

Rochester Borough Council
 Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building
 January 17, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Present: Vice-President Don Brothers, Rico Elmore, David Alford, Sam Piccinini, Toni Bucher, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Paul Steff, Sergeant Dawn Shane, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Jodi Hemer

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

Persons in Attendance:

Wes Hill asked Council what the status of the Police Chief was. Mr. Elmore stated that the Police Chief is on administrative leave until March. Mr. Hill asked if Council was planning to hire a new Police Chief since there were funds allocated in the 2023 budget. Mr. Elmore stated that Council would be continuing with the Sergeant in charge for now and Manager Barrett stated that all the funds allocated in the 2023 budget for Police Chief are for the salary of the current Police Chief who is on administrative leave.

John Moore, representing the Rochester Little Lady Rams Basketball Organization, discussed the basketball program and the needs facing the program. He asked if Council would consider supporting the program. After some discussion, Mr. Alford motioned to approve a \$250 donation to the organization. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

Kristy Waldroup, President of the Rochester Area Baseball & Softball Association, discussed team sponsorships, the condition of the upper ballfield and the difficulties with football playing on this field. After some discussion, Ms. Waldroup was asked to get a quote for refurbishing the upper field and the Borough would look to see if there were any stipulations placed on this property regulating its use.

Action Items:

Mr. Elmore motioned to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2022 regular Council meeting as presented. Mrs. Bucher seconded and the motion carried.

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

BILLS:

Gen. Fund – Ck# 11690–11744 – totaling \$237,688.69.

Payroll (12/23, 1/6) – Ck# 5505-5532 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$125,541.97.

Council received letters of resignation from Ben Rader and Ron Becker resigning their seats on Council. Mr. Elmore motioned to accept the letters of resignation. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Elmore motioned to approve and adopt resolution 2023-02 and

resolution 2023-03 appointing Chad Rape and Renee Simmons respectively, to fill the 2 vacant Council seats. Mr. Brothers seconded and the motion carried.

Bank Signatures – Mr. Rader and Mr. Becker were signatures on the Borough’s bank accounts. Two signatures are required on each check. Currently, Mrs. Hemer is the only active signature. Council needs to change the required signatures to one and/or add additional signatures to the accounts. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to keep Mrs. Hemer as a signature on all accounts and add Mr. Brothers and Mrs. Simmons as signatures on all accounts. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, Resolution 2023-01 establishing an Intergovernmental Emergency Cooperation Agreement between the three Rochester’s to delegate municipal powers to one local Emergency Management Coordinator for the implementation of local emergency services provided for under the Pennsylvania Emergency Services code 35 PA.C.S, Section 7101. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve and adopt Resolution 2023-01 as presented. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, information from the Beaver County Regional Council of Governments (COG). Rochester Borough is a member of the COG. Council needs to appoint a delegate and an alternate to be the Borough’s representatives at their meetings. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to appoint Mr. Elmore as the delegate and Mrs. Simmons as the alternate. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a proposal from the Middle Department Inspection Agency (MDIA) to assume the Building Code Official’s responsibilities as well as keeping the third-party plan review and inspection duties. Also received is a proposal from Owen Pella to assume the Zoning Officer’s duties. Both proposals together would be needed to meet most of the requirements for Building Code Official and Zoning Officer. Council also received a proposal from KLH Engineers/HMT & Associates to provide both Building Code Official and Zoning Officer services. These proposals were received to fill the duties left vacant by the discontinuance of the New Brighton Code Department. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to appoint Mr. Pella as the Borough’s Zoning Officer and MDIA as the Borough’s Building Code Official. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a 2021 and 2022 invoice from Rochester Township for 50% of the annual cost for the fire department’s incentive program. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve payment of the 2022 incentive program invoice and table the 2021 invoice for possible future discussion. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, the 2023 proposed fee schedule from MDIA for various plan reviews and inspections they provide. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to accept and approve the MDIA 2023 fee schedule as presented. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a draft newspaper advertisement inviting persons to apply to the Civil Service Commission to take a competitive exam for eligibility to be considered for a position as a full-time police officer. The Sergeant is asking if Council is interested in offering some kind of incentive/retention bonus if a successful applicant is subsequently offered and accepts a full-time position. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to hire 2 full-time police officers and to approve and authorize a hiring incentive bonus of \$5,000 to the 2 successful candidates with a 2-year minimum commitment. The bonus would be paid after the candidate successfully completes the field training and is cleared by the Sergeant. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, the job description for code enforcement provided by Solicitor Steff. This position would enforce, but not limited to, property maintenance issues such as high grass and accumulated garbage, and work with the Borough office on landlord registration and garbage citations as needed, and the mechanical device registration and invoicing. After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to approve and adopt the job description as presented. Mrs. Bucher seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Alford motioned to appoint John Farmer as the Code Officer for this position. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

Reappointments: current terms expired December 31, 2022

- i. Grant Farmer – 4-year term – Planning Commission 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2026
- ii. Jessica Howe – 3-year term – Zoning Hearing Board 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2025
- iii. Ted Hansen – 6-year term – Civil Service Commission 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2028

After some discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to approve and appoint the above members as presented. Mrs. Bucher seconded and the motion carried.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the December 8, 2022 minutes of the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority meeting.

Council received for their review, the Tax Collector's certification returning the uncollected real estate taxes for 2022. These uncollected taxes will be given to the Beaver County Tax Claim Bureau for delinquent collection.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration

Council received for their review, the Expense & Revenue report for the period January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

Public Safety – Don Brothers, Chairperson

There was discussion regarding a bad sidewalk on Adams Street and Connecticut Avenue and the collapsed wall and sidewalk at the intersection of Jackson Street and Connecticut Avenue. After some discussion, The Solicitor will work with the Code Officer to address these items.

There was discussion regarding residents putting their garbage out too early. The ordinance will be reviewed for enforcement measures.

It was noted that Columbia Gas was replacing their main gas line on Hinds Street as well as along some of the connecting streets.

Public Works – Jodi Hemer, Chairperson

There was nothing to report.

Recreation

There was nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson stated that there was an open hole in the sidewalk on Deer Lane. It was noted that there used to be a fire hydrant at this location and the contractor repairing the sidewalk following the electric pole replacement left this opening assuming the hydrant was going to be replaced. The Manager stated that he spoke with the Beaver Falls Municipal Authority (BFMA) and they were not intending to replace the hydrant. The Manager was asked to see if there was an agreement with the BFMA identifying how and when hydrants would be replaced.

Mayor Jackson noted the condition of the parking area off of Brighton Avenue and adjacent to Connecticut Avenue. Manager Barrett stated that this area was still on the books as part of Jackson Street. He and the Borough Engineer have this area on the next paving program to be resurfaced.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Steff had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

There was nothing to report.

Police Report:

Council received for their review, the December 2022 Police Department report.

Sergeant Shane stated that she was still working on getting quotes to replace the one door which needs replaced and remodeling the bathrooms.

Fire Chief's Report:

Council received for their review, the December 2022 Fire Department report and the 2022 Annual Fire Department Report along with the list of newly elected officers.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Council received for their review, the December 2022 Treasurer's Report.

Old Business/New Business:

Council, the Mayor, and the Solicitor received the State Ethics Commission Statement of Financial Interests form which is to be completed for the year 2022 and returned to the Manager's office by May 1, 2023.

Mayor Jackson swore in the 2 new Council members, Chad Rape and Renee Simmons. They both completed the affidavit of residency and oath of office forms and took their seats on Council.

Council will need to address the vacant officer position of Council President. Mr. Piccinini nominated Don Brothers for Council President. Mrs. Bucher seconded and all were in favor. Mr. Elmore nominated Dave Alford for Council Vice-President. Mr. Piccinini seconded and all were in favor. Mr. Brothers stated he would work on committee assignments with so many recent changes in Council.

Council went into an executive session to discuss union and non-union employment agreements for 2023 at 9:17 p.m.

Council reconvened at 10:50 p.m.

After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini and Mr. Elmore were appointed to be Council's representatives in discussions with Rochester Township and discussing a possible regional police department.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett
Borough Manager