

Rochester Borough Council
Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building
May 16, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Present: Vice-President Don Brothers, Marjorie White, David Alford, Ron Becker, Rico Elmore, Brandy Dietrich, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Bernie Rabik, Police Chief Frank Mercier, Code Officer Peggy Griffith, Manager John Barrett

Absent: President Benjamin Rader, Jodi Hemer, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III

The regular meeting was called to order with the pledge of allegiance and roll call.

Persons in Attendance:

Dennis Iannini, Rochester Township Commissioner, spoke to Council about concerns the Township has with regards to fire service. Mr. Iannini stated the current agreement needs modified to address the funding of fire services and he believes there is a lack of participation from the Borough Council in addressing the needs of the fire service. The Township would like to establish a committee with 2 representatives from each governing body to begin working on a modified agreement and asked for a response to this request by July 1st.

Gwynn Riley, Marion Hill Associates, asked Council for an extension of their current lease for the stage area at the riverfront. The lease is set to expire June 30th and they would like to extend it to September 30th due to the location of the current job they are working on. They have purchased property to relocate their operation but it is significantly further away from their current work site. The extension would allow them to complete this project before relocating their operation. Knowing that the Borough is working to renovate the riverfront area, Mr. Riley stated that his company would be willing to provide some assistance in that effort. Given that the anticipated completion date for the sewerage plant project is later this year, an extension would not adversely affect the renovation of the riverfront park. After some discussion, Mr. Becker motioned to approve the extension and for Mr. Riley to provide a written proposal for each party to sign affirming the extension. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Council temporarily closed the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. to hold a conditional use hearing on the application from St. Cecilia Regency Apartments to convert the old St. Cecilia School building into Senior Living Apartments located at 303 Jackson Street, Rochester. Upon reviewing certain evidence, it was determined that the hearing would need to be rescheduled to resolve certain deficiencies. The hearing was rescheduled for June 9th at 6:30 p.m.

Council reconvened the regular meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Alex Nichol stated that his organization is organizing a fundraiser to benefit cancer patients and is requesting permission to use the Connecticut Avenue ballfields to hold a softball tournament. After some discussion, Council approved their use of the fields contingent upon coordinating this with the baseball organization to ensure that there would not be any conflict with the baseball schedule.

Justin Egley, President of the Rochester Baseball Association, asked for Council's permission to move the outfield fence on the upper field in to the infield to create a T-Ball field. This would free up the outfield area for multipurpose uses while maintaining the integrity of ballfield. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to approve the request. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Michael Brdar, 90 Dewey Avenue, stated that he has completed the application process to convert his property from a multiunit rental property to a single-family dwelling. Since all his units have been vacant since January 1, he asked that this conversion be retroactive to January 1 even though the final change of use application was dated May 13th. This is so that he can try and get some relief from certain fees associated with the rental units. The date on the application can not be changed but given the lengthy application and review process and the fact Mr. Brdar has come before Council multiple times now discussing his intent, Mrs. White motioned to recognize the conversion as of January 1, 2022 and to adjust any of the Borough's fees accordingly. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried. Manager Barrett was asked to send a letter to the water and sewer authorities informing them of Council's determination.

Stella Duncan stated that she submitted a request for consent to purchase 318 Lloyd Street from the Beaver County Repository. She is intending to renovate the property and then rent it out. Mrs. Duncan completed the application and provided the necessary deposit. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to give the Borough's consent and to exonerate the delinquent taxes from 2014 to 2021. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Robert Vasquez, 433 New York Avenue, expressed his concerns with speeding on New York Avenue and cars not yielding to pedestrians at the crosswalks on Virginia Avenue. Chief Mercier stated that he would inform the officers and have them monitor those 2 areas.

Action Items:

Mr. Becker motioned to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2022 regular Council meeting and the May 9, 2022 special Council meeting as presented. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried.

Mrs. Dietrich motioned to pay all approved bills as submitted. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

BILLS:

Gen. Fund – Ck# 11251–11298 – totaling \$129,765.77.

Payroll (4/29, 5/13) – Ck# 5264-5288 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$88,014.19.

Council received for their review and consideration, a subdivision application from Koala Holdings, LLC to subdivide tax parcel 49-002-0605, 303 Jackson Street, into 2 separate parcels. The Rochester Borough Planning Commission has reviewed the application and is recommending the application be approved by Council. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to approve the subdivision plan as presented. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Council will receive for their review and consideration, a lot consolidation application from Help-A-Person to consolidate tax parcels 46-001-1408 (351 Rhode Island Ave) and 46-001-1412 (220 Jefferson St) into one tax parcel. The Rochester Borough Planning Commission has reviewed the application and is recommending the application be approved by Council. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to approve the lot consolidation plan as presented. Mrs. Dietrich seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a quote from Beaver County for new digital radios for the police department. The County is paying 80% of the cost with the Borough paying 20% of the cost. The Borough's portion is \$12,199.29. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to approve the quote for the purchase of new digital radios for the police department. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, an offer from East Rochester Borough to purchase their street sweeper attachment for \$1,200. Rochester Borough would also help them sweep their streets as needed. Manager Barrett stated the sweeper was self-contained and could be dumped directly into a dump truck, this sweeper can pick-up bigger and heavier material (gravel, branches, mud, etc.) than the regular street sweeper, and it is smaller so it can get into areas the regular street sweeper can't. A new unit costs between \$6,000 and \$8,000. Manager Barrett is recommending Council accept the offer. After some discussion, Mr. Becker motioned to accept and approve the offer for the purchase of the street sweeper attachment. Mrs. Dietrich seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, the 2022 road salt contract with American Rock Salt. American Rock Salt was the low bidder with the bid amount of \$88.00 per ton. Bids were solicited by the Beaver County Regional Council of Governments. Manager Barrett is recommending approval. After some discussion, Mr. Alford motioned to approve the contract with American Rock Salt. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the April 14, 2022 Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority meeting.

Council received for their review, the meeting notes of the April 20, 2022 Rochester Borough Development Corporation meeting.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration – Ron Becker, Chairperson

Council received for their review, the Expense & Revenue report for the period January 1, 2022 through May 11, 2022.

Public Safety – Don Brothers, Chairperson

Mr. Brothers had nothing to report.

Public Works – Jodi Hemer, Chairperson

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

Recreation – Brandy Dietrich, Chairperson

Mrs. Dietrich noted that the next Riverfront Committee meeting is scheduled for May 18th at 6:00 p.m. at the riverfront.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson stated that a portion of the sidewalk is missing at the intersection of Deer Lane and New York Ave. and that a piece of pipe is sticking up in the hole. Manager Barrett stated that there use to be a fire hydrant there and was not sure if the water authority was replacing it or not. The Manager will check with the water authority and get the sidewalk replaced.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Rabik had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

Council received for their review, the April 2022 Code Officer's Reports.

Code Officer Griffith stated that she has been in contact with Mr. Majors and he has been meeting with W.D. Wright to discuss repairing the fallen wall.

Police Chief's Report:

Chief Mercier presented the April Police Department report and Code Officer's report for Council's review. Chief Mercier reviewed several items from the reports.

Chief Mercier stated that Mary Kay Mackneer, an officer at the Salvation Army, approach him and asked if the Borough might consider an exchange of buildings. Their building is too small and they would like to move into a bigger place. She likes the setup of the Borough Building and wanted to see if there was any interest in swapping properties. The Salvation Army would also be willing to consider an additional cash payment to achieve a fair market value for the purchase of the Borough Building. After some discussion, Council asked the Manager to engage in a preliminary discussion with the Salvation Army to determine if an exchange would be beneficial for the Borough to pursue.

Fire Chief's Report:

Council received for their review, the April 2022 Fire Department report.

The representatives from Rochester Township asked Council earlier in the meeting about establishing a 4-person committee to discuss amending the current fire service agreement. Council felt the Public Safety Committee should represent Council in the discussions.

Rochester Township resubmitted their invoice from December for Council's review and consideration. The invoice is for the Fire Department Incentive Program in the amount of \$3,900. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to table this and have it as a part of the discussion regarding a new fire service agreement. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Manager Barrett presented the April 2022 Treasurer's report for Council's review.

Manager Barrett reminded Council of the need to finalize the resolution to create a regional emergency management agency with East Rochester and Rochester Township. This could possibly be discussed while working on a fire service agreement.

Old Business/New Business:

Mr. Becker asked about the status of the sign for Howe Park. Manager Barrett stated that he has not engaged a sign company yet but will do so in the near future. Mr. Becker also asked about the realtor sign that was erected in Howe Park. Code Officer Griffith stated that she had contacted them to have the sign removed. Code Officer Griffith and Chief Mercier will work to get this sign removed.

Chief Mercier asked Council if there was any interest in engaging Rochester Township to have further discussions regarding police services. Council stated that there was no further need to discuss police services with them singularly but if any new regional opportunities would present themselves then that could be a possibility.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett
Borough Manager