

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 18, 2023

A regular meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Stroudsburg Borough Municipal Building with the following members present: Council President Matt Abell, Vice-President Erica McCabe, Council Pro-Tem Toby Sabatine, Council Member Joanne Kochanski, Council Member Melody Trunfio, and Council Member Victoria DeVries. Council Member James Smith was absent.

Also present were: Mayor Michael Moreno, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Borough Solicitor Christopher Brown, Esq., Assistant Street Superintendent O.C. Hearthstone, Zoning/Codes Officer/Land Development Administrator Jennifer Walker, and Executive Assistant Becky Smith.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Hearing and Consideration to Revise an Ordinance of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Chapter 15, Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Part 3, §15-316, entitled “Handicapped Parking Zones Established”

Ms. McCabe advised if approved, a handicapped parking space will be added in front of Representative Tarah Probst’s office on South Ninth Street.

There were no questions or comments from Council or the public. A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. Sabatine to close the public hearing. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The aforementioned Ordinance was adopted on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Hearing and Consideration to Amend an Ordinance of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg, Chapter 15, Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Part 2, Section §15-205-1, entitled “Stop Intersections”

Ms. McCabe advised if approved, a stop sign will be installed at the intersection of South Ninth Street and Mill Alley.

There were no questions or comments from Council or the public. A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to close the public hearing. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The aforementioned Ordinance was adopted on a motion made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the regular meeting on April 4, 2023

The minutes of the regular meeting on April 4, 2023 were approved as circulated on a motion made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 1-abstain, Ms. McCabe)

Monthly Administrative Reports

The following monthly reports were approved on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine: Public Works Report, Parking Report, Fire Department Report, and the Right-To-Know Report. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Accept Unaudited March, 2023 Treasurer's Report.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to accept the Balance Sheets, FY 23 vs FY 22, and the Budget to Actual Report. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Old Business

None.

New Business

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve scheduling a public hearing to Amend an Ordinance of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Chapter 15, Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Part 3, §15-306, entitled “Parking Prohibited at all times in Certain Locations”, for Tuesday, May 2, 2023. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Rich Homar, President of the Board of Directors at AWSOM Animal Shelter, was present to discuss the proposed expansion of the shelter. The property adjacent to AWSOM is owned by the Borough of Stroudsburg. Mr. Homar is proposing to expand the facility, which is located in Stroud Township, and is requesting utilization of at least forty feet of the vacant land owned by the Borough of Stroudsburg. After discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the Solicitor to move forward with formalizing a lease agreement between AWSOM and the Borough of Stroudsburg for Council’s review, and to instruct the Borough Manager to send a letter of support to Stroud Township in regard to the proposed expansion of AWSOM Animal Shelter. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve an extension of the Subdivision and Land Development Plan of the Monroe County Historical Association to May 31, 2023. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve donating an out of service 1990 E1 Protector Fire Truck from the Stroudsburg Fire Department to the Monroe County Office of Emergency Management. Mr. Kopp reported this truck has been advertised multiple times to sell with no success. Chief Frantz added that by donating this truck, the Fire Department will receive one year of free training at the Monroe County Safety Center. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Kopp provided the 1st Quarter 2023 Financial Report for the Stroudsburg Borough Non-Uniformed Pension Plan. No action taken.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to approve a donation in the amount of \$2,250.00 to the Monroe County Historical Association in support of their Heritage Center Construction Project. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve an Event Request for the Trooper Joshua Miller Memorial 5K Run/Walk on June 4th, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the purchase of a 2023 GMC Sierra 2500HD Truck for \$50,000.00 from Star Buick GMC, COSTARS Contract 25-E22-537. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve hiring Michael DeCarlo as Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer and Project Manager at an annual salary of \$80,000.00, with a start date of May 15, 2023. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Kopp discussed the “Quick Build” Options of the Transforming Main Street Project, and advised he will work with Alta Planning and Design prior to receiving grant money in order to keep the project moving forward, and so the bids can be advertised as soon as funding is available.

Britt Detrick, owner of Renegade Winery, was present and requested authorization to rehang the “Netflix Lights” with the existing wires over Main Street, and leave them hanging year-round. Mr. Detrick advised he will perform the labor of hanging the lights, and absorb all costs, including electricity. A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve Britt Detrick rehang the “Netflix Lights” with the existing wires over Main Street, leaving them hang year-round, contingent upon the Borough Manager checking with PennDOT, and receipt of a Certificate of Liability from Renegade Winery. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Kopp reported receipt of a request from the Downtown Stroudsburg Business Association for Stroudsburg Borough to temporarily suspend paid parking during public events in the downtown. After discussion, there was no motion or action taken. Mr. Abell recommended that Mr. Kopp draft a letter to the Association with Council’s rationale, and include parking revenue figures from last year’s Stroud Fest to show what the Borough would be losing by suspending paid parking.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve the Special Event Permit Guidelines, Application, and Permit Fee, as distributed, with the correction on page 2, changing the application fee from \$250.00 to \$300.00. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve hiring a temporary, part time Parking Enforcement Officer, not to exceed 35 hours a week, at a salary of \$17.17 per hour, as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Teamsters Local 773. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve advertising for repairs to the south and west porches of the Stroudsburg Borough Building. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the application of Ralph Meisse, as recommended for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the

Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB), for the repair of the front porch at 606 Thomas Street. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to approve the application of Angel Rodrigues, as recommend for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB), for replacement of the roof at 13-15 North Sixth Street. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell reported that the Committee will meet Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at which time they will review the Rental Inspection Ordinance.

Budget Committee – Nothing to report.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe reported that cars continue to park in the privately owned, vacant lot at Eighth and Main Streets, and since the Parking Enforcement Officers cannot issue tickets on private property, the Codes Department should be issuing citations to the property owner for these violations. Council requested Mr. Kopp look into the original agreement between the property owner and the Borough, with regard to blocking off this lot to vehicles. Ms. McCabe advised PennDOT is behind in processing applications and issuing handicapped placards. She suggested that people who receive tickets for parking with an expired handicapped placard should be able to fill out the appeal form and attach proof of their renewal application that has been submitted to PennDOT, and the Borough will dismiss tickets in these circumstances. Mr. Kopp will provide this direction to Borough Staff.

Recycling Committee – Nothing to report.

Sewer Committee – Mr. Kopp is waiting to hear back from Brodhead Creek Regional Authority with regard to the sewer billing. Smoke testing will be performed this week on Third Street.

Street Committee – Mayor Moreno reported that at the April 5th Committee meeting, he discussed the dog fecal problem along Main Street. It was suggested to plant Marigold flowers to help deter dogs from going there, and possibly begin an adopt-a-tree well program. The PRIDE Abby Crosswalk painting project has been postponed until after August 31, 2023, tentatively, due to paving projects and bollard installation. The Committee will reach out to Monroe County for permission to place a convex mirror at North Sixth Street and Quaker Alley. As the Hometown Heroes banners become obsolete or tattered, they will be replaced with banners that meet new specifications, as to not interfere with pedestrian foot traffic. Mr. Ace discussed with the Committee UGI's concerns with the fees they pay the Borough for street restorations. Paving the whole span if there are two utility patches within 50 feet from one another is the requirement, and questioned if that applies to a calendar year, or over the duration of five years. Mr. Ace determined that each lane would be separate, patches would be required to be paved the full length if they occur within five years of each other, and this would not apply if the patches are created by different utility companies.

Personnel Committee – Mr. Kopp reported receipt of the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement and will schedule a meeting to begin negotiations.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Mr. Sabatine reported a grand reopening of Ann Street Park is being planned, tentatively for Saturday, August 12, 2023. The Committee will be begin featuring historic buildings, as well as interviews with volunteers, on the Borough Facebook

page. The Committee recommended an overhaul of the Borough's website. Mr. Sabatine advised that donations are being collected for the upcoming Dog Park, and requested the Borough make a contribution. Mr. Kopp will add this into the 2024 budget.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell reported the Committee met with HARB, who offered suggestions on improving the current application process.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – Ms. McCabe reported that a resident received a letter from PennDOT in regard to the I-80 Expansion project, with a substantially low offer to purchase their house, as part of eminent domain. Ms. McCabe is concerned PennDOT will continue to offer other Borough residents below market value for their homes and will keep an eye on this situation.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Committee – Ms. McCabe reported that SROSRC is currently hiring for summer positions. Live interviews will be conducted by the local news at the Dog Park in Glen Park on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. A trivia fundraising event, benefiting the Dog Park, will follow at 6:00 p.m. at The Willowtree Inn on Ann Street.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Moreno attended the Downtown Stroudsburg Alliance Meeting virtually, and reached out to Mary via email to advise that the Streets Committee is requesting feedback from businesses if they would like to sponsor tree wells, and in return the Borough would provide them with Marigolds to plant in an effort to curb dogs defecating within them. Mr. Moreno reported attendance at the following events: supported the LVH-Pocono and Pocono YMCA official announcement and did a brief interview with Channel 13; Municipal Leader Conference, hosted by Matt Cartwright's office; attended Meet & Greet with municipal leaders and first responders, hosted by Rosemary Brown; participated in Pick up the Poconos; and will be welcoming a new radio station, POCO 103.

Council Member Reports

Mrs. Kochanski reported to Codes and Zoning that clothing and garbage is piling up at the collection bins within the parking lot of the Gas Station on McConnell Street.

Ms. McCabe requested money be budgeted to allow the Borough to send appropriate items to express condolences as deemed appropriate. Ms. McCabe reported a child was hit by a bus on Main Street, and stated something needs to be done about safety around the school.

Mr. Sabatine reported his attendance at the Stormwater Tour. Mr. Sabatine asked the status of the ATT cell tower. Mr. Kopp will contact them again. Mr. Sabatine announced volunteers are needed for the Summer Concert Series, and the concert schedule will soon be distributed.

Mr. Abell added the Ann Street concrete work looks great.

Solicitor's Report

Nothing to report.

Manager's Report

Meetings

Interviews Codes/Zoning Position
Stroudsburg Downtown Business Association

April 10th & 11th
April 11th

Nathan Wiles/Wiles Weather	April 12 th
Joint Work Session HARB/Redevelopment	April 12 th
Municipal Leader's Conference	April 13 th
Conservation Stormwater Tour	April 14 th
Performance Reviews (Admin & Parking)	April 17 th – April 20 th
Keyur/Penn Stroud Hotel	April 18 th
7 th Street Project/ Pre-Bid Site Visit	April 19 th
Rosemary Brown/Meet & Greet	April 20 th
Watershed Plan Advisory Committee Meeting	April 20 th
Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Plan Review	April 20 th
DEP Flood Protection Workshop	April 25 th & 26 th
Pension Board Meeting	April 27 th

Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

Sidewalk Replacement Project/Multimodal Grant. Work began on Ann Street Park as well as finishing areas from fall 2022. South 6th Street, outside of Borough Hall, Williams Street and South 9th Street also included. Completion date NLT June 15th.

Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving. Abbreviated Act 537 Plan Update readvertised on March 20th. Submitted proof of advertisement and original resolution to DEP. DEP has 120 Days to respond to the plan.

Ann Street Park. Sidewalk replacement underway. Lights for falls installed. Security camera installed. Stamped concrete for middle deck provides by \$15,000 DCED COVID Response Grant. Quotes received for wooden deck. Will install colored panels, paint railings, clean concrete and plant flowers this spring. Boy Scout Projects ready. Need to plan reopening ceremony; all work should be complete early summer 2023 (Except Flower Planting).

Paving Summer 2023. North 7th Street and Courthouse Square out to bid with opening on May 3rd. Ann Street (5th to 8th) as part of Ann Street Sewer Project. Borough projects include: Church Alley, Brown Street, Lindbergh Street and Spring Garden. Borough projects to start approximately mid-May.

Grants Strategy 2023

DOT RAISE Grant. Submitted on February 27th. Reviewed by the DOT; no comments yet. All grant materials have been posted on the Borough website on a separate project page.

DCED Multimodal. Grant completed and submitted. Contains “Quick Build” elements of Main Street Project. CFA Board meeting on May 16th.

Monroe County LSA Grant. Will receive \$500,000 for the project. Working with Alta for plan for the use of funds.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant. Awarded \$218,236; 5% minimum match required.

PMVB 2023 Tourism Impact Grant. Awarded \$15,000 on 3/31 for bollards on N 7th Street. Ad for Bollards published, opening on May 2nd.

Levee Repair Project

Request for reimbursement of Municipal Share sent to DEP (\$80,000). Easements provided to Corps of Engineers Monday. Calendar has contact award by June 30th.

Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiations (CBA with Teamsters Union)

Received initial offer from the Teamsters. I can see that salary is going to be the sticking point in this negotiation.

Engineering Creek Walk Project

Survey crews on site last Friday, Monday and today. For use in grant request to DCED (And DCNR in 2024) for funding project.

Staff Performance Evaluations/ Counseling

This week, I am doing annual evaluations on Administrative and Parking personnel.

Capital Improvements Plan

Working on 10-year Capital Improvements Plan for the Borough listing all major capital projects and purchases through 2031. Dump truck that was ordered in 2022 will not be delivered until 2024; purchasing a utility pick-up instead with the budgeted funds.

Senior Waste Collection Assistance Program

To date, we have had 14 applicants. All have been eligible and full funding provided by the Borough. \$5,544 of \$15,000 Program Funds expended.

Borough Building Repairs

Working on getting quotes for repairs of both porches. In the 2023 Budget.

Safety Committee Meeting

Safety Committee met on March 2nd. Brian is taking Train the Trainer for flagging on April 28th; he will then train the rest of our staff. Defensive driving training for all employees who drive as part of their duties will be held on May 11th. Both of these trainings were recommended by KMIT on last year's Risk Assessment of the Borough.

Verkada Security Cameras

All finished except one camera, which we are trying to figure out!

Solid Waste Ordinance

First bill mailed on March 31st. Cross training with office staff to be able to answer questions and change billing addresses. Looking at additional days in April to locate solid waste ordinance violations.

Dumpster Ordinance Implementation

On hold until I receive further guidance. 43 properties have asked for appeal or some sort of relief from the Ordinance. 17 Properties have either complied or have met with me and have received go-ahead to proceed. I have received no response from 71 properties.

Sewer Billing

Draft billing SOP to BCRA for review; waiting to hear back to schedule meeting. Our Ordinance spells out in detail exactly what is required for 60+ day overdue accounts; they must be sent to a collection agency.

Sewer Rates/EDU Reassessment

Inspection of properties complete. Final review in 2023 and appeal for those whose EDUs are changing. Look at potential EBU system in 2024. Use data to review and update rental property information develop comprehensive database for the Borough with all resident information.

Sewer Collection System/I&I Initiative

Update report provided to BCRA. Working on ArcGIS mapping of all cleanouts & manholes. Reinstalled flow meters. Restarting Smoke Testing; smoke tested 700-900 blocks Sarah Street last week. North 3rd Street this week.

LERTA

Draft LERTA Ordinance to School Board for review. Should have comments soon.

Code Enforcement

Rental Properties: Follow-up letter sent to those that have not yet registered their properties. Excellent response from those who have not yet registered! We are building an excellent database of rental properties for next year.

Short-Term Rentals: Compiling list of properties for notification.

Staff Training

Working on a training presentation on Customer Service.

MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning

Going fully “live” with MyGov in 2023 on all permits and licenses. Customers will be required, unless they have a compelling reason, to submit all permit and license online through the Customer Service Portal. Waiting for a full staff before implementing.

Emergency Operations Plan

Plan was due to be updated in 2021; looking at completing in 2023.

Sewer Fund Delinquent Accounts/Liens

We are looking at our list of liens and see what liens need to be renewed and if any need to be taken off the list. BCRA wants to review billing procedures, as do I. I have talked to three collection agencies with the idea of letting them go after delinquent accounts, which is allowed in our Sewer Ordinance.

Bicycle Racks

Three racks remain to be installed: 745 Main, 401 Main & 33 North 7th Streets. North 7th Street was approved with a slightly changed location. Waiting to hear back from the remaining two property owners. One property owner (1172 Main Street) declined to have the rack on their property. Installation in Spring 2023.

Upcoming Focus

New Employee Integration
Solid Waste Billing
Sewer EDU Assessment Plan

CBA Bargaining
Capital Improvements Plan
Day to Day Activities

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. Walker provided an update on department activity in March to date: 1 HARB application in March, 2 HARB applications in April; 11 Change of Use permits; 5 Fence permits; 6 Sign permits; 12 Building permits; 7 Outdoor Dining permits; and 25 Dumpster permits.

Street Superintendent's Report

Ms. Hearthstone reported smoke testing is being performed regularly; mulching and pool work has begun; the Touch a Truck event, Arbor Day, and Pick Up the Poconos are all scheduled for Saturday, April 22.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 230418

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to authorize the payment of bills on Warrants 230418. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)