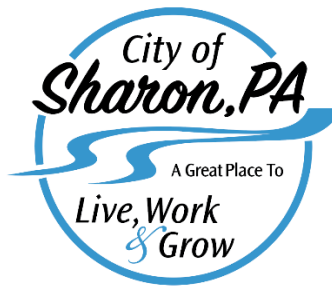


BUREAU OF COUNCIL
Molly Bundrant, President
Carl Sizer, Vice President
William James
David Koerth
Taylor Galaska



Robert Fiscus, City Manager
William J. Madden, City Solicitor
Daphne Parrish, City Clerk

SHARON CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 7:00 PM

Meeting Held in Council Chambers **AND** Via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Council:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| ✓ <u>President Bundrant</u> | ✓ <u>Mr. Koerth</u> |
| ✓ <u>Mr. James</u> | ✓ <u>Mr. Galaska</u> |
| ✓ <u>Mr. Sizer</u> | |

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- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| ✓ <u>Robert Fiscus, City Manager</u> | <u>News Media:</u> |
| ✓ <u>Attorney Madden, City Solicitor</u> | ✓ <u>The Herald</u> |
| ✓ <u>Daphne Parrish, City Clerk</u> | |

Department Heads:

- ✓ Jason Tomko, Finance Director
- ✓ Edward Stabile, Chief of Police
- ✓ David Tomko, Director of Code Enforcement

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- Mr. Fiscus requested an Executive Session at the end of the meeting for personnel and litigation issues.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - AGENDA ITEMS

- Kathy Testani, 417 Wilson Street. Ms. Testani asked about proposed Resolution #29-22, and why the City wants to demo the building and create a park. Mrs. Bundrant said at this point, we are just applying for the grant. Mr. Fiscus said after the City received ARPA funds, the process began to learn what amenities would draw people downtown. One item discussed was a riverfront park area and the need for a conduit between downtown and Penn State Shenango. The bank building has been for sale for some time; it is abandoned, the basement is full of water, and is deteriorating. He discussed these concerns with the realtor, who is marketing the building to be converted into apartments. Due to the layout of the windows, apartments are not a conducive usage. The City has the opportunity to submit a grant application, and this project may be a favorable use of this grant. The concept would be to gain site control, pay for demolition (approximately \$350,000), and begin working with nearby stakeholders to close some roadways and open up a large parcel for a riverside park and future development.
- Debby Pickens, 629 Sherman Avenue, suggested the concept of an amphitheater similar to what is in downtown Warren. Events and concerts would attract people downtown.
- Justin Turnbaugh, 656 Spruce Avenue, asked if the building could be used for dormitories. Mr. Fiscus said the building was not designed for residential units and converting it would be cost prohibitive. Mr. Fiscus said there are other plans for student housing and thanked Mr. Turnbaugh.
- Dave McLaren, 1113 Haig Street, asked if anybody expressed interest in buying the building. Mr. Fiscus said there were some early offers below asking price, with was no response from the Bank. Mr. McLaren asked who inspected the building. Mr. Fiscus said no thorough inspection was made of the building. Mr. McLaren said before we start condemning, it should be investigated. Mr. Fiscus said we are not proposing condemning; we are proposing to purchase and tear it down. The circumstances are ideal; the building is blighted and there is a need for a riverfront experience to draw people downtown. Mr. McLaren asked how much tax revenue will be lost. Mr. Fiscus said he does not have tax information available. Mrs. Bundrant said if nobody buys the building, tax revenue will not be generated. Mr. McLaren asked if someone is currently paying taxes on the building. Mr. Fiscus said yes, but this has

nothing to do with the proposal. Mr. McLaren asked how much the City would spend to buy the building. Mr. Fiscus said that would be discussed in Executive Session. Mr. McLaren asked if this information would be made public. Mr. Fiscus said if a price is negotiated, it would be made public. Mrs. Bundrant said the Resolution is to apply for a grant.

ORDINANCES

MOTION that Ordinance 04-22 entitled “An ORDINANCE of the Council of the City of Sharon, County of Mercer, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, amending the Codified Ordinances of the City of Sharon, Part Two “Administration”, Chapter 280 “Employees Generally” Repealing Section .08 “Compulsory Retirements” to repeal same in its entirety” **Pass FIRST reading by title.**

Motion: Mr. Sizer

Vote: YES Mr. Sizer
YES Mr. Galaska
YES Mr. James

Second: Mr. Koerth

YES Mr. Koerth
YES Mrs. Bundrant

MOTION that Ordinance 05-22 entitled “An ORDINANCE of the Council of the City of Sharon, County of Mercer, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, amending the Administrative Code of the City, Chapter 240 “Department of Fire-Rescue” Section .04 “Special Qualifications of Fire Fighter” to reduce the minimum age requirement from twenty-one (21) years old to eighteen (18) years old when pre-approved by the City’s liability carrier” **Pass FIRST reading by title.**

Motion: Mr. James

Vote: YES Mr. Koerth
YES Mr. Sizer
YES Mr. Galaska

Second: Mr. Koerth

YES Mr. James
YES Mrs. Bundrant

MOTION that Ordinance 06-22 entitled “An ORDINANCE of the Council of the City of Sharon, County of Mercer, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, amending the Codified Ordinances of the City of Sharon, Part Ten “Street, Utility, and Public Services Code”, Title Six, Chapter 1064(c) to change the allowable start time from 6:00 AM to 5:00 AM Local Time” **Pass FIRST reading by title.**

Motion: Mr. Koerth

Vote: YES Mr. Galaska
YES Mr. James
YES Mr. Koerth

Second: Mr. James

YES Mr. Sizer
YES Mrs. Bundrant

RESOLUTIONS

MOTION that Resolution #29-22 entitled, “A RESOLUTION of the Council of the City of Sharon, Mercer County, Pennsylvania, authorizing the proper city officials to apply for a Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant of \$1,000,000 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for the acquisition and demolition of One East State Street, Sharon, PA” **be adopted.**

Motion: Mr. Koerth

Vote: YES Mr. James
YES Mr. Koerth
YES Mr. Sizer

Second: Mr. Sizer

YES Mr. Galaska
YES Mrs. Bundrant

MOTION that Resolution #30-22 entitled “A RESOLUTION of the Council of the City of Sharon, Mercer County, Pennsylvania, and titled Fair Housing Resolution” **be adopted.**

Motion: Mr. James

Vote: YES Mr. Sizer
YES Mr. Galaska
YES Mr. James

Second: Mr. Koerth

YES Mr. Koerth
YES Mrs. Bundrant

CONSENT AGENDA

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE CONSIDERED BY CITY COUNCIL TO BE ROUTINE CITY BUSINESS AND WILL BE ENACTED BY ONE MOTION AND ONE ROLL CALL VOTE. ANY COUNCIL MEMBER, CITY OFFICIAL OR

CITIZENS WISHING CLARIFICATION OF AN ITEM MAY ASK A QUESTION BY RAISING THEIR HAND AND IDENTIFYING THE ITEM BEFORE ADOPTION OF THE ITEM.

MOTION that Resolution #31-22 entitled “A RESOLUTION of the Council of the City of Sharon, County of Mercer, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing, in accordance with Section 915 of the Home Rule Charter, The City Manager and Financial Officer to pay bills on attached Schedule “A” **be adopted.**

MOTION approving minutes from the February 16, 2022, Council Meeting **be adopted.**

MOTION that Resolution #32-22 entitled “A RESOLUTION of the Council of the City of Sharon, Mercer County, Pennsylvania, authorizing appointments for certain Committees, Boards and Authorities” be adopted.

- Beautification Commission
 - Stan Lefes - Reappointment
 - Martha Bruce - Reappointment
 - Adrian Thompson - Reappointment

Motion: **Mr. Koerth**

Second: **Mr. Sizer**

Vote: **YES Mr. Koerth**

YES Mr. James

YES Mr. Sizer

YES Mrs. Bundrant

YES Mr. Galaska

COMMENTS:

CITY MANAGER: Mr. Fiscus said the Small Business Assistance applications are being evaluated and there may be a special meeting scheduled to approve the applications, following the April Workshop.

Applications for assistance to Small Businesses for HVAC and outdoor covid mitigation and attraction issues will be published later this week.

NEWS MEDIA: No comments.

CITIZENS:

Ben Griffin, 528 Dwyer Way, said the Columbia Theater is in disarray, the Phoenix building has been vacant a long time, and the Reyers building is now vacant. He asked if taxes are being paid on the Huntington building. Mr. Fiscus said yes. Mr. Griffin asked who will make up the revenue. Mr. Fiscus said the tax burden will not be passed on to him; City Council has worked hard to not raise taxes and there is no projection for tax increases. Mrs. Bundrant said recent discussions to approve the LaunchBox and Endowment, as well as filling the Downtown Development positions, will hopefully help to fill these empty buildings. The addition of student housing will bring students to spend money. We have the opportunity to use a grant to transform a vacant building into something to attract people downtown. Mr. Griffin asked if the Library is a community library and if other cities are contributing to the \$160,000 project. Mrs. Bundrant said yes, other communities contribute to the Library; the City of Sharon owns the building. The Library has public meetings he can attend for more information.

Debby Pickens, 629 Sherman Avenue, said the kids began running around on mini bikes. Mrs. Bundrant said there is an Ordinance prohibiting the bikes, and Chief Stabile suggested Ms. Pickens call the police to report.

Deborah Roberson, 484 South Oakland Avenue, asked if parking on South Oakland is permitted on one side only. Mr. Fiscus said he would need to review the Ordinance; but it is likely permitted on one side. Mrs. Roberson said one person has been parking on the opposite side of the street. Mrs. Bundrant suggested she call the non-emergency police number to report.

Kathy Testani, 417 Wilson Street, asked if the burning laws are still 6 AM to 8 AM Monday through Friday, as neighbors are burning on Sundays and other various times. Mr. Fiscus suggested she call either 911 or the non-emergency number. The Fire Department will respond, put out the fire, and notify the property owner.

Ms. Testani said the street sweeper never sweeps the West Hill and none of the sewer grates get cleaned. Mr. Fiscus said the street sweeper is a function of the Sanitary Authority and they have a route that covers the entire City. He will pass the concern on to the Sanitary Authority. Mr. James requested Mr. Fiscus get a sweeping schedule.

Dave McLaren, 1113 Haig Street, asked if there are applicants for the vacancies in the Street Department. Mr. Fiscus said one full-time and one part-time employee were recently hired, but there is a City-wide issue to fill positions. Mr. McLaren asked if the residency Ordinance were changed, would City residents receive preference for hiring. Mr. Fiscus said he is a proponent of hiring the best candidate. If all things were equal between two candidates, he would give preference to the Sharon candidate.

Terry Whalen, 672 North Sharpsville Avenue, asked the benefit of tearing down One East State Street to put in a park. Mrs. Bundrant said Council addressed this at length earlier this evening. Mr. Fiscus said minutes could be provided to Mr. Whalen. Mr. Fiscus said an additional experience would attract people downtown to support businesses; after discussions with stakeholders, we developed the concept to create a park. Mr. Whalen said the City already has Bicentennial Park and the Riverside Walkway; what is the benefit of a park on a major downtown corner. Mr. Fiscus said he has no additional comments. Mr. Whalen asked if the former Elks property would be used. Mr. Fiscus said it would likely become a part of the project. Mr. Whalen asked what would be done with the parking lots associated with the bank building. Mr. Fiscus said this would become part of the master plan for development. Mr. Whalen said this project is overkill and he is not sure of the benefit. He asked if anybody approached Council about making apartments in the building. Mrs. Bundrant said she has not heard of any interest. Mr. James said this Resolution is to apply for the grant.

Sharlene Michael, 55 West Connelly Boulevard, asked Council's thoughts on a recent newspaper editorial suggesting Sharon Bucks be distributed to Sharon residents to be used exclusively at Sharon businesses. Mr. Sizer said he does not believe this is an eligible ARPA expense.

MR. JAMES: No comments.

MR. SIZER: Mr. Sizer asked the deadline to apply for the second Business Assistance grant. Mr. Fiscus said there is no established deadline yet; there will be a letter released with the application and the grants will likely be first come, first served.

MR. KOERTH: No comments.

MR. GALASKA: No comments.

MRS. BUNDRANT: Mrs. Bundrant said some local groups have begun to fundraise again. There is a Reverse Raffle scheduled for April 23rd at the Slovenian Athletic Club, who make donations to Little League and Youth Sports. Also, the Recreation Commission is hosting a Lucky 7 on May 14th at the Elks Club. She has tickets available for both events.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:41PM