Councilman Troup moved to change Mr. John Wiggs from a part-time employee to full-time with benefits after 90 days at a pay rate of \$10.35/hour and his main duty in the summer will be to run the street sweeper. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **NUISANCE PROPERTIES**

Councilman Bartello moved to place several properties on the nuisance property list to include: 312 S. Front St., 128-130 South St, 1126-1128 Wolverton St., 420-422 Chestnut St. and 139-141 Church St. They all have numerous code violations on file. Second – Troup. Vote – Eister, abstain. Yes - Persing, Snyder, Bartello, Troup. Motion carried.

## **VOUCHER'S PAYABLE REPORT**

Councilman Snyder moved to pay the invoices on the voucher's payable report in the amount of \$83,734.93 as funds are available. Second- Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **TAX EXONERATION**

Councilman Snyder moved to pass the tax exoneration as requested by Statewide Tax Recovery. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **AUDIENCE COMMENT**

Mr. Brad Niemic asked if council would consider reducing the square footage for apartments in the business district from 1,200'. The rest of the City has a much lower square footage requirements for apartments. Mr. Niemic said he feels a standard 1 bedroom apartment should be 700-750 sq. ft. From an investors standpoint it is not sustainable to put in such large apartments. Councilman Eister asked Mr. Niemic what he would be comfortable with and he answered there are already regulations so why change it for one area? Councilman Bartello said the minimum required is 300 sq. ft. for an efficiency apartment and it goes up from there. Mr. Niemic said he does not want to see more efficiencies. More people living in the downtown would be better for the businesses in downtown. Mr. Niemic also said there are properties in Sunbury that are existing multi-family units but no longer have rental permits associated with them. He feels it is a good time right now for investors to buy property. Banks are scrutinizing investors in real estate so Mr. Niemic does not think there would be a problem with half baked investors buying up the properties that are available. He feels the new rental permit of \$1,000 should be removed or reduced. Perhaps through the end of 2011 it could be advertised that it is removed. Mayor Persing said it is open to discussion – the changes made were in 2002 and the intent was not to create more rentals due to the higher than average rental unit rate in Sunbury. Councilman Eister reminded council that the \$1,000 permit was reduced from a higher amount for that very reason. Councilman Bartello also said the off- street parking requirements are a deterrent and when it is challenged at a zoning hearing it is usually granted. Councilman Troup said there is a half-double in his neighborhood and the residents have 6 vehicles with no off street parking and the people that own homes in the area have no place to park. Chief Mazzeo said the PSU survey showed that the parking lots are under-utilized and perhaps something could be done with the lots and the off-street parking problems.

## **DISCUSSION**

Councilman Eister told council that a portion of the roof at the Chestnut St. warehouse collapsed. They found soda bottles blocking the rain guttering. The water pooled to about 1 1/2' and 20' wide. The roof trusses snapped off. At this time, the roof is tarped. The insurance agency has been notified. Gutter guards will be put on the gutters when the roof is repaired.

Councilman Troup said the street sweeper may only be running every other week until Mr. Wiggs can get his CDL license. The no parking ordinance is still in effect. Also, the street sweeper has used over \$4,500 in fuel since the beginning of the street sweeping season.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Specht  
City Clerk