The regular monthly meeting of the Town Council of the Borough of East Rochester was held Wednesday, February 7, 2024 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, George Davies, Joseph Seminick, James Simon and David Wagner

ALSO PRESENT: Solicitor Paul Steff, Sgt. Dawn Shane, Mayor Robert Knox, Engineer Jeff Frye, Patrick McGuire, Code Enforcement Officer, Anthony Bruno, Zack Bachman, Janice Dunn, Borough Secretary.

ABSENT:

CITIZENS REPORT: Anthony Bruno said he came to the meeting in regard to 832 Oak Avenue. He said council previously voted to consent to the purchase from Beaver County Tax Repository for Theresa Blazier. He said that she has been diagnosed with health issues and she and Mr. Bruno felt it beneficial to have the property put into his name. Therefore, he went to the county and requested that he purchase the property instead of Ms. Blazier. He presented to council the paperwork he obtained from the county in order to purchase the property from tax repository. At this time, Mr. Steff presented to council the paperwork to purchase Tax Parcel No. 20-001-0327.000 from the Beaver County Tax Claim Bureau by Anthony Bruno. Mr. Simon made motion to allow Anthony Bruno to purchase Tax Parcel No. 20-001-0327.000 from the Beaver County Tax Claim Bureau. Mr. Wagner seconded. Roll call vote taken and all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Steff indicated to Mr. Bruno that once he obtains the deed for the property from the county, he can bring the paperwork back to council in order to ask for tax forgiveness for back taxes.

Zack Bachman of Rochester Area Baseball came to inquire about renting the East Washington Street Ballfield for T-Ball. He said he looked over the field and noticed that there are holes in the field and no baselines as the field had been previously used for football. Mr. Drumm indicated that the borough's laborer would like to continue to cut the grass as he knows where the holes in the field are and where the water lays on the field. After discussion, it was requested that Mr. Bachman prepare a list of what needs to be done to the field in order for it to be used for T-Ball and submit said list to the borough secretary. Mr. Wagner as head of Recreation will also look over the ballfield area. Mr. Drumm indicated to Mr. Bachman that there is a parking issue at the field due to the installation of the rain garden by the Rochester Area Joint Sewer Maintenance Authority.

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

COMMUNICATIONS: Secretary said she received from the Beaver County Humane Society a letter which enclosed agreements with regard to animal control. Secretary said she sent a copy of the communication to Mr. Steff for his review. Mr. Drumm asked Sgt. Shane how the police handle animal control situations. She said that the police call the Humane Society when needed and the Humane Society sends someone out to take care of the situation. Mr. Steff said the borough has not entered into an agreement with the Humane Society in previous years. After discussion it was decided to let the police handle animal control situations within the borough.

MAYOR and POLICE: Mayor Knox gave the report. In January there were 84 calls for service, 5 citations issues. It was mentioned to Sgt. Shane about the resident on 4th Street parking against the flow of traffic. She said she spoke to the resident previously, but will address the issue again.

At this time, Mayor Knox presented the police contract extension. Each council member has a copy of the agreement in their folders for their review. Mayor Knox indicated that the current contract expires December 31, 2024 and this new contract would continue for an additional 5 years. He said the first year of the extension that there would be a monetary freeze on the contract and that each year after 2025, there would only be a one percent increase. Discussion was held regarding the new contract. Mr. Seminick made motion to adopt the police contract which will cover years 2025 through 2029. Mr. Davies seconded. Roll call vote taken and all in favor. Motion carried.

Mayor Knox indicated that Duquesne Light is addressing the lighting situation on Route 65. He said there are underground issues with the wiring, but it should be remedied soon.

STREETS & SEWERS: Mr. Drumm indicated that the generators the borough purchased initially are not the right type for handling the traffic signal outages. He suggested that the borough sell the current generators and purchase the proper type. He suggested that the borough purchase a Honda generator.

BUILDING PERMITS: Mr. McGuire provided a copy of his January report to each council member. He discussed the issues that occurred at the residence on Third Street. He assured council that he will keep monitoring the situation.

FINANCE AND BUDGET/TAX REPORT: Tax Collection for January $2,013.71; Tax Collection Commission for January $100.69; Total bills paid $20,070.96 (January 4 to February 5); Payroll for $3,623.46; Pennvest February payment $1,024.95; December collection from Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority $3,449.06.

Mr. Wagner made motion to pay tax collector's commission. Mr. Davies seconded. Roll call vote taken and all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Seminick made motion to pay the bills. Mr. Wagner seconded. Roll call vote taken and all in favor. Motion carried.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Three calls in January (hazardous condition-no fire and 2 good intent calls). There was a total of 27 calls answered in the borough in 2023.

SOLICITOR, ORDINANCE & LITIGATION: Progress

BOROUGH ENGINEER: Mr. Frye said he spoke with the contractor who will be doing the work on Ramsey Way who indicated to Mr. Frye and he is in the process of obtaining the bond and the insurance for the project. Discussion held about talking to the other neighbors on Ramsey Way about coming between the homes or reroute around the homes. Mr. Drumm indicated that he will speak with the other neighbor.

It was mentioned that the catch basin is broken on Stewart and Curtland. Mr. Frye said he will check it out.

Mr. Frye said he is in the process of working with Baker Transportation regarding the Green Light Go Project that the borough has been given a grant for.

RECREATION: Mr. Wagner said he will look over everything at the ballfield.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Progress.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Wagner asked about taking the $18,000 the borough received for the sale of the truck and putting the money on the new truck loan. Secretary said if council approves, she will put the money on the new truck loan, but would prefer to wait until the 2024 tax revenue starts being received by the borough.

Mayor suggested that the current picnic table at the gazebo needs to be junked and maybe the borough could purchase a plastic table.

Secretary indicated that there are two vacancies on the Zoning Commission and one vacancy on the Planning Commission which needs to be filled.

Secretary also indicated that she looked into applying for the Beaver County Environmental Fund Grant made available due to the penalty of the Shell plant. She said she spoke with Rep. Matzie's office and the grant is only available for 501(C)3 organizations.

There being no further business a motion was made by Mr. Simon and seconded by Mr. Wagner to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Dunn, Borough Secretary/Treasurer