Rochester Borough Council

Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building

July 19, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President Benjamin Rader, Vice-President Marjorie White, Don Brothers, Marlin Robinson, Ron Becker, Wes Hill, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Bernie Rabik, Police Chief Frank Mercier, Code Officer Peggy Griffith, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Donna Short, Brandy Dietrich, Fire Chief Mike Mamone III

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

Persons in Attendance:

Lorene Harris, 166 George St, expressed her concerns about the delays in garbage collection, residents not placing their garbage in containers, and several residents putting their trash in the street. Mr. Rader stated that he spoke with a representative from Valley Waste. They have lost a number of drivers and have not been able to get applicants to replace the drivers. They will continue to do their best to try and meet the current collection schedule and will continue their efforts to find additional drivers. Residents are required to put their trash in a contain and place it on the sidewalk. The Borough will continue to inform the residents of these requirements.

A representative from the Rochester Lil Rams Football Organization requested that their termite and twerp teams be permitted to use the Connecticut Avenue ballfield for their practices. The Rochester School District only provides enough space for the Mitey Mites to practice. The organization is not interested in using the empty lot at the corner of Reno Street and Ohio Avenue. They felt there was too much of a risk of a player running into the street and potentially being hit by a car. Last month, the Baseball/Softball Organization stated that they were going to be applying for grants to fix-up the Connecticut Avenue field and asked that football not be allowed to use it for practices because of the damage resulting to the field. There are 3 baseball/softball fields at the Connecticut Avenue site. Two are playable and one is not. After some discussion, Council agreed to let the football organization use the unplayable field for their practices this year. A long-term solution will need to be explored.

William Lane presented a request to purchase 43 Bedford Avenue, Rochester off the Beaver County Repository. The lot is vacant and he owns the adjacent lot. The County and School District have both signed the request form. After some discussion, Mr. Robinson motioned to approve the request. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

Rico Elmore stated that he would like to hold a community event sometime before school starts. He was looking at one of the parks at the round-a-bout or possibly the area where the ballfields are located. He would provide more details as they develop.

Action Items:

Mr. Hill motioned to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2021 stormwater meeting and the June 28, 2021 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# 10683–10720 – totaling $203,235.24.

Payroll (7/9) – Ck# 5021-5036 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling $59,000.01.

Resolution 2021-03 – authorizing the sale of real property owned by Rochester Borough – 313 Deer Lane, tax parcel number 47-002-0509. Mr. Hill motioned to approve and adopt Resolution 2021-03 authorizing the sale of 313 Deer Lane for a minimum bid of $2,000. Mr. Becker seconded and the motion carried.

313 Deer Lane was advertised for sale and that the Borough was accepting bids for the purchase of the property. The Borough received one (1) bid which was from Mr. Albert Ellis, 311 Deer Lane for the bid amount of $2,000. After some discussion, Mr. Brothers motioned to award the bid to Mr. Ellis contingent upon an agreeable closing cost which would be shared 50/50 by the seller and the purchaser. Mr. Robinson seconded and the motion carried.

Council received a letter from Ken Major’s Attorney formally offering as a conditional gift to the Borough, 198 Brighton Avenue, tax parcel 49-002-0802. The existing structure, being condemned, would be demolished and the parcel developed as a public parking lot for the Rochester business district. After some discussion, Mr. Becker motioned to reject Mr. Majors’ offer. Mr. Hill seconded and the motion carried.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the June 10, 2021 Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority meeting.

Council received for their review, a report from the Beaver County Marcellus Awareness Community concerning the chemical reaction incident of July 12-18, 2019 at the old Beaver Valley Bowl building.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration – Ron Becker, Chairperson

The Expense & Revenue report covering January 1, 2021 through July 15, 2021 was presented for Council’s review.

Public Safety – Don Brothers, Chairperson

Mr. Brothers had nothing to report.

Public Works – Marlin Robinson, Chairperson

Mr. Robinson stated that he had a discussion with the Road Foreman and noted that he was looking into the purchase of a “Gator” or something similar to better assist the Road Department in the maintenance and care of the riverfront area. He will provide further details as they are developed.

Recreation – Brandy Dietrich, Chairperson

Mrs. Dietrich had nothing to report.

Mayor’s Report:

Mayor Jackson stated that the library is in need of a new roof and he feels the Borough should look to replace it.

Mayor Jackson asked if the Borough had an emergency evacuation route. Mr. Hill stated that the Borough does not have one.

Solicitor’s Report:

Solicitor Rabik had nothing to report.

Code Officer’s Report:

Council received for their review, the June 2021 Code Officer’s Report.

Code Officer Griffith noted that the Riverview Apartments sale should be finalized by the end of this month. She also noted that she has been in contact with Duquesne Light about dirt running off their property on Delaware Avenue where they are demolishing a building.

Code Officer Griffith stated that Mr. Sylvester, owner of 515 Oregon Avenue, has agreed to give permission for the demolition of the house at 515 Oregon Avenue. Code Officer Griffith will provide this to the Beaver County Community Development Office to have this demolition scheduled through their blight removal program.

Police Chief’s Report:

Chief Mercier presented the June 2021 Police Department Report for Council’s review. Chief Mercier reviewed several items from the report.

Fire Chief’s Report:

The June 2021 Fire Department Report was presented for Council’s review.

Manager Barrett stated that he has received 2 quotes for service to the Borough’s pumper truck from Glick Fire Equipment totaling $5,314.13. The first quote was for various repairs to the pumping system. The second quote was for the inspection and certification of the pumping system. After some discussion, Mr. Hill motioned to approve the 2 quotes following a review of the work to be done. Mr. Robinson seconded and the motion carried.

Manager’s/Treasurer’s Report:

Manager Barrett presented the June 2021 Treasurer’s report for Council’s review.

Manager Barrett stated that the Borough has received the first allocation of funds totaling $180, 031.04 authorized under the ARPA. Manager Barrett stated that he is still reviewing the statutory eligible uses for these funds and will discuss the available options with Council following his review.

Old Business/New Business:

Mrs. White asked about the repairing of Hinds Street and the possibility of refinancing the Borough’s bond. Manager Barrett stated that he has not yet followed up on these items but will do so.

Mrs. White re-stated the need for the Borough to update their comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. Council agreed and the various grant options should be pursued.

Mr. Rader stated that Mr. Solomon has installed a post next to his retaining wall that was continually being hit by vehicles traveling through the alley. He would still like Council to consider passing an ordinance restricting traffic to left turns only when pulling out onto Bedford Avenue. Council will continue to monitor the situation.

Mr. Robinson re-stated that several residents have raised the concern of handicap access at the Tax Collector’s home where she collects the Borough’s and School’s property tax. It was noted that she does have handicap access at the rear entrance of her home but does only have steps in the front. Code Officer Griffith will review the matter.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett

Borough Manager