

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES-FEBRUARY 15, 2022

A regular meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 in the Council Chambers of the Stroudsburg Borough Municipal Building with the following members present: Council President Matt Abell, Vice-President of Council Erica McCabe, Council member Tobias Sabatine, and Council member Joanne Kochanski. The meeting was also live-streamed on Zoom.us. Council President Pro-Tem Jim Evanisko and Council member Victoria DeVries advised of their absences prior to the meeting. Council member James Smith was absent.

Also present were: Mayor Tarah Probst, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Borough Solicitor Joseph McDonald Jr., Executive Assistant Mary Pat Quinn (via Zoom.us), Street Superintendent Brian Ace Jr., Zoning/Codes Officer and Land Development Administrator Jennifer Walker, and SARPD Police Chief Jennifer Lyon (via Zoom.us).

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Hearing and Consideration to Adopt An Ordinance of the Stroudsburg Borough Council to Revise Chapter 15 entitled, “Motor Vehicles and Traffic”, Part 4 “Metered Parking”, Section 1 “Parking Zones Established”.

There were no questions or comments from the public. A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to close the public hearing. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The aforementioned Ordinance was adopted on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Hearing and Consideration to Adopt An Ordinance of the Stroudsburg Borough Council to Chapter 15 entitled, “Motor Vehicles and Traffic” Part 3 “General Parking Regulations” Section 1 “Parking Time Limited in Certain Locations, Certain Days and Hours”.

There were no questions or comments from the public. A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to close the public hearing. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The aforementioned Ordinance was adopted on a motion made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the regular meeting on February 1, 2022

The minutes of the regular meeting on February 1, 2022 were approved as circulated on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Monthly Administrative Reports

A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the monthly reports for Permits Issued, Parking, Fire Department, Right-to-Know and SARPD. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Accept the Unaudited January 2022 Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to accept the bank account balances report as of January 31, 2022 and the budget to actual report as of January 31, 2022. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

OLD BUSINESS

Jason Fitzgerald, Penn Strategies, will be present to discuss a grant strategy for CY 2022

Mr. Fitzgerald reviewed his January 26, 2022 memorandum which outlined the following projects in order of importance: Sewer Distribution Lines, McMichaels Creek Flood Control, Stroudsburg Creek Walk Phase #1, Fire Department Generator, Stroudsburg Streetscaping Phase #1, and Parking Garage.

The McMichaels Creek Flood Control application must be filed with the PA DCED-Flood Mitigation Program by May 31, 2022. A resolution of support from the Borough Council will be required with the submission. His office will supply the resolution for Council's consideration.

The Creek Walk project will be submitted to the PA DCED-Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program and the DCNR-Community Conservation Partnerships Program. The deadlines are April 5, 2022 for the DCNR application and May 31, 2022 for the DCED application. A discussion ensued about the possibility of a local share. More information will follow.

Also discussed was the \$500,000.00 grant obtained by the Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation which has been earmarked for the Borough for a parking garage.

There is a statewide LSA Grant program which will be considered for other projects.

Mrs. Kochanski mentioned that she received notice that AARP may have a grant program that could possibly be a source for the Fire Department generator.

Proposal for a Parking Study for Stroudsburg Borough to be presented by William Kavanagh, The Harman Group

William Kavanagh, AIA, Director of Parking Design, The Harman Group (present on Zoom.us) reviewed a proposal for a parking supply/demand study for the Main Street commercial district. The purpose of the study is to gauge the anticipated demand and existing supply to assist the Borough in its planning efforts to satisfy parking needs in the downtown area. The Borough Council took the proposal under advisement.

Proposal for a Stroudsburg Borough “Complete Streets and Placemaking Project” to be discussed by Jennifer Baldwin, Alta Planning and Design

Jennifer Baldwin of Alta Planning and Design (present on Zoom.us) discussed the services that her company provides. They are a multimodal transportation firm that specializes in the planning, design and implementation of bicycle, pedestrian, park and trail corridors and systems. Her company was involved in the downtown complete street project in Jim Thorpe. The Borough Council asked that she prepare a scope of work for their consideration.

Consideration to schedule a Public Hearing for An Ordinance of the Stroudsburg Borough Council to revise Chapter 15 entitled, “Motor Vehicles and Traffic”, Part 3 “General Parking Regulations”, Section §15-309 1.A. “Special Purpose Parking Zones Established; Parking Otherwise Prohibited”.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to schedule a public hearing for consideration of the aforementioned ordinance on March 1, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to schedule a Public Hearing for An Ordinance of the Stroudsburg Borough Council to Amend Chapter 18 “Sewers and Sewage Disposal”, Part 3 “Connections”, Sections §18-306 “Connection Fees” and §18-307 “Tapping Fees”.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to schedule a public hearing for consideration of the aforementioned ordinance on March 1, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to accept the retirement of Kenneth Reese effective February 22, 2022.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to accept the retirement of Kenneth Reese effective February 22, 2022. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to promote Nicholas Halker and John Iadisernia to a Municipal Worker A at the hourly rate of \$24.70 pursuant to the 2021-2023 Agreement between Stroudsburg Borough and Teamster Local #773 and a recommendation by Street Superintendent Brian Ace, Jr.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the promotions of Nicholas Halker and John Iadisernia to Municipal Worker A at the hourly rate of \$24.70. Mr. Halker was present at the meeting. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Acknowledge and discuss a letter dated February 7, 2022 from Geoffrey Worthington, Esq. requesting that the Borough Council establish a policy requiring any event-related closure of North 7th Street be limited so that the road is open from Main Street to the Hotel driveway.

A discussion ensued about how to accommodate the guests of the Penn Stroud Hotel and the events that occur from time to time in the area of Courthouse Square. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to direct the Street Superintendent to make a sign that will be placed at the North 7th Street/Main Street intersection that will prohibit thru traffic but

allow and direct hotel guests to the entrance of the hotel parking lot. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to approve an Event Application from the Monroe County Bar Association to conduct the Annual Law Day 5K and 5-Mile Races on Sunday, May 1, 2022.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the event application of the Monroe County Bar Association to conduct the Annual Law Day 5K and 5-Mile Races on Sunday, May 1, 2022. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to approve an Event Application from Eric Scelza to conduct the Southside Springfest by Happy Hour on Saturday, April 23, 2022 and to close a portion of Clermont Avenue.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to approve the event application of Eric Scelza to conduct the Southside Springfest by Happy Hour on Saturday, April 23, 2022 and to close a portion of Clermont Avenue with two conditions. 1) Filing a Certificate of Liability Insurance naming the Borough of Stroudsburg as additional insured. 2) Providing a sketch of the event area. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Point of information – the Stroudsburg Council of Churches will hold a walk on the sidewalks in the Borough on Friday, April 15, 2022 at 11:00 A.M. No street closures or Borough services are needed; SARPD and the Stroudsburg Borough Fire Department have been notified.

There were no questions or comments about this event.

Consideration to approve an extension in connection with the Shanti House, LLC. Land Development Application.

A formal extension beyond February 28, 2022 was not received from the developer. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to table this matter. Solicitor McDonald advised the Council that tabling the application and no definitive action on the application would be considered an approval pursuant to the PA Municipal Planning Code. The motion and second were withdrawn.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to deny the Land Development Plan of Shanti House unless a formal written request for an extension is received by February 28, 2022. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Special Note: A Subdivision and Land Development Waiver of Borough Decision Deadline was received by Avi Rachmani for Shanti House, LLC. on February 21, 2022. The extension will expire May 31, 2022.

Consideration to establish a COVID-19 Policy for Stroudsburg Borough employees and officials.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the COVID-19 Policy for employees and officials. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to establish a temporary policy whereby any employee who contracts Covid-19 on or between February 8th and February 18th shall have sick days covered by the Borough without decreasing any sick days the employee has accrued to date.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the stated temporary policy. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell reported that the Committee will be working on a sidewalk/café ordinance, a noise ordinance and will discuss an event permit and fees for outdoor music in the downtown area.

Budget Committee – There was nothing to report.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe advised that the Parking Committee will meet next week.

Recycling Committee – Mr. Kopp advised that the Twin Boroughs Recycling Committee will meet in Council Chambers on Tuesday, February 22 at 5:15 P.M.

Sewer Committee – Mr. Kopp reported that the Borough received the two iPads and the GIS system, and the Street Department will start the EDU field work when the program is set up.

Street Committee – Mayor Probst advised that the Street Committee will meet on March 2 at 3:30 P.M. They will be discussing the 5 points intersection, lights at the falls on Ann Street, and getting security cameras at the parking garage. Chief Lyon will ask SARP's IT person to reach out the Mr. Ace.

Personnel Committee – Mr. Abell had something to discuss in executive session.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Mayor Probst advised that the Committee is working on the banner design and should have it to Council for consideration in the next month. Mr. Sabatine is working on getting a “hot spot” for Wi-Fi at the falls on Ann Street. Ms. McCabe and Adam Courtney are working on Concerts in the Square. The Committee is suggesting that solo artists be permitted during First Saturday Art Walks.

I-80 Expansion Task Force – There is nothing new to report.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell advised that the Committee will meet tomorrow and will begin to discuss a Main Street Streetscape plan.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Probst has received letters in support of the County turning over the ownership of the old jail to Stroudsburg Borough.

Council Member Reports

Mr. Abell asked the Council members to consider the vacancies on some of the Boards and Commissions, i.e., HARB, alternates on the Zoning Hearing Board, Human Relations Committee.

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor McDonald advised that the Federal Court Judge remanded the VFG LaBar matter back to the Monroe County Court of Common Pleas for the enforcement action.

There have been a number of citations issued by the Code Enforcement Officer to VFG LaBar for its failure to reregister the vacant and abandoned buildings in the development. As a result of their non-compliance, summonses/ arrest warrants have been issued by the Magisterial District Judge.

A meeting was held yesterday with Nate Oiler, P.E., Mr. Kopp and Ms. Walker to discuss the status of the Alpha Recycling Land Development Plan. The Borough Council conditionally approved the plan on March 24, 2021 providing that the developer satisfies the conditions within 90 days of that approval. The developer submitted two requests last Fall for extensions to Mr. Oiler's office; however, those requests were never sent to the Borough Council for consideration. The developer also contacted Mr. Oiler's office late last year about getting a building permit for a new accessory structure that they are not eligible to receive because it is not on the original application.

There are a number of conditions that have not been met: the plan has not been signed; security has not been posted; the design to extend the sewer line to Katz Road has not been submitted; and they have not met many of the conditions that they agreed to take care of. A letter will be sent to the developer to advise them that they should have a representative present at the March 1 meeting to explain why the Council should not file a rule to show cause for the application's deficiencies. The developer is risking Council's revocation of the conditional approval that was granted on March 24, 2021.

Solicitor McDonald advised that a letter should be sent to the developer requiring that they have a representative attend the next Council meeting on March 1, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. to discuss the matter. A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to direct Solicitor McDonald and Mr. Kopp to prepare a letter to be sent to the applicant requesting their attendance at the March 1, 2022 meeting so that they can explain why the Borough Council should not revoke the conditional approval of their land development plan. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Manager's Report

Mr. Kopp reported that he is working on the MyGov permit program.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. Walker received complaints about the condition of 864 Thomas Street. She and the Assistant Codes Officer, John Stevens, have been working with the landlord/property owner on the abatement of the violations that exist.

The use of the trailer that is parked on a private lane behind the Red Cross office building is still being researched.

Street Superintendent's Report

Mr. Ace did not have anything new to report other than what was previously discussed that evening.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 220215

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the payment of bills on Warrants 220215. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Executive Session – re: Personnel

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine at 9:00 P.M. to adjourn to an executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).