

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 4, 2024

A regular meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Stroudsburg Borough Municipal Building with the following members present: Council President Matt Abell, Council Vice-President Erica McCabe, Council Pro-Tem Joseph Shay, Council Member Melody Trunfio, Council Member Victoria DeVries, Council Member Cheryl Joubert, and Council Member J. Zac Christman.

Also present were: Mayor Michael Moreno, Borough Solicitor Christopher Brown, Esq., Street Superintendent Brian Ace, Jr., Zoning/Codes Officer Kenelle DeStefano, and Executive Assistant Becky Smith.

Borough Manager Larry Kopp was absent due to attending the annual PSAB Conference.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the Regular meeting on May 21, 2024

The minutes of the regular meeting on May 21, 2024 were approved as circulated on a motion made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Christman. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to approve advertising a public hearing for Tuesday, June 18, 2024, for an Ordinance amending the Code of the Borough of Stroudsburg by adding a Part 6, Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance, to Chapter 24 Taxation; Providing for real estate tax exemption for new construction and improvements to deteriorated property pursuant to the Pennsylvania Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act and establishing standards and qualifications for obtaining such exemption. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to approve advertising a public hearing for Tuesday, June 18, 2024, for the determination of designated deteriorated areas of the Borough for the purpose of implementing a Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Ordinance. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Christman to approve advertising a public hearing for Tuesday, June 18, 2024, regarding the Cable Franchise Renewal for the Borough of Stroudsburg. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to approve the request from American Cancer Society Relay for Life for their purple flags to be hung along Main Street for the month of June. Brian Ace advised this is an annual request, and is not an issue for his department to hang the flags. The motion was carried. (yes-6; no-1, Mr. Shay; abstain-0)

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. Trunfio to approve the request from the Housing Authority of Monroe County for 30 family/senior 2024 season passes to the Stroudsburg Pool at the discounted rate of \$125.00. The regular rate for the 2024 family season pass is \$250.00. The motion was carried. (yes-7; no-0; abstain-0)

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – The next committee meeting is June 26, at 4:30 p.m.

Budget Committee – No report.

Parking Committee – There was not a committee meeting in May. Several residents were present at tonight's Council Meeting to discuss the recent change to alternate side of the street parking on North 8th Street. Ms. McCabe stated that this topic will be discussed at the next Parking Committee meeting, and members of the public are invited. The meeting will be on June 25, 2024, at 5:00 via Zoom.

Recycling Committee – Mr. Abell reported letters have been sent to commercial establishments within Stroudsburg Borough to advise them of the state requirement of recycling. Recycling enforcement by Borough Staff is occurring throughout the Borough. The Recycling Committee plans to meet with the Monroe County Waste Authority to discuss the possibility of their organization operating the Twin Boro Recycling Center. The date of this meeting has not been determined yet.

Sewer Committee – Brian Ace reported the Ann Street sewer line replacement project is complete, with paving to occur in September. This project was under budget.

Street Committee – The next committee meeting is June 19th, at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Personnel Committee – No report.

Public Relations/Media Committee – Concerts in the Square will start Thursday, June 6, 2024; concerts will be from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. every Thursday through August 22. Volunteers are needed for this concert series. Ms. McCabe mentioned the next Public Relations Committee meeting will occur before the concert begins on June 6th.

Redevelopment Committee – No report.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – There is no I-80 Committee update. Mr. Abell mentioned he would like to petition PennDOT for a traffic light at the intersection of Routes 611 and 191 in Stroudsburg, as it is already a dangerous intersection, and expects it to get worse during I-80 construction.

Parks and Rec (Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation) Committee – Ms. McCabe stated the committee's name will be changed to Parks and Rec Committee. Ms. McCabe reported the pools will be open June 4th. The commission discussed shortening hours of operation from 11:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. through 6:00 p.m. Ms. McCabe will revisit this discussion with the commission, since the pool is a service to borough residents, and not everyone is able to get to the pool to enjoy it before 6:00 p.m. It would be most beneficial to borough residents if the pool stayed open until at least 7:00 p.m. daily.

Mayor's Report

Mr. Moreno reported the recent Pocono PRIDE Festival was well-attended; the organizers moved vendors to North 6th Street, which helped the parking situation, and the businesses along that street appreciated the foot traffic the move brought to their establishments. Mr. Moreno has received a lot of positive feedback and thanked the Downtown Business Association for their support.

Council Member Reports

Ms. Trunfio reported she and Mr. Moreno volunteered at the Levee Loop Trail Race on June 1st.

Ms. McCabe reported she has been appointed as the Fire Events Liaison; the firefighters are working hard with very little. Their turnout gear costs \$7,000.00 each, and expire, requiring new gear to be purchased. Ms. McCabe will continue to provide Council with updates.

Solicitor's Report

No Report.

Manager's Report

Borough Manager Report June 4th, 2024

Meetings

COG Monthly Meeting	May 20 th
Potential Historic Marker Meeting	May 28 th
Pension Committee/SARP	May 29 th
Homeless Workgroup	May 30 th
MY WORKS Program Meeting	May 31 st
PSAB Conference	June 2 nd – 5 th
Juneteenth Festival Coordination Meeting	June 6 th
SARP Executive Committee Meeting	June 10 th
Hazard Management Plan/Capability Assessment	June 12 th

Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving. Sewer and water line replacement complete. Paving late summer.

Quick Build / Main Street Project. Sent request for Signage District to PennDOT. Working on permissions for murals from property owners. Coordinating various project elements. Working on upgrades to the Borough's sign printer & laptop.

Stormwater System Rehabilitation/Upgrades. Scheduling with contractor. After Sewer Project completion, July or August.

Creek Walk Trail. Scheduling meetings to discuss easements with property owners. Held off on DCNR grant funding request until all easements are in place.

Borough Building Porches. Met with contractor May 16th. Work to begin within several weeks.

Parking Garage Repair/Rehabilitation. In design phase with Peters. Intent is to go out to bid for 2025 completion.

Grants Strategy 2024

2024 RAISE Grant. Applications submitted February 27th, 2024.

2023 Statewide LSA Grant. Submitted 11/28/23. For Creek Walk Trail.

2023 Monroe County LSA Grant. For Parking Garage Repairs. Received \$250,000.

2022 Monroe County LSA Grant. Received \$500,000 for the project.

RACP Grant. Peters Engineering completed draft budget for LSA Grant & RACP Grant. Work with Pocono Economic Development Corp on grant and administering these funds.

Monroe County Hotel Tax Allocation. Received \$12,500 for the remainder of the Bollard Project. Payment in April. Bollards have shipped.

PMVB Beautification Grant Program Round 2. Received \$5,769.00 for electric street sweeper.

PMVB Beautification Grant Program. Received \$2,000 for Dog Park in Glen Park.

Borough Building Repairs

Met with contractor May 16th. Beginning work in the next month.

Homeless Workgroup

Meeting on May 31st. First meeting basically summarized the issues involved with the large homeless population. Working on scheduling a second meeting to start working on solutions. County Commissioners expressed interest in establishing a shelter in close proximity to services, which means either Stroudsburg or East Stroudsburg.

Commercial/Residential Recycling

Letter sent to commercial properties notifying them of the requirement to recycle. Letter to trash haulers sent early May. Scheduling another round of garbage inspections for recycling/trash violations, including inspections of commercial properties.

Residential Rental Property Inspections

Postcard out to all rental units and owners. Website updated with information. Notification letter with brochure going out in the next two weeks. iPads and printers received.

Dog Park

Fencing installation complete. Other dog park equipment has shipped; benches have been received.

Monthly E-Newsletters

First monthly issue went out May 15th. Sending e-blast for first Concert in the Square. June issue going out mid-June.

Safety Committee

Approved Safety Plan was submitted to KMIT. Training scheduled for this month.

MY WORK Program

We have four young adults participating from June 17th for 6 weeks, through July 25th, M-F, 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. Scheduled for trash pick-up in the downtown & parks; curb and fire hydrant cleaning; and borough building cleaning.

Penn Strategies

Jason Fitzgerald is selling his interest in Penn Strategies. It may be the time to reassess our contract with Penn Strategies and decide what we do moving forward.

Borough Newsletter

Next issue going out in June.

Dumpster Painting

Determined & prioritized dumpsters that are either in locations that are in high-visibility locations or cannot be enclosed. Coordinating with Casella.

Sewer Rates/EDU Reassessment

Analysis underway, doing double duty as a confirmation of potential rental properties. Looking at numerous data sets: water EDUs, Sewer EDUs, Act 511 Payroll Taxes, Rental Property Registrations, and Solid Waste registrations.

LERTA

Updated Ordinance on the agenda this evening.

MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning

Going fully “live” with MyGov in 2024 on all permits and licenses. Requiring all Rental Registrations to be submitted through MyGov. Customers will be required, unless they have a compelling reason, to submit all permit and license online through the Customer Service Portal. System has been a bigger success than has been realized; we have a total of 1,699 unique collaborators since we started using the system.

Senior Waste Collection Assistance Program

14 recipients to date in 2024.

Staff Performance Evaluations/ Counseling

Annual evaluations are due. Counseling with all staff this spring.

Sewer Collection System/I&I Initiative

ArcGIS mapping of all cleanouts & manholes complete. Reinstalled flow meters. Restarting Smoke Testing this winter/spring.

Sewer Fund Delinquent Accounts/Liens

Becky is looking at our list of liens and see what liens need to be renewed and if any need to be taken off the list.

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 2024.

Upcoming Focus

LSA Grant Administration/Budget Development/Coordination
Res Rental Property Ordinance Implementation
Sewer Unit Reassessment Plan
Dumpster Painting Project
Day to Day Activities

Engineer’s Report

Kevin Kreitzer reported there is a pre-construction meeting scheduled with M&J Excavation, Inc. on Thursday, June 6th, at 10:00 a.m. for the 8th Street Paving Project. The Notice to Proceed will be issued after that meeting.

Street Superintendent’s Report

No Report.

Zoning/Codes Officer Report

No Report.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 240604

Mr. Shay asked what charges were being paid to Chargepoint, Inc. with check #6947, in the amount of \$3,780.00. Becky Smith advised she would look into the charges and report back to Council. A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Ms. DeVries to authorize the payment of bills on Warrants 240604, with the exception of Check #6947 to Chargepoint, Inc. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

8th Street Parking: Stacey Bardonnex, of 218 North 8th Street, was present to discuss the parking situation on North 8th Street, and feels this topic should not wait until the Parking Committee meeting scheduled for June 24th. Ms. McCabe read aloud a timeline of events, beginning in April of 2022, that led to the recent ordinance change. Ms. Bardonnex read a letter to Council addressing her concerns with the change to alternate side of the street parking on North 8th Street. The letter referenced procedural inconsistencies with scheduling public hearings, safety issues for the community, and with the change, parking is not uniform on North 8th Street, making the traffic pattern unsafe. Ms. Bardonnex requested Council to amend the current ordinance, making the east side the normal side to park. Ms. McCabe explained the Parking Committee will discuss this further with parking and street personnel, and invited the public to attend the meeting to offer their input. Debra Davis, of 220 North 8th Street, also expressed her concerns to the recent parking changes, asking why, after thirty years of living at that location, have the rules been amended, noting the change has created an obstacle course for vehicles, and her disappointment with the lack of transparency from Council. Mr. Abell stated there is no lack of transparency with this Council; they are proactive with communicating with the public, and summarizing committee highlights, all while attempting to keep meetings from becoming too lengthy. Public hearings are advertised as required by law, meeting minutes are available online, and meetings are streamed on Zoom. Ms. Davis added there are five neighbors at tonight's meeting concerned about the unsafe conditions this has caused.

Glen Park/Dog Park: Jessica Ackerman, of 125 Stokes Avenue and board member of Pocono Bike Club, was present to discuss her concerns with the dog park at Glen Park. For over ten years, the Pocono Bike Club has hosted racing events biannually at Glen Park, which bring in hundreds of racers and their families, infusing the local economy. Due to the newly installed dog park, this will be the final year of their races in Glen Park. Members of the Pocono Bike Club and residents of the neighborhood were at the June 20, 2023 Council Meeting to express their concerns about the potential dog park and feels their input was not taken into consideration. The fence for the dog park was recently installed, taking up approximately 90% of the ballfield, making the park unusable for any other activities. Ms. Ackerman stated residents in south Stroudsburg were not made aware of the dog park, and it was not mentioned in newsletters. She also mentioned dog parks are for more urban areas, and others in the area do not get used much. Glen Park has a significant homeless population, deterring people from using the park, and by making it a dog park, the Borough has taken it away from the community. Lucas Heller, of south Stroudsburg, stated Glen Park is now rendered useless due to the size and location of the fenced in area. It is a quiet neighborhood, but now there is concern for more traffic and noise, creating a dangerous environment for the children who live and play there. Mr. Heller mentioned this is the most neglected park in the Borough, with overflowing trashcans, no lawn maintenance, and no grills or picnic tables. Matt Arnold, with the Pocono Bike Club, stated he provided solid numbers and the impact the club's races bring to the community when he attended the June 20, 2023 Council Meeting, but the dog park was still installed. He asked with the fenced in area at the park, how does the club offer parking and enough space to the over 300 people attending the race, and asked how many people have come to council meetings requesting a dog park in the town.

713/715 Main Street: Alizai Malik, owner of 713/715 Main Street, stated he believes an employee of the Borough is planting vegetables and trees in a strip of grass adjacent to his building within Parking Lot #3, behind Panda Kitchen, which is causing flooding to his basement. Brian Ace, Director of Public Works, clarified no employee of his department is planting anything in that area. After discussing further, it was determined to be a tenant from another building who planted and maintains the plants that Mr. Malik is referencing. Mr. Malik requested the Borough to pave this area to alleviate his flooding issues, stating the plants and grass are creating a drainage issue. Kenelle DeStefano, Zoning and Codes Officer, has spoken with Mr. Malik previously, but does not think that specific area is borough-owned. Mr. Abell suggested that Mr. Malik speak with the tenant who planted the vegetation, or the property owner. The Borough will look further into the situation and determine who owns the piece of land Mr. Malik is referring to; Ms. DeStefano will be in contact with Mr. Malik in the near future.

601 Ann Street: Melissa Addison, owner of 563 Ann Street, requested Council's help with her ongoing problems with the owners of 601 Ann Street, George Nunn and Tina Schneck (The Willowtree Inn Restaurant). Ms. Addison reported the owners of The Willowtree trespass on her property, harass her, and attempt to take over part of her property. The police have been called numerous times. Additionally, Ms. Addison stated the owners of The Willowtree smoke near the doors and on the porch of their establishment, violating the rules set by the Liquor Control Board, and patrons of the restaurant smoke on Ms. Addison's property. Ms. McCabe advised this is a civil matter and requires a lawyer, not the Borough. Ms. McCabe suggested Ms. Addison obtain a survey of the property by a private surveyor.

561 Ann Street: Melissa Addison expressed her concerns with the property adjacent to her, 561 Ann Street. This is a four-unit home, and the fire escape is being used as the regular entrance/exit. The fire escape is not secure, and believes this is a code violation. Also, the owner of 561 Ann Street recently added/replaced gutters on the home, which are on and overlapping Ms. Addison's house. Kenelle DeStefano advised the rental inspection program begins in the fall, and the Ann Street area is slated to be inspected within the first year of the program, at which time any violations of the rental ordinance will be addressed. This property will be added to the next Codes Committee Agenda for further discussion. Mr. Abell advised the next Codes Committee meeting is scheduled for June 26, at 4:30 p.m., via Zoom; members of the public can email Ms. DeStefano for the link to the meeting, or join in person at the Borough Building.

Speeding/Thomas Street: Brooke Marchini, of 713 Thomas Street, complained about the speeding cars that cut across Thomas Street, and requested the Borough to install speed humps. Brian Ace stated there are state guidelines for speed humps, and instead suggested to rotate the borough-owned speed signs throughout town. Ms. McCabe will request more speed enforcement from SARPD. Mr. Abell would like a further discussion regarding the purchase of more speed signs be added to the Street Committee Agenda.

Fireworks in the Borough: Keith Swiatkowski, of 214 North 8th Street, inquired about fireworks enforcement within the Borough. Mr. Abell advised setting off fireworks within the Borough is illegal; Ms. McCabe mentioned SARPD has a drone to assist with enforcement, including fireworks, and will make it easier to pinpoint the launch location.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m., on a motion made by Mr. Christman, seconded by Ms. Trunfio. The motion was carried. (7-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)