

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 17, 2025

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 Joseph Shay, Council Member J. Zac Christman, and Council Member TJ Lopez, Council Member Victoria DeVries, and Council Member Cheryl Joubert.

Also present were: Mayor Michael Moreno, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Borough Solicitor Christopher Brown, Esq., Street Superintendent Brian Ace, Zoning/Codes Officer Kenelle DeStefano, and Executive Assistant Becky Smith.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the Regular meeting on June 3, 2025

The minutes of the regular meeting on June 3, 2025 were approved on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Lopez. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

Monthly Administrative Reports

The following monthly reports were approved on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries: Right-To-Know Report, Parking Report, Fire Department Report, and the Police Department Report. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Accept Unaudited May 2025, Treasurer Report

A motion was made by Ms. DeVries, seconded by Ms. McCabe to accept the Balance Sheets, FY 25 vs FY 24, and the Budget to Actual Report. Mr. Christman pointed out the Borough's current assets and total equity have both increased by 16% as compared to last year. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Old Business

Increase in salary for Borough Manager Larry Kopp from \$125,350 to \$145,000: Cindy Blake is not questioning Mr. Kopp's ability but \$20,000 is a substantial pay increase and will burden the taxpayers. Ms. Blake asked if the manager's job description is public record, and if the job description is updated with more responsibilities based on the proposed increase. Felix Galarza stated the average salary for a borough manager in Pennsylvania is \$59,000, and Mr. Kopp's proposed increase is outrageous, when no one else receives this amount. Keith Swaitkowski will endorse the increase if everyone who votes for it takes a cut from their stipend instead of burdening taxpayers. Mike Schroder said leadership is important, and there is frustration throughout staff members and residents; the Borough should not make a bad financial decision like this when there is infrastructure and blighted properties that need attention, suggesting a structured and transparent review process prior to any increase of this magnitude should occur. Clare Crawford-Braun's opinion is 16% is a significant increase in one year, and people are not happy with what is being done in the Borough; also there is a lack of transparency and no communication. Kerri Manning-Freeo started the petition against Mr. Kopp's proposed increase, stating there are currently 316 signatures; she urges council to reconsider, and mentioned the blighted house at 558 North 5th Street that has been in deplorable condition for years, and roads throughout the borough are horrible. Dulce Ridder said she has no issues with Mr. Kopp, he is very responsive when she needs him. However, there are issues with transparency and misunderstandings. Ms. Ridder requested to see the offer letter that Mr. Kopp received, to which Solicitor Brown responded information from personnel files are not public record. Mr. Galarza asked who sets the manager's job requirements, and who performs

evaluations, to which Mr. Abell said council performs the evaluations and sets the job objectives. Pete Begley advised when he was a council member at East Stroudsburg Borough, the manager received a 2% cost-of-living increase like all other employees. Judy Cherepko expressed her opinion that Mr. Kopp is the best borough manager Stroudsburg has had, and we need to keep him; he deserves the raise. Scott English mentioned he filed a lawsuit against the Borough regarding garbage and to get the town to abide by their own ordinance. Marilyn DeVries supports Mr. Kopp and says he is doing a great job as the borough manager. It is expensive and chaotic when an organization needs to find someone else, and typically the business is obligated to pay a severance package, adding more of an expense. Ms. DeVries said taxes are not going to go up that bad, and school taxes are going down!

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Christman to go in to Executive Session to discuss this personnel item at 7:43 p.m. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

The Executive Session concluded at 8:29 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Christman, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

A motion was made by Mr. Shay, seconded by Ms. McCabe to rescind the full raise, and approve a \$10,000 salary increase to be paid out from May 19, 2025 through December, at which time a performance review will be conducted to determine if Mr. Kopp will be granted the remainder of the increase, and update Mr. Kopp's job description. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 1-no, Mr. Lopez; 0-abstain)

Ms. Probst was the mayor when a previous manager who was not 100% qualified was employed, and the borough felt the consequences. The manager doesn't just manage employees in the office; they are versed in many other areas including applying for grants, knowing the law, and is not a job for just anyone. Mr. Kopp was pulled to Stroudsburg Borough by a headhunter because he has the skills and knowledge that not many people possess. Mr. Kopp has saved the borough hundreds of thousands of dollars with labor costs, union negotiations, and is worth his weight in gold; he is the best manager that Stroudsburg has seen! Mr. Lopez showed a short presentation showing borough managers' salaries from eight other municipalities with similar population size as Stroudsburg; the average is \$116,000, the low end of \$90,000 and the high being \$144,500. Mr. Abell stated he has been on council for 18 years, and saw eight different managers in his first 13 years! One road per year used to be paved when he first started, and now the borough paves about eight roads each year. It took a long time to find the leadership that Mr. Kopp has.

There was a short recess from 8:46 p.m. to 8:56 p.m.

New Business

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Lopez to approve the appointment of Larry Kopp, Robin Wall, Kenelle DeStefano, Becky Smith, and Ansun Ruffin to the Stroudsburg Borough Parking Authority Board and to schedule an SPA board meeting for Monday, June 23, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. for the purpose of conveying all Authority real estate to the Borough and to dissolve the Authority. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Lopez to approve the Resolution concerning the Stroudsburg Parking Authority, as presented. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mr. Lopez, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the Resolution authorizing participation in the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Junior Council Person Program. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain) The Junior Council Person

(JCP) Program allows youth in our community to engage in borough government and develop leadership skills. It also allows borough officials to mentor students who will be future community leaders. A JCP program allows high school and college students the opportunity to learn critical skills, including team building and collaboration, public speaking, public engagement, budgeting, and running effective meetings. It also allows the students to deliberate on issues affecting their community.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Lopez to approve the Special Event Application for Ayanna's Greenhouse Gallery on July 5 – 6, and August 2 – 3, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. in Ann Street Park, contingent upon receiving a Certificate of Insurance and the application fee. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Christman to approve the June 2025 HARB applications by Angel Rodriguez for 13 North 6th Street, and Eric and Patricia Adelman for 704 Thomas Street. Applications include window upgrades, the demolition of a back barn, and the removal of a block chimney. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell reported the ordinance addressing disorderly gatherings and disruptive dwellings was recently passed by Council. The committee continues working on changing the outdoor dining ordinance to year-round dining, the ordinance regarding skill games; and updating the special events policy. The next Codes Committee meeting is June 25, at 4:30 p.m.

Budget Committee – No report.

Parking Committee – The next Parking Committee meeting is June 23, at 5:00 p.m.

Recycling Committee – The next Recycling Committee meeting is June 23, at 5:00 p.m. Mike Schroder received a postcard in the mail from the borough that he thought was threatening to residents. Instead, he suggested that the borough take a different approach, and educate residents of the benefits of recycling, and mentioned events held in town do not recycle, but should be community-wide. Cindy Blake said \$300 fines are extreme, going through people's trash is invasive, and said the garbage cans on Main Street have recycling in them. Mr. Abell said the borough is working on implementing consistency to the recycling program.

Sewer Committee – No report.

Street Committee – Mr. Moreno reported the committee reviewed a traffic calming device that collects traffic data covertly, allowing for more accurate data on driver behavior. The device is called TrafficSTAT Traffic Data Collection System, and Brian Ace is researching the cost of the device. The committee also reviewed traffic safety signage for the fire house as it relates to emergency vehicle egress. The device is called TS50 Emergency Vehicle Warning Systems, and provides advanced warning to drivers that emergency vehicles are departing the fire station. The information was shared with Mr. Kopp and Council so it can be added as part of the RACP Authorization Bill. The next committee meeting is June 18, at 4:30 p.m.

Personnel Committee – No report.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Ms. McCabe announced Concerts in the Square take place every Thursday, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., through August 24th in Courthouse Square. A special thank you to Victoria DeVries and Michael Moreno for their assistance during concert season.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell stated a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis took place on June 10 with Field Services Specialist Bill Arrowood from the PA Downtown Center, Downtown Stroudsburg Business Association, Borough representatives, and members of the public. The Borough plans to hire a Downtown Manager late summer or early fall 2025. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for July 8th.

Mr. Abell stated Main Street needs more garbage cans and more frequent collection. Mr. Kopp advised collection occurs three times a week, and more cans can be added.

Mr. Abell reported improvements at Glen Park continue, with plans for a path around the field, more garbage cans, and benches. There are ongoing blight issues within the Borough; the ground floor of Penn Stroud has been vacant for approximately six years, which looks terrible for downtown Stroudsburg. It was recommended to add “Coming Soon” posters in the windows.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – No report.

Parks and Rec (Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation) Committee – The SROSRC 2022 - 2026 Strategic Plan was distributed. As per Mr. Abell’s inquiring regarding the State of the Commission, the Eastern Monroe Active Transportation Plan is referenced on pages 16 and 17 of the Plan. Mr. Moreno stated the Parks and Rec Ad-Hoc Ordinance Working Committee met on June 9; they reviewed over half of all three municipalities’ ordinances, and will meet again on June 30 to finalize their review. The next SROSRC meeting is June 24, at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor’s Report

Mayor Moreno attended the Bugz Ronin Music/Art Scholarship Reception with Commissioner Parker, honoring three Stroudsburg High School Seniors. The Mayor stated the 5th Annual Pocono PRIDE Festival was exceptionally well attended, and approximately \$3,000 was raised. Mr. Moreno joined Mr. Kopp at the PSAB Annual Conference in Hershey, and has a new found respect for all Borough Staff for everything they do on behalf of the residents of Stroudsburg Borough. He attended the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting for Chris’s Restaurant located at 548 Main Street, and also joined the SWOT Analysis regarding the Downtown Manager. On June 12, Mr. Moreno performed a wedding ceremony, assisted with Concerts in the Square, and met with Tim Sanders regarding the No Kings event. Juneteenth Festival was successful without any issues, and ensured public safety during the event by placing proper signage for road closures. On June 18, Mr. Moreno will attend the Pocono Center for the Arts Event, Music at the Moor, and invited council. The Stroudsburg Little Bethel Historical Association’s Annual Juneteenth Fish Fry Fundraiser, as well as the co-naming of North Third Street, from McConnell to North Second Street, “Little Bethel Way” will be held on June 21 at 11:15 a.m. Mr. Moreno read aloud a Proclamation for the co-naming of this section of North Third Street.

Council Member Reports

Mr. Shay notices a lot of people who park at meters on and around Main Street do not have change, and he suggested all parking meters should be converted to credit cards, or change machines should be installed. Mr. Kopp stated the first round of credit card meters are scheduled to be installed this summer.

Solicitor’s Report

Solicitor Brown has an item for Executive Session regarding a real estate acquisition matter.

Manager's Report

Mr. Kopp announced WNEP meteorologist, Joe Snedeker, will make a stop in Courthouse Square on July 24 at noon, as part of his annual charity bike ride, benefiting St. Joseph's Center.

Borough Manager Report June 17th, 2025

Meetings

PSAB Conference	June 1 st – 4 th
SARP/CBA Negotiation	June 4 th
RACP Grant/Review Entrance Conference	June 5 th
Homeless Workgroup	June 5 th
Chamber Public Policy Meeting	June 6 th
Delta Development Funding Status	June 6 th
Downtown/SWOT Analysis	June 10 th
Governor's Center for Local Government	June 11 th
Coordination Meeting/JuneTeenth Festival	June 12 th
YMCA/Coffee Chat	June 18 th
Training/Governor's Center f/Local Government	June 26 th

Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

Quick Build / Main Street Project. Labor & Industry approved Borough Labor; will need to get determination for Mural Artists' hourly wage requirements. Three mural locations approved by property owners. Met with PPG for Thermoplastic Crosswalks; finalizing locations and cost.

Creek Walk Trail. Statewide LSA, DCNR and DCED GTRP Grants submitted. Environmental studies underway.

Parking Garage Repair/Rehabilitation. Initial meeting w/state for RACP Grant June 5th. Updating advertisement with verbiage from RACP & LSA contracts.

Levee Erosion Mitigation. Emplacing rip rap on the Brodhead Creek side of the levee to stop erosion. DCED Flood Mitigation Grant submitted. Work in 2026.

Grants Strategy 2024-25

PennDOT Automated Red Light Enforcement Program (ARLE). Received pre-application approval from PennDOT. Due June 30th. For Park & Broad Streets traffic signal.

PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Asid (TASA). Draft applications due September 5th. Final applications due October 31st. For portion of Transforming Main Street.

Office of the Budget (OMB) Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP). For Borough Building renovation. Working cost estimate; meeting with Chuck Leonard.

2024 Statewide LSA Grant. For Creek Walk Trail & Footbridge. Submitted to DCED.

2024 PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant. Submitted. For Five Points Roundabout.

Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program. For engineering study for Main Street Project. Will resubmit when the grant program reopens.

Letters of Appropriation. Submitted to Senators McCormick, Fetterman and Congressman Bresnahan. Bresnahan tentatively including Five Points Roundabout in recommended appropriations. McCormick will also support.

2025 DCED PA Small Water & Sewer Program. Submitted. For slip lining sewer and water lines.

2025 DCNR Grant C2P2 Grant. Submitted. Working on finalizing easements.

DCED's Flood Mitigation Program. Submitted. Grant amount of \$84,991.

2025 DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund. Submitting with BCRA for complete street restoration, paving plus water line replacement. Due July 31st.

2024 Monroe County LSA Grant. Received \$200,000 for Parking Garage Repairs.

PMVB Beautification Grant Program. Received \$8,500 for Bollards & Sleeves, requested amount.

2023 Statewide LSA Grant. Received \$250,000 for the Creek Walk Project.

2023 Monroe County LSA Grant. For Parking Garage Repairs. Received \$250,000.

2022 Monroe County LSA Grant. Received \$500,000 for the Main Street Project.

EPA Community Change Grant. Lead Applicant for submission. Application submitted! Looks like program funding will be eliminated by the EPA, waiting for notification.

RACP Grant. Given OK to change scope of grant to repairs. Initial meeting to approve work June 5th.

Monroe County Hotel Tax Allocation. Received \$9,847 for equipment for Dog Park. Equipment received.

DEP Levee Inspection Reimbursement. \$3,975. Reimbursement received.

Dumpster Painting & Screening

Dumpster painting complete. Pick-up and delivery by Casella.

Washington Visit/Potential Official Visits

Visit to Congressman Rob Bresnahan, staffs of Senators McCormick & Fetterman and US DOT in Washington on May 22nd. Received pledges of support from Bresnahan, McCormick and DOT for Roundabout & potentially Main Street Project as well. Potential visit by Congressman Bresnahan to Stroudsburg.

Storm and Wastewater Pipe Reconditioning

Work completed and finished slightly under budget!

Downtown Manager

SWOT Analysis on June 10th. Follow-up scheduled for July 8th. Draft Bylaws complete; working on putting together Articles of Incorporation and 501c3 request to IRS. Hiring Downtown Manager during summer; need Board Members from community to begin hiring process.

My Work Program

Program will be from July 28th to August 21st. Task list to Youth Advocate Programs.

2024 Volunteer Service Tax Credit Program

Updated Volunteer Service Credit Program Application. Produced an Instruction Sheet for the program for 2024 submissions, provided to Fire Department.

Sewer Units/Trash/EDU Reassessment

Finding multiple properties not paying for trash as well as unregistered apartments. Boarding Houses are springing up as well; Zoning only allows them as a Special Exception in R-3 Zones. Looking at numerous data sets: Water EDUs, Sewer EDUs, Act 511 Payroll Taxes, Rental Property Registrations, and Solid Waste registrations.

Consolidated Stroudsburg Food Bank Creation

Met on June 5th. Next meeting on Thursday, July 10th, 7:00 pm. Working on assembling Board of Directors, 501c3.

Senior Waste Collection Assistance Program

To date, 16 participants in the program in 2025.

Homeless Workgroup

Next meeting not yet scheduled.

Commercial/Residential Recycling

Reminder letter sent to all commercial properties. Another round of residential trash inspections in Spring.

Residential Rental Property Inspections

Finishing inspection for 2024-25. Working on notifying 2025-26 inspections.

Dog Park

Installation complete of obstacle course for dogs.

Exercise Equipment

Installed in Glen Park.

Monthly E-Newsletters

June Newsletter sent.

Safety Committee

Training and Safety Committee Meeting scheduled for Friday, June 27th.

Borough Newsletter

Spring Newsletter delivered!

MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning

Going fully “live” with MyGov in Summer 2025 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.

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. Going to restart installation process.

June Priorities

Main Street Manager Implementation
LSA/Main Street Project
Grants

EDU/Unit Scrub
Inspection Residential/Commercial Recycling

Engineer's Report

Kylie Shoemaker reported Peters Consultants, Inc.: is preparing the Phase I Environmental Report for the parking garage rehabilitation project; updated the scope of work and the cost estimate for the Main Street Five-Points roundabout portion and provided the information to William Lewis of Delta Development Group, Inc.; and a cost estimate for the proposed street work in areas where Brodhead Creek Regional Authority is proposing upgrading waterlines was provided to Mr. Kopp and Mr. Ace.

Zoning/Codes Officer Report

Ms. DeStefano reported her team is beginning the second-year rental inspections. Ms. DeStefano forwarded letters from her staff to Mr. Kopp.

Street Superintendent's Report

No report.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 250617

A motion was made by Mr. Christman, seconded by Mr. Shay to approve the payment of bills on Warrants 250617. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

Keith Swaitkowski asked if crosswalks will be painted with the decorative stencils again. Mr. Kopp advised the Borough will be using thermal plastic for the crosswalks, which will be less slippery than the decorative painted ones. Cindy Blake wanted to confirm that the Borough pays a \$6500 monthly retainer to the grant writers, and receive 2% commission of grant funds received, to which Mr. Abell said yes, and the Borough receives more than that in grant funds; since Mr. Kopp started as the Borough Manager, \$1.5M in grants were received. Joanne Viola inquired about a list of accepted materials for curbside recycling collection. Mr. Kopp stated a solid waste and recycling guide is mailed out at the beginning of each year to all residents, and is available on the Borough's website. Ms. Viola expressed her concerns about the property at 238 Stokes Avenue; she has complained to the Borough multiple times, but has not seen any action, and is very frustrated. Mr. Abell advised there is much better communication with council now that Ms. DeStefano is in the Zoning Department, who advised enforcement has begun on said property, but is a lengthy process. Lori Woods voiced her opposition to Mr. Kopp's salary increase, stating a raise is typically no more than 3-5%; there seems to be animosity between council and residents, and council should educate the public on why Mr. Kopp deserves the raise. Ted Hoyt inquired about the Ramsey School. Temporary permission was granted while Monroe County offices occupied the property allowing parking within the fenced in area. Mr. Hoyt asked if that exception is granted to the new occupants of the property. Mr. Abell stated the 2021 agreement with Monroe County needs to be reviewed, as well as the minutes from the meetings at which permission was granted. Mr. Hoyt also asked if the School Zone flashing lights that were removed will be reinstalled, along with the "drug free school zone" signs. Mr. Kopp will research the status of the lights and signs. Tarah Probst is excited that a school is coming back to occupy the Ramsey property, and suggested "SCHOOL" be painted on the streets as was done previously. Mr. Schroder reported an issue with a bulk item he leaves weekly for collection, but has not been taken for three weeks. He was advised to contact the Borough office if the item is missed again. Robert Llopis added he thinks Stroudsburg is "paradise" and cannot wait to see what else Mr. Kopp can do to help the Borough!

Executive Session

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Lopez to go in to Executive Session to discuss a real estate matter at 10:21 p.m. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

The Executive Session concluded at 10:33 p.m. on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Lopez. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 p.m., on a motion made by Mr. Christman, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)