

## COUNCIL MEETING

April 10, 2019

The monthly meeting of the Rose Valley Borough Council was held on April 10, 2019 in the Borough Office, 9 Old Mill Lane, Rose Valley, Pa. President of Council Bill Hale called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. Other Councilmembers present were: Councilpersons Deb DeMasi, Dave Firn, Bob Siwicki, Judy Voet and Vippy Yee; Mayor Tim Plummer; Treasurer Joe Hare; Solicitor G. Guy Smith and Secretary Paula Healy. Councilperson Stephanie Middleton and Controller John Neilson were absent.

Guests attending the meeting were residents Allison and Jim Kimsey, 74 W. Rose Valley Road; Eric Root and Stephen Knob, 77 W. Rose Valley Road; and Rhoda O'Donnell, 603 W. Brookhaven Road.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the Minutes of the March 12, 2019 Council Meeting were approved after a correction regarding State Trooper Tobin's upcoming Town Watch Appreciation Night talk, on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

Mr. Hale asked the members of Council and the guest residents to introduce themselves and subsequently opened the floor to the residents. All residents attending were very unhappy about their Delcora sewer fee increasing 44% from \$625 per year billed twice a year at \$312.50 to \$900 per year billed four times a year at \$225. Mr. Hale briefly reviewed the history of the Rose Valley System, explaining that the Borough transferred ownership of the sewer system and treatment plant to DELCORA in 2009 in anticipation of changes in State DEP regulations that the Borough would have been unable to address. As expected, the DEP did not renew the permit to operate the antiquated treatment plant beyond 2018. Last year DELCORA had to convert the plant into a transfer pump station and install a new force main under South Longpoint Lane and Knowlton Road to transfer sewage into the Middletown piping system and eventually to the DELCORA treatment plant on the Delaware River. New three-phase, 480-volt power lines and a backup emergency generator had to be installed to power the transfer pumps. DELCORA also had to reline old sewer piping along Vernon Run near Rose Valley Swimming Pool to prevent leakage and replace vulnerable old piping crossing under Ridley Creek downstream of the Old Mill. DELCORA financed the cost of the work through a 30-year bond issued at a low interest rate available to them as a large sewer authority. Per DELCORA policy, the costs of these improvements to the system are shared by the roughly 500 households connected to the system. Mr. Hale acknowledged that while a sewer fee increase is not good news, it would have been far more expensive had the Borough remained responsible for operating the sewer system and the old treatment plant.

Residents asked if the sewer fees could be made fairer by basing them on the assessed value of properties or partly on water usage. Mr. Smith explained that while taxes can be based on assessed property values, fees must be based on the cost of providing service. Mr. Hale noted that DELCORA bills on a fixed fee basis because now almost all the expenses associated with operating the system are fixed, with the majority being amortized capital cost. Mr. Kimsey asked if more information regarding the amortized cost could be obtained. Mr. Hale said he would ask DELCORA for this information.

Mr. Root and Mr. Knob also voiced their concerns about the speed of traffic on Rose Valley Road and asked if the State Police could be requested to set up speed traps occasionally. Mrs. DeMasi said she would talk to the State Police about this and discussed the new speed sign devices which were recently installed on Rose Valley Road and the speed data they are providing. Mr. Firm mentioned the EAC's plans for a study of a pathway to improve the walkability of Rose Valley Road.

### ENVIRONMENT & EAC

Mr. Firm informed Council that the EAC Invasives Workshop and Plant Sale will be held on May 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, with the rain date on May 11.

The Chester-Ridley-Crum Watershed Association has asked if the Borough would be willing to be a sponsor of the Ridley Creek Stream Cleanup. After some discussion, in light of all the help CRC has provided the Borough in obtaining grants, Council approved a donation of \$250 on a motion made, seconded and passed, with Mr. Firm recused since he is a CRC board member.

Mr. Firm noted that former EAC member Jim Audley has proposed a project to fill in two frequently muddy areas of the path in the Saul Wildlife Sanctuary with crushed stone. The estimated cost for materials and rental equipment would be \$750. Volunteers would be needed to do the work. Discussion followed. Dave was not sure if this project had been approved by the EAC and the Borough Solicitor had some concern this might increase the liability of the Borough. It was felt these issues needed further investigation before proceeding.

### HIGHWAYS

Ms. Yee reported that she, Mrs. Healy and Borough Engineer Matt Houtmann performed the annual road inspection on April 9. Mr. Houtmann recommended that the 2019 roadwork include resurfacing Possum Hollow Road and selective patching elsewhere in the Borough. This plan was approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously approved.

### LIBRARY

Mrs. Voet reported that the Library Board met on April 9. The winner of this year's Great Getaway was The Chester Fund. Upcoming events at HKF include a talk by Ryan Berley on 4/11/19 sponsored by the Nether Providence Historical Society about Trench Art; a talk on 4/24/19 sponsored by the Chester Historical Society about Old Third Presbyterian Church; the Book It! 5k Walk/Run on 4/27/19; the May Fair on 5/11/19; and a talk on 5/21/19 about Rosie the Riveter. A new Library program called Arts Bringing Communities Together will debut at the May Fair. The purpose of this program known as ACT@Furness is to create a useful community resource for the study of performing arts and to provide a platform to showcase local talent. There will also be the Book Fair at the May Fair. The Library Board is looking for nominations for the Board. They need people with experience in Human Resources, website/tech, finances and sales/sponsorships. The Library's programming committee is working on a Speakers Series.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. DeMasi reviewed the Police and Fire Reports. The Police Report cited the following incidents: 3 false alarms; 3 see-officer events; a non-reportable disabled motorist event on 3/11/19; and a request assistance, specialized services on 3/26/19. The Fire Company responded to an automatic fire alarm activation on 3/22/19.

Mrs. DeMasi distributed reports generated using data collected from the speed sign devices on Rose Valley Road and discussed the findings.

Town Watch Appreciation Night will be held on April 15, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. at the Old Mill. Trooper Jessica Tobin, our new State Police Community Liaison, will talk about a timely and important safety topic. All Town Watchers and Rose Valley residents are invited to attend.

Trooper Tobin sent the Borough a flier on the State Police's Sunny Day Camp which will be held on June 22 2019. This is a one day event designed for children and adults with special needs or disabilities and their families to spend a day with law enforcement. The website for more information is [www.sunnydaycamp.org](http://www.sunnydaycamp.org).

## FINANCES

Mr. Hare went over the March Status of Funds and the March Income Reports. Mr. Siwicki reviewed the April Bills for Approval. On a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Bills in the amount of \$30,517.81 were approved for payment.

## PLANNING

The next Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled for May 2 at 7:30 p.m. to continue discussion of the proposed demolition ordinance.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Mrs. Healy informed Council that the Annual Large Trash Pickup will take place May 6 and 7.

## SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smith apprised Council of a dispute between neighbors.

## MAYOR'S REPORT

The Rose Valley Centennial Foundation submitted a Keystone Historic Preservation Construction Grant application to the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission to obtain funding to help restore the exterior of Thunderbird Lodge.

Tim thanked the Planning Commission for all the hard work they are doing on the proposed demolition ordinance.

Mayor Plummer reminded everyone to make plans to come to the Fourth of July celebration.

GENERAL

Mr. Siwicki asked if Council Meetings could start at 7:30 p.m. instead of 8:00 p.m. Council agreed. Starting in June, 2019, Council Meetings will start at 7:30 p.m. Mrs. Healy will advertise this new time.

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

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Paula W. Healy, Secretary