The regular monthly meeting of the Town Council of the Borough of East Rochester was held Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Lacock Dwellings Community Center, East Rochester, PA.

Meeting was called to order and Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken.

PRESENT: John Drumm, Joyce Gordon, Joseph Seminick and James Simon

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Robert Knox, Solicitor Paul Steff, Chief Frank Mercier, Janice Cable and Sam Landis

ABSENT: Cathy Hutsky and Engineer Jeff Frye

CITIZENS REPORT: Secretary said she received a call from Mrs. DePace concerning the trees that were cut and left on her property. She requested that the trees be removed as soon as possible. Mayor Knox said he cut the trees as they were hanging over the roadway and scratching his and his wife's vehicles as they drove by. He said he will get the debris removed. Mayor Knox said the borough needs to look at the property to make sure of the right-of-way. Mrs. Gordon said a survey was done previously and stakes were inserted and were a lot further down than the three feet allowed. Mrs. Gordon said Mrs. DePace owns the property. Mayor Knox said he will talk to Mrs. DePace.

Mr. Drumm said Mrs. DePace parks her car half way into the street and it will not be possible for the truck with the plow to pass through there. In that case, the police will need to be called when the car is parked half way out into the street. Mr. Drumm said that at one time the borough talked about doing a survey on Spruce. He believes the wall in front of Mrs. DePace's home is on borough property. Mr. Drumm asked who cut down the bushes and Mayor Knox said "He cut them". Mayor Knox said all the brush needs to be cleared. Mrs. Gordon said to Mayor Knox that he is starting something and that everyone will expect the same. Mayor Knox said if he wants to cut the brush, he will. Mr. Drumm advised Mayor Knox to be careful. Mayor Knox said that the Code Enforcement Officer should be doing his job. Mr. Steff said the Zoning Officer does not determine property issues. It was mentioned that there should be maps somewhere that distinguish where the property lines are. Will talk to Engineer about the maps. Mr. Steff said not to ask the Code Enforecement/Zoning Officer to determine property lines.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: Mr. Drumm asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting. There being none, Mr. Seminick made motion to accept minutes of previous meeting. Mrs. Gordon seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS: Nothing at this time.

MAYOR and POLICE: Mayor Knox read the report. There were 79 calls, 2 arrests and 14 citations issued for the month of October. Mr. Drumm thanked the police for the extra patrols on Trick or Treat night.

STREETS & SEWERS: Mr. Drumm said the borough needs to talk to the engineer about what can be done about fixing the wall so Mr. Clay does not get water into his garage and property. The wall has eroded and is falling in.

Discussion held about performing a survey on Linton and Spruce. Mr. Seminick made motion to get price for survey. Mr. Steff suggested that talk to the engineer first and maybe he has maps to determine the property lines. Mr. Steff said he does not want the borough to spend the money for a survey if it does not have to. Mr. Seminick then rescinded his previous motion.

Mr. Drumm said that Columbia Gas has staked parts that were marked where the lines are. They staked the utility rights-of-way.

Mr. Steff said he talked to Mr. Frye and he is currently in Colorado at meetings and the borough should consult with him to see if he has maps.

Mr. Drumm said there are no street lights on 3rd Street. Should see how much it would cost to have one installed. Mayor Knox said there are no street lights on 1st Street either.

Mrs. Gordon asked about the cost for the pole at the gazebo. Mr. Drumm explained that Duquesne Light does not install the poles and that the borough would have to purchase a pole and install it, which is costly. Mr. Drumm said the conduit has been installed and can be connected to the garage.

A discussion was held about how the paving will be done once the Columbia Gas project is complete. Mr. Drumm said the street opening ordinance indicates that if they cut into one side of the street on the side streets, they have to pave that area. Lacock Avenue will be fully paved. When they cut across, they have to pave the whole street. He said the ordinance regulates what is to be paved in order to avoid a checkerboard effect. He said on Second Street, Columbia Gas stayed off berm. He said that driving down 5th Street is terrible that the coal patch has sunk and they need to fill it in. He said he is not sure how Lyons Avenue and 4th Street will be dug up. Mr. Steff said that all work is subject to inspection and approval by the borough engineer.

BUILDING PERMITS: Excavation permit was issued for 150 Lyons Avenue.

FINANCE & BUDGET TAX REPORT: Taxes collected for October $1,484.65; Tax Collector Commission is $74.25; Total Bills Paid $35,223.23; Payroll $5,112.43 (includes street, secretary, zoning, tax collector); Pennvest $1,024.95 (correct amount – straightened out between state and bank for correct monthly payment); Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority collection for October $4,255,92.

Mr. Simon made motion to accept report and pay bills and tax collector commission. Mr. Seminick seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion carried.

A copy of the 2022 proposed budget was provided for review. Mr. Drumm asked about passing the budget. Mr. Steff said that everyone should review it and make motion to approve proposed budget so it can be advertised. He said if there are any changes to the budget between now and the next monthly meeting, would bring up and modify budget. He said at next

month's meeting he would have the tax ordinance ready for adoption.

Mrs. Gordon said the proposed budget is set at 23 mills. She said that Mr. Landis would like to have a shed so he can keep the zero-turn mower in it. The cost would be approximately $4,000 and she said there is a need to update the current furnace at the borough building. Mrs. Gordon said if the borough purchases these items, that taxes would have to be increased. Mr. Steff said that council needs to make a decision if they are going to raise taxes before the next meeting.

Mr. Steff said he needs authorization to advertise the proposed 2022 budget. Mrs. Gordon said that the highest gas bill last winter was around $400 and that the borough may need to raise taxes 2 mills. She said if we get the storm water grant, we would need to have $15,000 as the borough's share. She said that the borough used to be able to count on monies from Cronimet in the past but they are not doing business in the borough anymore.

Mr. Steff suggested that council review the budget tonight and pass as proposed budget for 2022. If the borough is going to raise taxes 2 mills, then approve the budget with a 2 mill increase. He said the advertisement does not include figures, only that the proposed 2022 budget is available for review at the borough office.

Mr. Drumm said it would not be good if the borough raised taxes, but did not do anything with the streets. Mrs. Gordon said a new furnace would probably cost around $6,000. Mr. Drumm said it would not look good to raise taxes for a new furnace but not do anything with the streets in the borough. Mr. Seminick said that in the long run it would be cheaper to get a new furnace because the gas bills would go down. Mr. Drumm asked if there is money now to get a new furnace this year.

Mrs. Gordon suggested that room could be made for storage of the zero-turn mower if the borough got rid of the street sweeper. Mr. Drumm asked what is being stored in the salt shed other than salt. He said if we do not use the street sweeper then the borough should sell it. Mr. Landis said the generator could be put on trailer and stored inside garage.

It was suggested that Mr. Landis try using the street sweeper to see if he can operate it. Chief Mercier said that Rochester Borough might be interested in purchasing the street sweeper. Mrs. Gordon said that Rochester Township has expressed an interest in the sweeper. If the borough sells the street sweeper, then that money could be used for a new shed.

Mr. Drumm said he would not like to raise taxes and the borough should see if there is a way to store the items now. Mr. Steff said as far as street paving the borough should use liquid fuels monies.

Discussion was held about using American Rescue Plan funds. Chief Mercier suggested that the borough secretary talk to John Barrett, Rochester Borough manager, about how the funds can be used. Mr. Steff also recommended talking to the company the county engaged for handling American Rescue Plan funds.

Mrs. Gordon made motion for Mr. Steff to advertise the proposed 2022 budget at 23 mills and to prepare the tax ordinance to be adopted at the December meeting. Mr. Simon seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion was carried.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: No report.

SOLICITOR, ORDINANCE & LITIGATION: Mr. Steff presented two tax exoneration resolutions for two different parcels that were purchased from the county tax repository. He first presented Resolution 11-3-21-1 on behalf of Brook Burtner and Katie Prest for Tax Parcel No. 20-001-0346-001 to exonerate taxes from the years 2002-2020. Then he presented Resolution 11-3-21-2 on behalf of Eric Hartsell for Tax Parcel No. 20-001-0263-000 to exonerate taxes for the years 2013 to 2020. Mr. Simon made motion to accept Resolution 11-3-21-1 and Resolution 11-3-21-2. Mrs. Gordon seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion was carried.

BOROUGH ENGINEER: No report

RECREATION: No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Secretary presented mylar drawings for property purchased by Maier Plumbing & Heating adjacent to his business which will be used to increase the size of his parking lot. She said that the Borough's Planning Commission met previously to approve the drawings. Mr. Steff looked over the drawings and indicated that the drawings need to be forwarded to the County Planning Commission for their review and comment. After the review by the County Planning Commission, they are sent back to the Borough to be approved by council and signed. He said a letter needs to be drafted to the county together with the drawings. He said the applicant submits the drawings to the county for their review and comment and to pay any fees required by the County Planning Commission.

Secretary instructed to draft letter and contact applicant so he can take the drawings to the county.

There being no further business a motion was made by Mrs. Gordon and seconded by Mr. Seminick to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Dunn, Borough Secretary/Treasurer