CITY COUNCIL

Sunbury PA 17801

December 9, 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

Lisa Martina, Director of Public Works

Other City officials in attendance:

Derrick Backer, City Administrator

Attorney Joel Wiest, Solicitor

Ronald Rupp, Fire Chief

Jerome Alex, City Controller

Joyce Neidig, Code Officer

Visitors present: 19

**Public Comment on Agenda Items**

N/A

**Approval of Minutes & Reports: Minutes of November 11th and November25th, 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.

**City Administrator Update**

Mr. Backer has been working on a few grants as far as administration and research. It will help a lot of businesses and bring in funding for businesses as far as existing. He attended conferences that involved investing and what needs to be done to bring in those investments into the community. One of the big things we are working on is infrastructure to entice those businesses to come in. Also tax incentives, such as LERTA. Working with DEP and SEDA COG, we are going through buildings in Sunbury and creating a list of properties that may have environmental issues. That will open up other funding such as remediation and rehab.

**Code Enforcement Update**

Code Enforcement Officer Joyce Neidig gave an update on inspections and citations that were issued since the last meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Approval of 2025 Budget**

Mayor Brosious made a motion to approve the 2025 Budget with no tax increase. Councilman Savidge seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Tax Rate/Millage Report**

Mayor Brosious made a motion to approve the 2025 Millage Report and Tax Rate and naming Keystone Collection Group as the 2025 delinquent tax collectors. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**City Hall Remodel**

Councilman Eister stated that they opened up the bids and HEPCO won the bid for general contractor and Selsyn Electric won the bid for electrical totaling around $184,000.00. Councilman Savidge asked what is included in the $184,000.00. Councilman Eister stated that the electrical is all the wiring on the first floor and moving and changing panel boxes from existing locations, the three offices are getting safety glass at counters. There will be new doors going in, dropping of ceilings to run the new electrical, there will be drywall work and metal studs moved. Councilman Savidge asked if we are finding the money in the General Fund or are we finding it in debt service. Mayor Brosious talked with Treasurer Troup, and they have a line of credit out at a very good interest rate through Norry National Bank and we are going to take it from that line of credit and with the money we already have, we will use it to pay back that line of credit and we have the debt service tax to pay the difference. We have the money allocated from ARPA Funds, ZETO, and the sale of Peters Property. Councilman Eister made a motion to continue with the architect who awarded these two contracts. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**2nd Reading of Ordinance #106 – Amusement & Vacant Property Ordinance**

Councilman Barnhart made a motion to table the 2nd Reading of Ordinance #106 – Amusement and the Vacant Property Ordinance to discuss it at the work session on January 13th at 5:00p.m. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**City Administrator Contract 2025-2026**

Councilwoman Martina made a motion to approve the City Administrator Contract for 2025-2026. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor except for Mayor Brosious who was not in favor.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Request to apply for Charles B Degenstein Foundation 2025 S.W.E.E.P Stewardship Program**

Mr. Backer stated that Kurt Karlovich has been running the program for 3 years now. This is a request for renewal of the grant application. They are looking to request $3,000.00 which has been done in the past. Mayor Brosious made the motion to approve the city to apply for the grant. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Approval of Abstracts/Vouchers for GF $188,524.77, LF $0.00, Private Grants $297,155.70, and Payroll $71,096.47**

Councilman Savidge made a motion to approve the Abstracts and Vouchers in the amounts above. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**DISCUSSION**

**Creation of Local Façade Grant**

Mr. Backer wanted everyone to be aware and expand on it. Creation at the local level can allow us to create our own destiny. We can control what we want people to apply for and criteria for eligibility to apply. At the state level they have expanded it from $5,000 to $10,000 and it is a 50/50 match. Opening and closing of the application is during the summer. There was further discussion on the matter.

**PA Sites Grant**

Mr. Backer explained that the PA Sites Grant helps previously utilized or underutilized sites.

**Pennsylvania First Grant**

Mr. Backer explained that Pennsylvania First Grant is eligible to businesses, corporations, and municipalities. It’s job training, acquisition of land, construction rehabilitation of buildings. There’s working capital that can be given with that. It can help a business purchase a property and redevelop it.

**Main Street Matters Grant**

Mr. Backer expanded on Main Street Matters Grant that Jody Ocker talked about in the work session. We would receive that and have a main street designation, and we could have a full-time downtown manager. Just like Jody said, looking for the city to contribute part of the funding because they might not fund all of it.

**PPL Economic Investment Forum**

Mr. Backer went to a PPL conference and one of the big things that they talked about was site readiness and site preparation, that includes infrastructure leading up to the site itself. We are moving in the right direction as far as the city goes in our attempts to, specifically the Celotex site, have that prepped and ready for investment in some form of a business to reuse or redevelop that site.

**Economic Initiatives**

M. Backer has had some conversations with developers and potential business owners to reuse and rehabilitate some buildings in the city for redevelopment in various capacities. He’s working with those developers and business owners to meet with the Governor Action Team as well as the state and congressional elected officials to see if there is anything they can do on their side.

**Certified Economic Development Professional Training**

Mr. Backer wanted to look into getting the certification on Economic Development Professional Training. The training is around $5,000.00 and I would like to look for grant funding to offset the cost. People who have taken the training said it took about a year to complete. Classes are online and some classes are work at your own pace.

**Amend Ordinance #166-3 – Parking of Inoperable Vehicles**

Councilman Barnhart wants to amend Ordinance #166-3, Parking of Inoperable Vehicles. Councilman Barnhart read the ordinance to the audience. There was further discussion on the matter.

**2025 Grants**

Mayor Brosious wanted to bring up that we must get the information out to the public in a timely manner when it comes to applying for grants. They need time to prepare and fill out the applications. Controller Alex suggested putting the grants and their application open and closing dates on council meeting agendas. Councilman Savidge suggested putting under the announcements on the agenda and minutes.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

-Accepting Letters of Interest Civil Service Board (3-year term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest Housing Authority (5-year Term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest Redevelopment Authority (4-year term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest Zoning Hearing Board 2 (3-year term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest Planning Commission 3 (4-year term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest Municipal Authority 2 (5-year term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest H.A.R.B. 2 (4-year term) Registered Architect

-Accepting Letters of Interest for Recreation Board (4-year term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest for Board of Appeals (4-year term)

-Accepting Letters of Interest for Shade Tree Commission (5-year term)

-Ugly Sweater Contest Party at the Ice Rink 12/29/24, 4PM

-New Years Eve Celebration at the Ice Rink from 12pm-3pm & Cameron Park from 8pm- after midnight 12/31/24

**Next City Council Meeting will be held at City Hall on December 23, 2024, at 6:15p.m.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Allen Bubb wanted to know what sites the city is talking about when it comes to the PA Sites Grant. Mr. Backer explained that they are sites that were already developed for industry that are under utilized in it’s current form or sites that have never been developed and can be developed. It’s more for commercial and industrial sites. Mr. Bubb also asked if the Inoperable Vehicle Ordinance will be enforced when someone is trying to sell an inoperable vehicle. Mayor Brosious explained that the individual will have to let code enforcement know what the plan is for the vehicle.

Brian Suloff ask Councilman Eister if there is an update on when Susquehanna Avenue will be open. Councilman Eister said that it will most likely be open this Wednesday. They were supposed to finish line painting on Packer Street but with the rain they pushed it to next spring. Mr. Suloff said that cars are parked on the street and wondered if they were allowed. Mr. Eister said that the contractor didn’t want to make that commitment in case something happens because of liability. As of this afternoon it should be open by Wednesday.

Jim Brumbach lives on the corner of N 9th Street and Masser Street. There is an extension of Masser Street that runs into his garage. He would like to purchase what he calls a driveway but is an extension of Masser Street. It would increase his tax revenue but not by that much. He’s willing to make an offer on that piece of ground. He has maintained the extension for 14-15 years as far as plowing and filling holes up every year. If they cannot sell it, he asked the city to maintain it. Attorney Wiest told Mr. Brumbach that he’s not sure if the city can sell him the property without offering it to the public as well, but that doesn't mean the city cannot look into negating that street and it becoming a part of your property. So, you wouldn’t buy it, it would just become a part of your property. Attorney Wiest is looking into it.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Garinger

Administrative Assistant