

CITY COUNCIL  
Sunbury PA 17801  
August 8, 2016  
6:15 pm

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Council of the City of Sunbury was called to order with the Honorable Mayor David L. Persing 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:

Kevin E. Troup, City Treasurer  
Brianna Apfelbaum Kula, City Solicitor  
John Bakowicz, City Engineer  
Michael Rhoads, Zoning Officer  
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were thirty (30) visitors present.

A moment of silent reflection was held prior to the beginning of the meeting

### **MINUTES AND REPORTS**

The Minutes of 7/12/16 and 7/26/16 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 Councilwoman Henry. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote. Minutes will be posted at [cityofsunbury.com](http://cityofsunbury.com).

### **PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA ITEMS**

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

### **CDBG UPDATE**

Mr. Dan Greene opened the final public hearing for 2016 CDBG funding. The total available funding is \$272,958 and the projects approved by city council members are: Chestnut St. Utilities Reconstruction Phase 2 \$220,328, Sunbury Fire Dept. \$12,500 and Administration Funds in the amount of \$40,130. Following this hearing Mr. Greene asked council to approve the Resolution to apply and authorize the mayor to sign all documents and have SEDA-COG prepare and submit the application to DCED. Mr. Joe Bartello asked if the administration funds go to SEDA-COG and Mr. Greene answered yes.

### **RESOLUTION/APPLY TO DCED FOR 2016 CDBG FUNDING**

Councilman Henry moved to pass a Resolution (see attached) to authorize SEDA-COG to prepare and submit the 2016 CDBG application with DCED and authorize the mayor to sign all documents related to it. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

### **SRI UPDATE**

Ms. Meghan Beck announced the Albright Center held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the elevator project. Valley's Got Talent is August 18<sup>th</sup> and River Festival is coming up on August 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. The final movie on the river is August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Radiance Holistic Center is having a member mixer. September 10<sup>th</sup> is the Renaissance Festival and the Wine and Brew Festival is scheduled for September 17<sup>th</sup>. River Festival After Hours, sponsored by Sunbury Motors will have music, a boat parade and fireworks.

## **BOARD OF HEALTH/CONDEMN 519 N. 5<sup>TH</sup> ST.**

Councilman Reichner said the situation with this property has been going on long before he was in office. Action will finally be taken on it because it is in deplorable condition and the owner does nothing to bring it to code. The structure is unfit for human occupancy. One of the occupants has moved out of the property to better living conditions. There is no water and electricity and the property is in a state of disrepair. Every time the code officers went to check the property the water and electric would be turned on and the property would be in livable condition. On July 27<sup>th</sup> the code officers were there with county agencies and upon going in the residence someone was living there and was not supposed to be. The owner has been cited many times. Under the city ordinance, after 3 times the property can be declared a nuisance. It has been placarded unfit for human habitation in 2015. An unidentified person asked why the officers did not respond to the property more frequently and the answer is when they went back the residence was in livable condition. Mr. Rhoads said it is owner occupied so it is not as easy to get entrance into the structure and is an unusual situation. Mr. Rhoads explained the property is owned by an individual from Northumberland and her sister stayed at the property. Ms. Julie Brosicous asked if the property can be rehabbed and Mr. Rhoads answered he will not know until it is cleaned out. It will be turned over to the Redevelopment Authority. Councilman Reichner said they do not tear them down unless there is no way to save the structure. Councilman Reichner moved that as the Board of Health, to condemn 519 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

## **APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES**

Councilman Henry moved to pay the invoices reported on the voucher's payable report in the amount of \$36,014.68 from the General Fund and \$10,236.40 from Liquid Fuels. Second - Reichner. Unanimous vote.

## **AUDIENCE COMMENT**

Ms. Debra Betz: There is an on-going issue with weeds in the city and she was wondering why the city government does not take care of the weeds on public land. There are more weeds along the curbs than there are in the yards. She is concerned because it is devaluing properties around them. She said the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and Key Club could all help because they get patches for participating in community events. Councilman Reichner said he thinks they need to start citing people for weeds. Ms. Betz said she would help in any way possible. Mr. Dave Whipple said the former Celotex site is in the same condition. Councilman Eister said he would get in touch with Ms. Betz about weeds on Wolverton St. Councilman Eister said they were going to start to use stone instead of plants in a lot of the public areas due to the manpower needed to maintain. It is an overwhelming job for 2 full-time employees and whatever part-time help they hire.

Ms. Carmen Campbell: They had weeds but they were not able to take care of them themselves and would they be fined? Mayor Persing answered as long as they aren't there for a long period of time they would not be fined.

Ms. Julie Brosicous: 2 weeks ago a code officer was taking photos of the industrial property with weeds and was it addressed with the owners? Councilman Reichner said yes as far as he knew it was. She also asked if there is asbestos in the older home's siding. Next door to her there is a family that had siding ripped off by their children and they were throwing bricks at it. Their grass is not cut and the weeds are not trimmed at 844 Edison Ave.

Mr. Gordon Lamb: Is Chief Miller's report finished for the Taser incident? Mayor Persing answered it is an on-going investigation and the public will know the results when the process can become public. Ms. Julie Brosicous asked about the status of the police contract and Mayor Persing said it is still with the arbitrator. She asked whether the K-9 was given to the Wilkes-Barre police or sold. Mayor Persing answered he was given to them with the understanding he will be used. The funding for the dog was all through donations. Ms. Brosicous asked what the results of the Purdy robbery in April 2015 and was the camera utilized? Mayor Persing said he does not know. Councilman Reichner said the camera she is talking about is the camera in the gazebo. Ms. Brosicous said it is a straight shot from that camera to Purdy Insurance. Ms. Brosicous said she gave Councilman Reichner a copy of an item in the newspaper about a tower that was to be installed below Chestnut St. and Councilman Reichner said he has heard nothing more on that. Verizon contacted the code office and asked about ordinances in the City but that was the only contact. Mr. Rhoads said the only

contact he has had was on the Shikellamy Ave. tower. The county has not had any contact about a tower on Chestnut St. She asked Councilman Eister about the equipment at the Rice playground being in bad condition. Councilman Eister said Bimbo donated \$8,000 to replace and/or repair equipment at the playground and provide volunteer manpower to spruce up the playground. The wrong parts were sent for the swing set and that is why there are no swings there right now. Ms. Broschious said the weeds are bad there also. Councilman Henry said that is his fault because his department did not spray the weeds at the playground. She asked about an assessment at the old dump to put solar panels in. Councilman Eister answered they were checking to see if that area would be suitable for a solar farm, not an assessment on the old dump. The review is still underway. The local solar company has a similar plan but they do not invest in the equipment needed which will be approximately \$2,000,000. The company doing the assessment has a program where there is a 20 year pay back.

Mr. Dave Whipple: The high percentage of rental units in the city contributes to the weed problem. He feels tenants don't care about what the property looks like. There should be a plan that not only is the landlord responsible but the tenant as well. Ms. Betz said a lot of the properties she discussed earlier are owner-occupied.

Unidentified Woman: Did council members see her pictures of the Chestnut St. property? This has been going on for years. She feels she has to babysit and let the code office know of the deficiencies too often. The code office was there Friday but they did not look over the fence so they did not see the mess in the yard. Nothing gets done when she complains. There are many more properties on Chestnut St. that need code attention. Ms. Betz said council members seem to be arrogant when people bring these complaints up and the ones bringing them up just want help.

Ms. Julie Broschious: Thanked Laurie Johnson for having Casino Night.

Ms. Laurie Johnson: Thanked everyone that planned National Night Out. She felt there was a record number of people in attendance. She invited everyone complaining at the meeting that the Macy Minnier fundraiser is at the high school on August 21<sup>st</sup> and they could use people to help. She will be there volunteering her time to help. The Casino Night she held was a unique fundraiser for Macy Minnier. The Edison Hotel held a wing night to raise funds. It is a community fundraiser and being part of it made her feel like she is part of the community.

Mr. Joe Bartello: Why weren't there police officers at National Night Out? Mayor Persing said it is based on volunteerism and sometimes there are a lot, sometimes like this past National Night Out no one could be there. The new Chief of Police was there.

## **DISCUSSION**

Mayor Persing said there have been parking situations brought up on Market St. and a committee was set up to discuss this project. Different parking meters are being looked at to see if they would help.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Music in the Park 6:30 to 8:00 pm – August 9 – Sunbury City Band, August 16 Billy D & Rosie

August 18 – Valley's Got Talent at the Shikellamy High School auditorium

August 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> - River Festival

August 21 – Reenactment of "Incident at Bloody Springs" on Memorial Drive

August 21 – Miles for Macy fundraiser relay at Shikellamy High School football stadium.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Specht  
City Clerk