

Rochester Borough Council  
 Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building  
 February 17, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President David Alford, Vice-President Toni Bucher, Don Brothers, Rico Elmore, Renee Simmons, Jodi Hemer, Sam Piccinini, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Paul Steff, Sergeant Dawn Shane, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Chad Rape, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III

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

Persons in Attendance:

Sandra Klezia, Beaver County Can Sing, discussed their event scheduled for April 26<sup>th</sup>. They have reserved the Rochester High School Auditorium as a back-up in case the event outgrows the Borough's auditorium capacity. Mr. Piccinini stated they would like to utilize a cash app to accept payments for tickets and entry fees. A requirement for a cash app is to link it to a debit card for payments to be accepted. He asked if Council would be willing to get a debit card to utilize this service. After much discussion, Mr. Elmore motioned to authorize one of the signers to secure a debit card through 1<sup>st</sup> Commonwealth Bank. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 6-1 with Ms. Simmons voting no.

Lori Anthony, Rochester Borough Development Corporation (RBDC), inquired about the status of the vacant building ordinance. Solicitor Steff stated that he is distributing a draft to Council tonight for their review. There are a number of areas to be discussed and clarified by Council. Once a final draft is developed, the ordinance will be advertised for adoption at the next regular meeting. The process could take 60 to 90 days.

Action Items:

Mrs. Hemer motioned to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2025 regular Council meeting as presented. Mrs. Bucher seconded and the motion carried.

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

**BILLS:**

Gen. Fund – Ck# 13433–13475 – totaling \$73,761.80.

Payroll (1/31, 2/14) – Ck# 6057-6071 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$114,153.47.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the Revenue & Expense Report – January 1, 2025 through February 14, 2025.

Council received for their review, the Auditor General's Compliance Audit of the Police Pension Plan covering 2019 through 2023.

Council received for their review, the Auditor General's Compliance Audit of the Non-Uniform Pension Plan covering 2019 through 2023.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration – Chad Rape, Chairperson

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

Public Safety – Rico Elmore, Chairperson

Mr. Elmore stated that he has a meeting scheduled for tomorrow with the Fire Department to continue ongoing discussions regarding budget and operations. Mr. Elmore brought up for discussion, the disposition of the Borough's fire station building which the fire department no longer utilizes. After some discussion, this topic will be put on the agenda for the March meeting to discuss whether to sell, rent, or retain the building.

Police Department Report – Sergeant Shane provided a letter of resignation effective February 27, 2025, from Officer Roach who is accepting a position with another department. There was some discussion regarding the \$5,000 signing bonus he will be required to repay since he did not stay the mandatory 2-years for accepting the bonus. Sergeant Shane submitted a retirement letter for Officer Farmer effective July 1, 2025. Officer Farmer will then be entering the DROP and continuing his employment under that program. Sergeant Shane submitted her DROP Election Form which states she will be retiring effective May 6, 2025 then entering the DROP and continuing her employment until May 6, 2030 under that program. Sergeant Shane stated that she is scheduling a Civil Service exam to develop a list of candidates for a full-time Police Officer position. She asked Council if she could offer a \$5,000 signing bonus as done the previous 2 exams. She felt since Officer Roach would be repaying his bonus money, it could be used for this exam. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve the \$5,000 signing bonus offer for this exam. Mr. Elmore seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call 6-1 with Mr. Alford voting no.

Public Works – Toni Bucher, Chairperson

Mrs. Bucher asked about the status of the front steps and why they were still closed off. Manager Barrett stated that the steps would be closed during the winter months for safety and time constraints.

Recreation – Renee Simmons, Chairperson

Ms. Simmons had nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson had nothing to report

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Steff had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

There was nothing to report.

Fire Chief's Report:

Council received for their review, the January 2025 Fire Department report.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Council received for their review, the January 2025 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 2024 and returned to the Manager's office by May 1, 2025.

Mrs. Bucher stated the Reclaim Project has amended their requirement of the Borough owning a property before a reclaim project could be utilized. The Manager was asked to contact the 2 owners of the houses that caught fire on E. Washington Street to see if they would like to participate in this program.

Mr. Alford stated that Council would not be accepting the Billy the Kid Event proposed in December due to a lack of interest. There was discussion about finding an event promoter to organize and promote events to utilize the riverfront park and event center.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. and Council went into executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett  
Borough Manager