

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
November 8, 2010
7:00 pm

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Council of the City of Sunbury was called to order with the Honorable Todd E. Snyder, Vice-Mayor, presiding. There was a quorum with the following in attendance:

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:

Elizabeth R. Kremer, City Treasurer
Lisa J. Martina, City Controller
John Bakowicz, City Engineer
Stephen Mazzeo, Chief of Police
Michael Rhoads, Property Maintenance Officer
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were twelve (12) visitors present.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

The available departmental reports of the Police Dept., Treasurer's Office, Fire Dept., City Engineer, Code Office, Park and Recreation Department, Park & Recreation Board, Public Works Dept, and Planning Commission are in the City Clerk's office for review. On motion by Eister, second by Troup, the available reports and minutes of 10/11/2010 and 10/25/2010 were approved as presented. Unanimous vote.

RIVERFRONT PROJECT

Councilman Eister announced that Phase I is coming to its completion. Landscapers will be in to start the tree line and other plantings. A walk-through will be held next Thursday. There is some concrete pouring to be finished. Phase II stabilization work is going well. The contractor will work as long as the weather allows. Councilman Snyder asked Councilman Eister to let him know for insurance purposes when the Phases are complete. Mr. Dave Whipple said the Front St. area looks very nice but asked if the telephone poles with transformers could have been moved. Councilman Eister answered that they considered that but the costs were prohibitive (PPL's fees to move the poles and transformers started at \$250,000).

SRI UPDATE

Mr. Bob Zimmerman told council a work party to put up the Christmas decorations is scheduled for Saturday Nov. 13th at 9 am. The holiday parade is being planned by the Kiwanis Club this year, in conjunction with the Litefest Committee and is scheduled for Friday Nov. 26th at 6:30. Late Night Shoppers was cancelled for this year. Mr. Zimmerman also asked for free parking on Market St. and the metered side streets from Thanksgiving until New Year's Day. The WELCOME sign project is progressing thanks to Triangle Tech School. The 11th St. project is in the final stages but the tree plantings may not occur until spring. Through the City, SRI applied for a PCTI grant for paving Wolverton St. but no awards have been announced yet. Councilman Snyder moved to allow free parking on Market St. and all metered streets from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. This does not include the parking lots. Second- Eister. Unanimous vote.

AWARD BID/LEGAL SERVICES FOR DEMOLITION

Councilman Eister stated only one firm bid the Demolition job – Apfelbaum Law Offices. Councilman Snyder moved to accept their bid on SEDA-COG's recommendation at \$150 per hour. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

2011 BUDGET

Each council member received a preliminary copy of the 2011 Budget. At this time, revenues are projected to be \$245,248 under expenses. Budget meetings are scheduled for November 15th, December 6th and if needed December 20th. In addition, the budget will be discussed at the council meetings on November 22nd, December 13th and 27th. A first reading of the budget must take place on

November 22nd. Councilman Eister said looking at his department's figures, he is missing a line item from 2010 for the roof project at the ice rink. It is showing in the Dept. 2 budget as a total of the 2 mil capital improvement line item and \$60,000 can be moved if that is council's wishes. Councilman Eister said he also put in a line item to make up the difference in expenditure for the police pension fund payment and it is not showing on the preliminary budget. Councilman Snyder stated that was not a Park and Recreation item so it was not included. Councilman Eister said no one else has addressed the issue so he was going to. Councilman Snyder explained that it is not a matter of anyone wanting to address the issue but if \$250,000 is included it will have to come out some place else and the departmental budgets are all very tight and it can't come from a tax increase. As a group, council must decide if it should be included. Councilman Snyder said it can be an item discussed at the budget meetings. This issue is not Sunbury specific but it is a state and nation-wide problem. Councilman Eister said he is worried about Sunbury only. Chief Mazzeo said the police officer's contribution to the fund was raised in 2009. Also, during the Early Intervention program, Mr. Sabatini made some recommendations to the City to help remedy the situation. It was agreed that a strategy to address the problem of underfunded pension plans should be adopted. Councilman Eister asked for the line item to be added back into his budget and Councilman Snyder said it should be in the mayor's police budget if he wants it included, which he does not. General discussion was held regarding the police pension fund and the discussion will continue at the budget meetings.

ACT 32 STUDY COMMISSION

Ms. Beth Kremer explained that in 2008 the state mandated that every county form a committee under Act 32 to select one tax collector for earned income tax in each county. The committee was formed and by-laws were adopted. A meeting is held once a month to discuss this project and a quorum must be present for action to be taken. In July a vote was taken to hire Capital Area to collect the earned income tax in Northumberland County. Since that time, several municipalities have decided they did not want Capital Area, they preferred Berkheimer Associates. One of the options for the Act 32 committee was for municipalities and school districts to have weighted votes, based on size. The by-laws adopted by the Northumberland County committee included one vote per municipality or school district so the smaller municipalities had an equal vote. RFP's were sent and 3 bids were received. One of them, Keystone, was not certified under Act 32 or accredited so they were not considered. Berkheimer's bid was 2.5% and Capital Area's bid was 1.5%. The bids were posted to the website so everyone knew what the bids were. At a subsequent meeting, Berkheimer changed their bid to 1.7% plus postage costs. Several municipalities, including Mt. Carmel, Mt. Carmel Township, Shamokin, Shamokin Township, Milton, Milton Township and one other one wanted to open the by-laws and include a weighted vote. The chairman of the committee called DCED and they said since Capital Area was chosen by the committee they should be notified that they were awarded the job. DCED said they would look into it further but there was no reason to change the selected collector. This will be enacted in 2012.

TAX EXONERATION

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

AUDIENCE COMMENT

Mr. Wil Haupt said he spoke to Julia Marano regarding the Ag Dept. grant to help farmer's markets. She told him the City would be applying in house for this grant. Mr. Haupt was asked to call Cheryl Delsite to discuss the grant and its uses. The grant is to bring attention to the farmer's market, which would include advertising. The maximum for the grant is \$7,500 with a matching \$2,500 from the municipality.

Mr. David Whipple said he was not always in favor of the beautification projects in Sunbury but when you come across the bridge and see how beautiful the City looks, it is a worthwhile project. He said he hopes there will be funds available to extend the new lighting to the north end of town. Councilman Eister thanked Mr. Whipple for his comments.

Mr. Scott White said that he has noticed a lot of tree limbs hanging low and some stop signs obscured by limbs and wondered if they could be trimmed up before a heavy snow. Councilman Troup thanked Mr. White for the information.

Mr. Brad Hare, representing the Sunbury Police Officer's Association, asked why there is no heat in the police dept. building. Councilman Eister explained that the steam boiler had to be taken apart and parts ordered to repair it. A check has been cut to pay for the parts so they will be ordered and installed when received. Councilman Snyder also explained that at this time of year, the cash flow is always slow and that could be why a check was held up. The boiler is old and the parts were hard to find.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meetings for the sole purpose of discussing the 2011 Budget are scheduled for Nov 15th, Dec 6th and if needed, Dec 20th at 6 pm in council chambers.

Holiday decorating will be Saturday Nov 13th beginning at 9 am. Volunteers and ladders are needed.

The holiday parade will be held on Friday November 26th beginning at 6:30 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht
City Clerk