

CITY COUNCIL
Sunbury PA 17801
March 22, 2021
6:17 pm

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Council of the City of Sunbury was called to order by video/teleconference with the Honorable Mayor Karlovich, presiding. There was a quorum with the following in attendance:

Richard L. Reichner, Director of Accounts and Finance
Christopher Reis, Director of Public Safety
Joshua Brosious, Director of Public Works
James R. Eister, Director of Parks, Recreation and Public Buildings

Other City officials in attendance:

Derrick Backer, City Administrator
Bradley Hare, Chief of Police
Jolinn Barner, City Clerk
Steve Welker, Public Works Supervisor
Jerome Alex, City Controller
Jeffrey Wojciechowski, Code Enforcement Supervisor

Visitors present: In Person (2) Zoom (10)

A moment of silent reflection was held prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Adding to the Agenda Chief Shikellamy Elementary School (ES) Proposed Land Development Plan

Mayor Karlovich made the motion to add to the agenda Chief Shikellamy Elementary School (ES) Proposed Land Development Plan. Second Eister. Unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Karlovich asked for public comment on agenda items.

Donald Rouse (Scout Master of Troop 333): Mr. Rouse wanted to talk about the agenda item of allowing Troop 333 to apply for funding for creation of Trail on the Wetlands property. Mr. Rouse made the comment that the troop has been helping at the wetlands since December for about 6 hours a month. The troop has 12 boys and a combined total of hours worked of 275 hours for the Wetland project. The troop got involved with the project, because the boys wanted to find a community service project that they could do for their local community. Three other groups and organizations have helped with the wetland project as well. The troop has been doing a lot of brush clearing and removing trees. If the troop receives funding, they would like to make a walking trail will go along the edge of the property up to 8th street and making the trail wheelchair accessible. The trail will tie into the project that the Mayor already as funding for with the railroad grade. This will allow the promotion of good fitness and health for the community. The boys are enjoying working on this project, and their involvement in this project means a big deal to them. The troop is looking at needing \$7,000 for the project to cover the materials they need. Mayor Karlovich asked how long of a project will this be for the troop if it shall get approved? Mr. Rouse responded that this project will be 6-8 months.

Seda-COG

Budget Revision/FFY 2020 CDBG-CV SRI Handwashing Station

Councilman Reis made the motion to re-budget the remaining \$1,412.84 to the CSO rent mortgage utility program. Second Karlovich. Unanimous vote.

Subrecipient agreement granting the \$3,000 in 2017 CDBG funds to CSO for Subsistence program

Councilman Eister made the motion to approve the subrecipient agreement for the \$3,000 in 2017 to CSO for the Subsistence program. Second Brosious. Unanimous vote.

Amendment 2 to 2020 CV Subrecipient Agreement with CSO to add the funds that council moved with the budget revision.

Councilman Reis made the motion to approve the amendment 2 to 2020 CV Subrecipient Agreement to move the funds of \$1,412.84 that were approved earlier in the meeting. Second Karlovich. Unanimous vote.

2nd READING OF BILL # 2021-01 MILITARY BUY BACK

Mayor Karlovich made the motion to approve the 2nd reading. Second Eister. Unanimous vote.

Council Meeting Process

Mayor Karlovich made the motion to change the council meeting process to, a topic can be voted on at any meeting so long as it was discussed in a previous meeting unless it is time sensitive, an emergency, housekeeping, etc. in which that case a topic doesn't require a discussion in a previous meeting. Second Reis. Unanimous vote

Proclamation Autism Acceptance Month and World Autism Awareness Day

Mayor Karlovich made the motion to make the month of April 2021 Autism Acceptance Month and make April 2nd, 2021 World Autism Awareness Day. Second Reis. Yes – Karlovich, Reichner, Reis, Eister. No – Brosious.

Sunbury Northumberland Community Trust Grant for Learn to Swim Program

Councilman Eister made the motion to apply for the grant. Second Reichner. Unanimous vote.

Allow Troop 333 to apply for Funding for Creation of Trail on the Wet-Lands Property

Mayor Karlovich made the motion to allow Troup 333 to apply for this grant under the city. Second Eister. Unanimous vote.

Chief Shikellamy Elementary School (ES) Proposed Land Development Plan

Councilman Eister made the motion to allow Chief Shikellamy Elementary School (ES) to go through with their proposed land development plan. Second Reichner. Unanimous vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Karlovich announced that on 3/22/21 an executive session was held due to potential litigation.

Copier Contract with Marco for Code Enforcement Office Printer

Councilman Reis made the motion to go back into the Contract with Marco to do the IT services on the copier for a \$120 for the year. Second Eister. Unanimous vote.

Extend the normal rate period for rental permit renewals to June 30, 2021

Councilman Reis made the motion to extend the normal rate period for rental permit renewals to June 30. Second Reichner. Unanimous vote.

Bill #2021-02 Repeal and Replace Chapter 163-26 Parking Prohibited During Certain Hours

Councilman Brosious made the motion to repeal and replace chapter 163-26 with Bill #2021-02. Second Karlovich. Unanimous vote.

Request to Name an Ally “Whitaker Ave”

Councilman Brosious made the motion to name the ally between Packer St. and Pomfret Cemetery off of Catawissa Ave. to “Whitaker Ave”. Second Reichner. Yes – Karlovich, Reichner, Brosious, Reis. Abstain – Eister.

Councilman Brosious announced that requests to name any unnamed streets or roads to be submitted to the City Clerk's Office.

Letter of Support for SRI to apply for FCFP Grant in the amount of \$10,000

Mayor Karlovich motioned to give a letter of support for SRI to apply for a FCFP grant in the amount of \$10,000. Second Eister. Yes – Karlovich, Reichner, Brosious, Eister. Abstain – Reis.

Career Link Lease

Mayor Karlovich made the motion to table the Career Link Lease renewal at the same rate. Second Eister. Unanimous vote.

PD Construction Project Bid Award Hepco Construction

Councilman Eister made the motion to award \$829,235 for the construction of the PD Construction Project to Hepco. Second Karlovich. Yes – Karlovich, Reichner, Reis, Eister. No – Brosious.

Bike Pedestrian Audit

City administrator explained that this would be a study to figure the best way to create a bike route. No vote was required.

International Property Code

Councilman Reis made the motion that the square footage requirement of the downtown follow the rest of the city, and is in line with the international property code. Second Karlovich. Yes – Karlovich, Reis. No – Reichner, Brosious, Eister

APPROVAL TO PAY INVOICES

Councilman Reichner moved to approve to Pay Invoices/Vouchers General Fund - \$169,189.99 and Liquid Fuels Fund - \$2,222.67. Second Brosious. Unanimous vote.

Discussion

There was discussion regarding the following topics between council and public officials.

- Agenda Items and Department Reports to Administration Office
- Digitalizing Code Enforcement Files Using Marco
- Letter of Intent to DCED to Look into PD Regionalization and FD Consolidation

Susquehanna Ave. Grant Discussion

Councilman Reis made the motion to go forward with the Susquehanna Ave. Grant application. Second Eister. Unanimous vote.

Discussion

There was discussion regarding the following topics between council and public officials.

- LERTA
- American Rescue Plan Federal Funding
- SWEEP Project
- Grant Writer
- Abandon Structure on wetlands
- Career Link Parking Lot Bid Packets
- Facebook Access

Announcements

Mayor Karlovich had no announcements.

Pre-Submitted Audience Comment

There were no Pre-Submitted Audience Comments

Zoom

Megan Beck: Ms. Beck wanted to make sure that everyone was aware that the link for the agenda for this meeting was incorrect, and that she spent 30 minutes looking for the right one. Ms. Beck wanted to thank Councilman Reis for bring up the square footage requirement for vote. Ms. Beck's opinion for those who voted no for reducing the square footage voted for arbitrary regulation, they voted against free enterprise, voted against revitalization of the downtown, voted against the downtown businesses. There might be 11 buildings that this might affect, and you are looking at 30 to 60 rental units that you might be able to obtain. Ms. Beck has no idea what 2nd and 3rd floors could be used for. 30 to 60 rental units could bring 30 to 120 people to the downtown, which will support the downtown businesses. Ms. Beck feels that there is positivity to rentals such as rental allow for flexibility. If we open the flood gates to people renovating the upper stories this will allow for new citizens to come into the city, who will hopefully enjoy our community, want to stay in

the community, and support the downtown businesses. Then they will hopefully buy property later on. Ms. Beck can't get over the fact the downtown is a higher density but have higher square footage requirements than the rest of the city.

Tammy Koonsman: Ms. Koonsman had a comment regarding the actual square footage of the apartments. Ms. Koonsman mentioned that she just purchased a building in the downtown and was lucky enough to have her apartments already at 900 square feet. If the taxes weren't so high it would be great for someone to invest and fix up the building, but with the taxes you need a minimum of 3 to 4 rentals to support the building. Ms. Koonsman feels that 900 square feet is good for a large apartment, but 600 square feet would be good for the upper levels of a building. A lower square footage will make it easier to have a building that is sustainable and an investment. Ms. Koonsman suggests looking at lowering the square footage and agrees that 200 square feet would be small. Ms. Koonsman suggest having it the same as the whole town, so investors don't look outside the downtown to invest in a building. Having a lower square footage requirement will make it possible for the downtown to be more sustainable.

Victoria Rosancrans: Listening tonight and bring up about the Facebook and about the posting. Ms. Rosancrans concern is for the people that can not attend the meeting. Ms. Rosancrans had people approach her and tell her it is like pulling teeth to get information. Ms. Rosancrans wants to make a suggestion that for people get on the meeting for the first time and looking at the agenda that it can be quite confusing. Ms. Rosancrans feels that there are normally slides for the meetings that help to explain what each agenda item means. Ms. Rosancrans feels that Facebook is not a big issue, but rather getting citizens access to these meetings, and documents. Ms. Rosancrans if she would miss a meeting that the minutes do not tell her much, and feels that we should go back to the way when the recordings would be posted on the city website. If you would post the recordings to the website this would save time in posting to the Facebook, and allow for the citizens to better understand what has been discussed.

Jody Ocker: Ms. Ocker mentioned the opportunity that the city has right now with the trend of people leaving the larger cities and a lot of properties are being purchased, and some of them are investors. Sunbury has the opportunity to benefit from that trend if we get out of the way of small investors, so this goes to the point of the square footage requirement and other zoning ordinances that we may have, and make sure that we take a look at them to support small investments. The city will not be saved by a large corporation coming into the city but rather the small investors. Ms. Ocker mentioned that we should be rolling out the red carpet to these investors, because to provide sustainability for the local municipalities is through economic development. Ms. Ocker feels that council should take a look at economic development strategies to better prepare to make decision on zoning ordinances. Ms. Ocker also mentioned that if you are only going to put out the agenda and not the supporting documents that you put more information on the agenda as far as what is going to be considered under that topic. Ms. Ocker also requested that you spell out the acronyms to make it easier to understand what is being discussed. Ms. Ocker would like to see the slides come back because it helps to understand what is being discussed and helps the people who are hearing impaired.

Chief Hare: The body cam grant was submitted right away so the city can get the reimbursement. The body cams and in car cam should be going live April 26th. The police will be doing training that day, and are doing free training now. The police are also having police testing this week to hopefully have 2 qualified candidates to fill the open roles.

The next city council meeting will be held on April 12, 2021 at 6:15 pm Via Zoom/Facebook Live.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexander Rissinger,
Administrative Assistant