CITY COUNCIL

Sunbury PA 17801

August 12, 2024

6:15 p.m.

There was a regular scheduled meeting of the Council of the city of Sunbury was called to order with the Honorable Mayor Brosious, presiding. There was a quorum with the following in attendance:

James R. Eister, Director of Parks & Recreation

John Barnhart III, Director of Public Safety

Nathan Savidge, Director of Finance, By Phone

Lisa Martina, Director of Public Works

Other City officials in attendance:

Derrick Backer, City Administrator

Jeffrey Wojciechowski, City Clerk

Atty Joel Weist, Solicitor

Jay Long, Fire Chief

Jerome Alex, City Controller

Travis Bremigen, Police Chief

Steve Welker, DPW Supervisor

Joyce Neidig, Code Officer

Visitors present: 53

**Public Comment on Agenda Items**

N/A

**Approval of Minutes & Reports: Minutes of May 13th, April 27th, and reports of the Fire Dept., Police Dept., Treasurer, Controller, Code Officer, Health Dept., Parks and Rec., and Planning Commission.**

Mayor Brosious made a motion to approve the minutes and reports listed above. Councilwoman Martina seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Mayor Brosious adjourned the meeting for the CDBG Hearing & Workshop**

**Community Development Block Grant Public Hearing & Workshop**

Jamie Shrawder called to order the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Hearing. 2024 CDBG allocations for the City of Sunbury is $308,529.00. The program allows the city to fund eligible and fundable projects. Jamie went over what is and what is not eligible. Fundability must meet one of three national objectives: 1. Benefits low to moderate income people, 2. Elimination of Slum or Blight, or 3. Response to an Urgent Need. The only project Jamie is aware of the Susquehanna Avenue Storm Water & Sewer Separation Phase 2 Project. Submissions are due August 23, 2024. Jamie went over the Fair Housing Notice, Anti-Displacement Plan, Section 3 Preference, and Section 504 Outreach/Notice. Today’s hearing is the first step involving the creation of the 3-year plan for the City of Sunbury, which gets submitted to DCED as part of the CDBG application process. The plan will be approved by city council at that time. She reviewed previously funded projects and is seeking information on new projects. Mayor Brosious asked when the funds would need to be spent for this year’s applied projects. She explained the process and said that the expend date would be 2028 for the funds. Jamie asked if anyone had any questions, comments, or concerns about environmental impact associated with any CDBG funded projects. A citizen was concerned about the tree removal on Susquehanna Avenue. Jamie then discussed the CDBG Discretionary Application, which is the Competitive Program. The city does intend to apply for the Discretionary Grant through CDBG which offers an opportunity for communities to compete for funding for larger projects. We are looking from anywhere to 1 million to 3 million for the CDBG Competitive Grant. The problem and solution for Susquehanna Avenue Phase Two is the same for Phase One, which is separating the sewer from the storm water, replacing aging infrastructure, and putting the street back as economically as possible. We are aware of appropriations for Representative Meuser’s Office, 3 years of CDNG Entitlement Funding, Municipal Authority Funding, the CDBG Competitive, Multimodal Transportation Funding, and State H2O Grant Funding. Demonstrating community support is always important for these applications. If anyone would like to offer some support, please send a letter to Jamie or drop it off at city hall. Being there was no public comment the hearing was adjourned.

**Mayor Josh Brosious reconvened the council meeting.**

**SEDA-COG**

**2024 Scope of Services**

Jamie went over the Scope of Services. For 2024, for the city’s regular entitlement program, the price has stayed the same at $50,000.00 and services remain the same.

**2024 Competitive Scope of Services Susquehanna Ave Phase 2**

Jamie stated if we were to get a Competitive Grant Award for the Susquehanna Avenue Phase 2 Project, this scope of services would be what we would base our agreement on. If it does not come to fruition, we will not make an agreement for it. That is $75,000.00.

**UPDATE**

**Fire Department Consolidation**

Rick Shemory gave and update of the Fire Department Consolidation. They had a meeting with the county EMA director, he is going to check and see if they would be interested in coming along with us with the potential future building. At this point all 6 fire companies are in on consolidation. They are getting to the point where they must separate the company assets from the fire assets. The companies are asking the city council to help with funding. It’s going to cost $5,000.00 to $10,000.00 per fire company, so $60,000.00 maximum. The new name that was agreed upon is Sunbury Regional Volunteer Fire Rescue. Once the consolidation is completed, they will start talking about the location.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**LATS Transportation**

Mayor Brosious stated that there was an article in the paper regarding the LATS Transportation System. They will start coming to Sunbury on November 4, 2024, to December 14, 2024, as a pilot program to see which route will be the best. Come March 2024 we will have an exact route on which the bus will take. It will run 6 days a week and it is handicap accessible. Citizens 65 and older ride for free.

**City Properties for Upcoming Sale**

Councilman Eister stated the following properties will be up for sale: 158 Linden Street (048-01-003-196), 201-203 Spruce Street (048-01-003-080), 503-505 N Center Street (052-04-007-018-A & 052-04-007-018), 1027 Keller Street (054-03-009-108), and Walnut Street (054-05-009-004). The property located at 242 Church Street (048-01-003-011) is on hold for now. Next council meeting they will vote on the date of the sale. It will be a public auction.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**NEIC Contract**

Councilman Barnhart explained that NEIC will be handling the Zoning, Planning and Health Inspections for the Code Office. Councilman Eister asked if he thought about having them as a back up for Rental Inspections. Councilman Barnhart said as of right now, no. He has other plans. Councilman Barnhart made a motion to approve the NEIC Contract. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Habitat for Humanity 1214 Line Street Subdivision Final Plan Approval**

Meck-Tech Engineer, Mike Thomas, explained that on September 25, 2023, city council approved the three waivers that were requested, followed by September 28, 2023, the Planning Commission recommended Conditional Plan Approval conditioned upon Mech-Teck’s comment letter dated August 30, 2024. Those conditions have now been met and Mech-Teck recommends approval of the plans. Councilman Barnhart made a motion to grant approval for the 1214 Line Street Subdivision Final Plan. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; Councilman Savidge, Councilman Martina, Councilman Barnhart, and Mayor Brosious were in favor; Councilman Eister abstained.

**First Baptist Church 115 S 4th Street Stormwater Waiver Approval**

Meck-Tech Engineer, Mike Thomas, recommended table the waiver approval at this time. They just received a revised plan calculations this afternoon. He has to get it over to the Sunbury Municipal Authority, if they approve it, then we can vote on it at the next council meeting. Councilman Barnhart made a motion to table the First Baptist Church, 115 S 4th Street, Stormwater Waiver. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**PA Background Checks for Rentals**

Councilman Barnhart explained that this is for the safety of city residents and the homeowner. Chief Bremigen elaborated on the importance of knowing who landlords are renting too. Mayor Brosious added that it is for the safety of the Code Officials as well. It’s best to know what they should be expecting when performing rental inspections. Councilwoman Martina asked how often landlords will be required to provide background checks. She believes there are a lot of unknowns to be able to approve this process. There was further discussion on the matter. Councilman Barnhart made the motion to table PA Background Checks for Rentals. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Resolution #2024-029 Adding Properties to Public Nuisance List**

Councilman Barnhart made a motion to add 452 N 7th Street, 462 Catawissa Avenue, and 925 Reagan Street to the Public Nuisance List. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Resolution #2024-030 Update Public Nuisance List**

Councilman Barnhart made a motion to update the Public Nuisance List. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Susquehanna Avenue Change Orders #3, #4, and #5**

Councilwoman Martina made a motion to approve Change Orders #3, #4, and #5. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**PennDOT Road Closures**

Councilwoman Martina made a motion to approve the following 2024 PennDOT Road Closures:

-Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony on May 27th

-Sunbury Celebration on July 13th

-Ta-Ta Trot Road Closure on July 13th

-Sunbury Diversity Festival on July 20th

-Sunbury Light Fest Christmas in July on July 27th

-Sunbury Revitalization River Festival on August 16th & 17th

-Arts & Curiosities Fest on September 14th

-Sunbury Fire Department Fireman’s Memorial Service on October 13th

-Sunbury Fire Police Halloween Parade on October 17th

-Masonic Fall Festival on October 19th

-Santa Parade & Tree Lighting Ceremony on November 29th

-Sunbury New Year’s Eve Celebration on December 31st & Jan 1st

Councilman Eister seconded the motion; Councilman Savidge, Councilman Eister, Councilwoman Martina, and Mayor Brosious were in favor; Councilman Barnhart abstained.

**Hire of Part-time Police Officer, Tyler Herbster at $28.00 per Hour**

Mayor Brosious stated that they are trying to get more part-time help in the Police Department. There is money in the budget to do so. Chief Bremigen stated that Tyler Herbster is a 7-year veteran and worked at Mt. Carmel and comes from the Mifflinburg Area. Councilwoman Martina asked how often the part-time police officers are scheduled. Chief Bremigen answered, a minimum of 3 shifts per month. Mayor Brosious made a motion to hire Part-Time Police Officer Tyler Herbster at $28.00 per hour. Councilwoman Martina seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**City Hall Blueprints**

Mayor Brosious and Councilman Eister met with Ted Strausser to go over the prints. The final vision is in the blueprints. It will be broken up into phases. Phase 1 is to do the main hallway with the lobby areas for each of the offices. Phase 2 would be to do the Code Office. Phase 3 would be to do the Conference Room, Treasures Office and Mayors Office. Included with Phase 1 is to upgrade the wiring in the building as well as the rear entrance by putting up an awning to project and prolong the life of the door. Mayor Brosious made a motion to accept the City Hall Blueprints. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Resolution #2024-026 – Police MMO, Resolution #2024-027 – 401K MMO, & Resolution #2024-028 – PMRS MMO**

Councilman Savidge made a motion to approve Resolutions #2024-026, #2024-027, and #2024-028, all of which address the Minimum Municipal Obligations that the city needs to make. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**SMA Consideration of Sale**

Last week, for information, Mayor Brosious, Councilman Savidge, and City Administrator, Derrick Backer were asked to attend a meeting with members from Senator Casey and Senator Fetterman’s Office. Based on information that they received there, Councilman Savidge wants to make a motion to stop the consideration of the sale of the Sunbury Municipal Authority in its entirety. Mayor Brosious asked why they wouldn’t consider when they don’t have all the facts. There was further discussion on the matter. Attorney Wiest’s opinion was you cannot say you won’t have further discussions; you can say we will/will not move forward with an evaluation. Councilman Savidge rescinded his original motion, and his amended motion is made a motion not to consider an evaluation to sell the Municipal Authority. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; Mayor Brosious voted no; Councilman Barnhart, Councilwoman Martina, Councilman Eister, and Councilman Savidge were in favor.

**Approval of Abstract/Vouchers for GF $100,067.67, LF $0.00, Private Grants $44,988.60, Payroll $91,343.73**

Councilman Savidge made a motion to approve the above bills. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**DISCUSSION**

**Riverwalk**

Mayor Brosious and Councilman Barnhart were looking to expand the River Walk and around the city including on the dike. Jeff Lewis stated that it is structurally sound, and it makes it easier for maintenance and better access. He thinks it would be a positive thing to do. Derrick Backer said the TA Set-Aside grant is part of that. The point of the project is to create interconnection. The dike system would go to the Riverfront and the Riverfront to run to Shikellamy State Park. The TA Set-Aside is getting Front Street sidewalks from Race Street to Packer Street.

**UTV’s**

Mayor Brosious stated that the UTV’s that the city has have seen better days. He would like to start the process of purchasing new ones for the Police, Code, and DPW and getting rid of the old ones by trading in or selling, or whatever is the most cost effective for the city.

**Dunk Tank**

Mayor Brosious stated that the Dunk Tank we currently have is close to 20 years old. He would like to look into getting a new modern Dunk Tank.

**Boat Lauch Lights**

Councilman Eister said they are taking the bucket truck up this week to look at the lights. Moonlights are being worked on.

**Cyber Liability**

Mayor Brosious and employees of the city met with a representative from InnoTek, an IT company based out of Hazelton with an office in Bloomsburg, to discuss what they offer. During the meeting they brought up Cyber Liability, which the city does not have. Mayor Brosious would like Jeff Wojciechowski to look for a company who offers Cyber Liability Insurance.

**Network Assessment**

Mayor Brosious stated also during the meeting with InnoTek, they recommended getting a Network Assessment done. It will show us what the city will need with the software coming out in the future.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Accepting Letters of Interest for 1 open spot H.A.R.B. (Historical Architectural Review Board) – Must be a Licensed Contractor**

**Accepting Letters of interest for 7 open spots (5 Active & 2 Alternates) on the Nuisance Abatement Board of Appeals (1 City Executive, 1 City Councilperson, 1 Police Officer, 2 Business Owners, & 2 Sunbury Citizens)**

**River Fest, August 16-17, Merle Phillips Park**

**Arts & Curiosities Fest – Saturday, September 14th at Stroh Alley**

**Tire & Metal Recycling Event at James R. Eister Youth and Community Center on September 14th from 9am to 12pm – No TV’s or Dishwashers**

**Lake Augusta Wine & Brew Festival at Merle Phillips Park on September 20th**

**Next City Council Meeting will be held at City Hall on August 26, 2024, at 6:15p.m.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jeff Wojciechowski stated there are money boxes available to businesses to take to try and raise money for a 6th Grade Shikellamy Student who is battling cancer. He also mentioned that the money raised from the tires at the recycling events will go towards funding for the new skatepark and the money raised from the metal will go towards the 6th Grade Shikellamy student who is battling cancer.

Bob Werline stated that when Chris Reis was on council, they were going to fix McCarthy Street, and it was never done. The street is in really bad shape and wonders if it will get done. Steve Welker said it is on the list for consideration, among many others, to get done this year.

Victoria Rosencrans had a question on when someone is doing repairs to their home, do they need a permit hung up in their front window. Mayor Brosious stated that if the work requires a permit, it should be displayed in a window. She also expressed her concern with the processes in the city because she hears different things from different people.

Tracy Lesher asked if there are any plans in the budget for road repairs specifically for 2nd Street. Steve Welker explained what his plans are for the streets. She then asked if there are any plans to do regular patrolling in the neighborhood. People are saying they don’t see the police around like they used to. There are 8 full time currently including the Chief and 3 more coming. He explained that there are major cases they are working on that do take precedence. Chief Bremigen stated that the officers are there, and they are working.

Alan Bubb stated that years ago there was a Fulltime Detective in the Police Department. If the city had one, they would take some workload off the patrol officers.

Bill Brown wanted to commend Councilman Savidge for standing up for the water authority. He asked Councilman Eister; did we not try subletting lawn service out not too many years ago for Front Street.

Norm Koch, Chairman of the Municipal Authority Board, on behalf of the board and the employees, he thanked council for their decision tonight.

Erica Miller-Driscoll wanted to know what’s going on with the Family Dollar. There is nowhere close for senior citizens, besides the grocery store, to buy their essentials. Mayor Brosious stated it is out of our hands, it’s up to the business to do what they see fit.

Julie Brosious asked if anyone has reached out to other municipalities to see how they operate their rentals. Mayor Brosious told her that other municipalities saw this on the agenda and reached out and asked us to pass down our ideas to them. She stated fact finding hurts nothing.

Norm Koch extended an invitation to council to schedule a tour of the Water Plant, Sewer Plant, and Transfer Station with Jason, the general manager.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Garinger

Administrative Assistant