

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
June 13, 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
James R. Eister, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings

Other City officials in attendance:

Elizabeth Kremer, City Treasurer
John R. Bakowicz, City Engineer
Michael M. Apfelbaum, City Solicitor
Stephen Mazzeo, Chief of Police
Dean Weirick, Fire Chief
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were eighteen (18) visitors present.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

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 Snyder, the available reports were approved as presented. Unanimous vote. Minutes will be posted at cityofsunbury.com

COMMENDATION OF MERIT

Mayor Persing announced that on June 7th 3 Sunbury police officers, Bremigen, Slack and Zerbe, kept a person alive that had a cardiac event until EMT arrive on the scene. Chief Mazzeo said this was above and beyond the call of duty and had they not performed CPR and used the AED she would have died on the railroad tracks.

SRI UPDATE

No report

RIVERFRONT PROJECT

Councilman Eister explained that they cannot work on Phase 2 of the project since the Fabridam has been inflated. Phase 1 is close to being finished after a few small items are completed.

ROAD CLOSURE/NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Councilman Eister moved to approve the road closure request by Sunbury Crime Watch for National Night Out on August 2nd from 2nd to 3rd St on Market St. Second – Snyder. Unanimous vote.

APPOINTMENT TO REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD

Mayor Persing moved to appoint Mr. Jeff Balestrini to the Redevelopment Authority Board per the board's request. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

APPOINTMENT TO HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD

Councilman Eister moved to appoint Mr. Michael Hogan to the Housing Authority Board per the board's request. Second – Persing. Unanimous vote.

CITY ZONING MAP

Councilman Eister announced that he would be contacting other council members to discuss updates to the City map to include new zoning. There are some un-named streets which should be named before a new map is completed.

ALCOHOL WAIVER/ELKS HOG AND GROG/RIVER FESTIVAL

Mayor Persing said he did not have a problem with the Elks serving alcohol behind the Elks building but since they want to move it to Front St. he is concerned about other entities that want to sell alcohol in public places. Councilman Eister explained that things are changing – Williamsport has block parties where alcohol is served and open containers are allowed, Harrisburg does also. Chief Mazzeo, a member of the River Festival committee, said this will be the same as the Elks did in prior years which is use public property to serve alcohol. It will be a relatively contained area. Alcohol will be restricted to a small portion of the area River Festival will be held in. This year is an experiment and if something goes wrong, they will learn from that for future years. They are migrating toward a music fest type of event, such as is held in Bethlehem each year. Mr. Apfelbaum said there is a beer festival held in downtown Selinsgrove and 1,100 tickets at \$45 each were sold in one morning. Councilman Bartello likened this to the pool tournament held last year in the rink area and council granted permission for alcohol to be served during that time period. Chief Mazzeo explained that each PLCB licensee can take their license off premises up to 6 times per year. Mr. Apfelbaum explained that the business decision council members had to make was whether to allow it. Councilman Eister said if there is ever a celebration on New Year's Eve at 4th and Market St, there would be alcohol allowed then. He thinks it will be good for the City and bring in a lot of people. Councilman Eister moved to grant permission for the Elks to sell alcohol on City property on August 19th and 20th during River Festival hours only and that this is experimental in 2011 to see how it works. Also, that SRI is gaining financially from this endeavor. Second – Persing. Unanimous vote. Mayor Persing said council should consider drafting rules and regulations for all to follow. Councilman Snyder asked if SRI or River Festival was gaining financially from this action. Chief Mazzeo explained that the River Festival committee will receive the vendor fee but he doesn't know if other arrangements have been made for SRI/River Festival to gain financially.

VOUCHER'S PAYABLE REPORT

Councilman Snyder moved to pay the invoices on the voucher's payable report in the amount of \$103,074.92 as funds are available. The payables report will be issued by email to council members on Tuesday. 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. Dale Henry said he knows there are reoccurring issues with blight properties in Sunbury. He stated that Coal Township will be taking pictures of blight properties, naming the property owners and addresses and publishing it to their website. Councilman Bartello said Williamsport has been doing that for some time. Mayor Persing said he would like to see the website used to promote Sunbury, not to show pictures of blight properties although it is a topic for council members to discuss. Mr. David Whipple said when Williamsport started to post blight properties to their website, a lot of people started to fix their properties up and he thought it was an effective action.

Fire Chief Dean Weirick said it has been a tough year for the fire department, including fire loss and equipment loss. At this time an audit/test of fire hose is being taken and they are short hose for several trucks. He asked council to see if they could help pay for the needed fire hose. Chief Weirick has 3 quotes for 2000' of 5" double jacketed fire hose ranging from \$11,300 to \$15,720. The warranties at the different companies quoted are different. Mayor Persing said the City has purchased hose for the fire department for many years but has never been asked in the middle of a year to purchase it and therefore it is not in the City's budget. The hose purchased 2 years ago replaced hose from the 1980's. The hose they are using now was purchased in 1995. The last hose purchased by the City was purchased with CDBG funds. Mayor Persing said council could not answer his request at this meeting but they would discuss options. The city clerk will check Co-Stars to see if there are any government contracts for the sale of fire hose.

Ms. Beverly Mercer said she recently purchased a home in Sunbury with tenants living on the 1st floor. She asked what the responsibility for the landlord would be with the installation of water meters. At this time, the landlord pays a flat-rate, however, if the tenant lets the water run it would be a huge burden on the landlord. Mayor Persing said that is a project undertaken by the Municipal Authority and they would be the ones to answer that question. Ms. Mercer said she contacted the Authority and was told the landlord has always been responsible for the water/sewer bill and she should attend a council meeting to get an answer to her question.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Persing told Councilman Bartello that he is receiving complaints from contractors and others in regard to the paper flow with BIU. Councilman Eister explained that the 3rd party inspector from BIU that is assigned to Sunbury has an attitude and that is not the image council wants the code office to project. Council is committed to bringing business to Sunbury and they do not want problems with commercial code issues. A general discussion was held regarding commercial code issues.

Councilman Eister asked Councilman Bartello if he needed a building permit to add a back porch onto one of his properties. He said he would be digging a footer, laying block and putting down a pad. Councilman Bartello said if he is digging a footer, he would need a permit.

Councilman Eister was contacted by Mr. Zane Simpson in regard to a semi-pro football team Mr. Simpson manages. He is looking for a field in Sunbury to use to play football. The City's insurance carrier said there is extensive liability coverage that would have to be supplied by the team. The team had been playing in an area near the dyke which they thought was City property but was on Sunbury Textile Mill property and were told they could no longer play there, also due to liability issues. Councilman Eister asked Chief Mazzeo if the organization asked him to have police presence at a game and Chief Mazzeo answered yes, the officers were on overtime rates and the football organization paid the City to use the officers. Councilman Eister is concerned that teams are coming to Sunbury where uniform officers are required. Councilman Bartello asked if the hockey and softball leagues are required to have the same insurance and Councilman Eister answered that the hockey league pays to play on City property. There are insurance issues with the location they were playing at in the past.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On June 8th SRI received a donation of 56 hanging baskets from Schwalm's Green House on Route 147. SRI volunteers including, Bob Zimmerman, Tom Crissinger, Bob Lagerman, Judy Sickle, Randy Peters and Mike Lagerman and City employees Ken and Mike Long and Josh Brosious planted the flowers in 27 baskets on Market St. Mayor Persing thanked everyone involved for helping to beautify Market St. The public works crew will be watering the planters.

The Barone Beauty School will be having a grand opening celebration on June 17th.

Participants in the Challenge 4 Health that were weighed lost approximately 200 lbs.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht
City Clerk