

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
Monday, December 8, 2008
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Eisaman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. City Administrator, Susan Trout, took roll call with the following members present: Councilman DePasquale, Councilman Peterinelli, Councilman Tridico, Councilman Finfrock and Mayor Eisaman. City Solicitor, Timothy McCormick and City Treasurer/Fiscal Director, Mary Perez were also present.

*****PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE*****Councilman DePasquale

*****ANNUAL REPORT – ‘SUMMERSOUNDS’ CONCERT SERIES*****

Gene James. Mr. James, “I wanted to come by to thank the City for helping and allowing us to produce ‘SummerSounds’ and give you some highlights from the 2008 series. The year 2008 was the most successful year in the history of the series. Attendance was up by 35% to 24,228 people. Community funding was up by 31% and audience donations were up by 21%; so all the numbers are great. We had ten National acts, two International acts and two western Pennsylvania acts performing in the park. The farthest band came from Australia, ‘The Green Cards’. Some demographic highlights that you may wish to know are that the majority of the audience for the series has a college degree and they have well-above average household income. We believe these are the people who will help reinvigorate our City. Fifty-two percent of the people came from the 15601 zip code and 31% of the people were residents of Hempfield Township. We believe we are showing many people that Greensburg is a wonderful town and we surely bring a lot of dining and tourism business to the town. Thirty-three hundred people who came to the concerts this year came from outside of Westmoreland County. Over half the people who attend say they like the quality of the performers, the variety, and that it’s a great family event. One-third of the people bring children; 100% of them say that they’ll recommend ‘SummerSounds’ to friends and neighbors. It’s interesting on those statistics that up until a couple of years ago the thing that people said they liked most about ‘SummerSounds’ was that it was free; now ‘that it’s free’ ranks fifth. We really are improving. We have some challenges. This year we had a show with 5,000 people and a show with well over 3,000, and people have to park quite far away. Happily there are almost no complaints about parking. Mostly people just say thank you for all the free parking. People are happy. The other challenge is that we’ve exceeded the capacity of the park’s sound system, which was designed for about 2,000 people. The Concert Committee is thrilled that 24,000 people have been shown that Greensburg is a great town, and for us nothing beats seeing 24,000 smiles during the summer. We also want to say a big thank you to the City staff that was always there to help us out when we needed it and to thank the City for taking such great care of that park. It’s a wonderful venue and really says great things about the City of Greensburg. Finally, thank you for all your support and if there are any questions, I would be happy to answer them. I hope we will go ahead and do it again next year.”

Mayor Eisaman, “Thank you very much, Gene. It was a great series. I was hoping to attend ‘Beatlemania’, but I was out of town and got into town about 8:15 p.m.....”

Mr. James, “...but you couldn’t find a parking space. You would have had to walk from your house.”

Mayor Eisaman, “I think that would have been the shortest distance. I think the first open space I found was by your house.”

Councilman DePasquale, “I think I made every concert but two, and it’s a great thing for our City. I thank you and the Committee.”

Councilman Peterinelli, “You do a helluva of a job. There are two ladies in the audience tonight that go all the time.”

Mr. James, “I know you’re there every week, Emil. Thank you for supporting it. Thank you very much.”

Mayor Eisaman, “Thank you, Gene, to you and your Committee. You gave a very informational report.”

*****APPROVAL OF LAST MONTH’S COUNCIL MINUTES*****Councilman Peterinelli **MOVED** to approve the minutes of last month’s Council meeting, and Councilman Tridico **SECONDED**. No discussion. **Unanimously all voted in favor.**

*****APPROVAL OF MONTHLY BILL LIST*****Councilman Finfrock **MOVED** to approve the bill list and pay the bills as the money becomes available. Councilman DePasquale **SECONDED**. No discussion. **Unanimously all voted in favor.**

*****REPORTS OF COUNCIL*****

Councilman DePasquale, “There is going to be a holiday show on Sunday, December 28, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. featuring the freestyle figure skaters at Nevin Arena. Also, Santa Claus is expected to stop by and may even take a ride on the Zamboni. This show is open to the public with a nominal admission charge of \$3 for adults and \$2 for children. All children under the age of three are free. In addition, we plan to add some extra public ice skating sessions between Christmas and New Year’s Day while the children are off school. That completes my report.”

Councilman Peterinelli, “The Street Department finished collecting leaves between October 20, 2008 and December 5, 2008. An estimated 580 tons of leaves were collected. This is 60 tons more than was collected last year. To accomplish this all leaf vacuum trailers were used along with the new street sweeper. Also, now that the leaves are done the City mechanics are putting the plows and the salt spreaders on the rest of the trucks. We’ll have seven trucks operating. Homeowners are reminded if you want to have your Christmas tree picked up it has to be curbside and the Street Department will go around and pick them up. That’s it, Mayor.”

Councilman Tridico, “The Mustard Seed Gallery on South Pennsylvania Avenue is soon going to have a new façade thanks to the Greensburg Community Development Corporation. Look for this project to begin in January after the Christmas season. As 2008 comes to an end, the Planning Department is looking at 2009. The year 2009 will bring the opening of the Seton Hill University Performing Arts Center and the Lake Erie College of Medicine (LECOM) students will arrive in the City to start medical school. A downtown shuttle is in the works and many developers are interested in renovating our buildings downtown. We are off to a good start in this tough economic climate. This concludes my report.”

Councilman Finfrock, “We’ll get to next year’s budget in a few minutes. The good news is as we conclude this year’s budget, again thanks to Sue, Mary and the supervisors who make this happen, our revenues are at 98% of our budget. That is 2% higher than November 2007. Our expenses are only at 87% of our budget. This is 1% lower than last year. So this year at least it looks like we’re going to bring it home just the way we thought we would and, again, that’s a credit to the people involved with this.”

*****MAYOR’S REPORT*****

- a. **Code, Fire and Police Reports.** Mayor Eisaman reviewed the Code, Fire and Police reports. Copies of these reports may be obtained at the respective offices or the City Administration Office.
- b. **Free Parking Downtown.** Mayor Eisaman, “In consideration of the shoppers and merchants there will be free parking at meters both on the street and in City parking lots after 1:00 p.m. beginning December 15th through January 1st.”
- c. **Membership Award from the National League of Cities.** Mayor Eisaman, “The City was presented a 5-year membership award plaque from the National League of Cities for our participation in their advocacy of National Municipal policy to promote and strengthen communities.”
- d. **Municipal Conservation Partner Award.** Mayor Eisaman, “On November 14th we were honored by the Westmoreland Conservation District with a plaque that reads, ‘Presented to the City of Greensburg for innovation and leadership in being the first municipality to implement green storm water retrofit practices during the creation of the Seton Hill Drive and Moore Avenue parking lots’. In addition to the plaque, we also received a certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Congressman Tim Murphy.”
- e. **2008 Triple ‘A’ (AAA) Community Traffic Safety Platinum Award.** Mayor Eisaman, “As a credit to our Police Chief, Captain and Police Officers we received

the 2008 AAA Community Traffic Safety Platinum Award. For the 5th consecutive year our Police Department has received this award for traffic safety and programming efforts; the highest award available for the 5th consecutive year. Thank you, Chief.”

*****INTRODUCTION OF BILLS*****

Bill No. 8 – AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE TAX RATE FOR CITY PURPOSES FOR THE YEAR 2009. Councilman Finrock, “I’d like to say a few things about the budget. It’s so difficult to imagine a more challenging budget year. The City is faced with declining revenues and skyrocketing increases in expenses. As a result we’ve had to make some painful decisions. The result will be a very different looking City government at the end of 2009 that exists today. Programs will be reduced and some will be eliminated entirely. By next December the number of employees will be smaller than the number today. Hopefully, that will be based on attrition. The pain will be spread throughout City Hall, and, unfortunately, the taxpayers will also be asked to share some of this burden. I want to start on the expense side. Even though oil prices are falling now it is unrealistic to expect that will continue; as either the economy will recover enough to reverse that trend or OPEC will reduce supply and increase that cost. Oil prices clearly affect public safety costs as well as road repair. Increased costs from utilities to salt have negatively impacted our ability to arrive at an easily balanced budget. Fixed labor contracts cannot be easily undone and are also a source of increased costs. The recent near collapse of the Stock Market has resulted in unfunded pension obligations. The Police Pension alone is approaching \$700,000 on an annual basis and is expected to cross the \$1,000,000 underfunded threshold in the next year. A mill of taxes brings in less than \$130,000. The City has practiced sound financial policies over the last two decades, but the best financial practices alone cannot overcome all of these increases. On the revenue side the picture is equally bleak. Taxes are projected to be down or even in all categories. Business and wage taxes are projected to be lower due to the worst economy in perhaps 70 years. Indeed if the recession lasts through March it will be the longest running recession since the Great Depression. Collection practices of the Local Services Tax have reduced that amount significantly. Reductions in State revenues have reduced our allocation of Liquid Fuels Tax which funds street maintenance and vehicle costs. Recent property tax settlements have resulted not only in lower property tax revenues for a large number of properties but actual refunds next year of previously collected revenues. Coupled with the fact that actually one-third of property in the City is tax-exempt, these losses can be magnified. While some of these revenue losses were expected the total loss was not, and the fact that in the October to November timeframe we saw the most significant losses gave us little time to react to prepare our budget for December. So what do we do? The easiest answer is just to pass the problem along to the taxpayers and say ‘that’s the way it is; the problem is not of our making and you have to deal with it. We didn’t create OPEC and we didn’t cause the Stock Market to crash. Those contract negotiations were built years and decades before’. That reaction is offensive in nature and unfair to a population that is struggling with their own response to this economy. We really don’t want to add to that. We can take the reverse approach and just ‘slash and burn’. We can have layoffs, mass layoffs, reduction of services, close recreational facilities such as the pool and the golf course and cancel all the quality of life programs that make Greensburg, Greensburg. Reacting in this manner could cripple the City just as exciting things are beginning to happen and we are seeing the seeds of investment recovery and the possible growth that comes with that. We reject this course as well. We believe it is important to assure that streets in the west end of town will be repaired as needed. Hilltop and Underwood residents need to know that their leaves will still be gathered. Saybrook residents can still call the police and get the phone answered when some fool with a hockey stick is whacking mailboxes. And Northmont residents need to know that when it rains Public Works crews and the Fire Department will be there to assist them and prevent further flood damages. The City needs to know, Mr. James, that on Fridays in the summer it’s still okay to go to St. Clair Park for an evening of music. We will not shut these things down. We will take a middle ground. The City will reduce costs. The budget is 1.4% lower than it was a year ago. The City will consolidate where it can and push for concessions in labor contracts. Recreation programs will be asked to seek outside revenues. We will continue to operate as efficiently as humanly possible. We will continue to send the message to the investment world that we are open for business. However, we cannot overcome all of these problems ourselves. We will not raise wage taxes. We will not raise fees such as parking. We will not raise the business privilege tax. We will ask for a property tax increase of 3.8 mills. Based on an average residential evaluation of \$17,770 this will

amount to an average increase of around \$1.30 per week per household. We do not do this easily. The track record over the last two decades shows that raising taxes indiscriminately is not a skill set that we possess. Indeed prior to this increase there have been no real major increases with taxes increased over where they were 20 years ago. Raising taxes is just not in our genetic makeup and this is difficult for us to do. Our focus in 2009 is to once again as we did 20 years ago reinvent government in this City to ensure that we move forward on sound financial footing and we ask our employees, our businesses and, most of all, our residents for their help in making this happen.”

Ms. Perez, “The General and Sinking Fund budgets are based on a total projected assessed value for 2009 of \$129,000,000 and 25.05 mills. One mill is equal to approximately \$129,000. The Sinking Fund, which is the fund that we pay our fixed, long-term debt from, is established at 8.00 mills for 2009, and the remaining 17.05 mills of tax will be for the General Fund. All funds have been budgeted in accordance with requirements by State Law or Local Ordinance. I would like to thank the Mayor, Council, Sue, our supervisors and all City employees and City residents for their input into the budget process and their understanding in what’s about to come for 2009.”

Mayor Eisaman, “Thank you. I would just like to make a brief comment. In a time of increased expenses and a challenging financial environment, this 2009 budget was difficult. We also realize that in 2009 we will have to continue to evaluate department services and properties and also look for additional revenue sources for our Community. I would also like to thank Mary, Sue, the supervisors, Randy and Council for their due diligence, time and effort in preparing the 2009 budget.”

Bill No. 9 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GREENSBURG FIXING THE NUMBER OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF ALL DEPARTMENTS OF THE CITY OF GREENSBURG AND RATES OF COMPENSATION THEREOF FOR THE YEAR 2009. Ms. Trout, “This is known as the City Wage Ordinance for 2009. As a general overview I believe it includes a near 3% raise for non-uniformed employees, 3 ½ % for teamsters and an undecided amount at this time for the Police Officers. We’re still negotiating there.”

Bill No. 10 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GREENSBURG, COUNTY OF WESTMORELAND AND COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, APPROPRIATING SPECIFIC SUMS ESTIMATED TO BE REQUIRED FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES FOR THE CITY GOVERNMENT HEREINAFTER SET FORTH DURING THE YEAR 2009. Ms. Trout, “This is actually the City Budget for 2009, which Randy, Mary and you have already commented on, Mayor.”

Bill No. 11 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 151, KNOWN AS ‘FEES’, OF ORDINANCE NO. 1646, THE CODE OF THE CITY OF GREENSBURG, CHANGING AND/OR ADDING CERTAIN FEES AND/OR LANGUAGE FOR CERTAIN CITY SERVICES. Ms. Trout, “This is known as the Fee Ordinance for 2009. There were minor changes to it. One change is we did implement a new Liquor License Application Hearing Fee for us to continue to hold the hearings where people are trying to transfer licenses into our Municipality.”

Ms. Perez, “There are some corrections; one new Recreation program and just a couple of increases. One of them as we talked about and Randy made note of is trying to get some of the programs to make contributions to the City or to try to keep them instituted. American Legion Baseball and Junior Legion Baseball will have an increase in their fees from \$45 to \$100, and there will be an increase in the birthday party package at the rink and the pool in conjunction with the contract with the concessionaire.”

*****COUNCIL APPROVAL*****

- a. **Maintenance Agreement between the City of Greensburg and AMCOM Office Systems.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval is for one year effective December 10, 2008 for the copier in the Conference Room and reflects an annual increase of approximately \$26.79.”
Councilman Tridico **MOVED** to approve the maintenance agreement, and Councilman Finrock **SECONDED**. No discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve the maintenance agreement.**

- b. Reappointment to the Greater Greensburg Sewage Authority.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval reappoints Guy Hutchinson to the Sewage Authority for the period of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2013. His rate of pay shall remain at \$200 per month.”
Councilman Tridico **MOVED** to approve the reappointment, and Councilman DePasquale **SECONDED**. No discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve.**
- c. Parking Lot Lease between the City of Greensburg and the Keystone Free Will Baptist Church.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval accepts the terms of the parking lease for the City-owned property located by the current Coal AC Club for a 10-year period until December 7, 2018. The lease includes a \$500 annual lease fee for the first 5 years of the contract with an increase to \$1,000 for each of the remaining 5 years of the lease. This is actually for a very small, pie-shaped parcel and the other lot across the street, which is right next to our golf course.”
Councilman DePasquale **MOVED** to approve the lease agreement, and Councilman Finrock **SECONDED**. No discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve the lease agreement.**
- d. Professional Audio Service Agreement between the City of Greensburg and Baughman Sound Systems.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval of the agreement is for one (1) year effective December 8, 2008. Under the terms of the agreement and direction of the City Administrator, Mr. Baughman will provide sound systems for all City-sponsored events on an as-needed basis at the rate of \$25 per hour. In addition to stage management and engineering audio, the rate shall also apply to the repair and maintenance of audio equipment currently installed at City-owned facilities. Extra charges shall be assessed for the use of additional equipment and machinery and needed parts and other supplies. What has prompted the need for this agreement is we have many groups who utilize our park and sound system including the Library, YMCA and we have the Unity Rally, and we have lots of hands touching the equipment. This is an effort to have one person in charge and we know who is utilizing our equipment. The thought process here is to pass on the \$25 to the users of the facility so we can pay Mr. Baughman the charge.”
Mayor Eisaman, “In your comments you mentioned he was providing sound systems for all City-sponsored events. If it’s an event held by the YMCA, that wouldn’t be a City-sponsored event so it’s actually anybody using our City park.”
Ms. Trout, “You’re right, Karl. This relayed the wrong language. I didn’t catch that.”
Councilman Peterinelli **MOVED** to approve the agreement, and Councilman DePasquale **SECONDED**. No further discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve the agreement.**
- e. Right to Know Policy Amendments.** Ms. Trout, “Amendments to the City’s policy which was dated December 2002 incorporates updates approved by Governor Rendell under the new Right to Know Law Act of February 14, 2008. A few of the amendments to the City’s policy designates the City Administrator as the Open Records Officer; defines public records; redefines a Requestor as a legal resident of the United States versus, ‘any citizen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’; and expands the response time allowance and clarifies the appeal process. I believe this new policy must be in place January 1, 2009.”
Councilman Finrock **MOVED** to approve the policy amendments, and Councilman Peterinelli **SECONDED**.
Councilman Tridico, “Should we incorporate in that amendment the price of copies?”
Ms. Trout, “Are you referring to the 15 cents?”
Councilman Tridico, “Yes.”
Ms. Perez, “That’s going to remain the same. When we researched what other entities were charging we found that we were right in the middle. We are competitive and compliant under the Law.”
Mayor Eisaman, “I think there were two communities that were around 25 cents.”
Ms. Perez, “There were some private entities charging around 10 cents.”
Ms. Trout, “Under our Fee Ordinance it is listed as 15 cents. We advocated keeping it the same.”
No further discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve.**

- f. Maintenance Agreement between the City of Greensburg and Verdin Clock Company for the Town Clock at Courthouse Square.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval accepts the 1-year agreement in the amount of \$520; the same price as last year.”
Councilman Tridico **MOVED** to approve the maintenance agreement, and Councilman DePasquale **SECONDED**. No discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve the maintenance agreement.**
- g. Resignation of Recreation Board Member.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval accepts the resignation of Howard B. ‘Huddie’ Kaufman as a member on the Recreation Board. ‘Huddie’ has spent nearly 45 years volunteering his service and expertise in the field of Recreation as a member of the Board. We appreciate his many years of devoted service and the invaluable contributions he has made to Recreation in the City of Greensburg.”
Councilman Peterinelli **MOVED** to approve the resignation, and Councilman DePasquale **SECONDED**.
Councilman Peterinelli, “Are we going to do anything for ‘Huddie’; a proclamation or a plaque?”
Mayor Eisaman, “We should definitely do a letter. We can do something.”
Councilman DePasquale, “That’s a big loss for the City. ‘Huddie’ has done a lot for a long time.”
Mayor Eisaman, “He’s been quite an asset to our Recreation and the Greensburg sports community.”
No further discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve.**
- h. Agreement between the City of Greensburg and the Captain of Police.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval extends the current agreement under the same terms for a 2-year period effective January 1, 2009; Captain George Seranko.”
Mayor Eisaman, “Once again any wages and/or benefits reflect what’s in the F.O.P. contract.”
Councilman Peterinelli **MOVED** to approve the agreement, and Councilman Finfrock **SECONDED**. No further discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve the agreement.**
- i. Agreement between the City of Greensburg and Robert T. Regola Surveying for Public Works, Development and Building Projects Consulting Services.** Ms. Trout, “The agreement is for one year effective January 1, 2009 at the rate of \$53.82 per hour with an option to renew for one additional year. Hours and rate of pay shall be negotiated prior to the optional renewal period. I would like to note we are planning on utilizing his services one less day in 2009 as part of the new budget.”
Councilman DePasquale **MOVED** to approve the agreement, and Councilman Tridico **SECONDED**. No discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve.**
- j. Authorization for the Planning Director to Apply to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) on behalf of the City of Greensburg for Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) Smart Transportation Project Funding.** Ms. Trout, “Council approval authorizes Barb Ciampini to apply for the PCTI funding. Sixty million dollars in Federal and State funding will be made available for projects in the first two years of the 2009 TIP. The City’s request will be in the amount of \$2.4 million dollars to fund projects from our proposed TRID project list including but not limited to the repainting of crosswalks at approximately 30 intersections in the TRID area, a pedestrian way finding system and the installation of thematic lighting at various locations.”
Councilman Tridico **MOVED** to approve the authorization, and Councilman Peterinelli **SECONDED**.
Mayor Eisaman, “Barb, if we do accept any of this money, if it is funded, is it 100% matched?”
Ms. Ciampini, “They’re just vouching for our debt. There’s no mention of a match.”
No further discussion. **All voted unanimously to approve the authorization.**

December 8, 2008 - 7

*****ADJOURNMENT*****Councilman DePasquale **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting.
Councilman Tridico **SECONDED**. Unanimously all voted in favor to **adjourn**.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Susan M. Trout, City Administrator

ame