

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
April 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
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
Michael Kula, City Solicitor
Brad Hare, Police Chief
Michael Rhoads, Zoning Officer
Michael Bordner, Workforce Supervisor
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were twenty-five (25) visitors present.

A moment of silent reflection was held prior to the beginning of the meeting in remembrance of Delroy Carr who retired from the city as Street Department Supervisor for 26 years.

MINUTES AND REPORTS

The minutes of 3/9/15 and 3/23/15 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 – Reichner. Unanimous vote. Minutes will be posted at cityofsunbury.com.

PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA ITEMS

Joseph Bartello: What reports are available? Mayor Persing answered the ones he read, all but the police pension board.

SRI UPDATE

Ms. Meghan Beck: SRI received a grant for Business & Economic Development in the amount of \$6,500 for the Sunbury asset marketing campaign. They also created a sub-committee to focus on a Shark Tank type event. Promotions is creating surveys for businesses to add training opportunities from the KIZ and SBDC. Hill Neighborhood held 2 rain barrel workshops in March. Membership is wrapping up and they met their goal. Individuals are welcome to join as well as businesses. A Meet and Mingle is planned for April 28th at the Packer House. Riverfront planning has scheduled Wake the Lake for June 6th and a concert series is planned for the 4th Sunday of every month June through September. The Renaissance Festival is scheduled for June 20th from 12-6 pm and they received a grant for this event in the amount of \$3,000. The flower baskets will be hung soon. The Albright council is coordinating a capital campaign and tax credit partners are being sought. Hometown Veteran Banners will be hung and the unveiling ceremony is May 16th. SRI held a strategic planning session and Ms. Beck thanked Councilmen Shipman and Eister for attending.

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY UPDATE

Mayor Persing announced an auction is coming up on May 16th. Councilman Reichner said several more properties have been turned over.

CELL TOWER PROJECT

Mr. Eric Brinser with Rettew Associates gave a presentation on the cell tower which will be located at Reagan St. on the Brewer's Outlet property. The tower will be 120' with a 5' lightning rod. City and county Planning and Zoning, North'd County Conservation District and Sunbury Municipal Authority have already approved the project. Mr. Rhoads said the outstanding issues are the highway permit needed from Penn DOT and the lease agreement. Councilman Reichner moved to allow the cell tower with the provision all the outstanding issues will be resolved. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote. Councilman Reichner also moved to allow a 90 day extension. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote. Ms. Regina Russell, Community Activist, asked if there are any health risks to residents in that area. Mr. Rettew answered no the FCC regulates the radio waves that are put out by items such as this and generally the towers are 200X less than the allowable safe level. She asked if there is a requirement that they have to be a certain distance from homes and Mr. Brinser answer no that is not necessary. Ms. Julie Broschious said this is the first she is hearing this and asked if other locations were looked at and how did they arrive at this location. Mr. Brinser answered Verizon sent consultants to survey areas in a search ring and they find the sites. He does not know if they looked at more than one location. Ms. Russell said it would affect Verizon users and Mr. Brinser answered it is for Verizon customers however others could put their antennas on it too but at this time it is just proposed for Verizon. Mr. Gordon Lamb asked if this is for more capacity and Mr. Brinser said he is not sure because he has not seen a radio frequency analysis. He knows the towers now have to be closer to users instead of the old school of thought where they were on the highest points. Ms. Broschious also said she saw towers on Front St. Mayor Persing said they aren't the cities and Mr. Brinser said they are not Verizon's. Mr. Justin Strawser asked how many customers this will benefit and Mr. Brinser said he does not know. Verizon would know that answer.

HARB

Mr. Rhoads explained Mr. Gene Heller wants to put a fence on his property on Chestnut St. HARB recommended that a fence be permitted on the property and the fence on Chestnut St. is wood or vinyl but if he wants to use chain-link he will have to plant shrubs/plants in front of it to keep with the aesthetics of the new Chestnut St. Mayor Persing asked if this is one of the vacant properties from the fire and Mr. Rhoads answered yes it is and Mr. Heller has a machine shop in the rear of the property. Councilman Reichner moved to approve HARB's decision for the fence. Councilman Shipman said there will be 1 fence in the middle of 4 properties and the other properties will not have fences and Mr. Rhoads answered yes. Mr. Heller told Mr. Rhoads there will be others coming to the code office regarding improvements to at least 1 other vacant lot in that area. Second – Eister. No – Persing, Shipman. Yes – Reichner, Henry, Eister. Motion carried.

PENN DOT ROAD CLOSURE

Councilman Henry moved to submit a road closure for Sunbury Celebration on July 11th and Soapbox Derby for July 12th. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

HIRE PART-TIME SUMMER MAINTENANCE WORKERS

Councilman Henry said last year the budget allowed hiring 4 summer maintenance workers. This year the budget was cut back so he will only be hiring 2. Councilman Henry moved to hire 2 part-time summer maintenance workers in the public works department. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

PROMOTE FROM PART-TIME/PARK AND RECREATION

Councilman Eister moved to promote Carl Yoder to a full-time position with the retirement of Mark Getz at a rate of \$12.50/hour. He explained he is saving money because Mr. Getz made more per hour than that. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

HIRE LIFEGUARDS/CONCESSION STAND AND PLAYGROUND COUNSELORS

Councilman Eister moved to hire lifeguards, concession stand workers, summer maintenance staff and playground counselors for the summer season. The pay varies for the different positions and years of service. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote.

RAISE/PARK AND RECREATION

Councilman Eister moved to give Tammy Forbes a raise from \$10.50/hour to \$12.50/hour. She will be taking over the operation of the skating rink. This past season she was instrumental in increasing revenue at the ice rink. With this raise and Mr. Yoder's hiring full-time, he is still under budget. Second – Reichner. Unanimous vote.

RAISES/PUBLIC WORKS

Councilman Henry moved to give raises to 2 of his employees Mike Long and Craig Long that are making \$11.85 and \$11.75 with more time working for the city than Mr. Yoder. His budget will increase by that amount but he does have the funding in his budget. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

PMRS REQUEST FOR IRS LANGUAGE CHANGE/NON-UNIFORM PENSION

Councilman Shipman explained the state has changed the PMRS ordinance and asked council to approve on 1st reading. He moved to approve the changes upon review of the city solicitor. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote.

APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES

Councilman Shipman moved to pay the invoices reported on the voucher's payable report in the amount of \$75,917.82 from the General Fund and \$4,657.96 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

Mr. Jamie Brown: Mr. Brown's dad has a city lien on a property that Mr. Brown is trying to sell. He is asking council to settle the \$2,000 lien with a payment of \$500. Mayor Persing asked what type of lien it was and Mr. Brown said he didn't know. After general discussion Councilman Shipman moved to satisfy the lien in the amount of \$100 and Mr. Kula will do the necessary paperwork and the mayor is authorized to sign all documents. Mr. Kula will send a copy of the satisfaction note after it is filed with the county. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote.

Ms. Regina Russell, Community Activist: Will the Sunbury police be getting any education and training on arrests so people are not shot by accident. Mayor Persing answered there is an amount budgeted every year for training. The officers may ask the chief for specific training they want. He can't say they will or will not but if they ask for that training the chief will make the decision. Ms. Russell asked if the police use Tasers and Chief Hare answered yes and all the officers have been trained, in fact there are 2 instructors on the force. Ms. Russell said last year the code office was checking backyards to get people to clean up and she is hoping the city will continue to be vigilant about that. In her neighborhood there are mice going in garages and she is worried about tires that contain water and could harbor mosquitoes with West Nile Virus.

Ms. Julie Broschious: How does the city pay PPL? Councilman Shipman answered monthly. She asked if it is a fixed amount. Councilman Shipman explained there are fixed fees and metered fees and the city owns some street lights. She said it is the city's responsibility to keep up with the lights that are out. She inquired about that after the last meeting and the lights are not on a meter. If they are out or on the city is still paying for the light because it is done by a calculation for fixed rates. It is the city's responsibility to check the lights and make sure they are on. It involves security and other police issues. There are a lot of dark spots throughout the city. The 2 numbers on the pole are the numbers needed to call PPL to let them know the lights are out. Councilman Eister asked what she means by the city being responsible for the lights. Ms. Broschious answered when they are out. Councilman Eister explained that Mr. Whipple brings lists of lights out to the office all the time. She said the one by the hospital is out for over a year. There are 2 or 3 on Race St. that are out.

Councilman Shipman explained there are so many lights in the city and there are multiple problems because sometimes they are on in daylight and we do our best to try to keep them on.

Mr. Gordon Lamb: How many crimes have been solved using the camera system? Mayor Persing said he doesn't know how many have been solved but there are cameras that have been used. Mr. Lamb said it seems there are very few people being arrested for what is happening with robberies, burglaries and assaults. There are more every day in the paper. Mayor Persing said every time there is a crime it is not going to be on camera. Mr. Lamb said by the law of averages there should be some. He asked what improvements the cameras have made and Mayor Persing said they are protecting the city. There are no cameras near where an assault occurred on Market St. The businesses in the area did not have cameras. Mr. Lamb said that is a main thoroughfare and there should be cameras. Mayor Persing explained the goal of the camera project was to get businesses to tie into them. Ms. Julie Broschius asked if the camera in Cameron Park that goes down Market St. would have caught the assault. Mayor Persing said that camera doesn't go out that far. Chief Hare said the cameras that are up are not in residential areas. The purpose of the cameras in the city is to make people feel safe in certain areas. Most of the cameras are near parks, Front St. and the skate park, swimming pool, etc. They are not in residential areas to invade resident's privacy. The purpose of the cameras is to monitor where the majority of the people are, where there is a lot of foot traffic in spring, summer and fall. They do solve crimes in those areas. A lot of the major crimes are in residential areas and there are no cameras there. Mr. Lamb asked if it wouldn't be better to have a wall of camera monitors for someone to monitor all the time. Chief Hare said he has access to videos as well as another officer. He said he is not going to have officers sitting around all day to monitor videos because they need to be out on the street. Chief Hare said he can retrieve anything they need. The purpose of the cameras is to be able to retrieve, not monitor.

Mr. Bill Shipman: Wants to be sure everyone knows he is not asking the street he lives on to be Bill Shipman Blvd. He is interested in having the street changed in the interest of history since he was told his address would have to change. The Horn Railroad was a big deal in the town. He would like the address to be 72 S. Horn Railroad Path. Councilman Henry said that is not going to happen. It is going to be Horn Railroad St. He said the 911 people working on this project would prefer to keep it Shamokin St. because everyone knows it as that name. The other businesses on the street will have to change their addresses as well. Councilman Shipman said city council can change the street name to whatever they want and they will get cooperation from the 911 Center and the post office. After general discussion on this topic Mayor Persing moved to change Mr. Shipman's address to 72 S. Horn Railroad Path. Second – Eister. No – Henry. Yes – Eister, Persing, Shipman, Reichner. Motion carried. If the 911 Center will not allow the 72 for the address they will notify council.

Mr. Gordon Lamb: If he saved \$12,000 in his budget why doesn't Councilman Eister give it to the police department? Councilman Eister said he is giving \$12.50/hour, not that he saved \$12,000.

DISCUSSION

The public works department received a 2001 GMC truck from the Municipal Authority. Council members were very appreciative of the Municipal Authority for doing that for the city.

Councilman Eister moved to sell by sealed bid a public works 1979 Chevy dump truck with 73,107 miles at the next council meeting. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

Spring clean-up – The city will pay for their share of the costs from the grant from the Redevelopment Authority for removal of blight. Mr. Adam Purdy, the RDA chairman, said that would be a good use for some of that grant money.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Street sweeping has started.

The Adam T. Bower dam schedule is:
April 21 & 22 – spring dam inspection
April 27 – inflation of dam which should take 10-14 days
May 11 – marina docks installed

The city docks will be installed May 12th.

Haul for Heroes 5K Run/Walk will be held on July 11, 2015 in conjunction with Sunbury Celebration.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht
City Clerk