

## COUNCIL MEETING

February 8, 2023

The monthly meeting of the Rose Valley Borough Council was held on February 8, 2023 in the main room of the Old Mill, 9 Old Mill Lane, Rose Valley, Pa. President of Council Dave Firn called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Other Council members present were Councilpersons Leonard Busby, Joe Hare, Shawn Stancill and Matt Sullivan; Mayor Bill Hale; Controller John Neilson; Treasurer Mario Bacchia; Solicitor G. Guy Smith and Secretary Paula Healy. Councilpersons Kathryn Mehan and Shannon Prown were absent.

Members of the public attending the meeting were Aaron Childs, Tina DiChiara, Ron Ploeg, Thaddeus DeHerrera, Diane Seider and William Thomas.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the Minutes of the January 11, 2023 Council meeting were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously approved with the following sentence corrected to read: "It was noted that the loan ~~to~~ from Capital Reserve will be paid back, to the extent possible, at the beginning of next year." In response to a question from Mr. Busby, Mr. Hale explained that the \$70,000 loan is paid back at the start of the next year because if it was paid back earlier and income equaled expenses for the year as budgeted, then there would be no money left in the operating account at the end of the year.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Firn asked if there was any public comment; there was none.

### ENVIRONMENT & EAC

The EAC sponsored "Rose Valley Next 100 Years – Crafting a Sustainable Future" meeting was held on January 31, 2023 at the School in Rose Valley. Approximately 40 people attended. The focus of this meeting was to explore what sustainability means to the community and identify steps that can be taken to achieve it. The next meeting will be in March and will focus on recycling and waste management.

Mr. Busby reported that the Deer Management program ended on January 27, 2023 with five deer harvested.

Mr. Firn announced that, as part of the "Next 100 Years" effort, the Borough will attempt to earn certification as a Community Wildlife Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation. The first step is for a critical mass of individual properties to become certified through payment of \$20 and completion of a very simple application. Once that is achieved, the Borough can be certified as a whole, joining hundreds of communities across the US, including our sister community, Arden. Certification requires the Borough to perform education and outreach activities, but these are mostly things the EAC and our residents are already doing.

### HIGHWAYS & INSURANCE

Mr. Sullivan reported that the Todmorden culvert repair project will start on Monday, February 13.

Matt also outlined a letter to be sent to the approximately dozen houses currently on septic in the vicinity of Rabbit Run and Brookhaven Road to gauge their interest in connecting to a sewer line extension if it were installed with grant funding. Discussion followed about whether the letter should state that the Borough might cover the resident's portion of the expenses and defer repayment until later. This question was tabled until interest in the project is assessed.

## LIBRARY

Ms. Mehan submitted the following report. "My first Library Board meeting was held January 17<sup>th</sup> at the Library immediately following the Annual Corporation Meeting. The new president, Emily Lovitz, was introduced by outgoing president Elizabeth Lim, and the new Board of Directors and volunteers were presented. Each item in an informational packet was then discussed. New board members were asked to sign up for two committees and two fundraisers. I signed up for the Fundraising and New Programming committees and volunteered for the Book Sales and Summer Auction fundraisers.

A new member orientation and onboarding meeting was held via zoom on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Another packet of information was reviewed, including responsibilities, budgets, financial reports, by-laws, leadership, Delaware County Libraries and history. Each new board member was asked to attend one Delaware County Library Board Meeting held via zoom during the year and I signed up for April 20<sup>th</sup>.

An additional meeting for the Fundraising committee is scheduled for February 16<sup>th</sup>. The next fundraising events are Annual Sponsor pledges and the Great Getaway Raffle in March. Tickets will be sold online and at the Library. All members are encouraged to get a Library Card, sign up for the Newsletter, and follow HKF Library on social media."

## POLICE & FIRE REPORTS

Mr. Stancil reported that the Police Report for January had not yet been received and the Fire Report showed no incidents during the month. The Fire Marshall provided a flier on space heater safety during the winter months.

Mr. Stancill will contact our State Police liaison, Trooper Naab, about setting up additional speed traps on Rose Valley Road.

## PLANNING

In Mrs. Prown's absence, Mr. Firm outlined that status of the Rose Valley Road walking path by first noting that the Borough was awarded a \$75,890 Green Ways Connect Grant from Delaware County in late 2021 for the design and construction of a walking path on Borough property on the south side of Rose Valley Road on either side of Old Mill Lane and within the PennDOT

right-of-way in front of the historic Mill Houses near the Possum Hollow intersection. Subsequently, the Borough learned that the subdivision of the original Pew property included rights-of-way for a walking path along Rose Valley Road from Woodward Road to just south of Buttonwood Road. The Borough informed the Delaware County Planning Department that it would be a much better use of the Connect Grant money to create a walking path along some of these properties rather than near Old Mill Lane and Possum Hollow Road. It was noted that pedestrians can already safely walk across the grass lawns on either side of Old Mill Lane and on the assorted walkways in front of the Mill Houses.

Late last year, the Borough submitted grant requests to the Delaware County Planning Department and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for the design and construction of a trail along the Pew subdivision properties on the east side of Rose Valley Road from Woodward Road to just south of Buttonwood Way to provide safe pedestrian access to the Moylan-Rose Valley Train Station. These grants were very competitive and Rose Valley was not selected as a recipient.

The Borough now needs to submit a resolution to the Delaware County Planning Department specifying the scope of work for how the \$75,890 Connect Grant will be utilized for the Pew properties. Our consultant, Bob Thomas, has advised that we use these funds to design and construct a walking path along Rose Valley Road in front of those properties closest to the Train Station, specifically the Thomas property at the corner of Woodward Road, the Borough-owned Pew Park property in front of the Seider property, a section of the Seider property, and possibly the Doyle property. The path would be relatively level across these properties with all grades less than 5 percent so it would be feasible for it to be constructed using permeable crushed stone.

Mr. Hale then discussed design considerations regarding each property and the concerns of the owners. There is a hedge running along Rose Valley Road the entire length of the property owned by Bill and Marjana Thomas and they would like a hedge to remain between their property and the walking path. The existing hedge decreases in width from 6 feet wide on flat ground near Woodward Road to 4 feet wide in the middle to only 2 feet wide on very steep slopes rising up 4 feet near the Seider property. Three trees on the Thomas property near the Seiders will have to be removed and the steep slope cut back and lowered to create a bench for the walking path. The hedge in this area could be relocated further up the regraded hill. The hedge can remain where it is in the middle of the property. Near Woodward Road, the width of the hedge could be reduced from 6 feet to 2 feet to make room for the walking path but the path would be located partly within the PennDOT right-of-way because of how the RoW is determined by the property lines. However, this is where the path naturally wants to be as the roadway curves and moves far from the center of the RoW when Manchester Road branches off. A curb will be provided at the edge of the walking path to provide a change in elevation, color and texture to make the walking path clearly visible to motorists. This curb near Woodward Road would line up with the curb running parallel to the road on the Moylan-Rose Valley Train Station SEPTA property to the north, which is similarly within the PennDOT RoW.

A four-foot-wide strip of macadam exists outside the white line for over 100 feet as one approaches Woodward that people currently use for walking. One possibility is to let pedestrians continue to walk here and use the money saved to construct the walking path across the Doyle

property. This would avoid the problem of obtaining PennDOT's permission to construct the walking path within their right-of-way. However, it is not really safe to walk this close to traffic and it would be better to provide a safe pathway in this area.

The Borough-owned Pew Park property extends across Rose Valley Road and includes most of the area where the walking path would be located in front of the Seider property. A small section of the path would be located on the Seider property itself and an easement would be required for a triangular area about 7 feet wide and 80 feet long. There are ten large trees on the Seider property located close to where the walking path would have to go. The white pine closest to the Thomas property will have to be taken down since it is too close to the road. Another white pine is actually dead with the top gone but the remaining large trunk provides beneficial visual screening. Diane and Warren Seider would like the remaining 3 white pines, 4 European larches, and a Norway maple to not be jeopardized by the construction of the walking path. The Seiders hired a professional arborist, Russell Carlson of Tree Tech Consulting, who met with them and Mr. Hale to discuss the walking path. Mr. Carlson submitted a report concluding a walking path could be constructed without harming the trees if excavation and disturbance of soil was avoided as much as possible and the path was made using crushed gravel placed over geotextile fabric that would allow for infiltration of air and water. A low stone wall would be constructed to provide a change in elevation to mark the walkway for motorists and confine the gravel.

The Seiders are willing to grant an easement to the Borough for the construction of the walking path within the triangular area of their property. They are also willing to allow access on the house side of the tree line toward the north for removing the necessary trees, excavating and grading the hillside, and constructing the walking path on the Thomas property and their own in this elevated area. This will be much safer and more cost effective than doing the work from Rose Valley Road. However, this construction activity will have considerable impact on their grounds and driveway. Mr. Hale indicated it would be appropriate for the Borough to repave the first 80 feet of their driveway in compensation.

At the next meeting, a scope of work, preliminary plan, cost estimate, and resolution will be presented for Council's approval authorizing the re-allocation of the \$75,890 Delaware County Green Ways Grant Monies to the final design and construction of a pervious stone pedestrian trail along the east side of Rose Valley Road on the Thomas property at the corner of Woodward Road, the Borough-owned Pew Park property, and the Seider property in preparation for signing a contract for the performance of this work with the Delaware County Planning Department.

## FINANCES

Treasurer Bacchia reviewed the Status of Funds for January and reported that the PNC bank accounts and QuickBooks had been reconciled. Mr. Hare reviewed the Income Reports for January and Mr. Neilson went over the February Bills for Approval and answered questions. The Bills for Approval in the amount of \$34,826.79 were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

Nether Providence Township sent the Borough a letter which was received February 1, 2023 stating the Borough's 2023 contractual contribution to the NP Fire Companies for 2023 is \$39,139.43. This was slightly higher than the \$38,000 budgeted. Mr. Hare will discuss this issue with Nether Providence Township.

#### SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smith submitted his Solicitor's Report for February noting the new bidding thresholds for 2023 are as follows: Purchases and Contracts below \$12,200 require no formal bidding, or written or telephone quotations; those between \$12,200 and \$22,500 require three written or telephone quotations; while those over \$22,500 require formal bidding.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mr. Hale noted the "Party of the Century" Gala on January 21 kicking off Rose Valley's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year was a great success with about 200 people attending.

There being no further business, on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Paula W. Healy, Secretary