

McKees Rocks Borough  
Virtual Special Public Meeting  
January 27, 2021  
7:00 PM

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Borough Solicitor Megan Turnbull announced for meeting minutes purposes that this meeting is the reconvene from the previously scheduled Special Council Meeting on January 21, 2021 at 1:00 PM.

**Roll Call:** Council President Brinza requested roll call. Councilmembers present: Vice-President Walker, Councilwoman Harvey, Councilman Mixer, Councilman Maritz, Councilman Myers, and Councilwoman Delgado.

Councilmembers Absent: Councilwoman Evich

Also present for this meeting were Borough Manager Ruth A. Pompey, Assistant Borough Secretary LeeAnn Wozniak, Borough Solicitor Megan Turnbull, of Weiss Burkhardt Kramer, LLC

**Agenda Comments/Changes:**

Borough Solicitor Turnbull advised the public in attendance that Council participated in an executive session prior to this meeting to discuss litigation matters.

**Guest Speakers/Public Comments (3 minutes):**

1. Ms. Maribeth Taylor (Resident): Ms. Taylor was present to address Council beginning with discussion about Councilman Mixer's previous statements during a public meeting that the Borough has been in the red for 13 years prior to the current administration with no proof. Ms. Taylor was also questioning Councilman Mixer's calculations about the rate increase at last meeting, indicating his calculations do not add up according to the Ordinance and her calculations are different of how much a resident's bill would change based on usage. Ms. Taylor is suggesting taking out a bond, instead of increasing the sewer rate and taxing the residents. Ms. Taylor also noted that more projects have been completed in the past, without any rate increases. Councilman Mixer responded to Ms. Taylor's comments that the Tax Collector had multiple documents for review at a past public meeting regarding Borough's past budget(s) for anyone to look at and no one took the time to review the previous years. Councilman Myers indicated the reason for the rate increase is due to major sewer line repairs and residents not paying their sewage bills.
2. Mr. Frank McQuillan (Resident): Mr. McQuillan was present to address Council and agrees with Ms. Taylor's comments that the numbers don't line up in the calculation(s) of the Ordinance. Mr. McQuillan feels it's not the right time to tax the residents, especially during a pandemic. He stated he will be completing a Right to Know Request for all expenditures of the sewer system and also requesting an independent audit. Mr. McQuillan states that this should be held off for at least a year or two, at least until the pandemic is over.

3. Ms. Samanta Levitzski-Wright (Resident): Ms. Levitzski-Wright was present to address Council. Ms. Levitzski-Wright provided a letter to Council prior to the meeting regarding her concern(s) in detail, but strongly suggests Council to look for grant opportunities instead of raising any rates at this time. Ms. Levitzski-Wright mentioned knowing families who have had to move into another family members home because of loss of income due to the pandemic. She is asking before the Council votes for any rate increase, to come up with a five year plan with projections of any rate increases to alert the residents in advance.
4. Ms. Linda Stanko (Rental Property Owner): Ms. Stanko was present to address Council, indicating she is struggling with the potential sewer rate increase. Ms. Stanko feels that the Borough is made up roughly 80 percent rental/20 percent homeowner occupied properties and this rate increase would definitely be a hit on the tenants, especially during a pandemic. Ms. Stanko is absorbing all the debt of her properties and paying all the bills/taxes on her rental properties. Her long-term tenants have been unable to pay rent since the pandemic. Ms. Stanko is also suggesting a five year plan with projections of rates, before Council should consider a rate change.

Discussion:

**Borough Ordinance 1769 – 2021 Sewer Fee Rate Change:**

Borough Solicitor Turnbull presented the updated Borough Ordinance 1769, indicating the Ordinance has been legally advertised for Council consideration at this evening's meeting. Borough Solicitor Turnbull explained a breakdown of rates, indicating that ALCOSAN rate increase has nothing to do with the Borough. Borough Manager Ruth A. Pompey advised that she provided a sewer fund analysis dating back to 2015 - 2020, requested by Council for review. A sewer fund budget comparison of 2019 and 2020 was also provided.

President Brinza made a motion to open the floor for Council discussion of Ordinance 1769, followed by a second motion of Vice-President Walker. Motion was adopted by acclamation.

President Brinza then made a motion to amend Ordinance 1769, keeping the Borough sewer rate the same at \$4.32/with no increase. A second motion was made by Vice-President Walker. Roll Call requested in 7 Yes- 0 No, to amend Ordinance 1769, keeping the 2021 sewer rate the same of \$4.32/with no increase. Motion carries.

Borough Solicitor Turnbull confirmed the sewer rate breakdown for Council adoption.

**Public Safety Director Resolution:**

Borough Solicitor Turnbull presented the Public Safety Director Resolution, explaining the position in detail being collaborative in nature between the McKees Rocks VFD and Independent Hose Company # 5. This position will be unpaid, oversight appointed by Council. Interested candidates will be reviewed by Council and appointed at an upcoming meeting. A motion was made by Councilman Mixter and seconded by Vice-President Walker to approve the Public Safety Director Resolution. Motion was adopted by acclamation.

A motion was made by President Brinza and second by Vice-President Walker to adjourn the meeting.  
Meeting adjourned, by Council President Brinza.