

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 3, 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, Council Member Victoria DeVries, Council Member Cheryl Joubert, and Council Member TJ Lopez.

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

Mayor Michael Moreno, and Borough Manager Larry Kopp were absent due to attending the annual PSAB Conference in Hershey.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Hearing and Consideration to Adopt an Ordinance of the Borough of Stroudsburg, in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to amend Chapter 15, “Motor Vehicles and Traffic”, Part 3 “General Parking Regulations”, to amend Section 15-316 “Handicapped Parking Zones Established” of the Stroudsburg Borough Code.

This ordinance changes the procedure and approval for obtaining on-street handicap parking spaces within the Borough. Applications requesting an on-street handicapped parking space shall be submitted to the Borough. The application will be reviewed by borough staff and approved or denied based on the criteria established in the ordinance. The criteria includes: proof of current handicapped license plate or parking placard for a person with a disability from PennDOT; individual may make an application for no more than one on-street handicap parking space within the corporate limits of the Borough; no handicap parking space shall be provided or the location so requested if there exists a reasonably accessible and practicable off-street parking space or area can be reasonably created; no more than four handicap parking spaces shall be permitted along any one-block section of street within the Borough; and a handicapped parking space designated according to this procedure is not for the exclusive use of any one individual and may be used by any person with disability displaying a valid license plate or placard. Additionally, all residents must submit an annual registration form which is due by December 31st. The list of approved on-street handicap parking spaces shall be reviewed annually by borough staff. If there is a change in circumstances where the approved space no longer meets the set criteria, the handicap space will be eliminated. Borough Council may establish an application fee for a handicap parking space by resolution.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Lopez to close the public hearing. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

The aforementioned Ordinance was adopted on a motion made by Mr. Christman, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the Regular meeting on May 19, 2025

The minutes of the regular meeting on May 19, 2025 were approved on a motion made by Ms. McCabe seconded by Mr. Lopez. The motion was carried. (yes-6; no-0; abstain-1, Ms. DeVries was not present at the May 19th meeting)

Old Business

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Christman to approve the request from Cleo Jarvis with the African-American Network to fly the Juneteenth flags throughout the month of June. The African-American Network will provide flags and poles and a \$275 stipend towards Borough costs to hang the flags. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

New Business

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Christman to approve a Resolution authorizing the submission of a request for funding through the Commonwealth Finance Authority (CFA) of Pennsylvania's Flood Mitigation Program for \$84,991 for the Levee Repair Project. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Christman to approve a Resolution authorizing the submission of a request for funding through the Commonwealth Finance Authority (CFA) of Pennsylvania's Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program for \$250,000 for the Creek Walk Project. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to table the increase in salary for Borough Manager Larry Kopp from \$125,350 to \$145,000, effective May 19, 2025, as part of a three-year contract with terms to be mutually agreed upon and approved by Council, pending legal comments. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Borough Resident Dulce Ridder asked for the justification of such increase. Mr. Abell advised that Mr. Kopp was offered another position elsewhere and Council agreed to match the offered salary to keep Mr. Kopp as Stroudsburg's Borough Manager. Borough Resident Mike Schroder stated the offer Mr. Kopp received is from a municipality with a \$63 Million operating budget, as opposed to Stroudsburg's \$12 Million operating budget. The proposed raise is a 16% increase, and Mr. Schroder stated that the top rate for a municipality similar in size to Stroudsburg is \$115,000. He is concerned about another tax hike that taxpayers will be unable to afford, and asked Council to look into this more diligently before approving the raise. Additionally, Mr. Schroder said a Borough Manager should be a homeowner in the borough with a vested interest in the community, not a renter in a different town. Mr. Schroder is afraid Mr. Kopp will not stop looking for other positions elsewhere, and will approach Council again asking for another increase, and asked where the money will come from to pay such a salary. Mr. Abell answered yes, it is a large increase, however, council feels the raise is warranted and is the best use of tax dollars. The Borough has gone through three managers in four years, costing the borough \$45,000 in employment recruiter fees. Losing borough managers loses continuity between staff and council members. Every time a new manager comes in, they start from scratch to become as productive as Mr. Kopp has become in his years with us so far. Mr. Kopp is vested in our community, he goes above and beyond to prove that, and does a stellar job at representing Stroudsburg. Tax payers would be at a disadvantage if we start over, and would be a poor use of tax funds. The previous raises that Mr. Kopp received were based on his performance. Ms. Ridder asked if Mr. Kopp applied for the position that he was offered, to which Mr. Abell answered no, he was approached. Ms. Ridder is concerned that another increase will happen next year, which will not be fair to taxpayers, especially considering recent tax increases, including county taxes. Mr. Christman added that as Council discussed the increase, they researched salary ranges for borough managers, they looked at the current financial reports and confirmed the borough is in a better spot so far this year than last, and determined that Mr. Kopp was approached with the job offer, he did not apply for it. Neighboring municipalities have lost borough managers which creates chaos and significant problems. Those municipalities are paying their managers significantly more for a similar-sized borough. Additionally, Council agreed to the potential increase with a three-year contract, during which Mr. Kopp will only receive cost of living raises. Mr. Schroder said the borough is landlocked, with no more tax

revenue available, and asked what is being cut from the current and future budgets to pay for the salary increase. He also suggested anonymous surveys be sent to all borough employees to make sure everyone feels the same way as Council feels about the borough manager. Borough Resident Marilyn DeVries stated that Mr. Kopp is great at getting grants, and not a lot of other municipalities have that privilege. Mr. Abell agreed that the borough has dedicated grant writers because of Larry's efforts, and many projects have been done and are planned because of grant funding. Ms. Ridder asked how much from grant funding received trickles down to taxpayers. Ms. McCabe advised grant money cannot be used to reduce taxes. Walt Phillips, an employee of the Borough, is concerned that as big raises are given to other employees, the union workers will not be approved for their increases when contract negotiations occur. Mr. Abell responded that union employees are guaranteed at least 3% annual increases, and receive other benefits that non-union employees do not get. Mr. Phillips said it creates bad morale within the workplace when employees in the same department who perform the same job get paid more than one another. Borough Resident Keith Swiatkowski wonders how the borough can find \$20,000 a year for at least the next three years to pay Mr. Kopp's increase when money for speedbumps cannot be found. Mr. Abell thanked everyone for their comments.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve the Special Event Permit for Eid Aladha on Friday, June 6, 2025 from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., on North 3rd Street, adjacent to the Stroudsburg Islamic Center. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mr. Christman, seconded by Mr. Lopez to approve the Special Event Permit for the Monroe County Veterans Day Parade on Sunday, November 2, 2025 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., with a rain date of Sunday, November 9, 2025, contingent upon receiving the application fee. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell reported the committee is reviewing the use ordinance regarding skill games and vape shops.

Budget Committee – No report.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe reported all casings for the new meters have been received. Eight meters have issues with downloading the correct pricing, and quarters get stuck in the coin slot in four meters. These twelve meters will be sent back to the company to be looked at.

Recycling Committee – Gary Kessel, a property owner in the Borough, asked how his buildings with multiple units should recycle. One property has 40 apartments, which would require 300 recycling buckets out for curbside collection, which is not practical. Mr. Kessel has received multiple warning letters from Mr. Kopp's assistant, Judy, about mandatory recycling and enforcement. He is also having issues with the garbage cans at his buildings, which he once had straightened out with Mr. Kopp, but is now getting conflicting information from Judy. This is the same employee who began inspecting Mr. Kessel's rental properties, and had issues with her then. Mr. Kessel was told she would not be the one performing the inspections any longer, and he assumed he was done with her. Now he is regularly receiving letters from Judy, and also reported her going into his garbage cans, taking pictures of the trash inside the cans, going onto his private property which he says is not allowed. She is creating problems with the reassessment office at Monroe County Courthouse regarding his properties, and he feels like he is being targeted. Mr. Abell asked Mr. Kessel to leave his contact information with Becky Smith, who will set up a meeting including Gary, Becky, Larry, Judy, and Kenelle to discuss all of his concerns and find a resolution. Additionally, Mr. Abell will provide clarity regarding the procedure of recycling at multi-family units in the commercial district. Mr. Abell added that

with the enforcement of recycling in commercial establishments, the recycling center has noticed an increase in materials, taking burden off taxpayers, since garbage tonnage decreases when recycling increases. Keith Swiatkowski recommended using streamline recycling to make it easier, and give the responsibility of trash collection back to the resident, not the borough-wide program. Mike Schroder mentioned the cardboard on Wallace Street does not get picked up, and asked if the recycling truck stops the route before getting to his section of Wallace Street, past Phillips Street. Mr. Abell will have this issue looked into. Gary Kessel asked who is responsible for recycling violations, the owner or the tenant. Solicitor Brown advised the tenant is responsible for those violations.

Sewer Committee – No report.

Street Committee – No report.

Personnel Committee – No report.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Ms. McCabe announced Concerts in the Square will run on Thursdays from June 12 through August 21 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in Courthouse Square. The schedule is posted on Facebook and posters are available if anyone wants to hang one in their establishment.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell reported the Shanti House Project is ongoing.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – No report.

Parks and Rec (Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation) Committee – The State of the Commission event took place on May 27, 2025. The committee continues working on trail gaps and providing a comprehensive plan to each municipality. Mr. Abell asked if the Eastern Monroe Active Transportation Plan will be incorporated into their comprehensive plan, since it was a very thorough plan with valuable information. Ms. McCabe will inquire with the committee.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Moreno was absent due to attending the annual PSAB Conference in Hershey.

Council Member Reports

Mr. Lopez stated the person who reported falling on a sidewalk in the area of Dreher Avenue declined to provide details for further enforcement. However, Mr. Lopez asked about our current sidewalk ordinance, and who is responsible for safely maintained sidewalks. Solicitor Brown advised the homeowner is responsible, the Borough is not responsible for injuries on private sidewalks.

Solicitor's Report

No report.

Manager's Report

Borough Manager Report June 3rd, 2025

Meetings

LTAP/Stop Signs & Traffic Control	May 20 th
Chris/PPG/Thermoplastic Crosswalks	May 20 th
Clear Gov Demo	May 21 st
SARP Commission	May 21 st
Delta/PA Elected Officials/Washington	May 22 nd
PEMA Floodplain Ordinance	May 27 th
SARP Pension Board Meeting	May 29 th
I-80 Project/Tarah	May 29 th
I-80 Project/PennDOT/AECOM	May 30 th
Jim/GO Collaborative	May 30 th
PSAB Conference	June 1 st – 4 th
SARP/CBA Negotiation	June 4 th
RACP Grant/Review Entrance Conference	June 5 th
Chamber Public Policy Meeting	June 6 th
Delta Development Funding Status	June 6 th
Downtown/SWOT Analysis	June 10 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

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 this week.

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 underway, began May 27th.

Downtown Manager

One-day SWOT Analysis scheduled for June 10th. 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

Contacted by PA Labor and Industry about again participating in this program. Due to funding cuts, program will be four weeks in 2025, not six as in previous years.

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

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

Delivered. Spring installation.

Monthly E-Newsletters

May Newsletter sent. June Newsletter going out second week of June.

Safety Committee

Training and Safety Committee Meeting on March 25th.

Borough Newsletter

Spring Newsletter sent to printer.

MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning

Going fully “live” with MyGov in Spring 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
Recycling
Grants

EDU/Unit Scrub
Inspection Residential/Commercial

Engineer’s Report

Kathleen Brady provided their monthly update to Mr. Kopp for distribution. Mr. Abell asked for an update on the Creek Walk. Ms. Brady stated the wetland report was received from Vortex Environmental, Inc., indicating no bog turtle habitat was located. PNDI has been signed by Vortex, and the estimated wait time for the report is one to two weeks, however, they are able to move forward with the signed PNDI.

Zoning/Codes Officer Report

Ms. DeStefano reported her department is sending letters out regarding the 2nd year of rental inspections, and also sandwich board sign license renewals, as well as outdoor dining renewals.

Street Superintendent’s Report

Mr. Ace reported the pool is scheduled to open June 7th. The levee inspection that was scheduled for June 3 was rescheduled to July 9, after receiving an extension due to excessive rain.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 250603

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve the payment of bills on Warrants 250603. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

A member of the audience, Karen, asked if SROSRC can provide pickleball courts in Stroudsburg; she is currently utilizing the tennis courts at the Stroudsburg High School, but draws lines for the court with chalk. Ms. McCabe advised SROSCR has a Pickleball Committee, who is seeking grants and fundraising to install pickleball courts in the area, which includes Stroudsburg Borough, Stroud Township, and East Stroudsburg Borough. Information and committee updates can be found at StroudRec.org. Ms. McCabe added that the cost to convert the tennis courts to pickleball courts at Dansbury Park on Day Street is roughly \$100,000. Ms. Joubert asked if lines could be painted on the Stroudsburg High School tennis courts, however, that is school district property, not SROSRC.

Mike Schroder asked if Council is still considering hiring a Downtown Manager. Mr. Abell stated yes, and grants will fund 75% of the first year's salary. Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau is offering free office space to this employee, and the Borough will provide salary and benefits. Mr. Christman added that once the Borough is in this type of program, other grant opportunities become available. Mr. Schroder suggested information like this be added to the newsletters for residents to become more aware.

Dulce Ridder asked why the Minutes of the March 18th and April 15th Council Meetings were not posted on the borough's website. It was an oversight, and Becky Smith will have them added to the website within the next day or so. Ms. Ridder also asked if audio and/or video recordings of council meetings could be posted to the website. Ms. McCabe stated our website may not have the capability or capacity for the recordings. Solicitor Brown advised that is what the minutes are for. Mr. Abell said he will look into this option.

Ms. Ridder asked if the "no camping" ordinance has been completed. Ms. McCabe advised that Mayor Moreno is on the SROSRC sub-committee and was not present to answer that question.

Executive Session

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m., on a motion made by Mr. Christman, seconded by Ms. DeVries. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)