

Rochester Borough Council
Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building
July 20, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President Benjamin Rader, Vice-President Marjorie White, Brandy Dietrich, Ron Becker, Martin Knafelc, Donna Short, Don Brothers, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Bernie Rabik, Police Chief Frank Mercier, Code Officer Peggy Griffith, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Howard Howe

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

Persons in Attendance:

Eileen Duin asked how a person could purchase condemned houses. Mr. Rader stated that many of the condemned houses are on the Beaver County Repository and anyone is permitted to purchase those properties through the Beaver County Assessment office.

Dan Miller, Rochester Zoning Hearing Board, stated that the Board recently held a hearing for a sign variance. The Board ruled in favor of the applicant because they felt the zoning ordinance did not regulate this type of sign. The Board is recommending that Council review and update the sign regulations. After some discussion, Council agreed to ask the Planning Commission to review the sign regulations and report back with any recommendations they feel are necessary.

Action Items:

Mrs. White motioned to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2020 regular meeting and stormwater meeting as presented. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Mrs. White had a question regarding 2 bills. The Police Chief explained what the bills were for. Mrs. Dietrich motioned to pay all approved bills as submitted. Mr. Brothers seconded and the motion carried.

BILLS:

Gen. Fund – Ck# 9913–9985 – totaling \$217,367.44.

Payroll (6/26, 7/10) – Ck# 4724-4747 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$103,599.44.

Gary Slyman is requesting Council's consent to purchase 454 Riverview Street from the Beaver County Repository. Mr. Slyman stated that he was intending to tear down the house and keep the garage as well as put up a fence. Mr. Slyman was told that a garage could not be a stand-alone structure because it is considered an accessory structure to a principle structure. He would have to be granted a variance for that use. After some discussion, Mr. Knafelc motioned to approve consent. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

John and Elizabeth Lane are requesting Council's consent to purchase 496 E. Washington Street from the Beaver County Repository. Mrs. Lane stated that this was an empty lot and they intended to consolidate it with their adjacent property. After some discussion, Mr. Brothers motioned to approve consent. Mrs. Dietrich seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call – 7-0, all members voted yes.

Engagement letter from The Phoenix Benefits Group for Actuarial Services for 2020-2021 valuation cycle. After some discussion, Mr. Becker motioned to accept and approve the engagement letter as presented. Mr. Brothers seconded and the motion carried.

Ordinance 03-2020 – Amending Ordinance 01-06; Registration and Licensing of Residential Rental Property: adding that the garbage fees and liability insurance must be current before a license can be issued or renewed to the owner or operator of the non-owner-occupied dwelling unit. Mrs. White asked if the Borough could require fire insurance as well. Solicitor Rabik stated that he would see if that is permitted. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to approve and adopt Ordinance 03-2020 as presented. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Lease Agreement – The Sewer & Maintenance Authority would like to lease the old Public Works garage. The Authority has provided a draft agreement for Council's consideration. After some discussion, Council asked the Public Administration Committee to review the agreement and report back with any recommendations at the next meeting.

The Manager presented Council with 3 quotes from Flashover Fire Apparatus & Equipment Co. totaling \$34,258. The quotes were for fire hose, nozzles and accessories to be replaced on the fire trucks. One quote would be paid for by Rochester Township, one by the Rochester Township Fire Department and the Fire Department was asking if Council would be willing to pay for the 3rd quote totaling \$5,940. These items would be for the fire truck owned by the Borough. Fire Chief Mamone explained the need for these items. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to accept and approve the quote for \$5,940 for fire hose and accessories. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the June 11, 2020 Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority meeting.

Council received for their review, the meeting notes of the June 9, 2020 Rochester Borough Development Corporation meeting.

Council received for their review, a draft ordinance amending ordinance 2-97, Chapter 1, Part 5 – Fire Department. The draft ordinance would repeal Part 5 – Fire Department in its entirety and replace it as attached in the draft ordinance. A resolution establishing fees would be developed at a later date. Also provided was a current copy of Chapter 1, Part 5 for Council's information. Rochester Township is also in the process of developing an ordinance establishing a mitigation fee program for fire services. After some discussion, Solicitor Rabik would contact the Solicitor for Rochester Township to ensure consistency between the two ordinances since the same Fire

Department would be covered by both ordinances. The Solicitor will provide comments and recommendations at the next meeting.

Council received for their review, a letter from the Borough of Baden asking if Council would be interested in working with Baden Borough to see if a consolidation of the police departments could provide a better service at a reasonable cost for the 2 municipalities and also look for other municipalities that may be interested in consolidating their police departments. After some discussion, Mr. Brothers motioned to approve entering into discussions with Baden Borough and other potential municipalities to review and consider the consolidation of Police Departments.

Chief Mercier stated that he has recently been approached by Freedom Borough to see if Rochester Borough would be interested in submitting a proposal to Freedom Council for providing police services to Freedom Borough. The service would be expected to start January 1, 2021. After some discussion, Mrs. Short motioned to authorize the Public Safety Committee to develop a proposal for police services for Freedom Borough for Council to review and consider. Mr. Brothers seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review, a letter from the PA DEP informing the Borough that they have concluded their clean-up of hazardous chemicals at the old Beaver Valley Bowl site. Code Officer Griffith stated that she will be setting up an inspection of the building to determine the status for occupancy.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration – Ron Becker, Chairperson

The Expense & Revenue report covering January 1, 2020 through July 9, 2020 was presented for Council's review.

Heart & Soul Program – the Team is holding an in-person meeting on July 22nd at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium. Manager Barrett stated that the Team will be conducting an exercise to identify the make-up of residents and groups in the community to develop an outreach plan to engage the residents for feedback and comments. The Manager asked Council members to make every effort to attend this meeting.

Public Safety – Don Brothers, Chairperson

Mr. Brothers asked about having the traffic lines painted on Virginia Avenue. The Manager stated that he would discuss this with the Public Works employee and schedule a time to have this done.

Public Works – Howard Howe, Chairperson

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

Recreation – Brandy Dietrich, Chairperson

Mrs. Dietrich had nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson stated that he discussed his issues with Representative Matzie who sent a letter to Mr. Rader. Mr. Rader acknowledged that he had received a letter from Representative Matzie. Mayor Jackson further discussed his issues with the Police Department.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Rabik had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

Code Officer Griffith presented the June 2020 Code Officer's Report for Council's review. Mrs. Griffith noted the Zoning Hearing Board's decision on the variance request regarding the Smokehouse sign. She also advised Council that the old church at 407 Jackson Street has been demolished.

Council received for their review, the March - June 15 and June 16 – July 20, rental inspection reports.

Police Chief's Report:

Chief Mercier presented the June 2020 Police Department report and code enforcement report for Council's review. Chief Mercier reviewed several items from the reports.

Chief Mercier asked for an executive session to discuss a personnel matter with Council.

Fire Chief's Report:

Chief Mamone presented the June 2020 Fire Department report for Council's review. Chief Mamone reviewed several items from the report and told Council if there was anything they would like to see added or changed in the report to please let him know.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Manager Barrett presented the June 2020 Treasurer's report for Council's review.

Manager Barrett stated that Duquesne Light was accepting applications for the 2020 LED Street Light Conversion Program. The Borough has participated in this program for a number of years and the Manager would like to submit an application for this cycle as well. The cost is the same, \$109 per light conversion. The application is for 10 lights and the municipalities are permitted to submit a second application for an additional 10 lights that Duquesne Light would

approve if the level of participation allows them to. After some discussion, Council agreed to have the Manager submit 2 applications for 10 lights each.

Manager Barrett asked Council if they would consider working with residents adjacent to abandoned properties to facilitate the purchase of the abandoned property by the adjacent property owner(s). It would be an opportunity to get these nuisance properties in the hands of residents who would maintain the property and pay the taxes. After some discussion, Council agreed to let the Manager work with the Solicitor and residents to see if the purchase of abandoned properties could be facilitated.

Old Business/New Business:

Mr. Becker asked about the park project. Manager Barrett stated that the project is mostly completed. The contractor is waiting on the granite stones to be inscribed so that they can be permanently installed.

Council went into executive session at 7:43 p.m.

Mayor Jackson left the executive session at 7:51 p.m.

Council reconvened at 8:52 p.m.

The meeting adjourned 8:53 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett
Borough Manager