

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
November 25, 2013
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
Joseph J. Bartello, III, Director of Public Safety
Kevin Troup, Director of Public Works
James R. Eister, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings

Other City officials in attendance:

Michael Rhoads, Zoning Officer and Fire Chief
Stephen Mazzeo, Chief of Police
Terry Specht, City Clerk

There were twenty-two (22) visitors present.

CDBG PROGRAMS

Mr. Lee Zeeger of CES Engineering explained they started surveying Chestnut St today from Front St to 3rd St. They will be talking with the Municipal Authority, SEDA-COG and PA DOT to review the project and let them know the schedule.

Ms. Jamie Shrawder told council she passed out a proposal about a month ago for council to review regarding targeted code enforcement. Ms. Shrawder said she has not gotten an answer yet from DCED to see if it is an eligible CDBG project. Ms. Shrawder asked if council wanted to go ahead with the project as written and when DCED approves the project it can get started. The Municipal Authority will help with the mapping part of this project. Councilman Bartello asked Ms. Shrawder if the code office told her they did not have spread sheets on this stuff. Ms. Shrawder said no but they don't have electronic information. Councilman Bartello said they have Excel spreadsheets with complaints for all the addresses for the last several years. They also have a spread sheet with the vacant properties and illegal gutters. Mayor Persing said they met with the Municipal Authority to see what layers they have on their mapping system and how their system works and if it would help with this project. Ms. Shrawder explained council decides what data to collect and then the City hires a temporary employee to collect the data and put it in the spreadsheet they create with the Municipal Authority. Then the Municipal Authority maps the data. The person hired will be paid by CDBG funds. It will be a lot of data to enter. Councilman Bartello asked how much this will cost and Ms. Shrawder said she allocated \$10,000 but she does not have an exact figure. This includes hiring a temporary employee. She thinks it will take about 4 weeks of work. City staff and Municipal Authority time can also be reimbursed. Mayor Persing said he does not think it will cost that much. Councilman Bartello said this is in place of our code office and Ms. Shrawder answered this is an area to target for increased code enforcement using CDBG funds. A deteriorated area must be picked within the municipality and explain why it is targeted and why money will be put into it for increased code enforcement. Councilman Bartello asked what would be done that isn't already done by code. Mayor Persing said it has nothing to do with the code office. It is creating an opportunity in a section of the City and be able to use the code office in the future for that specific purpose. Councilman Bartello said it sounds like extra money. Mayor Persing said he is missing the point. It is to target an area, not go throughout the entire city. During this initial process it will show where the problem areas are so the right area can be targeted. Councilman Bartello asked if Ms. Shrawder would have a certificate for code enforcement. Ms. Shrawder said she will not be doing it. Once the area is determined the city will allocate CDBG funds to pay the code officers for their work in that area. The CDBG funds will supplement the code office to allow them to spend time in the deteriorated area.

AUDIENCE COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Persing asked for audience comment on agenda items and there were no comments.

1ST READING/LEVY 2014 TAX

Councilman Eister moved to pass the 2014 Tax Levy on a first reading showing no tax increase. Second – Troup. No – Bartello. Yes – Troup, Eister, Persing. Motion carried.

2014 TAX ANTICIPATION LOAN LINE OF CREDIT

The following submitted a bid for the 2014 Tax Anticipation line of credit:

Swineford National Bank 1.05% fixed with a \$250.00 fee
1st National Bank 2.59% fixed rate
Northumberland Nat'l Bank 1.19% fixed

The bid was tabled until review by the solicitor.

APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES

Mayor Persing made a motion to pay the invoices on the vouchers payable report totaling \$103,676.33 from the general fund. Second – Eister. Unanimous vote.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

Mr. Bob Miller asked about the blighted properties. Mayor Persing said they are moving forward. Mr. Mike Rhoads said the owner of 245 Chestnut St. has given the property to the city. She met with the solicitor today. It is the property adjacent to the properties that are being demoed from the fire. Mayor Persing said that will make a nice big lot. Mr. Rhoads said the contractor wants to start the demolition later this week.

Mayor Persing said Councilman Troup went to the meeting held in Northumberland regarding animal control/cats. Councilman Troup said Northumberland does not have a veterinarian on board to neuter or put cats down at this time. They have no funding to proceed with it either. He said the one thing that is helpful is if someone is caught feeding feral cats they will be fined. It will go into effect January 1st in the hopes they get a veterinarian on board. Mt. Carmel and Shamokin are also having meetings to discuss this topic. Councilman Troup recommended that if anyone is caught feeding feral cats they are fined. Councilman Bartello said he thinks if a Resolution is made to Chapter 58 Animals and Fowl by adding Article 3 Cats – an addition can be made for Running at Large, Removal of Fecal Matter and Outdoor Open Feeding Prohibited with a \$25 fine if caught with dishes on their porch. Councilman Troup said trap, neuter and release would cut the cat population down tremendously. According to Northumberland's ordinance, if a cat is caught they will hold it for a certain number of days, neuter them or if they are sick they will euthanize them. Again, they don't have the funding at this time. Mayor Persing said if nothing else they can prohibit feeding. Councilman Troup agreed with the feeding issue. Mayor Persing asked if that means if a police officer drives by or a citizen, what do they do. Councilman Eister said the code office would enforce it in Northumberland. Mr. Scott Schwartz said neighboring communities are facing the same thing. Danville is voting on theirs soon. He would like to see the monetary consequences higher. Councilman Bartello said that is what most of the fines are and the people caught will be elderly and not able to afford a high fine. Everyone must be treated the same. Mr. Bob Werline asked if this would address the number of cats at a residence. He said there is an ordinance in place about the number of pets but Councilman Troup corrected him that is only dogs. Mr. Schwartz asked about licensing cats. Councilman Troup said that is why they are trying to make this a county-wide issue because dogs are licensed through the county. Councilman Bartello said a lot of times they are putting tattoos on pets. Councilman Troup said yes they are also putting chips in them and that would be a one time only fee instead of having to renew a license. Mr. Schwartz said you could include all animals instead of just dogs. Councilman Troup said he thinks the feeding issue should be looked at first. Ms. Julie Broschius said 5 Star Day School did a project for feral cats. They trapped, spayed, neutered and gave rabies shots to 200 cats in 2010. If a school or agency could take that project on it would be beneficial. Councilman Troup said they did that a few years ago but the Vet that did that was killed in a car accident. They clip the cat's ears that are neutered so they aren't picked up again and they tried to give the kittens away. Ms. Ruth Riehl gave the name of Tina Campbell who helped to trap the cats.

Ms. Becky Newberry said there is a problem at Center & Woodlawn Ave. because a truck hit a stop sign and people are not stopping there. Councilman Troup said they would take care of that tomorrow.

Mr. Dave Whipple asked what is going on with the Brass Key building. Mr. Rhoads said their project was just approved by the 3rd party inspectors and construction will begin shortly. The contractor has been awarded the bid.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board appointments will be made in January. Council has a list of those up for reappointment.

Next Monday there will be a budget meeting at 6:00pm.

The Santa parade is November 29th at 6:30 pm.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Specht
City Clerk