

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
January 25, 2016
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
Elizabeth R. Kremer, Director of Accounts and 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:

Michael Rhoads, Zoning Officer
Terry Specht, City Clerk

An executive session was held prior to this meeting regarding police personnel.

There were forty-two (42) visitors present.

A moment of silent reflection was held after the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA ITEMS

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

FEMA NEW INSURANCE RATE MAPS

Mayor Persing announced that FEMA revised their flood maps for areas of the city they consider in the 100 year flood opportunity. They have devised new zones, or special flood hazard areas (Zone AE). In the future, if you have flood insurance you are grandfathered. If you sell your property and are in a special zone, the flood insurance amount will probably be tripled. The Municipal Authority tried to appeal this but FEMA said there was no basis for an appeal. The flood maps are in the mayor's office if anyone would like to view them. Ms. Julie Brosicous asked if this is what was turned over to the Municipal Authority from a prior meeting and the answer is yes, so they could file an appeal. She asked if FEMA is aware that there are portions of the city intentionally being flooded because nothing is being done. Councilman Eister explained that FEMA lowered the flood elevations across the United States and this is the result. Every 100 years, the likelihood of flooding is the cause of the changes.

ROAD CLOSURE/SPREADING ANTLERS EASTER EGG HUNT MARCH 26, 2016

Councilman Henry moved to approve the permit process for the Spreading Antler's Children's Foundation to close Market St. from 2nd St. to 3rd St. for their annual Easter Egg Hunt in Cameron Park. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY

Councilwoman Kremer said because Martin Luther King was a great influence on this country, she moved to give the non-uniform employees that federal holiday off. Councilman Eister said he would like to look at the list of holidays. Councilwoman Kremer said all other government buildings are closed on that day. It would give 14 holidays for city non-uniform employees, the same as Northumberland County. Councilman Eister said he would like this topic to be tabled until everyone can look at it. Mayor Persing said the holiday schedule is put out at the end of the year and they could look at it then. Councilman Henry seconded the motion and said he has never voted on holidays for city employees. The reason is because they were voted on in prior years when they were given. Mayor Persing said the motion is to discuss it at the end of the year after it is added to the list. Unanimous vote.

APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES

Councilwoman Kremer moved to pay the invoices reported on the voucher's payable report in the amount of \$128,547.94 from the General Fund and \$550.00 from the Liquid Fuels fund. Second – Henry. Unanimous vote.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

Ms. Becky Enders: Thanked the public works department for keeping Center St. open for the soup kitchen on Saturday morning. A problem occurs when the Wiest law firm shovels snow onto the street which still makes it a problem with packed down snow. The route on Raspberry Ave. to the Riverfront Apartments was closed with snow so if there was an emergency an ambulance could not get in or out. Councilman Henry will check with public works about that.

Mr. Dave Whipple: Asked why, if there is parking on one side of the street like Edison Ave, do the plows have to plow into the vehicle parking side of the street. He and his neighbors shoveled the snow to the opposite side of the street and the plows put it back into their vehicles 3 times. Councilman Henry said their goal is to make the streets drive-able.

Ms. Regina Russell: Is there a program to help seniors and disabled with snow shoveling. There is not one in the city but it may be possible to get a list of names of people that would be willing to help.

Mr. Richard Stahl, Jr.: Is it legal to put a chair in a parking spot that someone else has already shoveled out? There is no law that says you can put a chair in a shoveled spot. Or that someone cannot park in a spot someone else shoveled. He also said there are alleys that are impassable. Councilman Henry said he did address that because he noticed some alleys were not plowed. There were several Municipal Authority employees helping with snow removal so they may not have been familiar.

Ms. Jan Dockey: When will Susquehanna Ave. be cleared of snow? At this time, the schedule is for Monday and Tuesday and Susquehanna Ave. is not on the list.

Mr. Dave Whipple: There is still a car on River Ave sitting under a no parking sign. Also, the van on the corner of Susquehanna Ave & Joseph St. is still there. Don't the police see these things when they are driving around?

Mr. Jim Snyder: Is the N. 2nd St. lot that is advertised for public auction still going to be sold as one parcel. Ms. Apfelbaum Kula said yes, the Redevelopment Authority's policy is whenever possible a single family home or single rental unit be put on vacant lots. An auction is scheduled for Saturday February 6th beginning at 9 am with the following schedule: 9:00 139-141 Church St., 9:30 326 Walnut St., 10:00 225 S. 4th St., 10:30 414-416 N. 2nd St. and 11:00 526-528 Pennsylvania Ave. Ms. Julie Broschius asked what the issue is as to why a double cannot be put on the lot. The answer is it is the policy of the Redevelopment Authority for any lot to be developed into a single family home or single rental unit. Ms. Snyder said there is room for 2 side-by-side houses on that lot.

Ms. Yvonne Koble: Will Sun Re Cheese be reopening? Councilman Reichner said it is out for bids for demolition at this time. Councilman Eister said as it stands now they are staying in Sunbury. He has been told they have ordered updated equipment from overseas and there have been engineers designing a new building for expansion.

POLICE INVESTIGATION

Mayor Persing announced the police investigation is over. The PA Office of Open Records is supposed to look at the report and decide if it is a public record. They were closed because of the snow. Mayor Persing read the following statement "The City of Sunbury employed the law firm of Ballard Spahr, as outside counsel, to conduct a confidential personnel investigation into whether the Sunbury Police department had conducted a thorough and appropriate investigation into allegations brought against an officer in the Police Dept. This confidential personnel investigation has been completed and council has fully reviewed the report's findings and conclusions. The City of Sunbury is actively advertising for a new part-time Chief of Police with the intent of working closely with

this new Chief of Police to address the recommendations raised in the report. I look forward to working with the new Chief of Police to improve the management of and public safety services provided by the Sunbury Police Dept.” The issues between The Daily Item and the Right-to-Know request is ongoing. Ms. Julie Broschius asked if the investigation was fully concluded and Mayor Persing answered yes. She also asked if council members have a copy of the investigation. Mayor Persing answered Ballard Spahr and the Apfelbaum Kula law firm have the only copies.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Persing explained the JROTC is celebrating their 100th anniversary in 2016. They will be performing clean-up projects in Northumberland and Sunbury. They will also celebrate with a 5K run, cake cutting and other programs.

Mayor Persing also said at the last meeting there was a question about political candidates knocking on doors and whether they need a peddling and solicitation permit. He researched the code and the ordinance pertains to financial gain so candidates would not need a permit. Ms. Regina Russell asked if that would include residential yard sales. Mayor Persing said that does not pertain to Article 124. Councilman Reichner said it is soliciting door to door.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht, City Clerk