

Rochester Borough Council
Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building
June 19, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President Don Brothers, Vice-President David Alford, Sam Piccinini, Renee Simmons, Jodi Hemer, Toni Bucher, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Paul Steff, Sergeant Dawn Shane, Code Officer Farmer, Zoning Officer Patrick McGuire, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Chad Rape, Rico Elmore, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III

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

Persons in Attendance:

Essex Law stated that he had submitted an employment application at the last Council meeting. Mr. Law stated a new employee was hired and asked about his application. Mr. Piccinini stated that Council approved hiring an additional full-time public works employee and up to 2 additional part-time employees. Council also gave the Manager and Road Foreman the discretion to hire as they see fit. Mr. Law stated that he wanted to see all the applications the Borough had. Mr. Law was told to submit a right to know request for any documents he would like to see.

Susan Dierdorf thanked Mr. Piccinini and Council for their help in facilitating the sale of her building.

John Drumm, Drumm & Sons, stated that he is completing work in the police department and wanted to make Council aware of several issues. The first was a leak that appears to be coming from the roof or somewhere above when it rains. Council asked Mr. Drumm to investigate and fix the leak. Second, the air circulation is confined to the area between the drop ceiling and the original ceiling. With limited ability to get outside air, it keeps recirculating the same air over and over. Council asked Mr. Drumm to provide a quote to rectify situation.

Kem Majors updated Council on his hotel project. He has received the final occupancy permit and is fully operational. He thanked Council for their help in granting a waiver from the required parking regulations.

Robert Vasques, 433 New York Avenue, stated that 422 New York Avenue has overgrown vegetation in the back yard and they continually use New York Avenue as a drag strip for their motorcycle. Code Officer Farmer stated that he is aware of the overgrown vegetation and has begun the enforcement process. Mr. Vasques was advised to call the police when the neighbor is racing his motorcycle up and down the street.

A gentleman addressed Council about a fundraiser they are organizing to help the daughter of a woman who was killed on Brighton Avenue a short time ago. The event would take place on August 19th from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Brighton Avenue. They are organizing a motorcycle run which will start and end on Brighton Avenue. They are asking to have Brighton Avenue closed for their event. Council agreed and asked Sergeant Shane to apply for the PennDOT permit to close the street.

Gene Matsook and Jon O'Data asked if something could be done about the excessive use of fireworks in their neighborhood. They are loud and they go late into the evening. Mr. Matsook and Mr. O'Data were advised to call the police when this happens so the officers have a chance to find out where the fireworks are being set off.

Ben Rader, 189 George Street, stated that the Previous Council had begun the process of honoring Howard Howe by naming the Girard Lock Park in his name. He stated that a formal dedication was never completed and asked that this be done soon since Mr. Howe is in ill health. Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve the final dedication plans previously considered for Howard Howe. Mrs. Simmons seconded and the motion carried. Mr. Rader noted an issue with the intersection of Harmony Avenue and Monroe Street. People go through the stop sign on Monroe Street to get a better look for traffic coming down Harmony Avenue. After some discussion, the Road Foreman was asked to replace a mirror and sign that was previously installed to assist with the sightline and notice of oncoming traffic. Mr. Rader encouraged the Council to begin utilizing the riverfront area for event now that the lease agreement has expired with Marion Hill.

Mr. & Mrs. Laure, 381 Ohio Avenue, stated that 379 Ohio Avenue has been abandoned for years and has become a hazard to the neighborhood. After some discussion, Council asked Code Officer McGuire to begin the enforcement process to get this property up to code.

Lena Michalik, 355 Clay Street, asked Council for an on-street handicap parking space. She has problems getting around and the neighbors are constantly parking in front of her house when they have parking in the rear they could use. Council asked Sergeant Shane speak with the neighbors and Council would table this for now.

Nate and Mark Kopsack, Beaver County PUSH/BOOM, updated Council on the BOOM event scheduled for June 24th and noted the importance of Rochester in this event. They stated that the coming years are expected to grow exponentially and Rochester should position themselves to take advantage of this opportunity. They thanked the Council and Manager for their cooperation in helping facilitate the logistical needs for the fireworks display.

Action Items:

Mr. Alford motioned to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2023 regular Council meeting as presented. Mrs. Hemer seconded and the motion carried.

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

BILLS:

Gen. Fund – Ck# 11972–12030 – totaling \$99,764.21.

Payroll (5/26, 6/9) – Ck# 5623-5667 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$105,304.82.

Council received for their review and consideration, a request from the Salvation Army for an on-street handicap parking space for 432 Harmony Avenue. Council took no action on this request.

Council received for their review and consideration, a request from Mayor Jackson to attend the Mayors' Association Conference and for a rental car to attend the conference. After some discussion, Mrs. Hemer motioned to approve the Borough paying for the registration, hotel and car rental. Mr. Jackson stated he would cover any expense outside the room and car rental for his spouse. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, Ordinance 01-2023, amending Chapter 24, Manager, to modify and clarify the duties of the Borough Manager. Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve and adopt Ordinance 01-2023 as presented. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, 2 quotes for alarm services for the Borough offices: Knighthawk Alarm Services in the amount of \$295 for upgrades and \$499 for the first year's monitoring fee; Monitronics in the amount of \$3,191 for installation and \$48.44 per month for monitoring fee. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to award the alarm services to Knighthawk Alarm Services as quoted. Mrs. Hemer seconded and the motion carried.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the May 11, 2023 meeting of the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority.

Council received for their information, an invitation to attend the Beaver County Regional COG Local Government Conference to be held on August 24th at the Hilton Garden Inn, Center Township.

Council discussed the planning commission's availability and membership. The Manager stated that there is currently only one member. Council will look to find members.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration – Chad Rape, Chairperson

Council received for their review, the Expense and Revenue Report from January 1, 2023 through June 13, 2023.

Public Safety – Rico Elmore, Chairperson

There was nothing to report in Mr. Elmore's absence.

Police Department Report – Mr. Piccinini brought up the need for some supplies in securing and working a crime scene. Council told Sergeant Shane to order what she needs. Sergeant Shane stated that the officers were recently qualified at the gun range for their annual certification by Mr. Piccinini and the Mayor attended as well. Sergeant Shane stated that she is still soliciting bids for some of the other items discussed.

Public Works – Toni Bucher, Chairperson

Mr. Brothers introduced Scott Bailey who was hired June 12, 2023 as a full-time public works employee to fill the opening Council approved last meeting.

Recreation – Renee Simmons, Chairperson

Mrs. Simmons discussed future events her committee is developing. She will provide more details as they become available.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson stated he spoke with some residents at 330 Connecticut Avenue and they are concerned about some drug activity taking place in the building. Sergeant Shane stated that they have been monitoring this location and are working on identifying the specific location of the activity.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Steff had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

Council received for their review, the May 2023 Code Officer's report and the Zoning/Code Officer's report. Mr. McGuire explained his process to Council. There was discussion about his attendance at Council's regular meetings. Mr. McGuire will attend periodically as his schedule permits.

Fire Chief's Report:

Council received for their review, the May 2023 Fire Department report.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Council received for their review, the May 2023 Treasurer's Report.

Old Business/New Business:

Mr. Piccinini discussed some proposed work at the stage area on the riverfront. He provided a 2-phase paving quote for proposed paving work. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini was advised that this work would have to be advertised for bids due to exceeding the \$22,500 bidding threshold established for Borough's. Mr. Piccinini will contact the Borough Engineer to have bid documents developed. There was discussion about Marion Hill being responsible for replacing the fence along the waters edge of the stage platform. It was believed that they removed the fence while utilizing this area under their 10-year lease with the Borough. There was also discussion about them repairing the stage as well. The Manager was asked to contact Marion Hill regarding these items.

Council received a notice regarding a Fire Department Regionalization meeting scheduled for Thursday, July 13 at 6:00 p.m. at the Daugherty Township Municipal Building. Departments invited were; Daugherty Township, Pulaski Township, New Brighton Borough, Fallston Borough, Bridgewater Borough, Rochester Borough/Township, East Rochester Borough and Freedom Borough.

Council received an invitation from the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority to tour the new sewage treatment facility. The tour is scheduled for Thursday July 13, at 6:00 p.m. at the treatment facility, 200 Water Street.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett
Borough Manager