The regular monthly meeting of the Town Council of the Borough of East Rochester was held Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at Rochester Borough Council Chambers, Rochester, PA.

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

**PRESENT:** John Drumm, George Davies, James Simon, Joseph Seminick and David Wagner

**ALSO PRESENT:** Solicitor Paul Steff, Sgt. Dawn Shane, Mayor Robert Knox, Engineer Jeff Frye, Borough Secretary, Deborah Ahern and Valerie DeLauter.

**ABSENT:** None

**CITIZENS REPORT:** Mrs. DeLauter said she noticed in past minutes the discussion about purchasing an air conditioner for Lacock Dwellings. She inquired is that is still the plan and Mr. Drumm said "no". She also asked why the borough laborer starts his shift so early and what does he do so early in the morning. Mr. Drumm indicated that he usually begins the day by checking the lift station and cleaning out any debris that has collected. He said sometimes he is there for over an hour.

Mrs. Ahern indicated that the LST taxes collected will be less than what was budgeted because there are some businesses that are not paying the tax. Mr. Steff said he previously sent letters to the businesses, which information was provided by Mrs. Ahern, and gave the businesses 30 days to comply. Mrs. Ahern said she has emailed Mr. Steff several times since then and not heard from him on what her next steps are to collect the LST taxes that are due. Mrs. Ahern indicated that she talked to the magistrate regarding what to do. They told her to talk to the solicitor. Mr. Steff indicated that Mrs. Ahern should be pursuing this and pestering the management at the businesses. He said that she can file suit against a business for nonpayment. He said it is the obligation of the tax collector to pursue this matter. Mrs. Ahern asked if council approved her filing suit. No response was given. Mrs. Ahern indicated that the State Store has not paid anything in all the years they have been operating at the location in East Rochester and also, Valvoline changed their payroll system and has not paid. Letters were sent to the Vape Shop and All Metals. Mr. Steff suggested she go to the businesses in person and keep pestering them.

Mrs. Aheran asked the borough if insurance is voted on every year. Secretary indicated that it automatically renews. Mayor Knox indicated that the fire department was to have been removed from the insurance. Mr. Drumm indicated that the fire department is not removed unless the building is sold. Mr. Steff indicated that the borough insurance policy is a package, i.e. blanket coverage.

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:** Mr. Drumm asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting. There being none, Mr. Simon 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:** None

**MAYOR and POLICE**: Mayor Knox said there for 71 calls for service, 2 arrest and 25 citations in August.

**STREETS & SEWERS:** Mr. Frye indicated that bids for catch basin and drainage work on Stewart Avenue were received and opened on August 21. He said LM&R of Chester, WVA was the lowest bidder. The bid for the storm sewer crossing was $14,834.00 and the bid for the drainage improvements on Stewart Avenue was $50,461.00 – total $65,295.00. A bid was also received from Youngblood with a total bid of $70,215.00. Mr. Seminick made motion to award bid to LM&R at the price of $65,295.00 for the Stewart Avenue storm crossing and the drainage improvements. Mr. Davies seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion was carried. Secretary noted that some of the work will be covered with County ARP Funds.

A discussion was held regarding the situation at 830 Spruce Avenue and also behind the building of Union Orthotics. The residents at 830 Spruce are getting water in their basement and Union Orthotics has flooding behind their building. Secretary was instructed to contact Beaver Falls Municipal Water Authority to have the areas tested for leaks, etc. Mr. Frye indicated that he thinks there may be a broken pipe in that area.

Mr. Drumm indicated that the service truck has been repaired, but needs to have new tires in order to pass inspection. Mr. Wagner made motion to have new tires purchased for service truck. Mr. Simon seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion was carried.

**BUILDING PERMITS:** No permits were issued in August.

**FINANCE AND BUDGET/TAX REPORT:** Tax Collection for August $9,912.00; Tax Commission for August $495.60; Total bills from August 8 to September 4 - $19,924.33; total payroll from August 8 to September 4 - $4,106.88; Pennvest installment for August - $1,024.95 each; collection from Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority for July - $4,592.96.

Mr. Simon made motion for pay tax collector's commission for August. Mr. Davies seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion was carried.

Mr. Simon made motion to pay bills. Mr. Davies seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion was carried.

Mr. Simon made motion to pay the amount of $3,062.00 for the Pennsylvania Retirement System Municipal Obligation for 2025. Mr. Seminick seconded. By way of roll call vote, all in favor and motion was carried.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:** No report

**SOLICITOR, ORDINANCE & LITIGATION:** Progress

**BOROUGH ENGINEER:** Mr. Frye indicated that Atlas Avenue will be paved at the same time the paving on Stewart is done. He indicated that the Local Share Program grant for 2025 opened on September 1 and applications need to be submitted by November 30.

**RECREATION:** Mr. Drumm indicated he would like to have a meeting with Mr. Wagner regarding getting work done at the ballfield and the playground. He indicated he would like to have the current basketball pad removed at the playground and a new one installed.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Sgt. Shane said she met with the Rochester School District Superintendent regarding the letter the borough received concerning the crossing guard matter. She said currently Rochester Borough and Rochester Township are paying 50% each of the crossing guards' salaries. She said the school district is saving money because of this and she feels there is no need for East Rochester to participate. The matter was tabled at this time.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Progress

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 7:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Dunn, Borough Secretary/Treasurer