

COUNCIL MEETING

November 10, 2021

The regular meeting of the Rose Valley Borough Council was held on November 10, 2021 at the Old Mill, 9 Old Mill Lane, Rose Valley, PA in the main room. President of Council Bill Hale called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Other Council members present were Councilpersons Debra DeMasi, Dave Firn, Stephanie Middleton and Bob Siwicki; Treasurer Joe Hare; Controller John Neilson; Solicitor G. Guy Smith and Secretary Paula Healy. Councilperson Vippy Yee and Mayor Tim Plummer were absent.

Members of the public attending the meeting were Marci Bramucci, Executive Artistic Director of Hedgerow Theatre, and residents Leonard Busby, Chris Carpenter, Kelly Caulfield, Diane Corbett, Scott Corbett, David Dee, Tina DiChiara, Alan Gee, Cindy Holston, Peter Howell, Joe Kanter, Rich O'Flynn, Theresa O'Flynn, Ron Ploeg Matt Sullivan and Richard Taxin.

MINUTES

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the Minutes from the October 13, 2021 Council Meeting were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marci Bramucci thanked Borough Council for the money given to Hedgerow Theatre from the American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus Recovery Funds in August. They had a successful run of THE WEIR, albeit at reduced indoor capacity, and are getting ready to present A CHRISTMAS CAROL in December and three plays in the spring. Dr. Taxin noted that Hedgerow Theatre is a great asset to the community deserving of our continued support.

Mr. Gee thanked Mayor Plummer for making the William L. Price Historical Marker dedication ceremony on November 6 such a wonderful event.

Mr. Corbett noted there is a long-existing pothole on Todmorden Drive which is still not fixed.

PERSONNEL

Treasurer Joe Hare submitted his resignation as Treasurer effective immediately. On a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, his resignation was accepted.

Judy Voet resigned from Council at its last meeting because she plans to move out of Rose Valley so there is a vacancy which needs to be filled. This position has been advertised on the Borough website and in the Borough's email blast. The Personnel Committee, consisting of the Mayor, President and Vice-President of Council, have reviewed the resumes of the four people who expressed interest in filling the position. On the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, Mr. Firn nominated Mr. Hare to fill the unexpired term of Judy Voet, noting his experience at the Council table as Treasurer and his familiarity with QuickBooks and Borough

finances. The nomination was seconded. After some discussion, the motion to appoint Joe Hare as Councilperson to fill the unexpired term of Judy Voet was unanimously passed. Mr. Smith subsequently administered the Loyalty Oath to Mr. Hare.

The Treasurer's position is now vacant and needs to be filled at the next regular Council meeting on December 8. The position will be advertised on the Borough website and in the Borough's email blast, however the Personnel Committee has identified a strong candidate from Long Point who works as a banker and would provide a much-needed voice at the Council table for the Long Point neighborhood. Nevertheless, any other resident of Rose Valley interested in this position should submit their resume to the Borough Office. The Treasurer is not an elected position and does not have a vote on Council.

ENVIRONMENT & EAC

Mr. Firn reported to Council that the EAC Fall Stewardship weekend held on October 23 and 24 went well with about 30 Volunteers showing up to help.

Mr. Firn and Mr. Hale met with Engineer Matt Houtmann to look over the half-dismantled dam in the Saul Wildlife Preserve and the recent erosion of the earthen mill race near the dam. The walking trail near the dam used to go up and over the mill race in this area. However, the mill race was cut through in recent years to level the trail. Rushing water in large storms has now eroded away the mill race up to the beginning of the stone dam. Mr. Houtmann advised that the large rocks in the remaining portion of the dam towards the middle of the creek could be moved to rebuild the mill race and reduce further erosion. Mr. Firn made a motion to allocate \$10,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund to move rocks from the end of the dam to rebuild the mill race. This motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

Matt Houtmann is attempting to convince DEP to accept the 2018 stabilization of 165 feet of Ridley Creek streambank in the Saul Wildlife Sanctuary as satisfying the MS4 stormwater requirements for the five-year period from March 2018 to March 2023.

Mr. Firn and Leonard Busby discussed the information kiosk to be put at the entrance to the Saul Wildlife Sanctuary. Council previously recommended and the Rose Valley Folk previously approved locating the kiosk on Folk property behind the rock with the Saul Wildlife Preserve plaque on it. However, this location does not readily allow people to walk by and view both sides of the kiosk as desired. The EAC therefore recommends that the kiosk be placed several feet inside the sanctuary near the location of the existing sanctuary guide map. This location was approved on a motion made and seconded and unanimously approved.

The 2021 Borough Deer Hunt will be held November 29 through December 10, 2021 and from January 3 through January 28, 2022. There is only one authorized bow hunter, and the hunt is limited to the Todmorden Woods on weekdays only. The Todmorden Woods will be open to the public during these weekday dates from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and on Saturdays and Sundays.

Mr. Neilson thanked the Gardeners of Rose Valley, Johanna Williams, Steven Root, Elaine Pilson, and John Kelly of Hollywood Landscaping for maintaining Rose Valley's public gardens noting they looked beautiful this year.

HIGHWAYS

Mrs. DeMasi opened the one snowplowing bid that was received in response to the advertisement in the "Delaware County Times" on October 16, 2021. The bid was from R. C. Marland, as usual, with a slight increase in rates. On a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the 2021-2022 snowplowing contract was awarded to R. C. Marland.

Aqua has repaved the southern half of Todmorden Drive and all of Cedar Hollow Drive, Briarcrest Drive and Tanglewood Circle after their replacement of the water line. Todmorden Drive was previously overlaid without prior milling the last time it was repaved and Aqua is only obligated to mill and pave 2 inches. Mr. Houtmann therefore negotiated with Aqua's subcontractor, Charlestown Paving, to profile mill each side of Todmorden Drive so the final paving would be flush with the gutters at a cost of \$11,200. There were also numerous collapsed concrete gutter sections that had to be repaired by Aqua's subcontractor, Delmont Construction. Engineer Houtmann is negotiating with Aqua and Delmont regarding the cost of this work.

Mr. Houtmann is still working on the design for stabilizing the embankment on the south side of the stream culvert on southern Todmorden Drive.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. DeMasi reviewed the Police and Fire Reports for October which showed no activity in Rose Valley. Trooper Jessica Tobin has offered to give a Zoom talk to residents on identity theft which will be arranged for some time in January of 2022.

Debra reported that Town Watch needs additional volunteers and reviewed the traffic data from the Rose Valley Road speed devices. She also noted the South Media Fire Company did a great job closing Rose Valley Road for the November 6 William Lightfoot Price Historical Marker dedication ceremony.

Mrs. DeMasi again reminded everyone to be careful about Covid, get appropriately vaccinated and boosted, follow CDC guidelines, and to get their seasonal flu shots.

PLANNING

Ms. Middleton reported that the Delaware County Planning Department awarded Rose Valley Borough a \$75,980 Green Ways Trails Grant for the design and construction of a walking path along the south side of Rose Valley Road on the Borough property on either side of Old Mill Lane (the Valley Green and the Veterans Memorial properties) and in the PennDOT right-of-way near Possum Hollow Road. The purpose of this grant is to better connect the community and promote pedestrian safety. It requires no matching funds. A second Green Ways Planning grant application for the planning and design of a trail along Rose Valley Road on privately-owned

property between School Lane and Woodward Road was not funded. Discussion followed about the hardscape material to be used for the walking path funded by the Trail Grant with bluestone pavers a possibility.

Our consultant for the Rose Valley Road Walking Path feasibility study is working on developing conceptual plans, sections and sketches to assist homeowners who have indicated they might consider granting an easement so the walking path can be adequately separated from Rose Valley Road.

FINANCES

Mr. Hare reviewed the Status of Funds for October noting that the PNC Bank accounts and QuickBooks had been reconciled. Mr. Siwicki reviewed the Income Reports for October. Mr. Neilson went over the November Bills for Approval and answered questions. The Bills for Approval in the amount of \$34,144.55 from the General Fund were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed. A check in the amount of \$11,200.00 from the Road Improvement Fund to Charlestown Paving for extra milling on Todmorden Drive and a check in the amount of \$2,112.00 from the Coronavirus Recovery Fund to South Media Fire Company for new chairs to go around the Eagle Scout Project table in the meeting room, were also approved on motions made, seconded and unanimously passed.

Mr. Siwicki discussed the proposed 2022 Budget for the Borough. He explained that the \$415,965 budget calls for a 10 percent increase in Borough taxes primarily due to recycling costs increasing from \$41,832 to \$55,000 with weekly pickup, appropriations from capital reserves decreasing from \$37,832 to \$26,696, and general inflation. The Borough has previously not raised taxes for many years as it returned to taxpayers capital reserves remaining from the time the Borough owned the Rose Valley Sewer System and Sewage Treatment Plant, which were transferred to DELCORA. Discussion followed.

Mr. Siwicki asked that Council approve the advertisement of the proposed 2022 Budget. This request was approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed. At least 30 days must elapse before the budget can be adopted and it must be available for public inspection in the Borough Office for at least 10 of these days. A special meeting for finalizing and adopting the budget will be held on Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smith reported that new State legislation created a standard maintenance agreement for all private roads.

He also asked for authorization to settle the tax appeal taken by the owners of 2 Todmorden Lane. The School District and the County have agreed to reduce their assessment from \$1,461,460 to \$995,000 to reflect the fair market value of the property. Council gave Mr. Smith authorization to sign the settlement stipulation on behalf of the Borough at that amount on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

The Borough Council Reorganization Meeting will be held on Monday, January 3, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. in the main room of the Old Mill. The regular Council Meeting will be held on January 12, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Smith requested that Council hold a brief Executive Session after tonight's Council Meeting to discuss a legal matter, which Mr. Hale announced.

GENERAL

Peter Howell, a Rose Valley Museum Board Member, thanked Borough Council for the wonderful William Lightfoot Price Historical Marker dedication ceremony on November 6, which was attended by around 100 people. He particularly thanked Tim Plummer, Bill Hale, the Boy Scouts, Leslie Krowchenko, Paula Healy and South Media Fire Company for closing Rose Valley Road. The Museum held their weekend conference on "The Arts & Crafts Movement from John Ruskin to William Lightfoot Price" on Nov. 6 and 7. Recordings of all the lectures will be posted on the Museum's website.

The Museum will hold its annual Holiday Tree Lighting event with carol singing and refreshments outside at Thunderbird Lodge on Sunday, December 5 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. All are invited to attend.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m. on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

Paula W. Healy, Secretary