

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES, MAY 3, 2022

A meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 3, 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 President Pro-Tem Jim Evanisko, Council member Victoria DeVries, Council member Tobias Sabatine, and Council member Joanne Kochanski. Council member James Smith was not present.

Also present were: Mayor Tarah Probst, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Solicitor Joseph P. McDonald, Jr. Esq., Solicitor Christopher Brown, Executive Assistant Mary Pat Quinn, Street Superintendent Brian Ace, and Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer/Land Development Administrator Jennifer Walker.

Public Hearing and Consideration to Adopt An Ordinance of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Amend Chapter 15 “Motor Vehicles and Traffic” Sections §15-316 1.A. “Handicapped Parking Zones Established”, §15-401 1.A and 2.G. “Parking Meter Zones Established”, of the Stroudsburg Borough Code.

The public hearing for the aforementioned Ordinance was opened to the public; there were no questions or comments. The public hearing was closed on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

The aforementioned Ordinance was adopted on a motion made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the Regular Meeting, April 19, 2023

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting on April 19, 2022 with the following correction in the Solicitor’s report (noted by Solicitor McDonald): “Adams Outdoor Advertising was issued a permit by Ron Kimes last fall for a sign in accordance with Ordinance #1048, which permits up to a ~~350~~ **300** square foot sign per face.” The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; abstain-no)

OLD BUSINESS

Status of Subdivision/Land Development Waivers of Borough Decision Deadlines/Extensions:

- Extension for Alpha Recycling Hwy 80, LLC. will expire May 29, 2022.
- Extension for Shanti House will expire May 31, 2022.
- Extension for 1009 Realty, LLC. (Dunkin Donuts) will expire June 30, 2022.
- Extension for Monroe County Historical Society (Jacob Stroud Museum Expansion) will expire September 30, 2022.

Alpha Recycling will be present at the May 18 meeting to discuss their progress in addressing the remaining conditions of their Land Development Plan.

Ms. Walker will reach out to Shanti House to remind them that their extension will expire on May 31, 2022.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration to approve a request from the American Cancer Society Relay for Life of the Greater Pocono Area to hang purple flags along Main Street from June 6 to June 19, 2022.

Joanne Lambert, the Event Chairperson for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life of the Greater Pocono Area, was present to request permission to hang purple flags along Main Street from June 6 to June 19, 2022. A discussion ensued about the flag requests for June, which are for the Pride Festival and the Juneteenth Festival. The Street Department will hang the flags in a manner which all three organizations and the American Flag will be displayed during June.

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

Consideration to Adopt a Resolution of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Authorizing the Submission of a Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP) Grant Application to the Commonwealth Financial Authority.

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

Consideration to appoint Judy Cherepko as an Assistant Code Enforcement Officer for 16 hours per week, no new compensation.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to appoint Judy Cherepko as an Assistant Code Enforcement Officer for 16 hours per week. Ms. Cherepko is also an employee of the Street Department. There will be no additional compensation. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; abstain-no)

Consideration to authorize the return of the 1996 GMC 3500 4X4 Dump Truck with Snowplow, VIN 1GDJK34F8VF046254, from Stephen Griffith to Twin Boroughs Recycling and to refund \$4,500.00 to Mr. Griffith from the Twin Boroughs Recycling Fund.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to authorize a refund as noted above. Mr. Kopp advised that Mr. Griffith put a stop payment on his check and decided that he does not want the truck. The Street Department already picked up the truck earlier in the day.

The motion was withdrawn by Mrs. Kochanski, and no action was taken. Mr. Kopp thought that the vehicle will likely be scrapped.

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell reported that the Committee is working on the Noise/Disorderly Conduct Ordinance so that it will comply with the guidelines of the PA Liquor Control Board.

The Monroe County Land Bank has decided to withdraw its offer to purchase 712-714 Scott Street. The cost to rehabilitate the house exceeds a reasonable asking price when it is offered for sale after the work is completed. Mr. Abell and Ms. Walker received a copy of the inspection documents, which will be shared with Council. There are an abundance of interior and exterior health and safety issues, such as lead paint, asbestos, non-working sinks, trees growing through the siding in to the house to name a few. He noted that the Land Bank paid for the inspections and the appraisal that were done. Solicitor McDonald suggested that access be provided to the Borough Engineer or a structural engineer to determine the structural load. The matter is under advisement.

Budget Committee – There is nothing to report.

Parking Committee – There is nothing to report.

Recycling Committee – There is nothing to report.

Sewer Committee – Mr. Kopp reported that he spoke with Russ Scott, P.E. about the status of the DEP review of the Borough's permit application for the Ann Street Sewer Replacement Project. Mr. Kopp and Mr. Scott will have a conference call with a DEP next week to discuss the Borough's request for an exemption regarding the size of the pipe that is proposed. Mr. Ace advised that his department did smoke testing on Oak Street last week. A few violations were found; he and Ms. Walker will be working with the homeowners to resolve the issues. Smoke testing will be done on Wallace Street next week.

Mr. Kopp advised that Steve Rinker, the Monroe County GIS Manager, assisted the Borough with installing the GIS on the tablets which will be used for the EDU assessment field work. Ms. Cherepko will be working on that as her first assignment.

Street Committee – Mayor Probst advised that the Committee will meet on May 4 at 3:30 P.M. via Zoom.

Personnel Committee – There was nothing to report.

Public Relations/ Media Committee – Mayor Probst noted that the meeting will be moved from May 17, 2022 to May 18, 2022 at 5:30 P.M.

Redevelopment Committee – Mr. Abell gave a report about the kick-off meeting with Alta Design. It was a good first meeting with a number of participants: Eric Diemer, Chuck Leonard, the YMCA, the Monroe County Transit Authority, PennDOT. The purpose of the meeting was to get input from the stakeholders to see what the expectations are. The group discussed parking needs, the condition of sidewalks, the need for additional sidewalks on West Main Street, the feasibility of bike lanes and where they would be safe. Mr. Kopp is working on a survey that will be sent out to residents for their input.

I-80 Expansion Task Force – Kris Battle was present on Zoom. There was a meeting with PennDOT, and there have been a number of changes to the expansion plan. 200 properties will be affected in the Borough; 100 properties will be affected in Stroud Township. 900 linear feet of stream will be affected, and PennDOT proposes to address that with credit banking. The public is urged to contact the Governor’s office, the PA Secretary of Transportation, and the US Secretary of Transportation. Mrs. Battle will provide talking points and the contact information on the website www.i80projectimpactaaa.com to assist the public. Mr. Kopp added that there is no Stormwater Management Plan. He will ask PennDOT for that.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission – Ms. McCabe stated that there are a number of seasonal jobs available. Registrations are full. Summer pool passes are available on line. The bridge that was done by the Knights of Columbus behind the High School has been washed away. Information about other events can be found on the Commission’s website www.srosrc.org . The State of the Commission meeting will be held on May 24, 2022.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to give free pool passes to the Board and Commission members, the Stroudsburg Borough Fire Department and their families.

Mayor’s Report

The PR/ Media Committee will be working on a Welcome to Stroudsburg Borough packet for new property owners. Ms. McCabe suggested that it be provided digitally. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; abstain-no)

Council Member Reports

Mrs. Kochanski reported that she met with Senator Mario Scavello about the outside organization that is pushing to raise the Federal limit of 80,000 pounds to 90,000 pounds for large trucks. Indiana has already approved the change. Senator Scavello is opposed to the increase. The use of electric trucks is coming; the batteries weigh 10,000 pounds.

PennDOT’s refusal to remove the large tree from McMichael’s Creek at the waterfall was also discussed. Senator Scavello suggested that the Borough do nothing as he is trying to find funding. Mr. Ace stated that he has arranged for a crew and a crane tomorrow to remove the tree from the creek. A Japanese Maple tree will be removed so that the crane can be positioned where it needs to be. The root ball will be wrapped and replanted in the same spot after the work.

LaBar Village received a grant in the amount of \$500,000.00 for the emergency repair/replacement of a bank and drip rap that was washed out due to flooding. “IBA” is doing the work.

Mr. Abell asked about the status of illegal dumping of trash on Main Street. Mr. Kopp knows who is doing the dumping, so the Borough will be taking the appropriate action to abate the problem.

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Brown reported that he has a list of the property owners that would be asked for an easement for the levee loop trail. He is obtaining their contact information.

Solicitor McDonald had two litigation items for discussion in executive session. He asked that Ms. Walker and Mr. Ace attend the session.

Manager's Report

Meetings

Pat/Brown & Brown Insurance	April 20 th
MyGov Implementation Training	April 26 th - 27 th
Pension Board Meeting	April 26 th
Pre-Construction Committee	April 28 th
Ann Street Park Improvements	April 28 th
Steve Rinker/ArcGIS	April 29 th
Alpha Recycling	April 29 th
PennDOT Connects	May 2 nd
Mobility Study Kick-Off	May 3 rd
MyGov Implementation Training	May 4 th to 6 th
COG Meeting	May 9 th
My Gov Go Live	May 10 th - 12 th

Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

Sidewalk Replacement Project/Multimodal Grant. Out to bid; bid opening May 18th. Extension approved from DCED/CFA. Project completion in summer 2022.

Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving. Sewer Facilities Planning Module sent 3/9/22. Water Quality Management Plan sent to DEP on 3/18/22. Still hope to go to bid this spring.

Thomas Street Paving Project. Pre-Construction Meeting on 4/28/22.

Grants Strategy 2022

Parking Garage. LSA Grant submitted on March 15th. Discussed with Chuck Leonard, Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation. They will be able to fund with grant funds on hand if DCED doesn't fund.

Trails. Submitted a DCNR Grant April 6th for the Creek Walk Trail. DCNR changed grant from a planning grant to an actual construction grant.

DCED Greenway, Trails and Recreation Program Grant. Matching Funds for the DCNR Grant for the Creek Walk Trail. Due on May 31st, beginning on the grant with Penn Strategies.

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

Mobility Study/Alta Planning

Contacted all stakeholders. Kickoff meeting set for May 3rd. Submitted information for mapping to Alta; working on additional information.

MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning

First week of training complete for site administrators. Verifying site set-up. Second week of training this week for site users. Plan is to go live the week of May 9th.

Request for Proposal (RFP), Solid Waste Service

Working on the RFP for Trash Haulers to provide service to the Borough starting in 2023. Met with Mascaro & Sons on March 17th to discuss; they provided some excellent examples of RFP from other PA municipalities.

Five Points Intersection North 5th Street

Cost estimate for project around \$1.2 Million. Ben is going forward to PennDOT to begin the approval process. Penn Strategies and I will begin looking at grants to potentially fund the work in 2023.

Sewer Collection System/I&I Initiative

BCRA has updated I&I Plan and is scheduling a meeting soon with municipalities to review. Acquired GIS capabilities to accurately, and quickly, map sewer collection system. Acquired laptop (budgeted) for the GIS Mapping program. We are conducting smoke testing weekly; weather dependent. Camera work on potential lines with I&I ongoing when conditions are favorable.

Sewer Rates/EDU Assessment/Billing

Completed scrub of rental unit data from the Borough against billed EDUs from BCRA as well as a scrub of BCRA Water EDUs. Obtained a copy of the 911 Address List for the Borough; will use to scrub against Borough and BCRA lists of properties to further refine prioritized list of properties for inspections. Working on developing inspection plan and coordinate staffing; will begin inspections in May.

Was notified that the billing system used by BCRA inadvertently billed monthly customers the incorrect rate for all of 2021. The amount of the shortfall in income collected was \$23,902. Accounts are 53 Commercial; 2 Industrial; and 12 Residential. BCRA is sending letters to all affected with an invoice for the amount due; we will also do a payment plan for up to 12 months if requested by the property owner.

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.

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.

Recycling Center

Truck sold on Municibid was returned on Monday. Refund check on the agenda this evening.

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 4/19, I have proof of 18 of the 29 properties having garbage service. I have further proof that residents of some of the apartments on the 500 Block of Main Street are throwing their trash into dumpsters.

Capital Improvements Plan

Working during spring/summer 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.

McMichael Creek Flood Protection Project/Levee Repair/DEP Grant

Project is being managed by the Army Corps of Engineers. RFP going through quality control process. Once complete will begin negotiations with contractor. Project Manager is working on the Local Cooperation Agreement (LCA) that will need to be executed by the Borough. 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.

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.

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

I am getting quotes from several vendors for an install of a pool liner in fall 2022, after the outdoor pool season is complete. There are basically two types of lines, trying to determine which is the most durable and cost effective for the Borough.

Bicycle Racks

Three racks remain to be installed: 745 Main, 401 Main & 33 North 7th Streets. North 7th 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 spring/summer 2022. It is important for insurance purposes to have an active Safety Committee.

Upcoming Focus

MyGov Implementation
Smoke Testing/I&I Mitigation
Proposals
Code Enforcement (Dumpster/Recycling/Rental Prop)

Sewer EDU Assessment Plan
Solid Waste Request for
Day to Day Activities

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. Walker did not have anything new to report.

Street Superintendent's Report

Mr. Ace met with the contractor who will do the Thomas Street Paving and ADA Ramps Project. There is some work to be done by the Street Department: stormwater upgrades, additional concrete aprons for the crosswalks. The PA One Calls and concrete work will start in about two weeks. Milling should start in the middle of June. The project could be completed by the end of July.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 220503

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to authorize the payment of the bills on Warrants 220503. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; abstain-no)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Executive Session, re: pending litigation

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to go in to an executive session at 8:11 P.M. for the purpose of discussing two litigation matters. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; abstain-no)

The executive session concluded at 8:40 P.M. on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; abstain-no)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 P.M. on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski. The motion was carried. (6-yes; 0-no; abstain-no)

