

Rochester Borough Council
Rescheduled Regular Meeting in Council Chambers
July 29, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

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

Absent: None

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

Persons in Attendance:

Frank Martocci, HAP Enterprises, expressed HAP's need to expand their facility at 351 Rhode Island Avenue. Mr. Martocci stated that HAP has a sales agreement in place with the property owner directly across Franklin Way. HAP's intention is to tear the house down on this lot and construct a garage for needed storage. The Borough's zoning regulations prohibit an accessory building on a stand-alone lot. Therefore, HAP is asking if Council would consider vacating the one block of Franklin Way from Jefferson Street to Mildew Way. This would allow HAP to consolidate the two lots into one which would then permit them to construct this accessory building. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to approve the request to vacate the one block of Franklin Way and authorize the Solicitor to begin the process for Council to permanently vacate this portion of Franklin Way. Mr. Brothers seconded and the motion carried 8-0. Roll Call – all member voted yes.

Action Items:

Mr. Becker motioned to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2019 stormwater meeting and regular Council meeting as presented. Mr. Howe seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Becker motioned to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2019 stormwater meeting and regular Council meeting as presented. Mr. Howe seconded and the motion carried.

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

BILLS:

Gen. Fund – Ck# 9080–9168 – totaling \$315,233.25.

Payroll (6/28, 7/12, 7/26) – Ck# 4408-4445 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$132,455.49.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the June 13, 2019 Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority meeting.

Council received for their review, the meeting notes of the June 10, 2019 Rochester Borough Development Corporation meeting.

Council received for their review, the June 2019 Fire Department report.

Council received for their information, the agenda for the Beaver County Local Government Conference and events scheduled for July 31st & August 1st. Registration is needed for some of the tours and the Legislative Cruise. Please make your reservations as soon as possible.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration – Ron Becker, Chairperson

Mr. Becker presented the Expense & Revenue report covering January 1, 2019 through July 10, 2019 for Council's review.

Public Safety – Martin Knafelc, Chairperson

Mr. Knafelc noted an abandoned vehicle in his neighborhood. Chief Mercier stated the officers are working to resolve that matter.

Mr. Rader noted the recent chemical fire in Rochester and the need for Council to review the Borough's emergency preparedness to ensure the appropriate people are notified and that the emergency plan provides the necessary steps to ensure public safety. Chief Mercier also noted the need to update protective gear for the officers for these types of emergencies.

Public Works – Howard Howe, Chairperson

Manager Barrett reported that the Borough's Public Works employee has accepted a job offer in New Brighton. He gave a 4 week notice to separate. His last day will be August 23rd. After some discussion, the Manager was asked to advertise this opening and begin accepting applications to consider for this position.

Recreation – Brandy Dietrich, Chairperson

Mrs. Dietrich had nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson stated that Bridgewater Borough expressed an interest in taking the stage located on the riverfront if the Borough was no longer considering to use it. There was some

discussion that this stage was purchased through some grant and may not be available for sale. There was still interest in using this venue at some time in the future.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Rabik noted a recent change to the Sunshine Act which now includes certain security related topics as exceptions to exempt them from public discussion to allow for safety of personnel and facilities.

Code Officer's Report:

The June 2019 Code Report was presented for Council's review.

Code Officer Griffith noted that the Beaver County Mental Health have resolved the legal issues regarding the fallen wall at their location on Brighton Avenue and will begin the process to have the wall removed.

Code Officer Griffith noted a vacancy on the Borough's Planning Commission. She has someone interested in filling this vacancy. Council asked her to have this person submit a letter of interest noting some of his/her qualifications for them to review and consider.

Police Chief's Report:

Chief Mercier reviewed several items in the June 2019 Police Department report.

Chief Mercier noted that the Department's current tasers are near the end of their life. Taser is now offering a package to lease tasers as well as purchasing them. After some discussion, the Chief was asked to get a quote on the 2 options for Council to consider.

Chief Mercier noted recent complaints regarding code enforcement issues. He stated that he is aggressively addressing code violations. Some residents understand and quickly comply but others take advantage of the system to delay abatement of the violation. The law doesn't provide for a quick or permanent resolution. Many of the problem properties are owned by habitual violators because the penalties incurred are not a strong enough deterrent to warrant a change in their behavior. Solicitor Rabik suggested that he and the Chief should meet with the Magisterial District Judge to see if some solution to these repeat offenders can be sought.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Manager Barrett presented the June 2019 Treasurer's report for Council's review.

Manager Barrett asked Council if the Public Administration Committee could begin meeting with the Manager and Code Officer to review the Borough's Fee Schedule. The purpose is to determine if some fees could possibly be reduced to make maintaining properties more affordable for the residents and businesses. Council agreed and Mr. Becker will schedule a meeting in the near future.

Manager Barrett discussed the tree work needed along the Beaver River. The Manager changed the original scope of work to include only the removal of 2 down trees, a broken branch and to remove 1 tree and its broken limbs, pictures of the proposed work were provided. He still only received 1 bid for \$5,600 from Marshall Tree Experts. After some discussion, since the bid was low enough that it did not require additional bids, Mrs. White motioned to accept the bid of \$5,600 from Marshall Tree Experts. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Manager Barrett distributed several pictures of the Library roof for Council's review. The Manager asked Arndt Roofing to take the pictures. Mr. Arndt recommended not replacing the roof. He recommends repairing where needed along the tin roof area, gutters and flashing and then repaint all of the tin areas. The Manager stated that Mr. Arndt was working up a quote for Council to consider.

Manager Barrett distributed several pictures of 2 trees abutting Taylor Way. These were the trees Mr. Perricelli has been expressing his concern the past 2 Council meetings. Manager Barrett stated that the trees may possibly be in the right-of-way of the alley but without a survey he could not definitively say they were. After some discussion, no action was taken. The Manager will continue to review the matter.

Old Business/New Business:

There was no further business.

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett
Borough Manager