

MINUTES
Stroudsburg Borough Council Meeting
Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 5:40 p.m.

Call Meeting to Order: Council President Weiss called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Council members Boyd Weiss, Joanne Kochanski, James Smith, Matt Abell, Mark Connors and Patrick Maurath were present, as well as Mayor Tarah Probst, Solicitor Ralph Matergia and Borough Manager Cathryn Thomas. Council member Ken Lang was absent.

Motion by Councilperson Smith, seconded by Councilperson Kochanski to enter into executive session to discuss personnel matters, including interviews with Borough Solicitor candidates. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilperson Connors left the meeting after the Solicitor interviews.

Motion by Councilperson Kochanski, seconded by Councilperson Smith to adjourn the executive session and resume the open segment of the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Council members discussed with Building Codes Official Jeff Wilkins his impending retirement and possible ways in which the Borough would continue to cover the numerous and varied aspects of this position. The following are the main segments of the job: Building Codes Official, Building Inspector (both residential and commercial properties), Health Officer and Code Enforcement Officer.

One job the Borough is obligated to have performed is that of electrical inspector and it has been the long-standing practice of the Borough to have a qualified professional part-time person perform these duties and that is expected to continue indefinitely.

Mr. Wilkins has offered that after he has retired at the beginning of June he would be willing to stay on in a part-time capacity to perform residential and commercial building inspections – which he noted includes 17 different certifications. He said he anticipated he could serve in this capacity for a number of years into the future.

The Borough is required to have a qualified person certified to serve as the Building Codes Official. It was noted that Assistant Codes Officer Ron Kimes may have this certification by the time Mr. Wilkins retires, in which case the Council could consider designating Mr. Kimes as the Building Codes Official. In the event that does not occur, Mr. Wilkins has offered to stay on in that capacity for the Borough.

The Council may consider appointing a part-time person to perform the duties of the Health Officer. This has been done successfully for a period of time in the neighboring Borough of East Stroudsburg. Manager Thomas reported she had reached out to Eastburg Health Officer Anita Einolf and she has said she would be interested in possibly working part-time for Stroudsburg. Mr. Wilkins said that his experience and interactions working with Ms. Einolf have been very positive.

Finally, Mr. Wilkins discussed the Code Enforcement aspect of his position. Currently, he and Mr. Kimes team up to cover these duties. Mr. Wilkins said that he did not think it would work to have Mr. Kimes be 100% responsible for performing all matters of Code Enforcement in addition to his other duties. Therefore, the Council could consider hiring a part-time and/or seasonal person to assist with Code Enforcement matters.

Mr. Wilkins provided some statistical and financial data to the Council on the various options. The data showed that the Borough could save on wages and benefits if the Council opted to have various duties and responsibilities performed using part-time personnel, as detailed above. One other possible option would be to hire a third-party private company to perform residential and commercial building inspections. This would yield some savings in wages and benefits, however would also have a significant impact in a reduction of revenues, as these private company arrangements generally have the company retaining 75% or more of the inspection fees as compensation.

The general consensus of the Council members was that the option to use various part-time personnel was something that merits further consideration.

Solicitor Matergia had left during the discussion with Mr. Wilkins and Mr. Wilkins left at this time.

The Council discussed another matter having to do with the impending departure of Executive Assistant Bonnie Christman. The Council had been provided a copy of an updated job description and also a proposed advertisement for the job, including a suggested wage range. The Council will take these matters under advisement and plans are to further discuss related issues to arrive at a decision concerning a final process to advertise and fill the position.

Motion by Councilperson Smith, seconded by Councilperson Kochanski to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Approved:

Boyd Weiss, President of Council

Attest:

Cathryn Thomas, Borough Manager/Secretary