

CITY COUNCIL  
Sunbury PA 17801  
November 24, 2008  
6:15 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  
Mark W. Walberg, Director of Public Works  
Kevin E. Troup, Director of Public Safety  
James R. Eister, Director of Parks/Recreation and Public Buildings

Other City officials in attendance:

Elizabeth Kremer, City Treasurer  
Lisa Persing, City Controller  
Stephen Mazzeo, Chief of Police  
Michael Rhoads, Property Maintenance Officer  
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were ten (10) visitors present.

**RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE SIGNATURE**

Councilman Walberg moved to pass a Resolution for the Mayor to sign the Revised Penn DOT Reimbursement Agreement #033201. Second-Eister. Unanimous vote.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

Councilman Troup moved to pass a Memorandum of Understanding regarding road salt use by the Shikellamy School District. In the past there has been no formal agreement for the use of the City's road salt. The school district cannot store the salt (lack of facility) and pays the City for any salt it uses. Second-Eister. Unanimous vote.

**1<sup>ST</sup> READING 2009 BUDGET ORDINANCE #1260**

Mayor Woodring moved to pass on a first reading the 2009 Budget as it stands with a 4.25 mill real estate tax increase. The budget/expense amount is \$4,507,554. A budget meeting is scheduled for December 2<sup>nd</sup> to look at the budget again to see what can be done to reduce the increased millage. Second-Eister. Unanimous vote. Councilman Walberg thought that if the City Administrator (\$109,000) in the 2009 Budget was removed for 2009 only, the millage rate increase could be avoided or lowered. Mayor Woodring stated that almost every community around Sunbury, regardless of size, has a manager. This is a position that is needed in Sunbury. So many of the items that council members must handle can and should be handled by a City Administrator. Full-time management is needed and the position will pay for itself. Councilman Eister explained that the City Administrator was discussed years ago when David Persing was the mayor. Mr. Snyder wanted to know if the City Administrator position could be revenue neutral – at this time, since it's a new position, it is uncertain what can and cannot be done. No one can predict what grants, etc. the City would be entitled to. Mayor Woodring answered that this is an investment in the City – just like business owners invest in their own businesses. Mr. Fred Campbell asked why the pay is so much – not many people living in Sunbury make \$75,000. Mayor Woodring explained that this is the third round of advertising for the position and administrators for municipalities are at a premium. The application asks for a salary history and \$65,000 to \$75,000 is normal for this position. The person will help in all departments to make them more efficient and to save money and find other revenue sources.

**2009 TAX LEVY ORDINANCE #1261**

Mayor Woodring moved to pass on a first reading Ordinance 1261 2009 Tax Levy. The millage increase is set at 4.25. The other taxes that are listed are the same. The 2 mil sinking fund tax will be shown separately on tax bills in 2009. Second-Eister. Yes-Troup, Eister, Woodring. No-Walberg. Motion carried.

**HARB APPROVAL**

Councilman Walberg moved to pass the improvements to 220 Market St. (Masonic Temple) as requested by HARB (re-mill existing lower fixed glass panels to accept insulated glass). Second-Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **SUEZ ENERGY**

Mike Bordner, Public Works Supervisor, contacted Suez Energy in regard to purchasing mulch from the City to burn in their generation facility in Point Township. An agreement was reached to sell up to \$28,875 during the base term of the Agreement (\$17.50 per ton). The delivery fee will be \$150 per load. Councilman Troup moved to accept the Agreement and give the Mayor the authority to sign the Agreement. Second-Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **CENTRAL PA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA/YOUTH PROGRAM**

Mayor Woodring explained that he met with a representative from this organization which is a work program that employs at-risk youth. They pay the entire wage of the worker up to 420 hours at minimum wage for a 20 hour work week. There are 2 young men in Sunbury that are approved for the program but need a jobsite. The City must do an evaluation at mid-point and at the end of the program and provide accurate time records. Mr. Apfelbaum has been asked to review the Agreement and give recommendations. It could also cover office help as well.

## **NOVEMBER EXPENDITURES**

Mayor Woodring moved to pay the bills in the amount of \$101,636.88 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> AP run in November. Second-Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **AUDIENCE COMMENT**

Mr. Robert Snyder asked council about the \$100 fee for vending machines and gaming devices. He feels \$25 is affordable but \$100 is out of reach for some business owners. Councilman Eister explained that the City does not reap any benefits from the vendor when they place machines and tables in local businesses. The establishment owner is supposed to pay mercantile taxes on that income. The ordinance change is also for the Schwanns and Snap-On Tools delivery trucks. The City gets nothing from this type of sales. A delivery truck, such as Rinehart's, is delivering for resale and the owner of the establishment pays mercantile tax on it. All these fees are on the books, but are from 1958 and that is why council is revisiting the issue. The original fees were \$10 to \$25. Mr. Scott Johnson said he spoke to Mr. Bob Fetter that has a business that puts machines in local businesses and he pays \$20 per machine. He reports how many machines are out in the City to the treasurer's office – there is no billing from the office going out. Councilman Walberg said the ordinance is old and ambiguous. He feels delivery drivers might buy lunch, gas or do shopping while in Sunbury and therefore the City does see some income from them. Councilman Walberg also suggested that the charge could be \$25 if paid by a certain date and then it would go up after a certain amount of time. Council will look at this before the second reading on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Scott Johnson asked about council considering a tax on vacant buildings in the downtown area. He feels they are not being pushed to do anything with their buildings, or the buildings are not to code and they don't want to put any money into the store fronts. He felt \$100 would be an appropriate amount. Councilman Eister questioned the legality but will check with Mr. Apfelbaum. Mayor Woodring felt most landlords probably do want their storefronts filled but may not have the appropriate tenant. Councilman Walberg does not feel that fining someone for a vacant store front is appropriate. Councilman Eister felt that council could not mandate that property owners fill their buildings but the City can, through the code office, make sure buildings are in compliance to the code.

Mayor Woodring stated that he met with the new owner of the Bitner building and has been assured that they want to do the right thing for Sunbury and the downtown area. One suggestion was use as the community college.

Mr. Snyder asked if council would provide business owners with tokens to be validated by businesses in the parking meters if the violation rates are increased. At this time it is not appropriate for the City to do that but perhaps SRI would be interested. Mayor Woodring is interested in having a parking survey completed to see what the parking needs are for the downtown area.

## **DISCUSSION**

A discussion was held regarding a bicycle auction to get rid of the bikes in the warehouse. Brad Hare volunteered to spearhead this project.

Fire Leave Policy – Councilman Walberg stated that the policy for City employees that are firefighters seems to be working. Mayor Woodring agreed but would like the policy to be in writing and adopt the policy.

Anthracite Industries – Councilman Troup said he and Chief Mazzeo spoke to Mr. McConnell of Penn DOT in regard to Anthracite Industries request to allow wide/long trailers to use City streets. Councilman Troup does not want the trucks on Chestnut St. because it is a city-owned street with residences on both sides of the street. He will approve the use of Reagan St. to Snyderstown Rd. because Reagan St. is a state-owned street. A letter has been sent to Mr. McConnell explaining the City's position on this matter.

Allentown PA “Landlord Hall of Shame” – Councilman Walberg has not yet called anyone in Allentown to discuss this subject.

Junior Council Member – a letter has been sent to the Shikellamy High School and a meeting is scheduled December 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss it with Mr. Angelo.

Health Officer – Mr. Lee Shaffer has decided to retire and a new health officer is in the process of being hired. The name will come before council at the next meeting. A civil service exam must be administered before she can take the position.

Copies of proposals for design services are available for Stroh Alley and Cameron Park. They can be reviewed in the City Clerk's office. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss with the designers.

A budget meeting has been scheduled for December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 3:30 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht  
City Clerk