

Rochester Borough Council  
Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building  
June 17, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President David Alford, Vice-President Toni Bucher (left at 9:31pm), Don Brothers, Renee Simmons, Chad Rape, Rico Elmore, Sam Piccinini (left at 8:35pm), Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Paul Steff, Sergeant Dawn Shane, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Jodi Hemer, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III

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

Persons in Attendance:

Charles Craft, 182 Clay Street, asked about the status of releasing his fire escrow funds. The Manager stated that he was waiting for the Code Officer's report. If there are no violations then the funds would be released.

Tim Waldron, 527 Adams Street, stated that there is overgrown vegetation behind his property. He believes that this area was an alley way and wants to know whose responsibility it is to clear this vegetation. Solicitor Steff stated he would review the matter.

Action Items:

Mr. Elmore motioned to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2024 regular Council meeting as presented. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

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

**BILLS:**

Gen. Fund – Ck# 12822–12904 – totaling \$369,291.96.

Payroll (5/24, 6/7) – Ck# 5860-5893 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$117,510.07.

Council received for their review and consideration, an event proposal from North Way Church to hold a 5K race on September 28, 2024 in the riverfront park. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to approve the request to use the riverfront park on September 28, 2024 for their 5K race. Mrs. Bucher seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a request from the Rochester Borough Sewer & Maintenance Authority to exonerate and refund the 2023 Borough property taxes the Authority paid on 6 parcels they purchased in September 2022. The taxes paid totaled \$1,260.02. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to deny the Authority's request for exoneration and refund of their 2023 property tax. Mrs. Bucher seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 7-0, all yes.

Council received for their review and consideration, a request from the Community Development Program of Beaver County (CDP) to submit a letter of commitment supporting the Rochester Borough Development Corporation as the Borough's Local Revitalization Organization (LRO). The LRO works, on behalf of the Borough, with the CDP under their Main Street and Façade Programs. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve the Rochester Borough Development Corporation as the Borough's LRO to work with the Community Development Program on the Borough's behalf and that Council would assist in recruiting members. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, proposals for an event for June 28<sup>th</sup> and June 29<sup>th</sup>. After much discussion, the 2 events combined for a total expenditure of \$30,782.30 plus an additional \$330 for a gas grill. Mr. Elmore motioned to approve the expenditures as presented. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion failed. Roll Call 4-3 Bucher, Alford, Brothers, Simmons – no; Piccinini, Elmore, Rape – yes. After further discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to approve the total expenditures for the 2 events totaling the \$30,782.30 plus the \$330 for the gas grill. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 5-2 Piccinini, Elmore, Alford, Brothers, Rape – yes; Bucher, Simmons – no.

#### Review Items:

Council received for their review, a thank you letter from Bags & Blessings for the use of the fountain park for their event.

Council received for their review, information about The Reclaim Project in Beaver County. The Project looks to create jobs for people with social barriers in blighted areas by teaching them skills to deconstruct a blighted structure and repurpose material which would otherwise have gone to a landfill. They have partnered with State and County programs for funding. Nick Trombetta and Chuck Verrett would like to attend the next Council meeting to make a formal presentation to Council on how the Reclaim Project could benefit Rochester. Council agreed to have them attend the next meeting.

Council received for their review, an ARPA fund update from the Manager.

Council received for their review, a draft ordinance for street openings and restoration. The Borough Engineer reviewed our current ordinance and prepared this draft with his recommended changes. Everyone should review it and provide any comments to the Solicitor.

#### Committee Reports:

##### Public Administration – Chad Rape, Chairperson

Council received for their review, the Expense and Revenue Report from January 1, 2024 through June 11, 2024.

Public Safety – Rico Elmore, Chairperson

Mr. Elmore discussed the grant writer's renewal proposal. Council decided to wait until they receive notifications from the grants submitted to evaluate the effectiveness of having a paid grant writer.

Police Department Report – Sergeant Shane presented a letter from the East Rochester Borough Council. They are asking if they could use Rochester's Council Chambers for their regular monthly meeting which are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. After some discussion, Mr. Brothers motioned to approve their request as submitted. Mr. Rape seconded and the motion carried. Sergeant Shane presented a proposed agreement with New Sewickley Township to provide officers if needed. Council and the Solicitor will review the proposed agreement. Sergeant Shane stated that service to the LPR at Sheetz has been interrupted due to an issue with the DA's office. A recovery box could be installed to collect the video for future review. The cost would be \$500. Council asked the Solicitor to review the matter. There was discussion regarding the hiring of a part-time police officer. Council left it to the discretion of the Sergeant.

Public Works – Toni Bucher, Chairperson

Mrs. Bucher had nothing to report.

Recreation – Renee Simmons, Chairperson

Ms. Simmons had nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson discussed various items; theater rental, the Municipal Building as a Community Center and the progress of the front steps.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Steff had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

Council received for their review, the May report from the Code Officer.

Fire Chief's Report:

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

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

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

Old Business/New Business:

Mr. Alford noted a meeting with the Borough Engineer at the intersection of New York Avenue and East Washington Street to discuss the sidewalk issue at 199 New York Avenue. The Engineer recommended milling around the corner to expose more curb which should eliminate or reduce the amount of stormwater getting on the sidewalk causing the stone to be washed away. The Property owner still needs to replace the sidewalk. After some discussion, Council agreed to try milling the corner and evaluate the effectiveness.

Council went into an executive session at 9:55 p.m. to discuss ongoing contract negotiations. Mayor Jackson left the meeting.

Council reconvened at 10:35 p.m.

Mr. Brothers motioned to approve the collective bargaining agreement with the Public Works Employees as presented. Mr. Rape seconded and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:36 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett  
Borough Manager