

Rochester Borough Council  
Regular Meeting in Council Chambers  
December 16, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

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

Absent: Don Brothers, Solicitor Bernie Rabik

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

Persons in Attendance:

Attorney Douglas, Solicitor for the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority (RAJSA), stated that the Authority is requesting to amend the 2 agreements Council approved at their special meeting on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The extension to the Service Agreement needed to be 34 years instead of 30 years because the Authority will only be making interest payments the first 3 years then the 30-year loan covering the principal would start. The agreement to accept the regulated fill showed a maximum of 10,000 cu/yds but the drawing prepared by KLH Engineering showing the details of the site disposal reflected a maximum of 18,000 cu/yds. The 18,000 cu/yds is the correct figure. After some discussion, Mr. Becker motioned to approve the amendments to the 2 agreements as presented. Mr. Howe seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call: 7-0 all voted yes.

Taylor Thomas asked Council for their consent to purchase 313 Deer Lane from the Beaver County Repository. After some discussion, Mr. Knafelc motioned to consent to the purchase of 313 Deer Lane. Mrs. Dietrich seconded and the motion carried.

Action Items:

Mr. Becker motioned to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2019 stormwater and regular Council meetings and the minutes of the December 2, 2019 special meeting as presented. Mr. Howe seconded and the motion carried.

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

**BILLS:**

Gen. Fund – Ck# 9433–9497 – totaling \$63,237.70.

Payroll (11/29, 12/13) – Ck# 4545-4573 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$104,507.71.

2020 Budget – Mr. Howe motioned to approve the 2020 Budget as presented. Mrs. Dietrich seconded and the motion carried. Roll Call: 7-0, all vote yes.

Resolution 2019-03 – fixing the 2020 real estate tax the same as it was for 2019: 29 mills for general purpose and 5.5 mills for debt service payments. Mr. Howe motioned to approve Resolution 2019-03 as presented. Mr. Knafelc seconded and the motion carried.

Stormwater Operation and Maintenance Agreement between Enterprise Bank and Rochester Borough. This agreement is developed in conjunction with the stormwater variance Council approved in October and the lot consolidation Council approved in November. Mr. Becker motioned to approve the Agreement as presented. Mr. Howe seconded and the motion carried.

Council received a letter from the Habitat for Humanity of Beaver County. They recently took control of 490 New York Avenue and are refurbishing it to provide a home for a family in need. There is a lien on the property for past due garbage fees and a current balance owed for garbage fees totaling \$843. They are asking if Council would forgive the total past due balance to allow their organization to use these resources to invest back into the property. After some discussion, Council asked the Manager to discuss this with them since the unpaid garbage fees were created by the tenant the gave the house to previously. Possibly have them pay 50% of the unpaid balance.

#### Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the November 14, 2019 and November 27, 2019 Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority meetings.

Council received for their review, the meeting notes of the November 14, 2019 Rochester Borough Development Corporation meeting.

Council received for their review, the November 2019 Fire Department report. Mr. Rader noted that the Fire Department would be taking Santa Claus around town on December 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:00 p.m.

Council received for their review, the 2017 Real Estate Tax Collector's Audit Report from Cottrill & Arbutina.

#### Committee Reports:

##### Public Administration – Ron Becker, Chairperson

The Expense & Revenue report covering January 1, 2019 through December 10, 2019 was presented for Council's review.

##### Public Safety – Martin Knafelc, Chairperson

Mr. Knafelc asked if Duquesne Light was giving notice to the residents if the power was going to be shut-off when they are changing light poles. The Manager stated that if it was going

to be a longer outage, they would but if it was 4 or 5 minutes during the changeover they were not.

Public Works – Howard Howe, Chairperson

Mr. Howe had nothing to report.

Recreation – Brandy Dietrich, Chairperson

Mrs. Dietrich had nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson asked about the abandoned boat along the Borough's property on the Beaver River. The Manager stated that it belonged to Rich Riley but he has not been able to talk directly to Mr. Riley but will continue to inquire about his intentions for the boat. The Mayor stated that maybe the Council should consider selling the public works property to the Joint Sewer Authority and apply those proceeds to the outstanding bond debt of the Borough. The Mayor noted a Common Pleas court ruling he provided to the Council members and stated he wanted a key to the police department. The Mayor stated that Council would probably want to discuss this with the Solicitor so he dropped the discussion since the Solicitor was not in attendance.

Solicitor's Report:

There was nothing to report in Solicitor Rabik's absence.

Code Officer's Report:

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

Mr. Becker asked about 170 W. Madison Street. Code Officer Griffith stated that the owner was cited for property maintenance issues but would be citing him again.

Code Officer Griffith noted 3 commercial properties that need demolished and asked about the process for having the County demolish these buildings if the owner would be willing to give his consent. The Manager stated that residential demolitions can be submitted directly to the Community Development Program for demolition but commercial properties must be submitted by the municipality through the regular block grant application process.

Police Chief's Report:

Chief Mercier presented the November 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 November 2019 Treasurer's report for Council's review.

Manager Barrett stated that the Local Government Academy runs a Municipal Intern Program. Municipalities can submit an application to receive an intern. If approved the municipality would cover 50% of the wages paid to the intern, undergraduates receive \$11/hr. and graduates receive \$12/hr. He noted that the Borough was selected for the Heart & Soul Program and he thought an intern would be a valuable supplement to the project manager and volunteers providing additional assistance in implementing the program. After some discussion, Council agreed to have the Manager submit an application.

Manager Barrett stated that the Community Development Block Grant applications are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> and wanted to see what if any projects Council would like to submit for a possible grant. He noted the previously discussed demolitions of 3 commercial properties. He asked the Council members to think about ideas and bring them to the reorganization meeting to be scheduled for January 6<sup>th</sup>.

Old Business/New Business:

Mr. Rader noted that a reorganization meeting is required to be held on January 6, 2020. What time would the members like to schedule the meeting for? Council agreed to start the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Manager Barrett reminded the newly elected officials to bring their certificates of election to the meeting. The Borough needs to keep the original but he could make a copy for anyone who would like one. Each newly elected member will be required to fill out an affidavit of residency and take the oath of office as well.

Mr. Rader asked about the 2020 regular meeting schedule. Would the members like to keep the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday as the regular meeting night? Council agreed to keep the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 6:30 p.m. as the regular meeting night. The Stormwater meetings will be held on a quarterly basis in 2020 starting in March.

Council went into executive session at 7:42 p.m. to discuss wage and benefits for the non-union employees.

Council reconvened at 8:20 p.m.

Mr. Becker motioned to approve a 3% raise in 2020 for the Manager and the Borough's full-time secretary, a dollar an hour increase for the part-time borough/police secretary, a \$100 increase every 2 weeks for Bob Goehring's service and a \$500 longevity increase and 1 additional weeks' vacation for the Police Chief. The Chief's wages will be considered at a later date. Mr. Knafelc seconded and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned 8:23 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett  
Borough Manager