

**ROCHELLE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
February 22, 2021**

The Rochelle City Council met in Regular Session at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, February 22, 2021 in the Council Chambers of City Hall; 420 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street; Rochelle, IL 61068.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG & PRAYER:** The pledge was led by Mayor Bearrows and prayer was said by Deputy City Clerk Rose Huéramo.

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor - On March 16th, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Pritzker suspended the in-person attendance requirement for public meetings allowing public bodies to conduct meetings electronically without having to comply with the physical quorum requirements or the conditions for participating electronically in a meeting. On March 31st Governor Pritzker extended the order until April 30th. On May 29th Governor Pritzker extended the order until June 27th. On June 26th Governor Pritzker extended the order through July 25th. On July 24th Governor Pritzker extended the order through August 22nd. On August 21st Governor Pritzker extended the order through September 19, 2020. On September 18th Governor Pritzker extended the order through October 17, 2020. On October 16th Governor Pritzker extended the order through November 14th. On November 13th Governor Pritzker extended the order through December 12th. On December 11th Governor Pritzker extended the order through January 9th. On January 8th Governor Pritzker extended the order through February 6th. On February 5th Governor Pritzker extended the order through March 6th. As a result, Councilman Bil Hayes has notified the City Clerk of his desire to participate remotely. Unless there is a motion objecting to his attendance, the request of the council member will be deemed approved. Present on Roll Call were Councilmembers Burke, Gruben, D. McDermott, T. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Mayor Bearrows, and Councilmember Burke and Hayes attended remotely. Absent: None. A quorum of seven were present. City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh and Deputy City Clerk Rose Huéramo were also present.

**PROCLAMATIONS, COMMENDATIONS, ETC:** None.

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

- Mayor's Report
- Council Members

**PUBLIC COMMENTARY:** None.

**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

**1) CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS BY OMNIBUS VOTE with Recommendations:**

- a) Approve Minutes of City Council Meeting – 02/08/21
- b) Approve Exceptions – 02/02/21-02/08/21, 02/09/21-02/15/21
- c) Approve Payroll – 01/25/21-02/07/21
- d) Accept and Place on File Financial Statement – January 2021

Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott and seconded by Councilor Burke, "**I move Consent Agenda Items (a) through (d) be approved by Omnibus Vote as recommended.**" Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Burke, Gruben, Hayes, D. McDermott, T. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

**2) Ordinance Amending Chapter 98 of the Rochelle Municipal Code Pertaining to Sewer and Sewage Disposal.**

The Rochelle Municipal Code contains the following language under General Provisions section 152 (b) (9) "Maintenance of all building sewers, from the center point of the public collector sewer, located on the public right-of-way, to and including the owner's property, shall be the responsibility of the building/property owner." In order to help mitigate hardship on residents during back-up sewer events the proposed ordinance adds the following condition:

- a. RMU will be responsible for the total cost of repairs to the sanitary service line in the ROW where a certified plumber is not able to break through a blockage and, if there are structural problems with the sanitary service line and repairs have to be made all cost associated with restoration within the City's ROW will be covered by the City.

Residents can purchase insurance through private carriers to cover the expenses of sewer pipe repairs that run between their home and the main utility connection. Utilities Superintendent, Adam Lanning was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor Burke and seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, "**I move Ordinance 21-5215, an Ordinance Amending Chapter 98 of the Rochelle Municipal Code Pertaining to Sewer and Sewage Disposal, be approved.**" Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Burke, Gruben, Hayes, D. McDermott, T. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

- 3) **Light Duty Work Truck Lease Agreements for Street Department.** In July of 2019, Rochelle City Council approved a Master Equity Lease Agreement with Enterprise Fleet Management. Leasing light duty fleet vehicles through Enterprise Fleet Management provides the City with financial and practical advantages such as improved cash flow, greatly reduced maintenance costs, reduced fuel consumption, as well as improved safety features to better protect City employees and the general public. The 2021 Street Department budget includes funds to lease two (2) new light duty work trucks through Enterprise Fleet Management. Light duty work trucks are used daily and need to be reliable and safe as they play a crucial role in Street Department activities. If approved, these two (2) new work trucks with full factory warranties will replace three (3) currently owned work trucks that are over ten (10) years old with increasing maintenance costs. Street Superintendent Tim Isley was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott and seconded by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, **“I move council approve a lease agreement with Enterprise Fleet Management and authorize the City Manager to sign an agreement for one (1) - 2021 Ram 3500 crew cab with lift gate at a monthly rate of \$592.98 and one (1) - 2021 Ram 3500 regular cab with dump body and V-plow at a monthly rate of \$763.13.”** Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Burke Gruben, Hayes, D. McDermott, T. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.
- 4) **Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Agreement with the Greater Rochelle Economic Development Corporation for the Purchase of Railroad Right of Way.** Over the past 35 years the City has been expanding the City of Rochelle Railroad (CIR) which has attracted more than a dozen rail served industries to Rochelle. Over the same period of time the City and GREDCO have collaborated in the purchase of land for the purpose of future rail development. Two years ago, GREDCO optioned and purchased a tract of land consisting of 47.38 acres of which the City subsequently purchased 22.99 acres which is known as Tract #1. Now the remaining 24.39 acres (Tract #2) is ready to be sold. The City has agreed to purchase and GREDCO has agreed to sell this tract for \$18,560 per acre for a total price of \$452,678.40 plus closing costs. By the City owning the rail right of way it clears the way for the City to seek grants to extend the rail system another 1.25 miles east and south opening up ~600 acres for rail served industrial development. Funds to purchase the land will come out of rail revenues that have been budgeted for the purpose of rail expansion. Economic Development Director Jason Anderson was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott and seconded by Councilor Burke, **“I move Resolution 21-05, a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Agreement with the Greater Rochelle Economic Development Corporation for the Purchase of Railroad Right of Way in the amount of \$452,678.40 plus closing costs, be approved.”** Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Burke, Gruben, Hayes, D. McDermott, T. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.
- 5) **Ordinance Waiving the Competitive Bidding Requirements and Awarding Wesco Distribution the Purchase Order for the Purchase of Cobra Head Streetlights.** For 2019 and 2020, the City Council approved the waiving of building permit fees, sewer, water, and electric connection fees for all new single-family residential construction. The savings per house on average is around \$400 for the building permit depending on the square footage, a \$700 sewer connection fee, and a \$50 electric connection fee for a total of \$1150. In addition to new construction, staff is requesting the extension of waiving the same fees for properties that have been vacant for 6 months or more, with a minimum investment of \$15,000. This additional request will assist with addressing blight in our community and encourage rehabilitation of existing housing. Staff is requesting the extension of the program till December 31, 2021, with the availability for the City Manager to extend to December 31, 2022. Community Development Director Michelle Pease was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor Gruben and seconded by Councilor D. McDermott, **“I move Ordinance 21-5217, an Ordinance Placing a Moratorium on Imposing Permit Fees for Residential Building Permits for Calendar Year 2021, be approved.”** Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Burke, Gruben, Hayes, D. McDermott, T. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

**DISCUSSION:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** At 6:55 PM, moved by Councilor T. McDermott and seconded by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, **“I move the Council adjourn.”** Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Burke, Gruben, Hayes, D. McDermott, T. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey and Mayor Bearrows. Absent: Hayes. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

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John Bearrows, Mayor

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Rose Huéramo  
Deputy City Clerk, City of Rochelle