

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 19, 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 Victoria DeVries, Council Member Joanne Kochanski, Council Member Melody Trunfio, and Council Member Joe Shay. Mayor Michael Moreno, and Council Member James Smith 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.

**Public Hearing and Consideration to adopt an Ordinance of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Fixing the Real Estate Tax rate for the Year 2024**

Mr. Kopp explained that the proposed Property Tax Rate for 2024 is 9.824 Mills, or \$982 per \$100,000.00 of property value. The tax rate per fund is as follows: General Fund 7.523 mills; Street Fund 0.497 mills; Fire Apparatus Fund 0.289 mills; Parks/Recreation Fund 0.824 mills; Street Lighting Fund 0.267 mills; and Debt Service Fund 0.424 mills.

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. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The aforementioned Ordinance was adopted on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

**Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the regular meeting on December 5, 2023**

The minutes of the regular meeting on December 5, 2023 were approved as circulated on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

**Monthly Administrative Reports**

The following monthly reports were approved on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe: Right-To-Know Report, Parking Report, Fire Department Report, and the Police Department Report. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

**Accept Unaudited November 2023, Treasurer Report**

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to accept the Balance Sheets, FY 23 vs FY 22, and the Budget to Actual Report. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

**Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

**New Business**

A motion was made by Mr. Shay, seconded by Ms. McCabe to adopt the Borough of Stroudsburg's 2024 Budget. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to adopt a Resolution of the Borough of Stroudsburg, in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, approving Solid Waste Fees for 2024. Effective January 1, 2024, the annual municipal solid waste collection service user fees shall be: \$39.00 per month; \$117.00 per quarter; \$460.00 per year. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to adopt a Resolution of the Borough of Stroudsburg, in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, approving a Sidewalk Maintenance Agreement between PennDOT and the Borough of Stroudsburg for sidewalk improvements that are part of the I-80 Reconstruction Project. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to approve Alta Planning & Design preparing a grant application for the Department of Transportation's 2024 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program, in support of the Transforming Main Street Project, for \$12,500.00. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mary Evanisko requested approval for the annual Winterfest, scheduled for Saturday, February 17, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The theme for this year's ice sculptures is "Children's Storytime". North 7<sup>th</sup> Street from the hotel entrance to Monroe Street to will be closed. The ice sculpting trucks will park in front of the old jail building. The Amerihealth Bus and the Bookmobile will park on either side of Main and North 7<sup>th</sup> Streets. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to approve the Winterfest event on Saturday, February 17, 2024, as presented. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to approve the annual StroudFest Community Festival on Saturday, August 31, 2024, from approximately 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to schedule a public hearing on January 2, 2024 for an Ordinance to amend Ordinance 1147, Appendix C, of the Borough of Stroudsburg, in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, designating Pennsylvania Municipal Service Company as the collector for delinquent solid waste collection user service fees and imposing on delinquent ratepayers the obligation to pay reasonable costs incurred for the collection of delinquent fees, penalties, and interest. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to schedule a public hearing on January 2, 2024 for an Ordinance to amend an Ordinance of the Borough of Stroudsburg, in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Chapter 18, Part 2, Section 18-202, entitled "Sewer Rental Rate Schedule and Service Charge". The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to publish the 2024 Stroudsburg Borough Council Meeting Schedule, as presented. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Solicitor Brown discussed the Alpha Recycling Land Development status. The project was originally approved with conditions; all conditions except one have been met. There is a title issue that will take about six to twelve months for the owner to resolve. Solicitor Brown recommends approving the Indemnification Agreement between the Borough of Stroudsburg and

Alpha Recycling Hwy 80, Inc., which allows the applicant to start work on a narrow part of the plan, outlined in the agreement. Included in the agreement are additional requirements, protecting the Borough's interest. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to approve the Indemnification Agreement between the Borough of Stroudsburg and Alpha Recycling Hwy 80, Inc. Roll Call: Yea: Ms. McCabe, Ms. DeVries, Ms. Trunfio, Mr. Abell; Nay: Mr. Shay. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 1-no; 0-abstain)

### **Committee Reports**

Codes Committee – No report.

Budget Committee – No report.

Parking Committee – No report.

Recycling Committee – A special committee meeting is scheduled for December 27, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. to approve the 2024 Twin Boroughs Recycling Budget.

Sewer Committee – Mr. Kopp reported the final approval for the Ann Street sewer replacement project is expected in January 2024. Mr. Kopp and Sewer Engineer, Russ Scott, met to discuss EDU's, and will meet with Solicitor Brown in January.

Street Committee – No report.

Personnel Committee – No report.

Public Relations/Media Committee – No report.

Redevelopment Committee – No report.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – There is a Task Force meeting scheduled for January 23, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Borough Council Chambers.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Committee – Ms. McCabe reported a Gala is scheduled for March 21, 2024 at Stroudsmoor to support SROSRC. Ms. McCabe encourages all Council Members to attend.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Moreno was absent.

### **Council Member Reports**

Mr. Abell reminded Council Members the January 2, 2024 Reorganization Meeting is very important to attend. Currently there is a Parks & Rec Committee, as well as the SROSRC committee; Mr. Abell wishes to disband the Parks & Rec Committee to avoid duplicate efforts. There are many committees that have vacancies; anyone interested in serving on any committee should email Mr. Kopp and Mr. Abell.

Mr. Abell reappointed Joanne Kochanski and Mary Pat Quinn to the Monroe County Control Center Board of Directors, for a 2-year term, expiring December 31, 2025. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to approve reappointing Joanne Kochanski and Mary Pat Quinn to the Monroe County Control Center Board of Directors, with the term expiring December 31, 2025. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Abell noted that Mary Pat Quinn's term as a representative on the Stroud Area Regional Police Department Commission expires on December 31, 2023. Mr. Abell recommended to reappoint Ms. Quinn to another term as a SARP representative. Ms. McCabe suggested a current

member of Council, the Mayor, or the Borough Manager should be appointed. Ms. McCabe and Mrs. Kochanski are currently on the Commission. A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Shay to reappoint Mary Pat Quinn as a representative on the Stroud Area Regional Police Department Commission. Roll Call: Yea: Mr. Abell, Mrs. Kochanski, Mr. Shay; Nay: Ms. DeVries, Ms. McCabe, Ms. Trunfio. The motion failed. (3-yes; 3-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Abell discussed the vacancies on the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB). A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to appoint Joanne Kochanski to HARB, for a four-year term, expiring December 31, 2027. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to appoint Toby Sabatine to HARB, for a four-year term, expiring December 31, 2027. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Ms. McCabe thanked all Council Members for a great year!

Mr. Shay advised there are speeding vehicles on North 6<sup>th</sup> Street every weekday between 8:20 and 8:35 a.m. Chief Lyon will pass this information on to the officers.

Mrs. Kochanski thanked everyone for allowing her to serve another term.

### **Solicitor's Report**

Solicitor Brown will discuss an agreement for 8<sup>th</sup> & Main Street at the January 2, 2024 Council meeting.

### **Manager's Report**

Mr. Kopp reported an LSA Grants meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 21, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Kopp will attend the Hazard Mitigation Kick-off meeting at the Monroe County Safety Center on January 8, 2024.

The Borough Newsletter is done and should be in residents' mailboxes by the end of the year. Mr. Kopp advised that GFL was recently bought out by Casella, who will be replacing residents' trash cans throughout the Borough.

## **Borough Manager Report December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

### **Meetings**

NEPA Alliance/MPO Legislation	December 7 <sup>th</sup>
Ad-Hoc Committee Events	December 11 <sup>th</sup>
Downtown Business Association	December 12 <sup>th</sup>
Waste Authority County Waste Plan Revision	December 12 <sup>th</sup>
Borough Christmas Party	December 15 <sup>th</sup>
Council of Governments Meeting	December 18 <sup>th</sup>
Emergency Services Work Group	December 21 <sup>st</sup>

### **Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects**

***Sidewalk Replacement Project/Multimodal Grant.*** Final sidewalk repairs complete. Project complete.

***Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving.*** Water Quality Management Permit (WQM) published in PA Bulletin on December 16<sup>th</sup>. 2-week comment period follows publication, so we should receive permit beginning of January 2024.

**Ann Street Park.** Picnic table and bench arrived; installation in 2024. Bastogne Tulips planted.

### **Grants Strategy 2023**

**2024 RAISE Grant.** Applications due February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Contract from Alta in preparation. Will require little work to update application.

**DOT Reconnecting Communities & Neighbors Grant.** Submitted 9/28/23. Waiting on notification of awards.

**2023 Statewide LSA Grant.** Submitted 11/28/23. For Creek Walk Trail.

**2023 Monroe County LSA Grant.** Submitted 9/27/23. For Parking Garage Repairs.

**2022 Monroe County LSA Grant.** Received \$500,000 for the project. Working on engineering with Alta and with PennDOT for approval/input. Signage and traffic calming. Work to be completed in 2024.

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

**Monroe County Hotel Tax Allocation.** 2024 request for remainder of Bollard Project. Submitted 8/31.

### **Sewer Billing**

Draft billing SOP to BCRA for review; waiting on meeting to implement.

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

Temporarily on hold; looking at one final scrub, implementation in 2024.

### **Levee Repair Project**

Staging to begin after Thanksgiving with work to begin late 2023 or early 2024.

### **Borough Building Repairs**

Working on developing Request for Bids for work to be done in 2024. In the 2024 Budget.

### **Engineering Creek Walk Project**

Peters working on permitting with DEP and PEMA. Working on securing easements as needed. Applied for funding through statewide LSA; will also go for DCNR Funding in 2024.

### **Emergency Operations Plan**

Plan was due to be updated in 2021; looking at completing in Winter 2023-24.

### **Tree City USA Application**

Application complete and submitted. Borough has been recognized as a "Tree City USA" Community 16 times in the past.

### **LERTA**

Discussions with several School Board members. Draft Ordinance was provided. Potential presentation to School Board in 2024, after elections and Board is seated.

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

Going fully "live" with MyGov in 2024 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.

### **Solid Waste Ordinance**

Customer payments accurately calculated, fund broke even in first year, allowing funds moved from General Funds to cover costs until payments began coming in to be moved back to GF.

### **Senior Waste Collection Assistance Program**

Contacting current program recipients for inclusion in the 2024 program.

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

Annual evaluations are due. Counseling with all staff in December.

### **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 winter.

### **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 2024.

### **Upcoming Focus**

Emergency Operations Plan  
Sewer EDU Reassessment Plan  
Reorganization Meeting 2024  
Day to Day Activities

Bid Packet for Borough Building Repairs  
LSA Grant Administration  
RAISE Grant/Grant Strategy 2024

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

No report.

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

No report.

### **Approval of Bills on Warrants 231219**

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to authorize the payment of bills on Warrants 231219. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

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

Rich Berkowicz, of Sherman Theater, suggested the Borough create a text or email alert system to inform residents and business owners of events and special announcements.

Brian Fairfield advised council of a dangerous incident involving a pedestrian that occurred along North 5<sup>th</sup> Street near Oak Street where there are no sidewalks. Mr. Abell suggested possible signs be installed to direct pedestrians to utilize Wallace Street instead of North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and will pass the information along to Mayor Moreno for further discussion at a Street Committee meeting.

### **Executive Session**

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to go in to Executive Session to discuss personnel and potential litigation matters at 8:14 p.m. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

The Executive Session concluded at 8:42 p.m. on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m., on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)