

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 5, 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 Pro-Tem Toby Sabatine, Council Member Joanne Kochanski, and Council Member Melody Trunfio. Council Member Victoria DeVries, Council Member James Smith, and Mayor Michael Moreno were absent.

Also present were: 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 August 15, 2023**

The minutes of the regular meeting on August 15, 2023 were approved as circulated on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

**Public Hearing and Consideration to Approve an Ordinance of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, “Establishing a Volunteer Service Credit Program; Establishing Local Tax Credits for Qualified Volunteer Members of Volunteer Fire Companies; Establishing Administrative Procedures and Appeals; and Providing for Other Miscellaneous Matters.”**

The purpose of this ordinance is to establish a volunteer service credit program to encourage membership and service in the communities’ volunteer fire companies. If approved, the program will be available to residents of the Borough of Stroudsburg who are volunteers of the following volunteer fire companies that provide service to the Borough of Stroudsburg: Phoenix Company, and Chemical Company of the Borough of Stroudsburg. Each active volunteer who has been certified under the Borough’s Volunteer Service Credit Program shall be eligible to receive a tax credit of up to \$250.00 of their earned income tax liability, and a tax credit of up to \$250.00 of the volunteer’s Borough real estate tax liability.

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

**Public Hearing and Consideration to Approve an Ordinance of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, “Establishing a Program for the Licensing and Inspection of Residential Rental Properties.”**

The purpose of this ordinance is to establish a licensing and inspection program for residential rental properties in order to protect and promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of the Borough; to establish rights and obligations of owners and occupants relating to the rental of certain residential units in the Borough of Stroudsburg and to see that rental housing within the Borough is properly maintained; to ensure that owners, managers, and occupants share responsibilities to comply with codes, to prevent overcrowding, and to avoid

nuisances for neighboring residents; and to provide for a system of inspections and for issuance and renewal of licenses and to establish penalties for violations.

Joe Shay, of 600 Sarah Street, expressed his concerns with the ordinance, as well as the MyGov website that residents are encouraged to use to complete registrations and applications. Mr. Abell advised that the ordinance allows the Borough to take further action against landlords, when necessary, for violations that are addressed but not corrected. Mr. Pozzi added that he is creating tutorials for residents to use the MyGov website, and he is also working directly with the administrators of the website to make it more user-friendly.

Bob Armstrong, of 214 Collins Street, also expressed his concerns with the ordinance, specifically the requirement of an executed addendum to lease. Mr. Armstrong asked if the addendum to lease could be executed when each lease is being renewed, as opposed to immediately. Mr. Abell advised the Zoning and Codes Department will be developing procedures by the end of this year in order to enforce this ordinance, and having the addendums to lease signed with the renewals of each lease would be acceptable.

Mr. Kopp was directed to provide monthly updates of the progress of this program to Council.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. 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 Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

### **Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

### **New Business**

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve a request from the Stroudsburg High School to conduct the annual bonfire on Thursday, October 26, 2023, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., with a rain date of Thursday, November 2, 2023. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve payment of \$10,392.21 to Firefighter One, LLC for Air-Pak equipment. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve a request from Christ Episcopal Church for their "Paint the Town Red" campaign. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve a request from the Irish-American Club for free parking during the Irish-American Festival on Saturday, September 9, 2023. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve Payment Request #12-Final, in the amount of \$21,966.16, to the Vanic Company, Inc. (payment to be made to SureTec Information Systems), for the Multimodal Sidewalk Replacement Project. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Kopp discussed the Department of Transportation (DOT) debrief on Stroudsburg Borough's 2023 RAISE Application and the Borough's application for the DOT's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. Council was provided with the overview documents created by Alta, and Council can direct any questions to Mr. Kopp.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe, to approve the public bidding on the Ann Street Sewer Replacement Project, contingent upon Solicitor's review. Public posting of documents will be no later than September 15, 2023, with a bid opening date of November 10, 2023. The bid schedule will allow the Borough to ask the lowest responsible bidder to hold its bid from December 25, 2023 to February 8, 2024, to allow for any potential delays in permitting. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Teamsters Union for the period of January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2026. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

### **Committee Reports**

Codes Committee – No report.

Budget Committee – Mr. Kopp began working on the 2024 Budget.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe reported the Committee is reviewing two applications for handicapped parking spaces.

Recycling Committee – Mr. Kopp met with the East Stroudsburg Borough's Interim Manager to discuss the 2024 Recycling Budget.

Sewer Committee – No report.

Street Committee – Mayor Moreno was absent, however, emailed the following report: Thank you to Brian Ace and team who lowered flag brackets on light poles that do not bear the American Flag. Mr. Moreno and Mr. Ace will meet Wednesday, September 6, at noon to discuss old business. A Street Committee meeting is scheduled for September 6, at 4:00 p.m.

Personnel Committee – Mr. Kopp has an item for Executive Session.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Mr. Sabatine congratulated Ms. McCabe on a successful Summer Concert Series.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell advised the Committee is waiting to hear back from Stroudsburg School District regarding the LERTA Ordinance.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – Mr. Kopp contacted PennDOT about property acquisitions within Stroudsburg Borough in connection with the I-80 expansion project. A list of properties should be available by October 2023 from PennDOT.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Committee – The SROSRC 2024 Budget Meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 8, 2023, at 5:30 p.m., with a Work Session following at 8:00 p.m.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Moreno was absent, however, emailed the following report: A great end to the concerts in the square and looking forward to hearing the budget reports so we may begin creating a new budget and soliciting dollars for next year.

## Council Member Reports

No reports.

## Solicitor's Report

No report.

## Manager's Report

### Borough Manager Report September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023

#### Meetings

Long Range Transportation Plan	August 17 <sup>th</sup>
CBA Session/Teamsters	August 21 <sup>st</sup>
RAISE Grant Debrief/DOT/Alta	August 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Coordination Meeting/Stroudfest	August 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Auditors On-Site/Borough Financial Audit	August 29 <sup>th</sup>
LSA Grant Administration/Penn Strategies	August 29 <sup>th</sup>
Signal Warrant Analysis/PennDOT	August 31 <sup>st</sup>
Coordination Meeting/Irish-American Festival	September 5 <sup>th</sup>
Bill Paletski/Safety	September 7 <sup>th</sup>
Alta/RCN Grant	September 8 <sup>th</sup>
Pension Board Meeting	September 12 <sup>th</sup>
United Way/Clean-Up Main Street	September 13 <sup>th</sup>
County Training/Submission of Site Plans/Docs	September 14 <sup>th</sup>

#### Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

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

***Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving.*** DEP required a 90-day extension to their review of the Abbreviated Act 537 Plan. Deadline for completion of review by DEP is November 6, 2023. Approval of bid is on the agenda for tonight. That puts work beginning in April 2024.

***Ann Street Park.*** Reopening ceremony August 5<sup>th</sup>. Still waiting on picnic table and bench (ordered). Flower planting in the fall.

***Paving Summer 2023.*** CDBG Project, North 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Courthouse Square and Bollard sleeves complete. Borough projects include: Church Alley, Brown Street and Spring Garden. Work tentatively scheduled for late September. Ann Street (5th to 8th) as part of Ann Street Sewer Project now in 2024.

#### Grants Strategy 2023

***DCED & PennDOT Multimodal.*** DCED Application submitted. 2023 PennDOT Multimodal working with Penn Strategies.

***Monroe County LSA Grant.*** Received \$500,000 for the project. DCED will not allow scope change for engineering. Going forward as submitted. Need to work on engineering and bid preparation for work to be completed in 2024.

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

***RACP Grant.*** Peters Engineering working on budget and grant materials for LSA Grant. Work with Pocono Economic Development Corp on grant and administering these funds.

***PMVB 2023 Tourism Impact Grant.*** Awarded \$15,000 on 3/31 for bollards on N 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Working on reimbursement.

***Monroe County Hotel Tax Allocation.*** Use for remainder of Bollard Project. Submitted last week.

### **Sewer Rates/EDU Reassessment**

Final scrub complete. Letter sent to affected properties this week. Online site to schedule appointments to review properties, if requested. New EDUs tentatively going into effect 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2023.

### **Dumpster Ordinance Implementation**

GFL agreed to allow painting of dumpsters in visible locations with some restrictions. Updated list of dumpsters. Reviewing properties that requested exemptions. Working with a vendor on decals for dumpsters in lieu of fencing.

### **Personnel Handbook Rewrite/Update**

Draft complete. Currently under review by staff and attorney. Complete by end of 2023.

### **Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiations (CBA with Teamsters Union)**

Negotiations complete. On agenda for approval at this evening's meeting.

### **LERTA**

Discussions with several School Board members. Draft Ordinance was provided. Potential presentation to School Board.

### **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.

### **Disaster Operations Personnel Policy**

Will be included as part of Personnel Handbook.

### **Engineering Creek Walk Project**

Plan complete. Peters working on permitting with DEP and PEMA. Working on securing easements as needed. 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 5<sup>th</sup> & Main/Five points; 9<sup>th</sup> and Main; viewing Wawa Market. All locations have Borough light posts for hook-ups. Working with Verkada/Gridless on scheduling installation; modems will be required.

### **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.

### **Borough Building Repairs**

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

### **MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning**

Going fully "live" with MyGov 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **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 30<sup>th</sup>, due September 30<sup>th</sup>. Looking at additional days this fall to locate solid waste ordinance violations; many cans still overflowing and incorrect bags used.

### **Staff Performance Evaluations/ Counseling**

Annual evaluations are coming due. Counselling with all staff in September.

### **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 this fall.

### **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 2023-24.

### **Sewer Fund Delinquent Accounts/Liens**

Becky is looking at our list of liens and see what liens need to be renewed and if any need to be taken off the list.

### **Bicycle Racks**

Three racks remain to be installed: 745 Main, 401 Main & 33 North 7<sup>th</sup> Streets. North 7<sup>th</sup> 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**

Grants	Sewer EDU Reassessment Plan
Dumpster Ordinance	Personnel Policy Updates
Borough Building Repair Proposal	Day to Day Activities

### **Code Enforcement Officer's Report**

Mr. Pozzi reported over 20 applications for the Assistant Zoning and Codes Officer position have been received, and he will provide an update at the September 19 Council Meeting.

### **Street Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Ace reported the North 7<sup>th</sup> Street paving project is done. The in-house paving on the following streets will begin this week and continue through October: Brown Street, Lindbergh Avenue, Spring Garden Street, and Church Alley.

### **Approval of Bills on Warrants 230905**

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to authorize the payment of bills on Warrants 230905. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

### **Public Input for Non-Agenda Items**

Scott Mathiesen, owner of Jewell TV & Appliances at 308 Main Street, expressed his concerns over the dumpster ordinance, and requested a representative from the Borough meet him on site to discuss a resolution for the placement of his dumpster. Mr. Mathiesen asked if businesses can utilize garbage cans, instead of dumpsters. Mr. Abell advised commercial establishments may use garbage cans, and there are no requirements to screen the cans.

### **Executive Session**

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to go in to Executive Session at 8:18 p.m. to discuss personnel matters. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

The executive session concluded at 8:28 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Sabatine to approve an additional two months of unpaid medical leave, through December 15, 2023, for Cindy Talamo. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m., on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (5- yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)