

Rochester Borough Council  
Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building  
August 22, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President Benjamin Rader, Vice-President Don Brothers, Brandy Dietrich, Marjorie White, Ron Becker, Rico Elmore, Jodi Hemer, David Alford, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Bernie Rabik, Police Chief Frank Mercier, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Fire Chief Mike Mamone III, Code Officer Peggy Griffith

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

Mr. Rader stated that Council is going into an executive session to discuss a police personnel matter. Council went into an executive session at 6:31 p.m.

Council reconvened at 6:54 p.m.

Mr. Brothers motioned to approve the employment agreement between the Borough and the Police Chief as presented and to authorize the President of Council and Manager to sign the agreement. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 6-2 with Mrs. White and Mrs. Hemer voting no.

Persons in Attendance:

A resident from Coolage Way stated that Utah Way between Reno Street and Brown Street is in bad condition. She also asked about why there is no parking on the one side of Utah Way. After some discussion, Mr. Rader stated that Council would review the matter.

Candy Farmer, Webster Street, expressed her concern with the lack of police officers per shift. Her husband is Officer Farmer and she is concerned for his safety. Chief Mercier explained the personnel situation, the open shifts, the overtime required, and some scheduling changes he imposed to address all the issues in trying to provide police services in the best interest of the residents, the officers and the Borough.

Beth Welsh, 405 Connecticut Avenue, expressed her concerns with several sections in the Stormwater Ordinance adopted last month. Manager Barrett stated that the draft ordinance was provided by the Engineer for the Rochester Borough Sewer & Maintenance Authority to keep the Borough compliant with recent change in the MS4 program. These stormwater requirements are mandated by the PA Dept. of Environmental Protection.

Jarod Carey had a repository request for Council to consider. Mr. Carey was told there is an agreement explaining certain requirements when making a repository request. Manager Barrett provided an agreement and Mr. Carey was told to follow the steps outlined in the agreement.

Michael Brdar, asked Council for relief from garbage bills he incurred in 2019. He recently received a citation for non-payment of these fees and explained why he felt Council should provide relief from these fees. After some discussion, Mr. Rader stated that Council would not address the garbage fees and that he needs to make his case to the Magistrate for why he feels he is entitled to relief.

Brian Wakefield, Baseball/Softball Association, stated that he was a new board member and that he was just trying to get a better understanding of the relationship between the Borough and the Association regarding the use and upkeep of the Connecticut Avenue ballfields. After some discussion, Mr. Wakefield will get in contact with the Manager to discuss the current arrangements.

Paul Young expressed his concerns with the number of blighted properties and empty store fronts in Rochester.

#### Action Items:

Mr. Brothers motioned to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2022 regular Council meeting as presented. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

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

#### BILLS:

Gen. Fund – Ck# 11406–11467 – totaling \$477,300.87.

Payroll (7/22, 8/5, 8/19) – Ck# 5345-5384 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$137,667.34.

Resolution 2022-04 – authorizing and approving an Intermunicipal Agreement, between Rochester Borough, Rochester Township and East Rochester Borough, creating the Rochester Area Regional Emergency Management Agency. After some discussion, Mrs. Dietrich motioned to approve and adopt Resolution 2022-04 as presented. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried.

Rochester Area Regional Emergency Management Agency Intermunicipal Agreement. Mr. Alford motioned to approve the agreement and authorize the President of Council and Manager to sign the agreement as presented. Mr. Brothers seconded and the motion carried. Council appointed Mr. Elmore as the Borough's representative on the Executive Committee to this new agency.

Council received for their review and consideration, the 2023 Police Pension Plan Minimum Municipal Obligation. Total funding required is \$325,618. After some discussion, Mr. Becker motioned to accept and approve the 2023 MMO as presented. Mr. Alford seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a request from the Rochester Salvation Army for a monetary donation to support the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Back to School Bash. This event is designed to provide needed school supplies to the children for the upcoming school year. Council took no action since the event had already taken place.

Review Items:

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

Council received for their review, the meeting notes of the July 12, 2022 Rochester Borough Development Corporation meeting.

Council received for their review, a letter from The Father's House thanking Council for addressing their storm water run-off problem from the adjacent Borough alley.

Committee Reports:Public Administration – Ron Becker, Chairperson

Council received for their review, the Expense & Revenue report for the period January 1, 2022 through August 15, 2022.

Council received for their review, a letter from the Beaver County Commissioners notifying the Borough that the County would be awarding Rochester additional funding from their ARPA funds since Rochester has been designated a disproportionately impacted community as defined by the federal regulations. Rochester must submit proposed projects to the County for their review and approval. These projects must meet the guidelines under the Final Rule as set by the Federal Treasury. Manager Barrett discussed three possible project: Improving recreation facilities, fountain park and riverfront park; upgrading HVAC in the Municipal Building and Library; and improve blighted properties. The Manager will get cost estimates and prepare applications.

Public Safety – Don Brothers, Chairperson

Council received for their review, a letter from New Sewickley Township notifying Rochester Township and the Borough that they are still interested in exploring a regional police department or multi-municipal police contracting. The Public Safety Committee will represent the Borough when a meeting has been established to continue discussions.

Council received for their review and consideration, a letter from New Sewickley Township. The letter included a proposal establishing a 5-year annual cost for providing police services to Rochester Borough with contract language to be determined. After some discussion, The Public Safety Committee will review the costs provided and report back to Council with a recommendation.

There was no new information regarding the fallen wall at the corner of Jackson Street and Connecticut Avenue. The Code Officer will be asked to update Council at the next meeting.

Council expressed their concerns about the condition of the road entering the Bridgewater-Rochester Bridge. PennDOT will be contacted.

Public Works – Jodi Hemer, Chairperson

Mrs. Hemer stated that she spoke with the Road Foreman and expressed a growing need to hire an additional full-time public works employee. There is too much work for one person and supplementing with part-time help isn't adequately addressing the need.

Recreation – Brandy Dietrich, Chairperson

Mrs. Dietrich noted that the next Riverfront Committee meeting is scheduled for September 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the riverfront.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson stated that the little park at the intersection of Brighton Avenue and Pleasant Street is in bad condition. Council will review for possible improvements.

Mayor Jackson stated that he would like an executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Rabik had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

Council received for their review, the July 2022 Code Officer's Report.

Police Chief's Report:

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

Fire Chief's Report:

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

Council discussed business permits and occupancy in light of the recent fire on Brighton Avenue.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

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

Manager Barrett noted the need to address the garbage contract which will expire at the end of the year. There was discussion about the contractor taking over billing for the service, a possible discount for seniors and the bidding process. The Police Chief expressed his concern regarding the contractor taking over billing. If a resident doesn't pay their bill the contractor will

simply stop the service. Then garbage will accumulate causing a new problem. After some discussion, Mrs. White and Mrs. Hemer will work with the Manager to develop specifications for bidding out this service.

Old Business/New Business:

Mr. Rader read a thank you from the Becker's for Council's gift related to the passing of Mrs. Becker's mother.

Council went into an executive session at 8:56 p.m.

Council reconvened at 9:32 p.m.

Mr. Elmore motioned to remove Mr. Rabik as the Borough's Solicitor effective immediately. Mrs. Hemer seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 5-3 with Mr. Brothers, Mr. Becker and Mrs. Dietrich voting no. Council members were instructed to provide the Manager with any potential candidates they would like to propose. The Manager will then set up interviews for next week.

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett  
Borough Manager