

Rochester Borough Council  
Regular Meeting in Council Chambers  
August 19, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President Benjamin Rader, Vice-President Brandy Dietrich, Howard Howe, 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: Ron Becker

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

Persons in Attendance:

Greg Douglas, Solicitor for the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority, discussed the request for permission to temporarily store historic fill material generated from the Authority's project on the Borough's property during their sewer plant upgrade project. A soil analysis and other information was provided for Council's review. Steve Gerritsen, a professional geologist, reviewed the results from the soil analysis. There was discussion regarding any health risks to the residents. The soil sampling did not disclose the presence of any hazardous materials and the levels of other elements detected in the soil did not represent any risk to human health. The length of time to store the material is undetermined at this time but State regulations would allow a maximum of 1 year so the material would need to be removed within one year from the start date. The project is expected to take 2 years to complete. Solicitor Rabik stated that he would insist that the Authority provide a hold harmless letter from the Authority to the Borough as a part of the agreement so that the Authority assumes all liability for the material while it is being stored on the Borough's property. Solicitor Douglas stated that the Authority would be agreeable to that. After some discussion, Mrs. Short motioned to approve the Authority's request to temporarily store the excavated historic fill on the Borough's property contingent upon the Authority providing a hold harmless letter to the Borough. Mr. Howe seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call: all members voted yes. Once the final plan has been approved by the Authority and DEP the 2 Solicitors will develop a written agreement for this arrangement.

Marlin Robinson stated the alley between Batchelor Street and Park Street is in need of repair. Also, the street name sign at Batchelor Street and Harmony Avenue is bent and one of the stop signs there is leaning as well. Manager Barrett will review the matter.

Gene Zook discussed the potential for development along the riverfront. Given the recent chemical incident at the old Beaver Valley Bowl building, he was not sure what the fate of that building would be. He expressed his desire to see the old Beaver Valley Bowl building remain in tacked and not be demolished.

Tony Perricelli, 451 E. Washington Street, raised concerns regarding a retaining wall in is neighborhood. Code Officer Griffith stated that she was aware of the situation and will address it.

Zac Burke, 520 Jackson Street, stated that he was interested in filling the vacancy on the Borough's Planning Commission. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to appoint Mr. Burke to the Planning Commission. Mrs. Dietrich seconded and the motion carried.

Chuck Thomas, Pastor at the Free Methodist Church, just wanted to introduce himself and let Council know that he was interested in helping the community in any way.

Action Items:

Mrs. Short motioned to approve the minutes of the July 29, 2019 rescheduled regular Council meeting as presented. Mrs. Dietrich seconded and the motion carried.

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

**BILLS:**

Gen. Fund – Ck# 9169–9218 – totaling \$61,239.02.

Payroll (8/9) – Ck# 4446-4460 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$40,989.94.

Council received the cover letter from the Dan McCown & Company appraisal showing the market value, \$335,000 and the insured value, \$447,000 of the Martino Property located at 425 Railroad Street. The appraisal was conducted to determine a possible sale price for the Council and Sewer Authority Board to consider to house a new Public Works facility. Manager Barrett presented an email from the Sewer Authority's Chairman, Frank Dodson stating that his Board approved making an offer for the Martino property with both entities splitting the cost 50/50. After some discussion, Mr. Brothers motioned to approve making an offer to Mr. Martino with the understanding the Borough and Authority were splitting the purchase cost 50/50. Mrs. Short seconded and the motion carried

The Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority's request listed on the agenda was addressed during the Public Participation earlier in the meeting.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the July 11, 2019 Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority meeting.

Council received for their review, the meeting notes of the July 8, 2019 Rochester Borough Development Corporation meeting.

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

Committee Reports:Public Administration – Ron Becker, Chairperson

The Expense & Revenue report covering January 1, 2019 through August 13, 2019 was presented for Council's review.

Public Safety – Martin Knafelc, Chairperson

Mr. Knafelc noted an abandoned vehicle and a car that is parking in the alley which limits access that are in his neighborhood. Chief Mercier stated that he would address those matters.

Public Works – Howard Howe, Chairperson

Manager Barrett stated that he received 16 applications for the Public Works position that will be vacant due to the resignation of Mr. White. After some discussion, Council agreed to have the Public Works and Public Administration committees work with the Manager to review the applications, interview the top 2 to 4 applicants, and make a recommendation to Council for their consideration.

Recreation – Brandy Dietrich, Chairperson

Mrs. Dietrich had nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson noted that people were contacting him about getting street sweeping tickets on nights when the sweeper did not run. The Mayor was told that the no parking regulation was enforced whether the sweeper ran or not.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Rabik had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

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

Police Chief's Report:

Chief Mercier presented the July 2019 Police Department report for Council's review. Chief Mercier reviewed several items from the report.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

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

Manager Barrett discuss a program which is being offered by the Orton Family Foundation and administered by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. The Heart & Soul Community Program is a four phase, step-by-step process developed by the Orton Family Foundation. It is designed to empower people to shape the future of their community by improving local decision-making, creating a shared sense of belonging, and ultimately strengthening the social, cultural, and economic vibrancy of the community. Communities must apply for a chance to be designated a PA Heart & Soul Community. Applications are due by September 30<sup>th</sup>. There was a mandatory information session on August 15<sup>th</sup> that communities had to attend to have their applications considered. Manager Barrett and Maria Longo, who is with the Rochester Borough Development Corporation, did attend this mandatory session on Rochester Borough's behalf. The Development Corporation would be looking to partner with the Borough to administer this program if selected. If Rochester is selected, the Borough would be eligible for a \$50,000 grant over a 2-year period that can be used to cover costs associated with developing and administering the program. The Manager asked Council if they would be interested in applying for this designation. Local government support is a key component the Orton Family Foundation and the Pennsylvania Humanities Council are looking for. After some discussion, Mrs. White motioned to authorize the Manager and Mrs. Longo to complete and submit the application on the Borough's behalf. Mr. Howe seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call: all members voted ye

Manager Barrett distributed information regarding the renewal of the Winter Maintenance Agreement between the Borough and PennDOT. The Borough has been involved with this same mutual agreement for many years. It is a 5-year agreement by which the State will pay the Borough to help salt and plow the State Highways which run through Rochester Borough. PennDOT provided an exhibit page showing how much the Borough would receive for the 2019-2020 winter season and how it was determined. The reimbursement amounted to \$11,069.81, approximately a \$180 increase from the 2018-2019 reimbursement. A resolution authorizing signatures is required. Manager Barrett presented Resolution 2019-01, authorizing the President of Council and the Manager to sign the agreement, for Council's consideration. After some discussion, Mr. Brothers motioned to approve the agreement and Resolution 2019-01. Mr. Knafelc seconded and the motion carried.

Old Business/New Business:

Mrs. White asked for an update on Library roof issue. Manager Barrett stated that he is waiting on a quote from the roofer to repair and repaint the metal areas of the Library's roof. This appears to be the area where water may be getting into the building. Mrs. White also stated a need to clean-up some of the outside area around the Library. She asked if the Borough would pick up any debris that would be collected. Manager Barrett stated that he would have it picked up. Mrs. White asked the Mayor for his help in getting a group of volunteers put together to clean-up around the Library.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett  
Borough Manager