

MINUTES
Stroudsburg Borough Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 15, 2016 at 7 p.m.

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call: Council President Weiss called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Borough Manager Cathryn Thomas called roll. Present were President Weiss, Vice-President James Smith, Council Members Joanne Kochanski, Ken Lang, Matt Abell and Mark Connors. Absent was Council Member Patrick Maurath. Also present were Mayor Tarah Probst and Solicitor Ralph Matergia.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. A moment of silence to raise awareness of suicide prevention: Council Member James Smith asked that a moment of silence be observed for the most recent suicide victim from Stroudsburg High School and for all victims and their families.

4. Public Input:

On behalf of the Stroudsburg Fire Department Fireman Mehmet Barzev asked that we recognize tonight three Stroudsburg Firemen, Bill Miller, John Brown III and John Brown IV, who on November 1 performed CPR and saved a local man's life in Besecker's Diner who had begun choking and collapsed. The men received a round of applause from all in attendance of tonight's meeting. Representatives of State Senator Mario Scavello's and David Parker's offices presented the three firemen with citations and extended their sincere thanks from the entire community.

President Weiss went on to recognize the entire Stroudsburg Fire Department stating they do a wonderful job protecting lives in our community and that most of us do not realize what goes into running a well-organized fire department. Mr. Weiss read aloud a letter from the Fire Department addressed to Council informing them that in accordance to the Borough Code of Ordinances both Chemical Company #1 and Phoenix Company #2 have each appointed five delegates to the convention for the election of department officers and submit the following unanimous nominations for Council consideration; Mike Seip for Chief, John Stevens and Charles Frantz for Assistant Chiefs. Council will vote on these nominations in April.

Suzanne McCool has received several complaints from people who find it very difficult and dangerous to try and make a left onto West Main Street when turning from South 10th Street. She suggested a "No Left Turn" sign be placed there. People can always go up Ninth Street instead and make the left onto Main Street at the light. Public Works Director Brian Bond stated that intersection is where a borough road meets a state road. The borough can do a traffic study and contact the SARPD to see if there have been any reportable accidents at that intersection to get a better idea of what may be needed. Council Member Mrs. Kochanski asked that if we cannot put up a "No Left Turn" sign, can the last parking space be designated for compact cars only for better visibility.

Mayor Probst received an email that the intersection of Dreher Avenue and West Main Street is not well lit in the mornings when school children are in the area. Mr. Bond will look at both issues and report back to Council.

Motion by Mr. Smith, second by Mrs. Kochanski, to close public input. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes from March 1 and March 8, 2016: Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Lang, to approve the Council Meeting Minutes from March 1 and March 8, 2016. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Monthly Administrative Reports: Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Smith, to accept the Monthly Administrative Reports. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

7. Consideration of letters to be sent to the County Commissioners and the BCRA Board concerning meeting times: As chair, Mr. Weiss stated he would like to personally meet with these bodies.

Motion by Mr. Connors, second by Mr. Abell, to approve sending letters to the County Commissioners and the BCRA Board concerning meeting times. Motion passed; 4-2-0 with Mr. Weiss and Mr. Smith voting no.

New Business

8. Consideration of a request from the Monroe Farmer's Market to operate in Court House Square for the 2016 season: President Virginia Romango was present to answer Council's questions. A map of vendor placement was included in Council's packet. 7th Street will be closed around the circle as indicated on the vendor map opposed to the written request stating it will be closed from Main Street and Monroe Street will be closed from 6th to 7th Street. Mr. Bond has reviewed the request and has no concerns. Chief Seip stated the fire department needs 12-foot access throughout the area.

It was also asked that Ms. Romagno contact Race Farms and tell them they will not be allowed to park in the handicap space on Monroe Street like they did last year.

This year there is no request for free parking for the vendors or patrons.

Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Smith, to approve the request. Mr. Connors asked that Mr. Abell and Mr. Smith amend their motion to include approving the request as presented on the vendor map, with no free parking and that there be 12-foot lanes between tents. They agreed. Both the motion and amendment passed unanimously.

Ms. Romagno requested the farmers market be allowed to use the Borough as an honorary sponsor of the market including the Borough logo on their printed material and website and also including a booth at the market that the Borough can utilize. Solicitor Matergia and a few of the Council Members were not clear as to what an honorary sponsor means. Mayor Probst thinks it is very nice and would welcome the idea. Solicitor Matergia stated the Borough can approve the location of the market but doesn't endorse the activity. He went on to explain that there is no

prohibition against an organization thanking the Borough for their support but it is not the function of government to endorse activities one way or another.

Mayor Probst asked Ms. Romagno to get back to her when she has more details regarding hanging banners for the market.

9. Consideration to approve the Art on Main event on May 14th: Lisa Diemer from Kitchen Chemistry was present representing the Arts Council. She explained they would like to piggyback on the Farmers Market that day keeping Court House Square and Monroe Street closed off from 1 to 5 p.m. and are requesting free parking with the local artists making up the “No Parking” bags to place on the meters. Mr. Lang feels free parking would cause a financial hardship for the Borough. Council would not be opposed to free parking in limited areas and suggested she come back with a revised request.

Mr. Bond reminded Ms. Diemer that the cones and barricades would have to be locked up after the event and that the meter bags placed for the Run for the Red event the next day must be put back on. Chief Seip reminded Ms. Diemer to keep a 12-foot lane open in the street in case of emergencies.

Motion by Mr. Smith, second by Mr. Abell, to approve the Art on Main event on May 14th. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Smith, to deny the request of the Arts Council for free parking throughout the borough for the Art on Main event on May 14th. Motion passed unanimously.

10. Consideration of a request from the Rite Aid Corp. for the Borough to sell property on McConnell Street: Attorney Tom Schlegel representing his client BTS Stroudsburg, LLC and project developer Burt Schaerer were present to address Council’s questions. Solicitor Matergia stated that if the Borough is interested, they should have the property appraised and decide if they want to sell and with what terms. Council was in favor of moving forward with an appraisal but asked that the applicant be burdened with the cost to which the applicant agreed. Mr. Matergia will contact the appraiser.

Mr. Abell stated the 68 parking spaces proposed for this project is excessive and feels the Borough needs to revisit the formula to determine a threshold of parking spaces that makes sense. It may be that the small piece of land we own may not be needed to develop this project successfully. He also feels the entrances and exits to the property need to be in appropriate places to avoid major traffic issues and perhaps if the number of parking spaces is reduced, the site can be reconfigured in a way that works for both the applicant and the community. He feels the Borough should make their intentions known to the County Planning Commission and begin making revisions of the MU parking requirements for this and future applications. Mr. Schaerer commented that the plans remitted to the Planning Commission were based on our current ordinances. Mr. Matergia stated that from what he is hearing, Council is interested in proceeding with an appraisal for the sale of the property that is tied to a plan that they will embrace.

11. Consideration of a request from the Pocono Irish-American Club for free meter bags to indicate “NO PARKING” on the North and South sides of Main Street, from 8th to 6th Streets and on North 7th Street at the side of the Siamsa Irish Pub, on Sunday, March 20th for the 39th Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade: Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Abell, to approve a request

from the Pocono Irish-American Club for free “No Parking” meter bags on both sides of Main Street, from 8th to 6th Streets and on North 7th Street at the side of the Siamsa Irish Pub, on Sunday, March 20th for the 39th Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade. Motion passed unanimously.

12. Dee Curran requests discussion of parking concerns for 145 North 9th Street: Ms. Curran was not present for Council to question. Mayor Probst received an email from her regarding parking tickets she is receiving outside her office on N. 9th Street for one hour limit. She suggested Ms. Curran contact her landlord.

Zoning and Codes Officer Jeff Wilkins stated that the one hour limit is there to accommodate turnover of vehicles and customers for the businesses in the area and that Ms. Curran submitted a letter from her landlord stating that she has four off-street parking spaces. His understanding is that she chooses not to park in those spaces as they are further from her front door. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to table this until Ms. Curran is present. Mayor Probst and Council Member Kochanski would like staff to investigate putting parking meters on this block. Mr. Bond will look into it.

13. Consideration to approve the request of the Pocono Heritage Land Trust to provide a letter of support for a DCNR Land Acquisition Reimbursement Grant application for the Glen Run Nature Preserve: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Smith, to approve the request of the Pocono Heritage Land Trust to provide a letter of support for a DCNR Land Acquisition Reimbursement Grant application for the Glen Run Nature Preserve. Motion passed unanimously.

14. Consideration of a request from the Housing Authority of Monroe County for 15 pool passes discounted 50% for lower income residents: Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Abell, to approve the request from the Housing Authority of Monroe County for 15 pool passes discounted 50% for lower income residents. Motion passed; 5-1-0 with Mr. Lang voting no.

Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Smith, to approve free pool passes to borough employees, volunteers and members of board and commissions for the 2016 pool season. Motion passed 4-2-0 with Mr. Lang and Mr. Connors voting no.

15. Consideration to approve Memorial Day Weekend for residents to hold Fee Free Yard Sales: Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Connors, to approve Friday through Monday of Memorial Day Weekend for residents to hold Fee Free Yard Sales. Motion passed unanimously.

16. Consideration to select a new codification company: Ms. Thomas hoped Council would go with her recommendation and choose General Code. Several Council Members were interested in getting more information on Code Publishing Company and reviewing what each company brings to the table. Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Abell, to approve General Code as the borough’s new codification company. Motion failed; 2-4-0 with Mr. Connors, Mr. Abell, Mr. Smith and Mr. Lang voting no.

17. Discussion of an early-stage proposal from the Mayor to work with the County concerning renovation of the historical County-owned jail building for public purposes: Mayor Probst explained that the County currently uses the old jail for storage but now that they have taken over 701 Main, maybe they could use that for storage and make the old jail a tourist attraction to generate revenue. Council Consensus is to move ahead with exploring the possibility.

18. Consideration to appoint a person to serve as the Alternate Member on the Monroe County Tax Collection Committee (C. Thomas is the appointed member), with the next meeting for the Alternate to attend on March 24th at 8:30 a.m. at the Monroe County Control Center: Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Abell, to appoint Mrs. Kochanski as the Alternate Member on the Monroe County Tax Collection Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

19. Discussion on honoring Stroudsburg High School's John Jakobsen as the first person from the school to become a State Wrestling Champion: Mayor Probst along with School Superintendent Dr. Curry requested the County Commissioners approve an event in Court House Square on March 31st from 6 to 8 p.m. so that the community can come together and celebrate John Jakonsen's achievement. Mrs. Kochanski suggested also contacting our state representatives. Motion by Mr. Lang, second by Mr. Smith, to support the Mayor's preliminary plan for a celebration of John Jakobsen as described in agenda item No. 19. Motion passed unanimously.

20. Solicitor's Report: None.

21. Mayor's Report: None.

22. Council Member Reports:

Mrs. Kochanski is concerned about wide loads coming off Route 80 onto Park Avenue and asked if they can be restricted from making a left turn there. It seems they are coming downtown for no other reason than their GPS directed them to. Solicitor Matergia commented that there is a way to communicate with the companies who set that up to redirect the route. Public Works Director Brian Bond stated the Borough cannot restrict a PennDOT road and that if we wanted to change the truck route, we would have to conduct the required study which cost approximately \$15,000 and present them a plan. Ms. Thomas stated there is a Street Committee meeting scheduled for March 29th where this will be discussed further.

Mrs. Kochanski asked for an update regarding the air conditioning units by Aaron's. Solicitor Matergia had a meeting with property owner Ray Price and his attorney, Brian Bond, Jeff Wilkins and Engineer Nate Oiler. Mr. Oiler is reviewing Mr. Bond's parking sketch plan and believes there is enough area to create parking without having to go all the way up to the building which encourages us to believe this can be resolved without a dispute with the owner.

Mrs. Kochanski would like to see a list generated of dark areas that need better lighting throughout town. Mr. Lang encouraged everyone to forward areas of concern to Mr. Bond.

Mr. Smith had a very productive meeting with SROSRC and Ceal Yost. Currently they are looking to seek grant money for handicap accessible equipment for our park.

Mr. Lang asked where the decision came from to brand Stroudsburg "The Heart of the Poconos" as advertised downtown and on our letterhead. He feels it is very "1980's" and reminds him of heart shaped tubs. Ms. Thomas stated it was her. Mr. Lang asked the Mayor if the Public Relations Committee can come up with something more relevant.

Mr. Lang asked if a deadline could be set for letters of interest in the vacant position on the Zoning Hearing Board. Ms. Thomas stated it has been advertised and so far only one letter of

interest has been received. Mr. Weiss directed Ms. Thomas to advertise one more time with setting a deadline.

Mr. Lang feels there is some language that needs to be cleaned up in our HARB ordinance and asked Council for approval for HARB to work on that and bring it back to Council. Mr. Connors feels that is the job of HARB. Mr. Lang welcomes Council's comments.

Mayor Probst received a complaint from Mr. Bob Widmer asking how the gas company can rip up Borough streets and not be responsible for fixing them. Mr. Bond stated they have 90 days from when the temporary restoration is in place to do a final restoration.

Mr. Weiss reported to Mr. Bond that the crosswalk on 6th Street by Dunkelbergers has sunk down 4-inches and needs immediate attention.

Mr. Connors stated the Personnel Committee met and has received a few letters of interest for the solicitor position but have not heard from everyone Mr. Matergia recommended. He will call them to see if they will be remitting anything in writing. Also at the next meeting they would like to discuss alternatives on how the Borough will meet the needs for replacing the duties of Mr. Wilkins and welcomes Council's input.

23. Manager's Report: There is a handicap space by 531 Queen Street which is no longer needed as the person it was placed there for is deceased. Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Abell, to advertise for public hearing on April 19th to remove the handicap parking space at 531 Queen Street. Motion passed unanimously.

24. Approval of Bills on Warrant 160315: Motion by Mr. Abell, second by Mr. Connors, to approve the bills on Warrant 160315. Motion passed unanimously.

25. Executive Session: None.

26. Adjournment: Motion by Mrs. Kochanski, second by Mr. Connors, to adjourn at 8:48 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Approved:

Boyd Weiss, President of Council

Attest:

Cathryn Thomas, Borough Manager/Secretary