



MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 6:30 PM
City of Rochelle Council Chambers—420 North 6th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Pledge to the Flag and prayer were led by Mayor Bearrows.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Present were Councilors T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor John Bearrows. A quorum of seven were present. Also, present City Manager Jeff Fiegenschuh and City Clerk Rose Huéramo.
- III. **PROCLAMATIONS, COMMENDATIONS, ETC:** None.
- IV. **REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**
1. Mayor's Report: C.A.N. event will be held on Saturday, October 18, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM in the south parking lot of the museum.
 2. Council Members: Councilwoman Arteaga congratulated the fifth-grade Rochelle Junior Tackle on winning the Big 14 Conference and completing an undefeated season.
- V. **PUBLIC COMMENTARY:** None.
- VI. **DISCUSSION ITEMS: 2025 Tax Levy:** The State of Illinois requires the City annually adopt and file a Property Tax Levy Ordinance on or before the last Tuesday in December. Last year, the City's Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) was \$324,521,968 and its property tax rate was .928120 per \$100 of EAV. The City collected \$3,011,953 in property taxes. For 2025, Ogle County has estimated the City's EAV at \$354,394,722 which is an increase of nearly \$30 million. The proposed levy calculation options would result in the City collecting \$3,044,949 in property taxes, an increase of 1% (excluding the bond), \$3,074,449 in property taxes, an increase of 2% (excluding the bond), or \$3,104,199 in property taxes, an increase of 3% (excluding the bond). Based on the estimated EAV, the tax rate would decrease .068923 per \$100 EAV for the 1% option, decrease .060599 per \$100 EAV for the 2% option, or decrease .052204 per \$100 EAV for the 3% option. The proposed 2025 levy includes funding the Police and Fire Pension Funds as recommended by the pension boards' actuarial studies. The Ordinance Levying Taxes for the City of Rochelle for 2025 will be included as a business item on the October 27, 2025, City Council Meeting.
- VII. **BUSINESS ITEMS:**
1. **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS BY OMNIUS VOTE with Recommendations:**
 - a) Approve City Council Meeting Minutes - 9/22/25
 - b) Accept & Place on File Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes - 8/4/2025
 - c) Approve Payroll - 9/1/25-9/14-25, 9/15/25-9/28/25
 - d) Approve Payment Registers - 9/22/25, 9/29/25, 10/6/25
 - e) Approve Exceptions - 9/25/25, 10/1/25, 10/2/25Motion made by Councilor Hayes, Seconded by Councilor Arteaga, **"I move consent agenda items (a) through (e) be approved by Omnibus vote as recommended."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.
 2. **An Ordinance Approving a Special Use Permit for a Childcare Center located at 211 East IL Route 38.** The petitioner is seeking a special use permit for a childcare center. The subject property is zoned B2, Commercial Highway and is located at 211 East IL Route 38. Sec. 110-160, District Use Classification List, Daycare Centers require a special use in a B2 zoning district. On Monday, October 6, 2025, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted 5-0, to approve the proposed Special Use for the property located at 211 East IL Route 38. Community Development Director Michelle Pease was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor

D. McDermott, **"I move Ordinance 2025-59, an Ordinance Approving a Special Use Permit for a Childcare Center at 211 East IL Route 38, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

3. **An Ordinance Approving a TIF Redevelopment Agreement with Down Range Properties, LLC.** As downtown development continues, the City seeks to facilitate a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Redevelopment Agreement with Down Range Properties, LLC located at 422 Cherry Avenue. The proposed redevelopment agreement allows the developer to be eligible for up to 50% of the estimated \$398,152.00 for tuckpointing, doors, renovation of office and residential spaces, and a roof. A maximum of \$199,076.00 is proposed within this agreement. Upon proof of completion of the work, the City will provide payment of 50% of the costs over five years: \$39,815.20 by December 2026, \$39,815.20 by December 2027, \$39,815.20 by December 2028, \$39,815.20 by December 2029, and \$39,815.20 by December 2030. Community Development Director Michelle Pease was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, Seconded by Councilor Valdivieso, **"I move Ordinance 2025-60, an Ordinance Approving a TIF Redevelopment Agreement with Down Range Properties, LLC, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.
4. **An Ordinance Amending Sections 102 and 103 of Chapter 94 - Traffic and Vehicles.** City staff have received safety concerns and reports of near misses at the intersections of 7th Avenue & 2nd Street, 8th Avenue & Woolf Court, S. Main Street & Veterans Parkway/Standard Oil Road, 4th Avenue & 6th Street, and 8th Street & 5th Avenue. After investigation and traffic studies, these intersections have been identified as meeting certain criteria permitting an ALL-WAY STOP controlled intersection. Each of these intersections have unique characteristics. The intersections of 7th Avenue & 2nd Street, 4th Avenue & 6th Street, S. Main Street. & Veterans Parkway/Standard Oil Road are all located on designated truck routes. Trucks take longer to clear an intersection and require large turning movements that can encroach upon the driving lane of oncoming traffic. The intersections of Woolf Court & 8th Avenue, and 6th Street & 5th Avenue both have significant increases in traffic and pedestrian movement at times of the day due to nearby schools, churches, and employers. As the traffic volumes increase during these times the intersection efficiencies decrease and create motorist confusion and vision issues. Based upon the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidance and warrants, as well as industry best practices and engineering judgement, Rochelle's City Engineer, and Public Works Director agree that it is in the best interest of the City of Rochelle and the motoring public to designate these intersections as ALL-WAY STOP intersections. A controlled stop at each intersection will help better manage the flow of traffic, as well as improve motorist and pedestrian safety. Director of Public Works Tim Isley was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor D. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, **"I move Ordinance 2025-61, an Ordinance Amending Sections 102 and 103 of Chapter 94 - Traffic and Vehicles, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.
5. **An Ordinance Amending Section 4 of Chapter 6 Relating to the Hours of Sale for Alcoholic Beverages.** It has been brought to the City's attention that the current hours for alcohol sales listed in the City Code do not reflect the long-standing practice observed by local businesses. According to City ordinances adopted in 1966, 1989, and 2012, the official hours of sale are as follows: Sec. 6-4. - Hours of sale. (a) No person licensed to sell alcoholic liquor under this chapter shall permit his establishment to be open for the serving, sale or giving away of such liquors except during the following periods of time on the following days: (1) On the days of Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. of the following day. (2) On the days of Friday and Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. of the following day. (3) On Sundays from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. (4) Class E temporary licenses shall be valid from 12:00 noon for the day they are issued until 10:00 p.m. that day unless

otherwise authorized by the local liquor commissioner or city council. These ordinances list Thursday as 6:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m., even though it has historically been observed as 6:00 a.m. – 2:00 a.m. This discrepancy also affects the operating hours for gaming machines. To ensure consistency and minimize disruptions to local businesses, staff recommends updating the ordinance so that the official hours align with the historically observed schedule. City Clerk Rose Huéramo was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor D. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, **"I move Ordinance 2025-62, an Ordinance Amending Section 4 of Chapter 6 Relating to the Hours of Sale for Alcoholic Beverages, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

6. **An Ordinance Amending Section 47 of Chapter 6 Relating to Eligibility for a Liquor License.** Staff is requesting an amendment to Ch. 6, Article II, Sec. 6-47 – Ineligibility for License, specifically the section regarding nonresidents of the city. Currently, the code requires that a person, or in the case of a partnership, a partner, must reside within the city to qualify for a liquor license. The proposed amendment would allow owners to reside within 75 miles of the city, provided that all partners or owners continue to meet all other eligibility requirements under state and local law. This change is intended to make it easier for local business owners to comply with regulations while maintaining the integrity and safety standards of the city's liquor licensing process. City Clerk Rose Huéramo was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor Valdivieso, Seconded by Councilor Arteaga, **"I move Ordinance 2025-63, an Ordinance Amending Section 47 of Chapter 6 Relating to Eligibility for a Liquor License, be approved."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0. Motion made by Councilor T. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Valdivieso, **"I move Council Remove the Mileage Qualification from the original Ordinance."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.
7. **A Resolution Approving Intergovernmental Personnel Benefits Cooperative Premium Rates for January 1, 2026 -December 31, 2026.** Background in September 2017, the City Council approved a resolution authorizing the City of Rochelle to join the Intergovernmental Personnel Benefits Cooperative (IPBC), effective January 2018, as part of the Quad Cities Health Insurance Pool (QCHIP). Health insurance premiums for full-time employees are cost-shared between employees and the City, with contribution percentages determined by respective collective bargaining agreements or the Employee Handbook. Since joining IPBC in 2018, the City has experienced an average annual premium increase of 3.09% through the current 2025 plan year. Current Considerations For the upcoming plan year, IPBC presented the City with a projected 13.9% increase to the cost of premiums should the City remain with the current Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO plan. On June 23, our IPBC representative met with the internal Insurance Committee to review alternatives. The committee was presented with a Blue Choice Options (BCO) plan reflecting a 9.05% increase in premiums. After review, the committee determined that the BCO plan offers the most cost-effective balance for both employees and the City. While the High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) shows a projected 13.3% increase, its overall premium cost remains lower than the BCO plan. Therefore, the recommendation is to continue offering the HDHP as a coverage option. In addition, beginning in 2026, it is recommended that the City provide a \$1,000 Health Savings Account (HSA) contribution to each employee electing the HDHP, regardless of coverage tier. Historically the City has provided a different amount depending on coverage and tier. For financial stability, coupled with ensuring the cost-effective option is attractive to employees, it is suggested to decrease to \$1,000 for all employees on any HDHP. Director of Human Resources Jillian Condon was available for questions. Motion made by Councilor D. McDermott, Seconded by Councilor Shaw-Dickey, **"I move Resolution R2025-44, a Resolution Approving Intergovernmental Personnel Benefits Cooperative Premium Rates for January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026, be**

approved." Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:33 P.M. Motion made by Councilor Valdivieso, Seconded by Councilor Hayes, **"I move the Council adjourn."** Voting Yea: T. McDermott, Hayes, D. McDermott, Shaw-Dickey, Arteaga, Valdivieso, and Mayor Bearrows. Nays: None. Motion passed 7-0.

John Bearrows, Mayor

Rose Huéramo, City Clerk