

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 1, 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, Council Vice-President Erica McCabe, Council Member Joanne Kochanski, Council Member Melody Trunfio, and Council Member Victoria DeVries. Council Pro-Tem Toby Sabatine, and Council Member James Smith were absent.

Also present were: Mayor Michael Moreno, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Borough Solicitor Christopher Brown, Esq., Street Superintendent Brian Ace, Jr., Zoning/Codes Officer/Land Development Administrator Nate Pozzi, and Executive Assistant Becky Smith.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the regular meeting on July 18, 2023

The minutes of the regular meeting on July 18, 2023 were approved as circulated on a motion made by Mr. DeVries, seconded by Ms. Trunfio. Ms. McCabe abstained. The motion was carried. (4- yes; 0-no; 1-abstain)

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

This ordinance allows Handicapped parking spaces at 307 Wallace Street, and 217 North 8th Street.

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

Public Hearing and Consideration to Adopt an Ordinance of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 15-307, “Alternate Parking Established on Certain Streets”

The purpose of this ordinance is to change the alternate side parking for North 8th Street, between Sarah and Scott Streets, making those two blocks consistent with the rest of the street. This ordinance also clarifies the “normal parking side” and “alternate parking side” for streets listed in the alternate parking section.

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

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

A request was received from the Stroudsburg Area School District to set off one or two aerial fireworks for touchdowns which may occur at football games on August 25, September 1, September 29, October 6, and October 20, 2023. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve the request for the Homecoming football game only, scheduled for October 20, 2023. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to approve hiring Michael Clark as a full-time Municipal Worker C, with a start date of Wednesday, August 2, 2023, at the probationary hourly rate of \$20.09, as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Teamsters 773. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve hiring Ansun Ruffin, Jr. as a temporary, part-time Parking Enforcement Officer, not to exceed 35 hours per week, at an hourly rate of \$17.17, 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 Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve hiring Ethan Grossman as a part-time East Stroudsburg Borough employee at the Twin Boroughs Recycling Center. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The Pregnancy Resource Center of the Poconos will conduct a Walk for Life on Saturday, October 7, 2023 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. No action necessary, as the event will be held on sidewalks, and no Borough resources are being requested. The organization will advise the Stroud Area Regional Police Department of the event.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve \$7,900.00 to Osborn Construction for the rebuilding of ramps and steps at Twin Boroughs Recycling Center, to be paid from the Twin Boroughs Recycling Center Fund, with 90% reimbursement from a DEP Act 101 Grant. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve payment of the Stroud Region Open Space Recreation Commission (SROSRC) Stewardship Fee, and the August and September Appropriations, in the amount of \$74,040.50, ahead of schedule. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Kopp discussed the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) Ordinance for the Borough of Stroudsburg. The proposed ordinance includes the C2 and the C1A districts. Mr. Kopp's recommendation is to proceed with the two included districts, and attempt adding other zoning districts, such as the MU district, at a later date. The Borough will approach the Stroudsburg Area School District, then the County Commissioners with the proposed ordinance.

Mr. Kopp discussed the Borough's 2023 LSA Grant. Alta Planning & Design, Inc. suggested that if the Borough was serious about implementing the entire Main Street Project, the \$500,000.00 DCED LSA Grant approved for the Borough could be used for engineering fees for the project instead of implementing "quick build" portions of the plan. The total engineering costs for the project are estimated at \$1.2 to \$1.8 Million, and with approved engineering in place, the project would be "shovel ready" and more likely to be funded. Council directed Mr. Kopp to contact Alta to put together a proposal for engineering and to contact DCED to see if this change of scope of the grant would be allowed under the funding rules for the program. Mr. Kopp also discussed a federal grant opportunity to fund the entire Main Street Project, the US Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods. He will ask

Alta to provide a proposal for preparing and submitting this grant, which is due at the end of September.

The draft Rental Property Inspection Ordinance was provided to Council for review. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to schedule a public hearing for September 5, 2023 to adopt an Ordinance for Licensing and Inspection of Residential Rental Property. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. DeVries, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve advertising for a full-time Code Enforcement Officer. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A letter from a resident who is expressing concern about the solid waste billing process was received and reviewed by Council. No action taken.

Mr. Kopp discussed incomplete portions of the Multimodal Project. The contractor for this project improperly installed two ADA ramps on South 6th Street, and the sidewalk at 762 Main Street was not finished. The Borough can have a different contractor finish the work for a total of \$10,300.00. The bulk of that cost would be paid by the Borough, with only approximately \$2,000.00 covered by retainage held from the original contractor. Or, the Borough can make a call on the performance bond, which would require using the original contractor, The Vanic Company, to make the repairs and corrections to these areas. Mr. Kopp suggested the latter of the two options, so the Borough does not directly incur the repair costs. Council agreed and advised Mr. Kopp to proceed with calling on the performance bond of the original contractor to make all necessary repairs and corrections.

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell acknowledged the great job that Nate Pozzi is doing keeping up with the problem properties within the Borough.

Budget Committee – No report.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe reported certain private parking lots within the Borough are charging vehicles to park, which is not permitted per Borough ordinance. AT&T users continue to have problems using the meter app on their cell phones. A parking meter at 6th Street and Sarah Street is down due to the courthouse project. Ms. McCabe acknowledged the great job that Robin and the Parking Enforcement team is doing.

Recycling Committee – No report.

Sewer Committee – Mr. Kopp plans to have the bid packet for the Ann Street project ready for the next Council meeting.

Street Committee – No report.

Personnel Committee – No report.

Public Relations/Media Committee – The Re-Grand Opening celebration at Ann Street Park will be held on August 5, 2023, beginning at noon.

Redevelopment Committee – No report.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – No report.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Committee – No report.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Moreno reported that he recently attended the Pocono Mountains Music Festival Country Jukebox.

Council Member Reports

Ms. McCabe expressed her gratitude to Council members for their help with Concerts in the Square. Ms. McCabe also acknowledged Brian Ace for always tending to any issues that arise within the Borough.

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Brown acknowledged Robin Wall for doing a great job revising a recent parking ordinance.

Manager's Report

Mr. Kopp spoke with Jim Evanisko about painting murals on dumpsters. Since the dumpsters have an enamel finish, it would be difficult for the paint to adhere. Mr. Evanisko recommended wrapping dumpsters instead of painting. Mr. Kopp will obtain pricing for dumpster wraps. Mrs. Kochanski asked if the Borough is enforcing the dumpster ordinance, specifically the enclosures. After discussion, Council agreed that Borough staff should begin enforcing the dumpster ordinance.

Borough Manager Report August 1st, 2023

Meetings

Multimodal Grant/Alta Planning	July 19 th
Discussion 112 North 9 th Street	July 20 th
Levee Inspection	July 26 th
LERTA/School Board	July 26 th
Jim Evanisko/Go Collaborative	July 28 th

Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

Sidewalk Replacement Project/Multimodal Grant. Working on final payments and grant closure.

Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving. DEP stated Plan is administratively complete, working on the technical review process. Intends to complete review in 120 days. Bid advertisement this summer, with language that bid may be held up to 90 days to allow for completion of review by DEP. That puts work beginning in early spring 2024.

Ann Street Park. Finishing last details this week: colored panels, paint railings, clean concrete and plant flowers this month. Reopening ceremony set for August 5th.

Paving Summer 2023. CDBG Project, North 7th Street and Courthouse Square. Handicapped crossings/concrete work complete. Milling and bollard sleeves this week. Borough projects include: Church Alley, Brown Street and Spring Garden. Out to bid. Ann Street (5th to 8th) as part of Ann Street Sewer Project now in 2024.

Grants Strategy 2023

DCED & PennDOT Multimodal. DCED Application submitted. Waiting for dates for 2023 PennDOT Multimodal.

Monroe County LSA Grant. Received \$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.

RACP Grant. Working with Peters Engineering to come up with \$1 Million Project for 2024. Pocono Economic Development Corp administering these funds.

PMVB 2023 Tourism Impact Grant. Awarded \$15,000 on 3/31 for bollards on N 7th Street. Ordered bollards and sleeves. Upon installation of sleeves, will request reimbursement.

Monroe County Hotel Tax Allocation. Due August 31st. Use for remainder of Bollard Project?

Safety Bollards for Courthouse Square

Sleeve installation this week as part of milling process prior to paving.

Sewer Rates/EDU Reassessment

Final scrub complete. Letter going out to affected properties this week. Online site to schedule appointments to review properties, if requested. New EDUs going into effect 4th Quarter 2023.

Disaster Operations Personnel Policy

Will be included as part of CBA Negotiations and Personnel Handbook.

Personnel Handbook Rewrite/Update

Updating, rewriting and organizing Personnel Policies/Handbook. Complete by end of 2023.

Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiations (CBA with Teamsters Union)

Negotiations are on hiatus. Bargaining Unit meeting with Union today (August 1st), should have meeting scheduled soon.

Engineering Creek Walk Project

Plan complete. Peters working on permitting with DEP and PEMA. Assessing grant opportunities to fund.

Verkada Security Cameras

Three spare cameras, which were ordered due to sub-contractor error. SARP recommended cameras in the following locations 5th & Main/Five points; 9th and Main; viewing Wawa Market. All locations have Borough light posts for hook-ups. Working with Verkada/Gridless on scheduling installation.

Levee Repair Project

Contractor selected (CEG). Next step is to get the solicitation to them for their review and proposal in the next few weeks. Award contract, earliest August, NLT 30 Sep 23.

Levee Maintenance

Emergency Action Plan update complete, approved by county. Waiting for DEP review comments. Camera inspections still outstanding. Inspection complete 7/26.

Borough Building Repairs

Working on developing Request for Proposals. In the 2023 Budget.

Dumpster Ordinance Implementation

GFL agreed to allow painting of dumpsters in visible locations with some restrictions. List complete; working with Go Collaborative on plan for painting.

Sewer Billing

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

LERTA

Discussions with several School Board members. Draft Ordinance was provided. On agenda this evening.

MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning

Going fully "live" with MyGov 4th Quarter 2023 on all permits and licenses. Requiring all Rental Registrations to be submitted through MyGov. Customers will be required, unless they have a compelling reason, to submit all permit and license online through the Customer Service Portal.

MY Work Program

We have four program students 20 hours weekly (8:00 am to 12:00 pm) to keep the downtown and parks clean and to help with any additional tasks required through August.

AARP Senior Community Service Employment Program

New participant in this program, Salah Malik. Helping out with filing in Codes/Zoning and general office duties as needed.

Solid Waste Ordinance

Third Quarter bill mailed on June 30th, due September 30th. Looking at additional days in summer to locate solid waste ordinance violations; many cans still overflowing and incorrect bags used.

Staff Performance Evaluations/ Counseling

Annual evaluations are coming due.

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.

Sewer Collection System/I&I Initiative

Update report provided to BCRA. ArcGIS mapping of all cleanouts & manholes complete. Reinstalled flow meters. Restarting Smoke Testing.

Staff Training

Working on a training presentation on Customer Service.

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

Sewer EDU Reassessment Plan
Parking Garage Repair
Day to Day Activities

Personnel Policy Updates
Borough Building Repair Proposal

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Mr. Pozzi stated that not all residents and property owners are aware of or have access to the My.Gov portal. More public knowledge about the program should be available so the portal can be used by as many people as possible. Mr. Pozzi suggested that tutorials be posted on our website, and staff can guide residents through the portal process in person from a computer at the Borough Office.

Street Superintendent's Report

Mr. Ace reported that the Levee Inspection was held on July 26, 2023, and acknowledged his staff for doing a good job maintaining the levee. Overall, the inspection went well. Mr. Ace advised that large boulders will need to be placed along the levee due to shifting near the First Street side. The fence at Ann Street Park is being painted; the bollards at Courthouse Square are being installed Wednesday and Thursday; and portions of North 7th Street will be closed often throughout the next two weeks while the paving project continues.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 230801

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to authorize the payment of bills on Warrants 230801. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

A member of the public asked the status of the sidewalks near the corner of Fifth Street, and the Phillips Street area. Mr. Abell advised there has been no progress due to lack of funding, and asked Mayor Moreno to add this topic to the Street Committee agenda for discussion.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m., on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)