CITY COUNCIL

Sunbury PA 17801

March 10, 2025

6:15 p.m.

**There was an Executive Meeting held prior to tonight’s meeting to discuss possible litigation.**

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:

John Barnhart III, Director of Public Safety

James R. Eister, Director of Parks & Recreation

Lisa Martina, Director of Public Works

Nathan Savidge, Director of Finance

Other City Officials in attendance:

Attorney Joel Wiest, City Solicitor

Jeffrey Wojciechowski, City Clerk

Derrick Backer, City Administrator

Jerome Alex, City Controller

Travis Bremigen, Police Chief

Cheryl Delsite, Code Supervisor

Visitors Present: 57

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Danielle Bronowicz is with the Susquehanna River Cleanup Project. The event will be held on April 13th this year. Last year they had over 200 volunteers. They take on 20 territories around Lake Augusta. On April 4th they will hold a Community Cleanup. There will be different locations in Sunbury to meet. Last year they collected 11,620 pounds of debris, 960 pounds of metal that was recycled, and around 3,000 pounds of tires. That is just from our area. Everyone is welcome to participate.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND REPORTS: Minutes of February 10th & 24th of 2025 and Reports of the Fire Dept., Police Dept., Treasurer, Controller, Code Office, Health Dept., Parks and Rec., and Planning Commission.**

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

**UPDATE**

**Outdoor Burning**

Fire Chief Jay Long wanted to bring to everyone’s attention the number of incidents the fire department has been called to in the city is very concerning. He would like council to put a burn ban in effect at least until the end of the month so we can look at the ordinance and make sure everyone who has an outdoor burn pit is following the ordinance and because of how dry it has been.

Councilman Barnhart made a motion to add a Burn Ban to the agenda. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Resolution #2025-009 Cellular Telephone and Vehicle Tracking**

The last few meetings council has discussed putting Life 360 on city devices during working hours. Mayor Brosious also wants to add tracking devices to all city vehicles. He wants accountability across the board. Councilwoman Martina asked who would be responsible with tracking all of it. Mayor Brosious stated that all council members would have access. There was further discussion on the matter. Controller Alex stated that there was council approval 5-6 years ago to track vehicles but was never implemented. Mayor Brosious asked Attorney Wiest if we can move forward with tracking vehicles since it was already voted on in the past and Attorney Wiest said yes. Mayor Brosious made a motion to table Resolution #2025-009 Cellular Telephone and Vehicle Tracking to discuss it further at a work session. Councilman Savidge seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Resolution #2025-010 Inclusivity**

Last meeting Mayor Brosious read a rough draft of a proclamation when it should have been a resolution. Mayor Brosious read Resolution #2025-010 Inclusivity. Mayor Brosious made the motion to approve Resolution #2025-010 Inclusivity. Councilman Barnhart seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Rink Update**

A few weeks ago, there was a situation up at the Ice-Skating Rink and Councilman Eister wanted to clarify a few things. He went up with Carl and went through the process step by step. Councilman Eister went over the tally sheets in the money bags and if they were over or under. He wanted to clarify that it is not off by thousands of dollars. They will be updating registers and prices in the future.

**Rhoads to a New U Lease**

Attorney Wiest drew up a lease to rent the basement to Rhoads to a New U for $200.00 a month. Councilman Eister made a motion to have Mayor Brosious sign it so she can move her non-profit in the basement. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Power DMS Time Clock Staff Accountability**

Councilman Savidge made a motion to table the DMS Time Clock and revisit it when we change IT companies to make sure the systems will integrate. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Burn Ban**

Councilman Barnhart made a motion to place a Burn Ban in effect until the end of the month and revisit the topic at next council meeting. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Amend 53-11 Open Burning**

Councilman Barnhart read ordinance number 53-11. Councilman Barnhart made a motion to amend the ordinance to include the fire pits must be of commercial grade. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**New Printer/Scanner**

Mayor Brosious was questioned why he had the locks changed on the Clerk’s Office last week. The reason is that someone went in there while the office was closed and went through Jeff and Robyn’s desk to find documents to send out. Councilman Savidge does not believe that it was an appropriate action to take. It should have been a disciplinary issue, not to lock out all council members who have reason to be in the City Clerk’s Office. Mr. Backer went in Tuesday morning because he was asked to get the proclamation that was signed at the council meeting the night before. He comes in between 7 and 7:30 every day, so he went into the folder that has all the signed documents from the council meeting. Brosious made a motion to provide Mr. Backer with a printer/scanner if he needs it in his office. There was further discussion on the matter. Mayor Brosious rescinded his last motion and made a new motion to table the vote for a new printer/scanner for Mr. Backer. Councilwoman Martina seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Hiring of Police Officer Tyler Herbster to Full-time**

Mayor Brosious made a motion to table the Hiring of Police Officer Tyler Herbster to Full-Time until next meeting because he was not able to attend tonight’s meeting due to a last-minute obligation. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Update Police Eligibility List**

Mayor Brosious made a motion to update the Police Eligibility List. Councilwoman Martina seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**RFP for IT Services**

Councilman Savidge asked if council thinks applying for an RFP for the IT Services in necessary or if we are comfortable with the new company’s presentation. He initially thinks that going for an RFP for a sizable contract is the necessary way to go. But with the work they have already done with our city and sent their ambassador and employees here at least 3 times, he feels comfortable using the Professional Services Clause to go with this company and start integration. All of council agreed. Councilman Savidge made a motion to table the RFP for IT Services. Councilman Eister seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**Approval of Abstract/Vouchers of GF $108,996.21, LF $114,601.30, Private Grants $202,811.24, and Payroll $69,742.19**

Councilman Savidge made the motion to approve the above abstracts and vouchers. Mayor Brosious seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**DISCUSSION**

**Penn Cemetery Redevelopment/Reclamation Project**

Mayor Brosious stated that Jeff and Robyn have been working very hard with trying to restore Penn Cemetery. A couple of months ago they went to Bucknell to present their idea to students to get them involved. A group of students have chosen that as their class project to help record the exact plots of the stones. Councilman Barnhart would like to apply for grants and see what we can do to get brass name plates for those whose stones are no longer legible. There are some very prestigious people buried in our city cemetery. Jeff Wojciechowski went on to say that about 300-man hours have be put into the cemetery so far. We’ve had help from the District Magistrate giving us those who need community service hours. The first verified death of the Civil War and the bodyguard of General George Washington are buried in our cemetery.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

-Spring Clean-Up Tire / Television Recycle Event March 22nd 128 Memorial Drive, Sunbury, PA 10am-12pm Car/Light Truck Tires $5 each, TV’s $1/lb. Only 100 TV’s will be accepted at event.

-All-Inclusive Easter Egg Hunt April 5, 2025, 9am-12pm Goodwill Hose Playground

-Fire Police Chinese Auction, Sunbury Eagles, 33 s. 3rd St, May 10, 2025, 11am-4pm

- Councilman Barnhart, Councilman Eister, Jason Neidig, and Matt Bennett from the Municipal Authority are meeting tomorrow to discuss a date for the Spring Cleanup.

**Next City Council Meeting will be held at City Hall on March 24th at 6:15p.m.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Councilman Savidge wanted to address the audience, the public in general, members of this body, and other candidates for public offices including the seats council holds. He read a speech he wrote regarding an event that occurred last week that brought threats, false accusations, libel, slander, rhetoric against members of this council and other members of the community at large.

Deborah Betz stated that she was disappointed in Mayor Brosious. She expressed her concern and voiced her opinion and views on Tim Miller’s live video. She feels Mayor Brosious should apologize to those affected by the video.

Maddison Mullen wanted an update from Councilman Eister regards to her email request about looking into provisions for trash cans throughout the wards. She asked since they have a weekly round of picking up brush, could they parallel a system to pick up trash? She also asked if City Council if they considered finding time to have a meeting to talk about climate action plans. She also thinks the city should look into developing community air-conditioned centers during the summer months.

Lori Johnson wanted to say that this past weekend, after doing business in Sunbury for the past eighteen years, she didn’t want to come into the city. She shouldn’t have to worry about coming into the city after what Mayor Brosious did in a phone conversation. She feels Mayor Brosious should apologize to those affected by the video.

George Ferrandi along with members of Save our Susquehanna and Climate Reality Project wanted to invite council and everyone in the room to Sunbury’s 1st Earth Day Celebration on April 19th, the Saturday before Easter, in Cameron Park. They are putting together an event that celebrates our shared love of the natural world and will acknowledge those who are doing good work to protect our river and landscape that we all love. They were hoping someone from council could attend and read the Earth Day Proclamation at the event.

Cathi Brady is not sure who she signed the petition for, but she has video of them dumping things at Celotex. There were truckloads dumped on that site. Her kitchen window faces Celotex. She is concerned as a citizen, a mother and a grandmother because she doesn’t know what is running off of that property.

Aaron Yalch sees people dump at the Celotex site all the time. The city has access to that site because that is where the brush pile is located. He said that Mr. Mill brought things to light about that site. He thinks it needs to be looked at.

Anne Marshall has pictures from September to now of all the bags of garbage at the rental that is next to her. Come spring, she is going to have to worry about mice and rats in her basement. Wants to know who is going to pay for that if the garbage is not taken care of. She read the ordinance regarding trash and rubbish and there are only 2 garbage cans for a 4-unit rental. This should not be an issue since she called the code office in September. The property is at 440 N 8th Street.

Brian Sulouff directed is question to Attorney Wiest and asked what recourse do they have to discuss the issues on Susquehanna Avenue, if we can’t discuss it with city council according to his statement that Mr. Backer read at the last council meeting. Attorney Wiest explained that he did not put a gag order on the public, he doesn’t want the city to get sued by the contractor for anything that may have been said at a public meeting by accident, while he wasn’t here. It was to prevent any litigation.

Randy Buehner asked if the public could have an agenda for Work Sessions. Mayor Brosious explained that they were posted online, they just weren’t printed out. She also mentioned that the city needs to be more clear on agenda items because they don’t know what questions to ask on agenda items if they don’t know what it’s for. She gets really upset when there is divisiveness being caused by certain things that are said or done. For the first time ever, she drove her car a half block away to this meeting because she was scared to walk.

Maddison Mullen asked if it was too late to ask what everyone was talking about, because she didn’t know what they were talking about. Mayor Brosious explained that they cannot divulge in the matter. She asked if there was a true sense of danger.

Deb Betz asked Mr. Backer what is being dumped on the Celotex site. Mr. Backer explained that we dumped dirt from the Reagan Street project. She asked if it was tested. Mr. Backer said yes. He printed out paperwork for those who want it regarding what was found and what could be built on the property. With the concern of safety and health, Attorney Wiest thinks it is a good idea that the city has work session and invite DEP up here. She asked what the part the city had access to, and Councilman Eister stated the brush pile. She asked Josh what he thought was compromising the integrity of Derrick that he felt the need to change the locks without everyone’s knowledge. He explained that he didn’t ask and went in there and didn’t tell anyone.

Bill Brown has lived here for 50 years and he’s not afraid to walk around at any time of day. He fought a fire at the Celotex site. DEP took his gear due to the exposure. He’s 68 years old and lived on Edison Avenue in the 70’s and he’s healthy for his age. He asked if it was possible that people just get cancer. There are a lot of good things about the city.

Aimee Buehner thinks that we should make a resolution to shorten the council meetings. And Behind closed doors business is properly conducted behind closed doors, public business is properly done in public and everybody in this room taking the extra 20 minutes twice a month and volunteering for one of the community organizations that hold wonderful events.

Robert Hauck asked if he has to follow the city codes as far as concrete work, or can he say that he’s working by PennDOT specs. Attorney Wiest said he would think you would have to go by the code but it may depend on the project. Mayor Brosious asked if we could get back to him on the question.

Anna has lived here about 10 years and has seen an increase of crime. Is anything in place to decrease the crime. Chief Bremigen said it doesn’t matter where you live, there is going to be crime. We are hoping to bring back Crime Watch and Meet the Officers. There is more good in Sunbury than there is bad. According to his stats, crime is actually going down. We are combating crime and will continue putting things in to help.

Sheena Espinal what was your hopes in contacting miller. Mayor Brosious explained the conversation that he had with Tim Miller. The conversation was about bringing someone in from the outside, we’ll call it the DOGE of Sunbury. She asked if he expected the outcome. He said he did not, and he cannot control what people do on social media.

Jeff Wojciechowski announced that there will be a clean-up at the City Cemetery from 12-4pm tomorrow from 12pm-4pm. All are welcome to come help.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Garinger

Administrative Assistant