

Rochester Borough Council  
Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building  
December 16, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President David Alford, Don Brothers, Jodi Hemer, Rico Elmore, Chad Rape, Sam Piccinini, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Paul Steff, Sergeant Dawn Shane, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Vice-President Toni Bucher, Renee Simmons, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III

The meeting was called to order with the pledge of allegiance.

Mr. Alford announced Council had an executive session at 6:00 p.m. to discuss personnel matters.

Persons in Attendance:

Tom Daman, Jefferson St., expressed his concerns over the proposed 2 mill property tax increase for 2025. He asked Council to consider a reduction to this increase for the benefit of the residents.

Ian Barnes stated that he was looking to purchase 500 Harmony Ave. from the Beaver County Repository. Council has received his application for review. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to approve Mr. Barnes' application and exonerate the delinquent taxes from 2017 to present. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

Matt Torres, Alex Andres, from the Center Theatre Players (CTP), provided Council with some background information as to how the CTP came to Rochester in 2015. They further provided a list of improvements they have made over the years as well as general expenses they incur. The CTP are very thankful to the Council and Rochester for allowing them to use the theater for their performances and would like to continue this relationship into the future.

Chris Kronk, Marian Acon, Rochester Borough Development Corporation (RBDC), informed Council that the RBDC is meeting regularly and are excited to work at initiating development activity in the Borough's business district. They informed Council of a "Meet and Greet" event the RBDC is hosting on January 11<sup>th</sup> from 6pm-8pm at the Rochester Hotel and invited Council to attend. Mrs. Kronk noted that she and Mrs. Acon did submit the Local Share Account grant application on the Borough's behalf for improvements to the Municipal Building.

Action Items:

Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2024 regular Council meeting as presented. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Brothers motioned to pay all approved bills as submitted. Mr. Rape seconded and the motion carried.

**BILLS:**

Gen. Fund – Ck# 13311–13364 – totaling \$160,741.79.

Payroll (10/25, 11/8) – Ck# 6014-6032 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$118,438.00.

Council received for their review and consideration, the 2025 Tentative Budget. After some discussion, Mrs. Hemer motioned to approve the 2025 Budget as presented. Mr. Rape seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 4-2. Mr. Elmore, Mr. Brothers voted no.

Council received for their review and consideration, Ordinance 01-2024, setting the 2025 real estate property tax rate at 9 mills. After some discussion, Mr. Alford motioned to approve and adopt the ordinance as presented. Mr. Rape seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 4-2, Mr. Elmore, Mr. Brothers voted no.

Council received for their review and consideration, a subdivision application from Calico Inc. There are 9 existing lots along the riverfront next to the old Beaver Valley Bowl building which will be consolidated into 3 separate lots. The Rochester Planning Commission has reviewed the plan and Council received their comments. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve the subdivision plan conditionally upon the addition of the public right-of-ways for storm and sanitary utilities noted on the plan. Mrs. Hemer seconded and the motion carried.

Reappointments: The following individuals' terms are set to expire December 31, 2024.  
 Wes Hill – Zoning Hearing Board – 3-year term  
 Sam Walters – Civil Service Commission – 6-year term  
 Turner Dalmaso – Rochester Sewer & Maintenance Authority – 5-year term

After some discussion, Mr. Brothers motioned to reappoint the three individuals respective to their current board positions. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, a presentation of steps 1-3 of the Strategic Management Planning Program (STMPP) conducted by the University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs on behalf of the PA Department of Community & Economic Development. Mr. Alford noted a meeting Council had with the STMPP Committee. The STMPP Committee will be conducting interviews with Council and department heads sometime in January during the next phase of this financial review process.

Council received for their review, information from the Center Theatre Players highlighting their activities since utilizing the auditorium and various line-item expenses they incur to conduct their performances. There was some discussion regarding the imposition of an annual fee. The matter was tabled for future discussion.

Committee Reports:Public Administration – Chad Rape, Chairperson

Council received for their review, the Expense and Revenue Report from January 1, 2024 through December 13, 2024.

Public Safety – Rico Elmore, Chairperson

Mr. Elmore had nothing to report.

Police Department Report – Sergeant Shane stated that the Borough received the \$5,000 grant for 2 AED's. The Sergeant will look to purchase the devices and have them installed, one on the ground level and one on the first floor of the Municipal Building. The Police Department has partnered with Shop N Save to hold a "Shop with a Cop" event. It is scheduled for this Wednesday from 3pm-5pm. The Sergeant noted that Officer Zarillo is scheduled to return to work January 13<sup>th</sup>.

Public Works – Toni Bucher, Chairperson

There was nothing to report in Mrs. Bucher's absence.

Recreation – Renee Simmons, Chairperson

There was nothing to report in Mrs. Simmons' absence.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson had nothing to report.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Steff asked Council about the 2025 meeting schedule. After some discussion, Council agreed to keep it the same. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Code Officer's Report:

There was nothing to report.

Fire Chief's Report:

Council received for their review, the November 2024 Fire Department report.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Council received for their review, the November 2024 Treasurer's Report.

Old Business/New Business:

Mr. Alford noted that the County Commissioners are withdrawing the remaining ARPA funds that the Borough didn't spend by the October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, approximately \$146,000. Council asked the Manager to send the Commissioners a request to use these funds for continued enhancements of outdoor recreation activities and facilities: replace uplighting at the Flag Plaza, purchase additional outdoor exercise equipment, tables and chairs for events, and additional security cameras.

Council went into executive session to discuss personnel matters at 8:58 p.m.

Council reconvened at 9:17 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett  
Borough Manager