

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES, MARCH 15, 2022

A **special meeting** of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 6:30 P.M. on March 15, 2022 with the following members present: Council President Matt Abell, Vice-President of Council Erica McCabe, Council President Pro-Tem Jim Evanisko, Council member Victoria DeVries, Council member Tobias Sabatine, and Council member Joanne Kochanski. Council member James Smith was absent.

Also present were: Mayor Tarah Probst and Borough Manager Larry Kopp.

An executive session was held to interview two candidates for the position of Co-Borough Solicitor. No action was taken.

The **special meeting** concluded at 7:00 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 7:00 P.M. on March 15, 2022 with the following members present: Council President Matt Abell, Vice-President of Council Erica McCabe, Council President Pro-Tem Jim Evanisko, Council member Victoria DeVries, Council member Tobias Sabatine, and Council member Joanne Kochanski. Council member James Smith was absent.

Also present were: Mayor Tarah Probst, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Borough Solicitor Joseph McDonald, Jr. Esq., Executive Assistant Mary Pat Quinn, Street Superintendent Brian Ace Jr., Zoning/Codes Officer and Land Use Administrator Jennifer Walker, and Fire Chief Charles Frantz.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Consideration to schedule a Public Hearing for Ordinances to refinance the GOB Series 2013, GON Series 2013A and GON Series 2015 AA.

Christopher Gibbons of Concord Public Financial Advisors was present. He advised the Borough Council that his firm solicited thirty-nine (39) banks for financing proposals. Nineteen (19) proposals were received from seven banks. The best proposal to renegotiate or refinance the GOB, Series of 2013 and the GON, Series A of 2013 was from Wayne Bank, and the best proposal to refinance the GON, Series 15AA was from ESSA Bank and Trust.

There are two options. Option #1 – renegotiate the 13 and 13A with Wayne Bank; refinance 15 AA with ESSA Bank and Trust; the Borough contributes \$26,500.00 up front. Those funds would be recouped in three years. The overall savings would be \$220,304.00 or 3.35%. Option #2 – refinance the 13 and 13A with Wayne Bank; refinance 15AA with ESSA Bank and Trust; the Borough contributes zero cash up front. The savings are \$217,894.00 or 3.32%. A short discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to choose Option #2 and to schedule a special meeting on Monday, March 21, 2022 at 4:00 P.M. for consideration of the enabling resolution and ordinance. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mr. Gibbons left the meeting at this time.

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

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2022 meeting as circulated. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 1-abstain, Ms. DeVries)

#### Monthly Administrative Reports

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the following monthly reports: Permits Issued Report, Parking Report, Fire Department Report, Right-to-Know Report, and Police Department Report (provided via email). The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

#### Accept Unaudited February, 2022 Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by Ms. DeVries, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the Bank Account Balances Report and the Budget to Actual Report for February, 2022. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

#### OLD BUSINESS

Consideration to approve a new date for the Southside Springfest by Happy Hour on Saturday, May 28, 2022 from 12:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. (music will start at 1:00 P.M.) with a rain date on Sunday, May 29, 2022. The applicant requested the closure of Clermont Street between Broad Street and Park Avenue between 8:00 A.M. and 11:00 P.M. to allow for set up and clean up.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the new date, the rain date, time, and street closure information for the Southside Springfest by Happy Hour as stated. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

#### NEW BUSINESS

Consideration to appoint Charles Frantz as Fire Chief, Mehmet Barzev as Assistant Fire Chief, and Michael Mignosi, as Assistant Fire Chief of the Stroudsburg Borough Fire Department as recommended by the appointed delegates to the Convention for the Election of Department Officers.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to appoint Charles Frantz as the Fire Chief, Mehmet Barzev as an Assistant Fire Chief, and Michael Mignosi as an Assistant Fire Chief for three-year terms. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to adopt a Budget Transfer Resolution for CY 2021.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to adopt the Budget Transfer Resolution for calendar year 2021. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to adopt a Resolution of the Stroudsburg Borough Council to Authorize the Sale of Obsolete Public Works Equipment pursuant to §1201.2(a) of the Pennsylvania Borough Code entitled, "Personal Property".

A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe to adopt the aforementioned Resolution. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to appoint Nicholas Halker as the Assistant Director of Public Works at an annual salary of \$60,000.00.

Mr. Ace advised that Mr. Halker has decided not to take the position. The matter was tabled on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to appoint Judith Cherepko as a Municipal Worker C at an hourly rate of \$19.51.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to appoint Judith Cherepko as a full-time Municipal Worker C at an hourly rate of \$19.51. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to appoint Michelle Prevoznik as a member of the Zoning Hearing Board as Alternate #1 for a three-year term.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to appoint Michelle Prevoznik as Alternate #1 on the Zoning Hearing Board for a three-year term. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to approve a "Welcome to Stroudsburg" Banner for downtown Stroudsburg

Mayor Probst advised that the Public Relations/Media Committee obtained quotes for the two Welcome to Stroudsburg banners. Pocono Print and Design was the lowest quote at \$380.00 each. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to authorize the purchase of two banners from Pocono Print and Design. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Consideration to approve a new Solicitor for the Borough of Stroudsburg

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to go in to an Executive Session at 7:42 P.M. to discuss a personnel matter. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The executive session was concluded at 7:50 P.M. on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

Council President Matt Abell, Vice-President of Council Erica McCabe, Council President Pro-Tem Jim Evanisko, Council member Victoria DeVries, Council member Tobias Sabatine, Council member Joanne Kochanski, Mayor Probst, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, and Borough Solicitor Joseph McDonald Jr., Esq. were present during the Executive Session.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Evanisko to appoint Christopher Brown, Esq., as Co-Borough Solicitor. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

Mr. Abell stated that Mr. Kopp will coordinate the work to be done by Solicitor McDonald and Solicitor Brown. Solicitor McDonald welcomed the addition of Solicitor Brown.

Consideration to approve an updated Scope of Work and Fee from Alta Planning and Design for a Complete Streets/Placemaking/Parking Study of Stroudsburg for \$74,996.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the aforementioned terms and agreement from Alta Planning and Design. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain). Mr. Kopp advised that Alta will be coordinating with PennDOT and the Redevelopment Committee.

Consideration to approve a request from the Pocono Chamber of Commerce to conduct the 2022 Pocono Pride Festival on Sunday, June 5, 2022 from 12:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M., meter bags, and placing the Progressive Pride Flags on Main Street, Lower Main Street and Courthouse Square.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the aforementioned request. The requestor will be reminded that the guests of The Penn Stroud Hotel must have access to the parking lot behind the hotel (off of North 7<sup>th</sup> Street). The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

Consideration to approve a request from Cleo MeriAbut Jarvis, JuneTeenth Freedom Festival Chair, to place the National JuneTeenth Flags on Main Street, Lower Main Street and Courthouse Square and to share those spaces with the Progressive Pride Flags during June, 2022. (The Annual Juneteenth Freedom Festival is Saturday, June 18, 2022)

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the aforementioned request. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

Consideration to approve a request from the Sherman Theatre and the Pocono Chamber of Commerce to conduct a Multicultural Festival on Saturday, July 9, 2022 from 11:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

Rich Berkowitz and Sarah Collier were present to provide details for the proposed festival. Mr. Berkowitz explained that there will be food vendors, crafts, sidewalk sales and music. He was reminded that the guests of The Penn Stroud Hotel must have access to the parking lot behind the hotel (off of North 7<sup>th</sup> Street). Mr. Berkowitz will have security present to allow vehicular access to the hotel parking lot as well as the businesses that have driveways. The main stage will be at Courthouse Square. Businesses may apply to the Borough for a Special Event Permit if they wish to have acoustic music in front of their establishments.

A motion to approve the request was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

### Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Gay Schroeder of 846 Thomas Street asked for clarification about the smoke testing. Mr. Abell explained the Borough is trying to find the sources of the overabundance of rainwater that is going in to the sewer collection system.

### Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell advised that the Committee will meet on March 23 and will discuss the Noise Ordinance and problem properties.

Budget Committee – Nothing to report.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe advised that the Parking Committee will meet on March 22.

Recycling Committee – Mr. Kopp will be scheduling the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2022 Twin Boroughs Recycling meeting. More recycling buckets are being purchased. The GMC truck is posted on Municibid.

Sewer Committee – Mr. Kopp is waiting for BCRA to schedule a meeting to discuss the updated I&I plan. He met with the Monroe County GIS Office to download the maps so that the Borough can begin to map the cleanouts and manholes. The County does have the past mapping work that was done. Smoke testing continues to be done weekly. Camera work on the potential lines with I&I is ongoing weather permitting. Preparation for the EDU Assessment is continuing.

Street Committee – Mayor Probst reported that the Committee is working on a paving plan, the lighting of the Ann Street Park, and business directory signs. They are also exploring the historical data about the underground railroad and tunnels in the Borough out of curiosity. The Street Committee meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month.

Personnel Committee – Nothing to report.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Mayor Probst reported that the Committee met at 5:30 P.M. just before the Council meeting. They discussed Concerts in the Square, which will be held for 12 weeks this year. Ms. McCabe and Adam Courtney are working on a list of musicians. More information will follow.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell reported that the Committee will be working Alta Planning and Design. He would like to revisit LERTA.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – Mayor Probst was told that PennDOT is approaching the final design of the expansion project. She has reached out to Governor Tom Wolf's office

and Senator Bob Casey's office. Mr. Kopp mentioned that he was contacted by Tom Cushner who is the engineer in charge of the design, and the final design will be finalized next month. He told Mr. Kopp that PennDOT will be working with the Borough to coordinate aspects of its multimodal goals, such as sidewalks on Dreher Avenue and West Main Street, and also contributions toward the Greenway Trail system.

Mrs. Kochanski mentioned that the Exit 308 (East Stroudsburg) construction will start sometime next week. It is a four-and-a-half-year project.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission – Ms. McCabe advised that the Commission meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month.

### Mayor's Report

The organizers of the Monroe Farmers' Market will be conducting six special events and would like to stay open until 1:00 P.M. on those days. Mr. Abell suggested that they contact the Borough ahead of time for approval.

### Council Member Reports

Mr. Abell noted that a couple of Council Members would like their seats changed. Those that do, are to get in contact with him. The Council President, Borough Manager, Mayor and Borough Solicitor seats will not change.

Ms. McCabe asked for the Borough to look in to signage for a pedestrian crosswalk at Sarah Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. PennDOT approval will likely be needed.

### Solicitor's Report

Solicitor McDonald was contacted by Solicitor Gerald Geiger, who has been representing the Borough in the VFG LaBar matter (sales office building) in Federal Court. VFG LaBar did not file an appeal of the Federal Judge's order to return the litigation to the Monroe County Court of Common Pleas. The deadline was March 14, 2022. They are to provide a "responsive pleading" (answer) to the Borough's complaint. Simpson Glen, a silent partner, will also be added to the litigation.

A discussion ensued about the Borough of Stroudsburg Agent for LaBar Village Escrow Account. Research has been done by Ms. Quinn, and a former Borough Manager and a former Borough Solicitor were also contacted to ascertain the reason why the account exists. The account was opened on March 4, 2003. The account balance as of February 28, 2022 is \$22,236.08.

## Manager's Report

### Meetings

Peters Engineers/Parking Garage Assessment	March 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Larry/P3 Towers	March 7 <sup>th</sup>
Steve Rinker/County GIS	March 8 <sup>th</sup>
Wayne/Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm	March 8 <sup>th</sup>
PennDOT Active Transportation	March 10 <sup>th</sup>
Al DeGennaro/Mascaro & Sons	March 17 <sup>th</sup>
St. Patrick's Parade Coordination Mtg	March 18 <sup>th</sup>
Council Visit/Twin Boroughs Recycling	March 25 <sup>th</sup>
Monroe County Tax Meeting	March 28 <sup>th</sup>
Vietnam Veteran's Day Ceremony	March 29 <sup>th</sup>

### Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

*Sidewalk Replacement Project/Multimodal Grant.* Extension approved from DCED/CFA. Finalizing to go out to bid; waiting to hear from RKR Hess. Project completion in summer 2022. Will add ramp(s) at corner at 6<sup>th</sup> and Monroe (SW Corner) as part of the project.

*Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving.* Sewer Facilities Planning Module sent 3/9/22. Still hope to go to bid this spring.

*Thomas Street Paving Project.* Out for bids.

### Grants Strategy 2022

*Parking Garage.* Received estimate from Peters Engineers (Attached to Report). LSA Grant submitted on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

*Flood Mitigation.* Met with Maryellen Keegan from Monroe County EMA. Contacted Conservation District for guidance in steps required for waterways and obtain hydrological data (we can't just go in and remove downed trees if grant funding is involved).

*Trails.* Met with DCNR on February 28<sup>th</sup> to determine next steps. Looking at submitting a Park Rehabilitation and Development Grant to put together an in-depth plan by engineers. Grant is due April 6<sup>th</sup>.

*PMVB Community Impact Grant Application.* Due by April 30<sup>th</sup>. Quality of Life/Recreation Projects. 50% Match.

## Emergency Operations Plan

I'm working with Mehmet to update our contacts and to look specifically at EMP and Cyber Attacks. Current world situation has me concerned and I want us to be ready. Plan was due to be updated in 2021.

## MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning and Parking

Priority for the next month. We've made real progress in gathering and organizing data and putting together processes for systems. Shooting for going live end of April.

## Recycling Center

Work Session on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Working on scheduling 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2022 Committee Meeting. Purchasing more recycling buckets; we gone through just about all we have. GMC Dump Truck is posted on MunicBid, waiting to see how it goes. Working on an update of the Twin Boroughs Recycling Agreement. Finally, considering adding Saturday afternoon hours once monthly at the Recycling Center; union wants to increase Saturday hours, not just move them.

## Sewer Collection System/I&I Initiative

Waiting for a date for a meeting with BCRA on updated I&I Plan. Acquired GIS capabilities to accurately, and quickly, map sewer collection system. Met with Monroe County GIS Office to download Maps so we can start mapping cleanouts and manholes. County did save past work done on Stormwater and Manhole mapping. We are conducting smoke testing weekly; 500-700 Blocks of Main Street the week of March 7<sup>th</sup>. Camera work on potential lines with I&I ongoing when conditions are favorable.

## Request for Proposal (RFP), Solid Waste Service

Working on the RFP for Trash Haulers to provide service to the Borough starting in 2023. Meeting with Mascaro & Sons on March 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss.

## Sewer Rates/EDU Assessment/Billing

Priority for the next month. Completed scrub of rental unit data from the Borough against billed EDUs from BCRA. Of the 451 rental properties, there were differences in 146, or 32%. Next step is to look at BCRA's list of property Water EDUs and then, again, see where there are differences. According to our Code, every separate living unit/apartment is supposed to be charged one EDU.



Beginning issuing separate bills for sewer customers in 2022 and will change the information that is included on bills later in the FY. BCRA is having issues with their billing system and may be changing vendors.

#### Five Points Intersection North 5<sup>th</sup> Street

Survey work complete! Ben is working on design.

#### Garbage Concerns on Main Street

Second letter sent to all property owners on the North side of the 500 & 600 Blocks of Main Street requiring them to provide the Borough evidence of a trash hauler for their property. As of 3/10 I have proof of 18 of the 29 properties having garbage service. They had until March 4<sup>th</sup> to respond, then I will be pursuing legal action.

#### Capital Improvements Plan

Working during winter/spring 2022 to put together a 10-year Capital Improvements Plan for the Borough listing all major capital projects and purchases through 2031. Looking to finish priority projects before beginning later in March or April 2022.

#### Code Enforcement

I have taken over supervision of the Zoning/Code Enforcement Office and am working on several large-scale projects necessitated by Ordinances that have been passed by Council. *Dumpster*: Identifying dumpsters and owners for notification and implementation of Ordinance requiring dumpsters to be screened from the right-of-way. Codes Committee granted additional time for compliance. *Rental Properties*: Looking at ways to make sure all rental properties are registered with the Borough. Need to identify properties that are rental properties to update EDU/EBUs and to ensure compliance with the IPMC. *Short-Term Rentals*: Compiling list of properties for notification.

#### McMichael Creek Flood Protection Project/Levee Repair/DEP Grant

Project is being managed by the Army Corps of Engineers. Award date for the contract is now tentatively March 31<sup>st</sup>; Notice to Proceed April 14<sup>th</sup>, with construction starting June 1<sup>st</sup> and be completed NLT August 30<sup>th</sup>. Will keep Council updated. Grant Agreement is complete for DEP to provide 100% of the share of the Borough's cost of the project. We will be responsible for the upfront match costs and then will be reimbursed, up to \$80,000, by DEP, and is included in the 2022 Budget.

#### Sewer Fund Delinquent Accounts/Liens

BCRA wants to meet in regard to delinquent accounts; this has been put onto the back burner until plans to address I&I are underway. I have talked to three different collection agencies and given the experiences so far with the shutoff notices, there may be a place for collection agencies when a rental property has water due to be shut off because of nonpayment by the property owner/landlord. BCRA found a 20-year-old agreement on how billing was to be done for sewer accounts.

#### Levee Conduit Inspection

In 2021, all conduits on our Levees must be inspected by camera. Since we have our own camera truck, we are able to do this work “in house” and save costs. Working on getting more guidance from the Corps of Engineers/DEP.

#### Borough Pool

Water level settled at normal level from in past years. Looking to hire vendor to see if they can determine location of leak prior to pool opening for 2022 season.

#### 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 2022.

#### Safety Committee

Last time the Safety Committee met was in August 2019. We will set-up a meeting soon. It is important for insurance purposes to have an active Safety Committee.

#### Upcoming Focus

MyGov Implementation  
Grants

Sewer EDU Assessment  
Smoke Testing/I&I Mitigation

Solid Waste Request for Proposals  
Code Enforcement (Dumpster/Recycling/Rental Prop)

Capital Improvement Plan  
Day to Day Activities

#### Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. Walker did not have anything new to report.

#### Street Superintendent's Report

Mr. Ace's department will resume smoke testing a day or two after the rain stops.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 220315

A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the payment of bills on Warrants 220315. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

There were no additional questions or comments from the public.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 P.M. on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain).