

MINUTES  
Stroudsburg Borough Council Meeting  
Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at 7 p.m.

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call: Council President Kim Diddio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Borough Manager Cathryn Thomas called roll. Present were President Diddio, Council Members Ken Lang, Matt Abell, and Boyd Weiss. Absent were Vice President Joanne Kochanski, Council Members Eric Scelza and Neil Allen. Also present were Mayor Ellen Deihl and Solicitor Ralph Matergia.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Public Hearings

The public hearings were opened at 7:03 p.m.

- A. Consideration of a Tax Ordinance setting the millage rates for 2016 relative to what is contained in the 2016 Proposed Budget: Ms. Cindy Blake of 1039 Dreher Avenue requested Council find ways to reduce costs instead of raising taxes.

Ms. Jane Parkinson of 37 Club Court commented that homeowners cannot afford a tax increase. It will force them to ignore home improvements. Instead of a new street sweeper and fire truck, the Borough should be dealing with the increased crime throughout town. She also asked if the Borough had a five-year plan to deal with the upcoming SARP pension payouts and post-retirement healthcare costs. Borough Manager Cathryn Thomas replied that periodically the SARP Operations Committee looks at that. Some of those projections were made and brought to Council about 1-½ years ago.

Mr. Bill Parkinson of 37 Club Court deals with a lot of young people who he knows are currently struggling with high Borough rents and low incomes. A tax increase will push them out of the Borough. He also commented that his elderly aunt tripped on a damaged sidewalk. For the taxes the Borough collects, the sidewalks should be in good shape.

- B. Consideration of an ordinance to amend the Borough Code, Chapter 18, Sewers and Sewage Disposal, Part 2, Section 202, increasing the sewer rate charged from \$3.45 to \$3.95 per 1,000 gallons of water used, and also increasing the quarterly base rates \$5 for each category (residential, commercial and industrial): Ms. Joanne Viola of 23 Huston Avenue asked if the Borough applies for all grants that are available for sewer and road issues. Ms. Thomas stated grants are not available for those issues and in the past few years she has applied for numerous LSA grants for which the Borough has not been approved for funding.

President Diddio added that the number of properties taken off the tax base by the School District and the County in the past few years is also part of the problem.

Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Lang, to close the public hearing at 7:15 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Input: Ms. Joanne Viola asked if the Borough can send some sort of notification when the recycling center is off schedule. Ms. Thomas stated that when the Borough is notified, an alert is put on our website.

5. Consideration to approve Council Meeting Minutes from November 17, 2015: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Lang, to approve the Council Meeting Minutes from November 17, 2015. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Consideration to accept the September and October Treasurer's Reports: Motion by Mr. Weiss, second by Mr. Abell, to accept the September and October Treasurer's Reports. Motion passed unanimously.

## **Old Business**

7. Discussion of a request for “NO PARKING” on Sunset Lane and on the west side of Woodcliff Avenue, which would require a public hearing to consider amending the Borough Ordinance: Assistant Public Works Director Brian Ace reported that Public Works Director Brian Bond recommends alternate parking on Woodcliff Avenue and no parking on Sunset Lane. Council felt this decision should be handled by the new Council in January. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to table this until January 2016. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Consideration to approve the FY 2015 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application and authorizing its submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED): Motion by Mr. Weiss, second by Mr. Abell, to approve the FY 2015 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application and authorizing its submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED). Motion passed unanimously.

9. Consideration of approval of the following change orders for the Fire Hall renovation project:

- a. Change Order No. 4 with Plumbing Contractor Yannuzzi, an increase of \$1,784.50 for exterior work to tie-in rain pipe in the rear and side of the building to the 6-inch rain pipe from the roof drain.
- b. Change Order No. 5 with Plumbing Contractor Yannuzzi, an increase of \$5,444.68 for installation of footing drain along entire left side of the building to mitigate a water table issue.
- c. Change Order No. 4 for Leibold Incorporated, an increase of \$3,480.00 for the installation of longer line sets for three (3) ductless split systems.
- d. Change Order No. 9 for NuCor Management for interior window well reinforcement, side entrance landing replacement for ADA compliance, and replacement of wood studs with metal due to mold – total \$6,489.00.

Engineer Dave McGarry was not present to answer questions therefore Council Member Lang stated he was not prepared to discuss the change orders tonight. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Weiss, to table the change orders listed above until the next Council meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business**

10. Consideration to approve the 2016 Budget for the Stroud Area Regional Police Department (SARPD), as recommended for approval by the SARPD Commission, with the contribution from the Borough of Stroudsburg to be \$1,421,294, a decrease of \$9,792, or .68%: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Weiss, to approve the 2016 Budget for the Stroud Area Regional Police Department (SARPD), as recommended for approval by the SARPD Commission, with the contribution from the Borough of Stroudsburg to be \$1,421,294, a decrease of \$9,792, or .68%. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Consideration to approve the 2016 Budget for the Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission, with contributions for Stroudsburg Borough for 2016 proposed to be \$30,337 for the Municipal Appropriation, \$78,500 for the Stewardship Contribution and \$1,387 for the Greenway Contribution, with all amounts the same as were budgeted for the year 2015: Motion by Mr. Weiss, second by Mr. Abell, to approve the 2016 Budget for the Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission, with contributions for Stroudsburg Borough for 2016 proposed to be \$30,337 for the Municipal Appropriation, \$78,500 for the Stewardship Contribution and \$1,387 for the Greenway Contribution, with all amounts the same as were budgeted for the year 2015. Motion passed unanimously.

12. Consideration to approve the 2016 Proposed Budget as the 2016 Final Adopted Budget: Council Member Lang was not in favor of borrowing money to improve roads due to the current Fire Department Project change orders. In general he is not in favor of the proposed budget. Ms. Thomas reminded Council that if we wait to do

the street project the Borough takes the chance of higher interest rates resulting in higher costs. President Diddio stated she is not in favor of raising taxes and questioned the need for the new fire truck in 2016. Chief Seip commented that if not ordered soon, the ISO rating will go up resulting in higher homeowner insurance premiums. Council Members Weiss and Lang will meet with Ms. Thomas and the Fire Department at the Chief's convenience to discuss this matter further. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to table the 2016 Proposed Budget until the next Council meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

13. Consideration to approve the Tax Ordinance setting the millage rates for 2016 relative to what is contained in the 2016 Final Adopted Budget: Not considered.

14. Consideration of an ordinance to amend the Borough Code, Chapter 18, Sewers and Sewage Disposal, Part 2, Section 202, increasing the sewer rate charged from \$3.45 to \$3.95 per 1,000 gallons of water used, and also increasing the quarterly base rates \$5 for each category (residential, commercial and industrial): Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Lang, to amend the Borough Code, Chapter 18, Sewers and Sewage Disposal, Part 2, Section 202, increasing the sewer rate charged from \$3.45 to \$3.95 per 1,000 gallons of water used, and also increasing the quarterly base rates \$5 for each category (residential, commercial and industrial). Motion passed unanimously.

15. Consideration to approve a change order for the Clermont Avenue reconstruction project, as a deduction of \$16,529.22 and to authorize payment request No. 1 for this project: Engineer Nate Oiler reported that the actual deduction is \$48,622.36 for a total contract price of \$180,439.14. The amount of the first payment request is \$162,395.22. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to approve a change order for the Clermont Avenue reconstruction project, as a deduction of \$48,622.36. Motion passed unanimously. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to authorize payment request No. 1 for this project with the conditions set forth in Mr. Oiler's letter. Motion passed unanimously.

17. Consideration to accept the resignation of Jack Muehlhan from the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB): Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to accept with regrets the resignation of Jack Muehlhan from the Historic Architectural Review Board. Motion passed unanimously.

16. Consideration to approve a change order for payment of the final retainage on the Wallace/Colbert 2014 ADA Ramp and Road Project in the amount of \$9,460.26: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Lang, to approve a change order for payment of the final retainage on the Wallace/Colbert 2014 ADA Ramp and Road Project in the amount of \$9,460.26 subject to Solicitor Matergia's review of the close out documents. Motion passed unanimously.

Engineer Nate Oiler also requested the final payment for the CDBG funded Garden Street project in the amount of \$11,232.73. Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Lang, to authorize the final payment for the CDBG funded Garden Street project in the amount of \$11,232.73 conditioned upon PennDOT writing off the permit for the work they did along West Main Street and Solicitor Matergia's review. Motion passed unanimously.

18. Consideration to amend and modify the HARB appointment of Yarrow Wilkins – who had been appointed to fill the vacancy and unexpired term of Lori Giovinco, term ending 12/31/18, and changing that to have Yarrow Wilkins fill the vacancy and unexpired term of Jack Muehlhan, term ending 12/31/16, and specifying that Ms. Wilkins shall serve in the "Real Estate Broker" position on the HARB: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Lang, to amend and modify the HARB appointment of Yarrow Wilkins – who had been appointed to fill the vacancy and unexpired term of Lori Giovinco, term ending 12/31/18, and changing that to have Yarrow Wilkins fill the vacancy and unexpired term of Jack Muehlhan, term ending 12/31/16, and specifying that Ms. Wilkins shall serve in the "Real Estate Broker" position on the HARB. Motion passed unanimously.

19. Solicitor's Report: Solicitor Matergia reported that December 16<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to file an appeal in the Shanti House zoning case. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to authorize Solicitor Matergia, to file an appeal in the Shanti House zoning case. Motion passed unanimously.

20. Mayor's Report: The Tree Lighting in Courthouse Square was lovely!

21. Council Member Reports: Council Member Weiss received several complaints regarding the Gas Company moving meters from basements to the sidewalk and paving the sidewalk with macadam which is not allowed by our ordinance.

22. Manager's Report: None.

23. Approval of Bills on Warrant 151201: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Weiss, to approve the Bills on Warrant 151201. Motion passed unanimously.

24. Executive Session: None.

25. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Lang, to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Approved:

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Kim M. Diddio, President of Council

Attest:

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Cathryn Thomas, Borough Manager/Secretary