

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
July 13, 2015
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
John K. Shipman, Director of Accounts & Finance ***by telephone***
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:

Kevin E. Troup, City Treasurer
John Bakowicz, City Engineer
Michael Apfelbaum, City Solicitor
Brad Hare, Police Chief
Michael Rhoads, Zoning Officer
Michael Bordner, Workforce Supervisor
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were twenty-seven (27) visitors present.

A moment of silent reflection was held prior to the beginning of the meeting in memory of David Woodring.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

The minutes of 6/8/15 and 6/22/15 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 and Police Pension Board (quarterly) are in the City Clerk's office for review. Motion to accept was made by Councilman Eister. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote. Minutes will be posted at cityofsunbury.com.

PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA ITEMS

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

CDBG

Ms. Jamie Shrawder opened the public hearing for a budget modification and asked for public comment in regard to moving \$35,159.61 from the fire department ladder truck project into Chestnut reconstruction in the amount of \$32,259.65 and into OPG basketball court in the amount of \$2,899.96. The purpose of the public hearing is to give the public a chance to comment because the fire department ladder truck purchase project is being eliminated. Ms. Regina Russell said the money for the ladder truck is because of all the fires in Sunbury and the townships surrounding Sunbury that the fire department responds too. She also thinks that money could be used for increases in their salaries or something that can be done to help the fire department. Ms. Shrawder said the reason it is being moved is because they are not ready to purchase the truck and the funding has to be used within 3 years. When they are ready to make the purchase they will consider refunding the project. This money is from 2013. The only equipment purchase eligible from CDBG funding is for fire equipment. Ms. Russell commended Ms. Shrawder because she is good at what she does and Ms. Russell said every time there is a grant it was gotten for a specific need. It seems the council has other uses for grants than what it was given for. Ms. Shrawder said that is not uncommon. Projects are changed all the time. Ms. Russell asked why they put in for a grant if they are not ready for it and Councilman Eister explained they decided not to refurbish a truck but buy a new truck so the money was set aside 2 years ago and it has to be spent within 3 years. Money is set aside for CDBG funded

projects but the fire company changed the project and did not have the funding to move forward with it. Chief Hare explained he is part of the Americus and when they found out what it cost to refurbish the truck they decided to get a new one because it was \$1.1 million. Everything is specked out and ready to go but they are fundraising right now. Ms. Russell asked if that means the fire department is not equipped with the proper equipment they need. Chief Hare answered they do have the proper equipment. The truck is 15 years old and to get any trade value they have to trade it soon. Ms. Russell said if it can't go to the fire department why does it have to go to the Chestnut St. project. Mr. Apfelbaum said this is an established time for a public hearing for public comment. It is not a question/answer session. Ms. Julie Brosicous asked if there were other fire companies that can utilize the money. Mr. Apfelbaum again said to be fair, this is a public comment period. Ms. Russell asked if there is a way to make a comment and Mr. Apfelbaum answered certainly, just make a statement. Ms. Shrawder said CDBG is an entitlement grant the city gets every year and can only be used for certain things. The reason money is being put into Chestnut St. reconstruction and the OPG project is because they are ongoing projects that can spend the money in the time frame it needs to be spent. The Chestnut St. project is very large and needs funding. It is getting harder to find projects that can be done with grant funding. Sidewalks are specific to location. They are trying to get the 2 projects completed before funding other projects. There were no other public comments so the public hearing was adjourned.

MODIFICATION TO FFY 2013 CDBG BUDGET

Councilman Eister moved to approve the modification (see attached) to the 2013 CDBG Budget per the above discussion. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

FFY 2015 CDBG FUNDING

Ms. Shrawder recommended to council to approve the FFY 2015 CDBG funding for the Chestnut St. project as part of the utilities for Phase 2 in combination with the CDBG Competitive Grant that has not yet been reviewed. Councilman Reichner moved to approve the FFY 2015 CDBG funding for the use as described above. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

RESCIND AWARD FOR DEMOLITION OF 1062 MILLER ST

Ms. Shrawder explained that at the last meeting the award for demolition of 1062 Miller St. was approved. The zip code for Sunbury was incorrect on the bid documents so one of the bids was not received in time. Councilman Reichner moved to rescind the award for the demolition of 1062 Miller St. to Affordable Construction and Demolition. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote

RE-BID DEMOLITION OF 1062 MILLER ST

Councilman Reichner moved to reject all bids previously received and to re-bid the demolition of 1062 Miller St. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote.

CHANGE ORDER CHESTNUT ST PHASE 1

Councilman Eister moved to approve change order #1 for \$3,686.20 for Phase 1 of the Chestnut St. project. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote.

SRI UPDATE

Ms. Meghan Beck reported that the Business and Economic Development committee is working on the BIZ Pitch competition for the fall and updating the website. Promotions ordered rack cards which are in and it includes the events for the rest of the year. The discount card will soon be finished. A gift card has been discussed for participating businesses. Riverfront concert series will feature Reverend Blue Jeans at 2 pm on Sunday July 26th. The tax credits were all sold and the goal of \$207,000 was raised for the Albright Center. The elevator will be under construction soon. Zach Stotter resigned to take a position with the Boy Scouts of America so that position is now available. Mr. Slade Schreck reported that new events for River Festival will include Veterans and children's themed train rides, a boat parade and River Festival After Hours, which is a concert. Chalk the Walk will be available for children. Chief Hare asked about traffic on Front St. Councilman Eister said at this time Walnut St. from 2nd St. to Front St. will be switched from one way to one way the other way.

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY UPDATE

Councilman Reichner moved to pass the Resolution (see attached) to declare 129 N. 11th St. a public nuisance. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote. Mr. Apfelbaum said there was a successful hearing in regard to 1062 Miller St. and the judge granted ownership of the property to the city. They will proceed with 116 S. 4th St.

REFUND 6 YEARS OF TAXES/053-03-008-148/1281 MARKET ST

Councilman Shipman moved to refund the taxes for 1281 Market St. because they were not assessed properly. The total refund is \$233.58. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

WAIVE OPEN CONTAINER/SRI EVENTS

Councilman Eister moved to waive the open container requirement for the River Festival events through the end of 2015. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT PARKING

Councilman Eister said he has been working with the sheriff’s department and issues with their vans coming from the prison in Coal Township blocking parking at city hall. Councilman Henry said he is not opposed to giving spots on 2nd St. or in the Court St. parking lot but not in the city employee parking lot. It would only be 1 to 1 ½ years until the new prison is built.

APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES

Councilman Shipman moved to pay the invoices reported on the voucher’s payable report in the amount of \$152,607.21 from the General Fund and \$566.73 from the Liquid Fuels Fund. Second - Henry. Unanimous vote.

TAX EXONERATION

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

AUDIENCE COMMENT

Ms. Becky Enders: Baseball play-offs started at 10 am and because the children attended church, games had to be forfeited. Can the games and Soap Box Derby be pushed back to noon? Councilman Eister said they begin set up for the soap box derby by 7 am. Why was the Ta Ta Trot moved to Selinsgrove? Councilman Eister answered the organizers decided to move to Selinsgrove. Mayor Persing stated the Haul for Heroes run was very successful for the first year and he feels it will continue to grow. Councilman Reichner said the Ta Ta Trot run is timed. Last year the route had to be changed because they could not get a schedule for trains running through Sunbury.

Ms. Linda DeGroat: Discount tax question for school taxes. Mr. Troup explained the only time school taxes are discounted is if you are unemployed or a part-time worker. There is a form to be completed. County and school should be the same. He asked Ms. DeGroat to come into his office and they can get it straightened out.

Mr. Drake Saxton: Wants to discuss the notice to remediate on the Celotex site. On July 3rd there was an article in The Daily Item that the site received an application to remediate the site. It is now validated that the site is contaminated. He has discussed this many times with council. There is also a storm water management problem in the upper part of the City. Mayor Persing asked if he has attended a North’d County meeting and the answer is no he has discussed the issue with Commissioner Shoch. He knows it is county business but the City is going to join with the county to develop the site and he doesn’t think it is a wise move at this time. More research and studies must go into it. If the county takes ownership of the site, Mr. Moran, the current owner, will be relieved of the responsibility of remediating it. Grant money should not be used at the site until it is remediated. Who will be responsible for remediation of the Caketown area because of the uncontrolled storm

water run-off that has now contaminated many lots? Mr. Saxton said the city failed to act when alerted to problems. He asked council to make sure it is not a pig in a poke and the city does not take the wrong end of it.

Mr. Jim Snyder, Sunbury Supply Company: What is happening with getting a contractor's license for work done in Sunbury. He is asking what the definition of "work" is in a commercial building. Mr. Rhoads said any services rendered including maintenance, installation and repair. He feels anyone doing work such as clearing sidewalks and mowing grass for rental units should be included under "work" performed by a contractor that would need a license. He was told he will be cited every time he does work because he does not have a permit. He was in the court house doing service work to make sure everything is working and he doesn't feel he should have to pay \$100 to do service work. He did quote an HVAC job at city hall. Councilman Eister said 2 units were replaced and a permit is needed for that. Changing filters, etc. is maintenance. Mr. Snyder said Harry's Plumbing and Heating did the HVAC job and he does not have a license. Councilman Eister said he would check that out tomorrow. Mr. Snyder doesn't feel the playing field is even. Mayor Persing said the code office is always looking for contractor's working without licenses. Councilman Reichner said last year Mr. Snyder's company was installing permanent air conditioners in the court house without a license to work in the city or a permit for the job. Councilman Reichner asked him if he would not have been seen doing the work he would not have gotten a permit or license and Mr. Snyder answered him that is correct. Councilman Reichner said then there are no more courtesy calls, the next time he is caught doing work without a license he will be cited. He directed the code officers to do that. Councilman Henry said he was involved with the work done and Mr. Dunkelberger said he called Councilman Reichner and asked if a permit was needed and he was told someone would get back to him and no one did. Councilman Henry said he called Councilman Eister and Councilman Reichner was right there. Further discussion was held on this topic. Mr. Snyder is asking for changes to the ordinance to make it more clear. Ms. DeGroat said the code office is on everyone.

Ms. Regina Russell: Discussed several sites that needed attention by code or police department. She went with Councilman Henry to the site at 3rd & Penn Sts. after a prior meeting and she isn't sure whether he was trying to make her an enemy of the fire department but he explained that the land with overgrown weeds, a rusted trailer with no back and trash in and outside the trailer, part of it is city property and part is the fire department. She asked Councilman Reichner why if it is city property, the area isn't cleaned up. Why do tax payers have to clean-up and the city and councilmen are exempt from the laws and fines issued upon tax payers? Councilman Reichner asked her to clarify who is exempt and she answered city council. He said she accused him of not paying fines if he has them. He would like to have that clarified or the legal system will clarify it. She said he can go ahead because she wants city council. Council is not enforcing the same ordinances the taxpayers have to abide by. Mayor Persing said she is discussing a property owned by the city and now she has council involved and she should get back to the subject. She said Councilman Henry has a rusted trailer in that area and he has not been fined. Councilman Henry said the day after he met her at that site he had DPW spray the weeds but they do not die immediately. He went by today at lunch and they look like they are starting to wilt. His trailer that is parked there is a pull behind scrap trailer. It does not have to be inspected and is legally tagged. It is not shiny. The trailer has no trash or garbage in it – it is all items from the carnival that has been in the city since 1955. He is proud that he has raised money to purchase 4 firetrucks with the proceeds. She said the property still needs to be cleaned up because it is a public safety issue. She does not understand why council does not help the citizens. Mayor Persing said Ms. Broschious's problem is a major project. 209 ½ has a chair sitting on the sidewalk for a long time. On Church St. between Front St and 2nd St. there are rentals that still need a lot of work on them. They have no handrails and the porches look terrible. 225 S. 3rd St. has bags of trash for over a month. 331-334 on S. 3rd St. needs attention. 318 Race St. has a lot of furniture and trash on the front porch. Ms. Russell asked when members of council or code office are driving around they don't make a mental note of it? Mayor Persing said more blight properties have been taken care of in the last 3 years than have been in the last 30 years by the Redevelopment Authority. If the minor repairs don't break a law nothing can be done about it. There are properties in the city that have too much junk in the yard but it is unclear what can or cannot be done about it. Ms. Russell asked what is considered a gift when someone provides a service for you. Her paint job at her house is a gift to her. People are doing it to help her.

Ms. Julie Broschious: Has a letter regarding storm water management and plan reviews. There were concerns about no storm water management plan being submitted by Moran at that property. The letter was dated May 13, 2008 to Mike Rhoads from Mike Rothman and copied Dan Ramer, SMA

board members, Mayor Jesse Woodring and Councilman Mark Walberg. Councilman Reichner said he met with Mike Kerstetter and they met at the old Wilson property. The run-off is not just coming off the Bimbo site, it is coming down from Packer St. and Amy St. Her property is lower than the Rescues parking lot so the water is coming from multiple places. The ruts are huge.

Ms. Laurie Johnson: Thank you to the city for Sunbury Celebration. Councilman Eister does a great job and she saw all of the council participating. Her grandchildren had a great time and she is looking forward to River Festival. She is hoping there is more positive about things going on in the city.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Persing explained the work camp students are doing a great job doing repairs at various houses in the city. He was amazed at the number of students and their enthusiasm was overwhelming. There are closing ceremonies at the high school gym on Friday July 17th at 7:30 pm and the mayor urged everyone to attend.

Music in the Park schedule was announced.

National Night Out is August 4th in Cameron Park beginning at 6 pm.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht
City Clerk