

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES, AUGUST 3, 2021

A meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 7:00 P.M. on August 3, 2021 in the Council Chambers of the Stroudsburg Borough Municipal Building with the following members present: Council President Matt Abell, Council President Pro-Tem Erica McCabe, Council member Joanne Kochanski, Council member Victoria DeVries, Council member Boyd Weiss, and Council member Jim Evanisko. Council member James Smith was absent.

Also present were: Mayor Tarah Probst, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Borough Solicitor Joseph McDonald, and Street Superintendent Brian Ace.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the Regular Meeting, July 20, 2021

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2021 meeting as circulated. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration to schedule a public hearing for “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 20 SOLID WASTE OF THE STROUDSBURG BOROUGH CODE ESTABLISHING A MANDATORY MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE FOR ALL NON MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLING UNITS, SUBJECT TO A ONE TIME OPT-OUT PROVISION, CONTINUING MANDATORY MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE COLLECTION THROUGH PRIVATE CONTRACTED COLLECTION SERVICES FOR ALL NON-RESIDENTIAL AND MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND PRIVATE HOUSING COMMUNITIES AND ADOPTING ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS, TERMS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE COLLEDCTION OF SOLID WASTE”

Mr. Abell advised that the proposed Ordinance was recommended to Council from the Codes Committee. A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to advertise for a public hearing for consideration of the Ordinance at the September 7, 2021 meeting. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to approve an Event Application of the Monroe County Historical Association to conduct a Walking Tour of Stroudsburg’s Cemeteries on Sunday, October 3, 2021 from 9:00 A.M. to Noon.

Trish Imperio, the owner of Ready, Set, Run was present. Her business and the Monroe County Historical Association are coordinating the event. There will be groups of ten people with two leaders for each group. Each group will start at a different cemetery so there won’t be large crowds at any one of the cemeteries. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Weiss to approve the event. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to adopt a Resolution to Authorize the Destruction Specific Records in Accordance with the Municipal Records Act of January 18, 1968 (P.L. 961, NO. 428).

A motion was made by Mr. Weiss, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to adopt the aforementioned Resolution. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Discuss Fire Department Billing Information.

Fire Chief Charles Frantz was present to discuss the benefits of employing a fire recovery service. The Pocono Township Fire Department and the Blue Ridge Hook and Ladder Fire Company are using PA Fire Recovery Service. This service would allow the Fire Department to bill an individual's insurance company for the cost of supplies and equipment that are used to fight a fire. There would be no cost beyond that to the individual taxpayer.

He noted that the first year of service would provide 85% of the fees collected would go to the Borough, and the remaining 15% would go to the recovery service. Thereafter, the Borough would keep 65%, and 35% would go to the recovery service.

An Ordinance by the Borough Council would be required. He asked that if the service is used that the recovered funds go to the Fire Apparatus Fund to help with the savings for the future purchase of new firetrucks.

The Council was in favor of proceeding with the preparation of an Ordinance.

Discussion of an Open Space Recreation Fee Ordinance as recommended by the Redevelopment Committee.

Mr. Abell explained some specifics about the proposed Open Space Impact Fee Ordinance, which would require developers to provide green space, and if that is not possible, a fee that would be earmarked specifically for green space.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to send the proposed Ordinance to the Monroe County Planning Commission and the Stroudsburg Borough Planning Commission for review and recommendation. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to proclaim August 7th, 2021, as Covid Awareness Day.

A motion was made by Mr. Weiss, seconded by Ms. McCabe to make the aforementioned Proclamation. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mayor Probst read the Proclamation in to the record:

A PROCLAMATION OF STROUDSBURG BOROUGH, COUNTY OF MONROE,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, MAKING AUGUST 7th, 2021, COVID
AWARENESS DAY

WHEREAS, the 7th day of August has been designated as Covid Awareness Day; and

WHEREAS, Covid-19 is a virus that has rapidly spread across the world, leaving us in a global pandemic. This virus has claimed the lives of over 600,000 people in the United States, has devastated our communities, and impacted our economy; and

WHEREAS, at a local level, some state governments have made the health of their constituents a priority by taking the necessary steps to provide the community with updated vital information about Covid-19; and

WHEREAS, our healthcare workers have sacrificed their own health and lives to care for our communities. Essential workers put themselves at risk to make sure our country had the necessities to shelter in place; and

WHEREAS, Covid-19 has impacted our low-income communities of color, making them the most vulnerable population to be affected by Covid-19; and

WHEREAS, state mandates targeted prevention to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 by social distancing, wearing masks, and staying home; and

WHEREAS, Covid-19 symptoms and severity vary by individual, while long-term side effects for those who survive Covid-19 are still unknown. Furthermore, many survivors are still suffering with lingering side-effects of the virus after they no longer test positive; and

WHEREAS, more than 4 million people worldwide and over 600,000 in the United States have lost their lives to Covid-19; and

WHEREAS, each loved one lost to Covid-19 was more than just a number. The absence of our loved ones will be felt forever, they are now a part of history; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stroudsburg Borough Council and Mayor Tarah Probst proclaim August 7th, 2021, as Covid Awareness Day in remembrance of those who have lost their lives and to honor those still fighting today.

Kim Latizzi, Linda Latizzi (her mother), and Wendy Marsh were present. Ms. Latizzi shared about her late father, who died from Covid-19, and information about the Yellow Heart Memorial.

Consideration to discuss potential changes to the 2020 CDBG-CV Grant proposed by the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Monroe.

Mr. Kopp reported that personal protective equipment for the Fire Department is not a permitted expense under the 2020 CDBG-CV Grant. The Monroe County Redevelopment Authority with the approval of Stroudsburg Borough, East Stroudsburg Borough and the Monroe County Commissioners have developed a “Healthy Home Repair Program”, which is an allowable expense. The program will provide forgivable loans to income eligible homeowners to rehabilitate their homes in response to living conditions such as mold remediation, lead-based paint, and poor ventilation which are associated with more severe coronavirus disease or poorer post-COVID health outcomes. The rehabilitation would be conducted along with standard building codes and public health advice. The funds must be spent by September 30, 2022 or they will be returned to the PaDCED.

The Borough Council was in favor of the program. Mr. Kopp advised that it will be important to get the information out to the public, which will be done by posting the guidelines on the Borough website and the Borough Facebook page.

Consideration to approve the appearance of the Borough Solicitor, Joseph P. McDonald, Jr., as a representative of the Borough of Stroudsburg at the Zoning Hearing Board public hearing for 805 Scott Street.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the appearance of the Borough Solicitor, Joseph P. McDonald, Jr., at the Zoning Hearing Board public hearing on August 26, 2021 at which time the appeal by Dew Gap, LLC. (805-809 Scott Street) of the Zoning Officer’s notice of violation will be considered. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell noted that the public hearing for the proposed Amendment to the Sign Ordinance was continued to the September 7, 2021 meeting.

The Committee has prepared the first draft of the Rental and Real Estate Transfer Inspection Ordinance.

The proposed Knox Box Ordinance will be sent to the Stroudsburg Fire Department for review and recommendation.

A draft “Split Unit Subdivision Ordinance” is being reviewed by the Codes Officer. The goal of the Ordinance is to bring down the cost of homeownership in the Borough.

A Professional Services Escrow Fee Schedule will be on the Committee’s agenda for the next monthly meeting.

Ms. McCabe provided the Committee with a marijuana decriminalization ordinance which it will also review at the next monthly meeting. The Borough would need to coordinate this effort with its SARP municipal partners, Stroud Township and East Stroudsburg Borough.

The Codes Committee and the Codes Officer have also been working on problem properties in the Borough.

Budget Committee – Ms. McCabe reported that there has not been a meeting.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe advised that a parking study was conducted for Thomas Street between Stone Street and 9th Street. There is no need to change this area to a residential parking district as there is sufficient on-street parking available. Many of the properties have driveways. Mr. Abell suggested that another survey be conducted after ESU classes start; the survey will be conducted in late September early October.

Recycling Committee – Mr. Kopp advised that he, Mr. Weiss, Mr. Evanisko, and Mr. Ace will meet at the Twin Boroughs Recycling yard with the East Stroudsburg Superintendent of Public Works and the Recycling Supervisor to discuss opportunities to better utilize the property.

Sewer Committee – Mr. Kopp reported that he and Mr. Ace will meet with BCRA and RKR Hess on Thursday, August 5, 2021 to discuss the proposed Ann Street sewer main replacement project. He will also reach out to Stroud Township to discuss their financial responsibility toward the project. It was also noted that there are a number of sizeable sewer liens that need to be dealt with. The Borough will likely need to hire a collection agency.

Street Committee – Mayor Probst noted that the next meeting will be Wednesday, August 4 at 3:30 P.M. via Zoom.us.

Personnel Committee – Ms. McCabe reported that there has not been a need to meet.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Mayor Probst advised that the next meeting is Tuesday, August 17 at 5:30 P.M. via Zoom.us.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell reported that the Committee is working on plans for a Creek Walk. He would like to look in to possible grants; Mr. Kopp will be reaching out to SROSRC to see what, if any, funds are available from their reserve. The Monroe County Land Bank is actively working on the Scott Street house owned by Leonard and Joyce Wallace. The Committee will be looking for a consultant to assist them with a parking garage study.

I-80 Expansion Task Force – Ms. Probst had nothing new to report.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission – Ms. McCabe reported that lifeguards are need at the Stroudsburg Borough Pool and Dansbury Pool in East Stroudsburg.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Probst asked Council to consider a proclamation for the owner of Kay's Tavern, who will be retiring after 57 years in business. The Council will have something for the September 7 meeting.

She thanked the officers of SARP for their recent enforcement of the Fireworks Ordinance; Go Collaborative and Jim Evanisko for the sidewalk stencil in front of the old County Jail; and the Stroudsburg Fire Department for its service.

Council Member Reports

Mrs. Kochanski advised that she followed up on Mike Schroeder's concerns about the response of Suburban Ambulance. The issue is not as problematic; however, she suggested that the Borough Council meet with the EMS Council to discuss the issues.

Mr. Weiss discussed the traffic jams that were created earlier in the day by the United Way Backpack Pick Up. McConnell Street, Lower Main Street, Kane Street and 4th Street were backed up with traffic that did not move. Mr. Kopp will speak to the director about the issue so that it can be avoided in the future.

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor McDonald reported that the court appointed conservator of the Lasak property, 124 Lee Avenue Rear, completed and provided his report to Judge Zulick a week ago. He determined that there is equity in the property to cover the demolition of the structure. He suggests that the property should be sold to a buyer with a sufficient deposit. The present owner accepted a \$3,000.00 private offer for the property, which is contrary to Judge Zulick's instructions.

The Land Development Plan of AKS Realty (the former Hess Gas Station) is not complete; the Improvement Bond needs to be posted.

Manager's Report

Classes/Training

MetEd Storm Response Webinar July 22nd

Meetings

Edmunds GovTech	July 20 th
PPL/Monroe Street Utility Poles	July 21 st
GovPilot Demonstration	July 21 st
Edmunds GovTech/ Pat McGee	July 22 nd
Creative Works/Logo Design	July 22 nd
Meet Judge Worthington	July 23 rd

Visit County Jail	July 23 rd
Elevation Studio/Logo	July 23 rd
Council of Governments	July 26 th
Trump Media/ Logo Design	July 26 th
GovPilot Demonstration	July 27 th
SROSRC/Strategic Planning	July 27 th
TextMyGov Demonstration	July 29 th
Arts Council	August 3 rd
GovPilot Demonstration	August 4 th
BCRA/RKR Hess/Ann Street Project	August 5 th
Recycling Center	August 6 th

Software for Codes/Zoning and Parking

I've done research of available systems and have been talking with a number of potential vendors: GovPilot, Edmunds GovTech, Cyrian Systems. We've had a number of demonstrations with GovPilot and have one scheduled with Edmunds GovTech. This would be for the 2022 budget and implementation in early 2022.

I'm looking for a cloud-based system that will allow residents to apply for permits/licenses online through fillable forms as well as pay online for all Borough services. And have software that will allow Codes & Health to do inspections with handheld devices. Initially, I had hoped to include parking in the system, but I'm afraid due to the complexity and specialization required, it will have to remain a stand-alone system. This was initially brought about by concerns of current workload, inefficient work processes and the potential for substantial additional work through Ordinances for solid waste and rental unit/change of owner inspections.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

First payment (or tranche, as the government says) of \$290,875.74 was electronically deposited. Second payment of the remainder of funds (\$290,875.74) will be deposited in spring/early summer 2022.

BCRA Mid-Year Report

Received Mid-Year Waste Water Treatment Plant Budget Report from BCRA. Our overall flow volume was 2.6% less than predicted. However, due to Pocono Township's flow being 21.5% less than predicted (and Stroud Township being 6.2% more than predicted), our portion of the total flow increased to 30.082% to 31.219%. That means our monthly billing will increase by \$2,084 (\$25,012/year).

However, due to receiving \$300,000 from Sanofi to reimburse BCRA's expenses for their expenses in securing an Industrial Pretreatment Permit, we will receive a \$101,557.20 credit towards our bills. So, I directed BCRA to pay the \$25,012 in additional monthly fees, August's O&M fees, and the remainder for September's O&M billing. Bottom line is that we will be

saving \$101,557.20 in expenses, which, combined with higher than budgeted income and less than budgeted expenses, gives us a shot at balancing the Sewer Budget for the first time in years.

Borough Pool

The 2021 Budget has \$140,000 for a new liner for the pool. However, I have concerns about a pretty serious leak that showed up this year. The pool is losing 8 gallons of water per minute. We're not sure where the leak is occurring, whether it is in the walls or is in one of the underground pipes that circulate water between the pool and pumps. I am bringing in a pool company that specializes in locating leaks, which isn't as easy to do as it sounds. There is no reason get quotes a pool liner if we are looking at work to fix a leak that would require construction to fix. More to follow when I have information. Mr. Ace and I are meeting with Strands Pool on Thursday, August 5 at 8:00 A.M.

Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

Fetherman Street Paving Project. Pre-Construction Meeting Complete. Work must be completed by September 19th. The project started earlier today, August 3.

North 8th Street Paving Project. Bids open on July 7th and will end in August, with work to be done by October 2021. Location of Water mains and addition of ADA Ramps at 8th and Scott Streets were added to the project.

Sidewalk Replacement Project/Multimodal Grant. DCED/CFA will grant an extension after January 1, 2022 if needed. Out to bid this fall, project completed next spring into summer. Concern is with price for construction (concrete particularly); the hope is prices will stabilize over the winter so we can bid over the summer. Will add ramp at corner at 6th and Monroe (SW Corner) as part of the project that Monroe County requested the Borough improve.

Ann Street Sewer Replacement. Will use ARPA funding. This is an approved use of funds (I&I mitigation of sanitary sewer system) and requires no approval from the state or federal governments. Meeting with BCRA and RKR Hess on August 5th to begin coordination of water main replacement as part of the project.

Ann Street Sewer Replacement – Cost Sharing Formula

Received data from RKR Hess on a study done in 2019 to determine cost sharing between the Borough and Stroud Township for the Ann Street Sewer Replacement Project. Report is attached. Based upon flow studies done in 2019, the amount of flow from the Township is 18% of the total flow, and thus would be the percentage of the project payable by the Township. I will be in contact with Stroud Township Sewer Authority to begin discussions.

Recycling Center

The Recycling Committee and Public Works Directors from the Borough and East Stroudsburg are meeting with the Manager of the Recycling Center Mike Stettler on August 6th to discuss additional revenue producing opportunities and ways to streamline operations at the Recycling Center. Total income from the Recycling Center has been up and down every year, and is dependent on the prices being for recyclables, which is highly variable. This would be a way of

increasing, and hopefully, equalizing, the income from year to year. And due to limited number of employees, increased productivity would be a huge help at the Center.

Loitering & Littering on Main Street

This is an issue that has been ongoing for years, even decades. In the past several weeks I have received several complaints from businesses on Main Street about people loitering on benches in front of their businesses, drinking beer, littering and loitering. From first-hand experience working with this population, homelessness is linked with mental illness the majority of the time. A productive way to deal with this issue may be convene the human/social service organizations and churches that serve this community and come up with a community plan to deal with the human side of this issue. I've been in contact with several of the churches/organizations involved and want to sit everyone down in the same room and see if we can come up with an agreement to work together on this issue.

McMichael Creek Flood Protection Project/Levee Repair/DEP Grant

Project is being managed by the Army Corps of Engineers. Award date for the contract was scheduled to be mid-August, but they are running behind schedule. Will keep Council updated. Grant Agreement is complete for DEP to provide 100% of the share of the Borough's cost of the project. We will be responsible for the upfront match costs and then will be reimbursed, up to \$80,000, by DEP.

Sewer Flow Projections

By September we have to provide sewer flow projections for 2022 to BCRA. These numbers are critical, as they determine the percentage/amount we pay towards BCRA's Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Budget. These numbers have varied over the years and have been a major contributor to deficits in the Sewer Fund Budget, so I want to make sure they are as accurate as possible. Will work with Russ at RKR Hess.

Levee Conduit Inspection

Army Corps of Engineers will conduct the annual inspection of the levee on August 16th. Also, in 2021, all conduits on our Levees must be inspected by camera. Since we have our own camera truck, we are able to do this work "in house" and save costs. We received the Army Corps of Engineers Inspection Guidelines and will be doing the work this summer. Waiting for more guidance from the Corps of Engineers/DEP.

Sewer Collection System Inflow and Infiltration

Flow Metering ongoing along Ann Street, to determine locations and severity of I&I. The meters have been moved to new locations. Smoke testing also will be employed to determine inflow; working with Brian to schedule testing. This is probably the major source of the problem.

Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)

Public input session held on July 29th to get input on Education & Outreach; Public Involvement & Participation; and Illicit Discharge Programs. Staff Training Session moved to August, date TBD.

Financial

Completed Financial Study. Working to schedule a meeting with the Finance Committee in August and later this year will present to full Council.

Summer Newsletter

Planning on having Late Summer/Fall Borough Newsletter out to residents by early September.

COVID/CDBG Grant Funding (Originally for Hand Wash Stations)

Received information on PPE needed by the Fire Department; working on getting information to County to update grant so we can purchase the PPE.

2021 CDBG Funding

By July 31st, we need to provide to the County Redevelopment Authority what project we will be undertaking with those funds. Brain and I discussed, and we are recommending Church Alley and South 8th Street. Application submission date is October 28th, 2021.

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.

Sewer Lien

The owner of the Pocono Plaza Inn has agreed to a payment for the past due sewer balance of \$54,014.22. Finishing agreement and will submit to Joe for review.

Five Points Intersection North 5th Street

Ben Guthrie/Traffic Planning & Design working on study for the Five Points intersection. Staying in touch and coordinating as needed. RKR Hess will be doing survey work in connection with the TPD study.

2021 Grant Deadlines

LSA (July 1st to September 30th Open)

Small Water & Sewer (Still not Open)

PennDOT Multimodal (No dates yet posted for 2021)

ESSA/Swimming Pool Liner (September; must be through SROSRC Volunteer Group)

Upcoming Focus

Ann Street Project

Work Analysis & Automation Upgrade, Office

Paving/Infrastructure Projects 2021

Day to Day Activities

Presentation, Borough Finances

Financial Procedures

Continue to Meet Community Leaders

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Mr. Kimes was not present; there was no report.

Street Superintendent's Report

Mr. Ace had nothing else to report.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 210803

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Evanisko to approve the bills on Warrants 210803. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

There were no questions or comments from the public on non-agenda items.

There was no need for an Executive Session.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 P.M. on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)