

Rochester Borough Council
 Regular Meeting in the Municipal Building
 July 17, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Present: President Don Brothers, Vice-President David Alford, Sam Piccinini, Renee Simmons, Chad Rape, Rico Elmore, Jodi Hemer (arrived at 6:42pm), Toni Bucher, Mayor Keith Jackson, Solicitor Paul Steff, Sergeant Dawn Shane, Code Officer John Farmer, Foreman Mike Lucci, Engineer Tony Sadaka, Manager John Barrett

Absent: Fire Chief Mike Mamone III

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

Persons in Attendance:

Essex Law asked about his right-to-know request for all employment applications. Solicitor Steff stated that a letter was sent notifying him that the Borough was invoking the 30-day extension to prepare the response. He will be sent the response before the 30-day extension expires. Mr. Law asked about the Borough's hiring procedures. Solicitor Steff stated that this could not be addressed due to pending litigation.

Shari Jackson stated that she received a citation from the Borough for failure to pay the landlord registration fee. Solicitor Steff stated that this could not be addressed due to pending litigation.

Kimberly Hubbard, 466 Irvin Avenue, stated that her neighbor's property is unsightly with overgrown weeds and shrubs. Code Officer Farmer stated that he is aware of the situation and is working to resolve the problems.

Action Items:

Mr. Alford motioned to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2023 regular Council meeting as presented. Mrs. Simmons seconded and the motion carried.

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

BILLS:

Gen. Fund – Ck# 12031–12087 – totaling \$148,650.93.

Payroll (6/23, 7/7) – Ck# 5668-5694 plus Dir. Dep. and Elec. Pymts. – totaling \$108,581.63.

Council discussed paving the stage area at the riverfront with the Borough Engineer. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to amend the 2023 street paving contract with Youngblood Paving to remove the streets scheduled for seal coating and replace them with the paving at the riverfront using the County ARPA funds to pay for this change. Mrs. Bucher seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a draft Police Mutual Aid Agreement between the Beaver Valley Regional Police Department and Rochester Borough Police Department. Solicitor Steff prepared Resolution 2023-04 authorizing the execution of this agreement if Council wished to do so. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve and execute the mutual aid agreement as presented. Mr. Rape seconded and the motion carried.

Council received for their review and consideration, a proposal from the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority to add the Borough's garbage bill to their sewer bills for the collection of the garbage fees in Rochester. After some discussion, the matter was tabled.

Review Items:

Council received for their review, the minutes of the June 8, 2023 meeting of the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority.

The bid opening for concrete work to replace the steps and parking areas at the Borough Building was July 6th. No bids were received. The project will be re-bid.

Council received for their review and consideration, an email from the Salvation Army informing them of their upcoming Back 2 School Bash event scheduled for August 19th and soliciting interest in partnerships for this event.

Committee Reports:

Public Administration – Chad Rape, Chairperson

Council received for their review, the Expense and Revenue Report from January 1, 2023 through July 10, 2023.

The full-time Borough secretary is retiring at the end of July. The Manager has hired Toni Celeste to fill this position. A draft employment letter is provided. If Council is agreeable, then it can be approved. If there will be discussion on the employment letter, then the discussion should be done in an executive session. Council will discuss the employment letter in executive session.

Public Safety – Rico Elmore, Chairperson

Mr. Elmore stated that he and his committee attended a meeting to discuss a regional fire department. In attendance were; Rochester Borough, Rochester Township, New Brighton Borough, Fallston Borough, Daugherty Township, and Pulaski Township. Further meetings will be scheduled and he will keep Council apprised of any movement.

Mr. Elmore stated, for Council's information, that there will be a meeting at the Community College of Beaver County to discuss funding allocation of restitution collected by the PA Department of Environmental Protection against the Shell Corporation for violations that occurred at the Shell cracker plant.

Police Department Report – Sergeant Shane informed Council of the loss of one of the crossing guards. A replacement will be sought. Sergeant Shane stated that she and Fire Chief Mamone have discussed implementing the false fire alarm ordinance. They feel Code Officer Farmer would be the best person to issue enforcement notices. The Sergeant asked for additional hours in code enforcement to cover the time need for enforcement of this ordinance. After some discussion, Council agreed to authorize 2 additional hours per week for 30 days then evaluate the effectiveness and actual time needed. Sergeant Shane stated that the Fire Chief would also like to begin submitting reimbursements to insurance companies for fire services when warranted. They felt the reimbursement should go to the Township for distribution to the fire department. Council agreed. Sergeant Shane received a bid of \$2,960 for new audio and video equipment for the new interview room. After some discussion, Mr. Piccinini motioned to approve the purchase and installation of the audio and video equipment. Mr. Rape seconded and the motion carried.

Roll Call 6-2 with Mr. Alford and Mr. Brothers voting no. Sergeant Shane stated that she had received a quote of \$9,990 from Knighthawk Security to replace the current security system in the police department. After some discussion, the Sergeant will work with Knighthawk to see if some changes in how the alarms are set up could reduce the cost.

Mr. Piccinini stated that there has been ongoing discussion regarding a regional police department consisting of Rochester Borough and Rochester Township as well as possibly joining the Beaver Valley Regional Police Department. The group felt a public meeting for the residents of the 2 Rochester's was needed. At the meeting, the various options can be discussed and the residents would have the opportunity to provide feedback as to the direction they would like to see policing take. The proposed date for the meeting is August 9th at 6:00 p.m. at the Rochester High School. After some discussion, Mr. Alford motioned to approve splitting the cost of the advertisement for the meeting 50/50 with Rochester Township. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

Public Works – Toni Bucher, Chairperson

Council discussed the need for a bucket truck and a utility task vehicle (Kawasaki mule) to maintain the park areas, service traffic signals and street lights. Council received a quote for a used bucket truck in the amount of \$22,000 and a quote for a used Kawasaki mule in the amount of \$8,265. After some discussion, Mrs. Simmons motioned to authorize the two purchases and use the Borough's ARPA funds to cover the cost. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

Recreation – Renee Simmons, Chairperson

Mrs. Simmons had nothing to report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Jackson stated that he received the Borough's credit card to pay for his hotel reservation and car rental to attend the Mayor's Association Conference. He had concerns that the Manager's name was on the credit card. Council advised him that it would be appropriate for him to use the credit card.

Solicitor's Report:

Solicitor Steff had nothing to report.

Code Officer's Report:

Council received for their review, the June 2023 Zoning/Code Officer's report. An issue at 348 ½ Deer Lane and 507 Jackson Street were noted. The Manager will pass these on to the Code/Zoning Officer.

Fire Chief's Report:

Council received for their review, the June 2023 Fire Department report.

Manager's/Treasurer's Report:

Council received for their review, the June 2023 Treasurer's Report.

Old Business/New Business:

There was discussion regarding Council members having email addresses through the Borough. Some members currently have them and some don't. The Manager will create the emails and distribute the access and password information. The Manager will also distribute an updated contact list.

Mr. Elmore noted for Council's information, a back pack distribution for school students will take place at the Community College of Beaver County on July 22nd.

Mr. Piccinini brought up for future discussion, the possibility of amending the Borough's zoning ordinance to address how vacant lots can be utilized to possibly allow accessory uses to be constructed on vacant lots.

Council went into an executive session at 9:21 p.m.

Council reconvened at 10:54 p.m.

Council received a proposed sign and quote for Howe Park honoring Howdy Howe. The quote was for \$1,750. After some discussion, Mrs. Bucher motioned to approve the sign and authorize the purchase. Mr. Piccinini seconded and the motion carried.

Council affirmed the hiring of Toni Celeste and approve the employment agreement as amended.

The meeting adjourned at 10:59 p.m.

Submitted by,

John M. Barrett
Borough Manager