

Stewartstown Borough Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 5th, 2024

Members present

Pamela Almony
Donna Bloom
Kimberly Carl
Roy Burkins
Dave Elwell
Jason Roberts

Others present

Mayor Brittany Barnette
Craig Sharnetzka, Solicitor
Jason Brenneman, Engineer
Ira Walker, Jr., Sewer/Water
Stacy Myers, Recording Sec'y

Visitors

Paul & Louise Roscosky
Janet McElwain
Nathan Filak

Rudy Kocman
Erica Rearich

Janet Winters
Pamela Bond

1. The meeting was called to order @ 7:00pm. followed by the pledge to the flag.
2. **General Business**
 - **Approval of Meeting Minutes**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve the July 1st, 2024 Meeting Minutes; Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Approval of Financial Statements**
 - **General Funds**—Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve General Fund bills dated June 29th thru August 1st, 2024, totaling \$13,842.50; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Sewer Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve Sewer Fund bills dated June 29th thru August 1st, 2024, totaling \$39,092.73; Mr. Roberts seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Water Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve Water Fund bills dated June 29th thru August 1st, 2024, totaling \$65,305.73; Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
3. **Public Comments/Visitors**—the following were present to address Council:
 - **Rudy Kocman, from Kocman Insurance** presented the Borough's insurance renewal for 2024-2025 which covers property, general liability, crime, auto, workers compensation, general liability & public officials. He reported the premium for 2024-2025 is \$75,978, increasing a bit from last year's premium at \$74,074. Coverage through another broker was reviewed, but Kocman Insurance still found the best price for the same coverage by going with EMC Insurance. The Borough has been a member of the PSAB (Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs) for many years, which is an endorsed & exclusive program to Keystone Insurers Group partner agencies like Kocman Insurance. This enables program members, such as the Borough, to receive dividends based on the claims of the members. The Borough's dividend check for 2023 is \$5,955.70 which Rudy presented to Council. Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve the Borough's 2024-2025 policy renewal with Kocman Insurance Group & EMC Insurance. Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried. Rudy thanked Borough Council for allowing Kocman to, once again, provide for the Borough's insurance needs.
 - **Janet McElwain, representing Mason Dixon Library**, gave a rundown of 2023 operations & 2024 year-to-date operations. Since 2023, the library is now open 6 days a week (47hrs.) & employs two part-time staff members plus the librarian working each shift. The number of visits increased in 2023 with a 9% increase to active card holders; however, revenue was down due to fewer fundraisers, lower distributions from our trusts and not receiving large anonymous donations as in 2022. Janet stated to date in 2024, Mason Dixon is operating in the "black", thanks to five fundraisers. As always, she thanked Borough Council for their past donations and asked for continued support.

- **Pamela Bond, 45 Mill Street** was present to discuss the certified letter she received regarding a violation of the Borough's Zoning Ordinance. The letter was mailed from the Borough's Zoning Officer, as staff had recently been made aware that a laundry business was being operated out of Mrs. Bond's home, located in the Residential Town Zone. A Special Exception of Section s.503.h would need to be granted in order for the business to continue. Mrs. Bond was very distraught about the letter, which stated she only had 15 days in which to apply for a SE with the Zoning Hearing Board, and she had only received the letter 4 days' prior to that 15-day deadline. She works for Poplin, a nationwide laundry business where subcontractors such as herself can view a list of clients in & around the area and then decide which clients' laundry she wants to pick up, clean, & re-deliver. Mrs. Bond stated this type of business works well for her & her family's schedule, but she cannot afford the \$650 filing fee to apply for a Special Exception.

Borough staff, present at the meeting, explained this situation is actually two-fold, in that, not only is a permit required to operate a home business in the RT Zone but during the past 3 meter reading cycles, staff noticed a tremendous increase in the water usage at 45 Mill Street. Due to the continued high usage, the Sewer & Water Authority was set to send a letter to the Bond's stating, should the usage continue, one or two more EDU's (Equivalent Dwelling Unit) would be required. Each residence and/or business, depending on their water usage has an EDU associated with it. The allowed usage per EDU is 230 gallons/day, which calculates to 20,700 gallons per a 3-month billing period. Should this usage be consistently exceeded for 3 billing cycles, notice is sent that additional EDU's are required. The cost for an additional water EDU is \$2,908.72; an additional sewer EDU is \$4,539.71. Mrs. Bond said her family simply cannot afford that, and she has started taking the laundry from her Poplin clients to the laundromat, which is becoming extremely expensive.

Council had offered to give her a 60 or 90-day extension past the 15-day deadline to apply for a Special Exception, but the excessive water usage would remain a problem unless more EDU's are purchased. Mrs. Bond thanked Council for their time.

4. **Engineer's Report**—Jason Brenneman reported:

- **Street Work**

- **George Street Paving**—this project is complete for the most part, other than a small bit of pavement repair. An Application for Payment was received in the amount of \$66,152.52. Jason concurs with this request as all the work & paperwork associated with it are correct. Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve payment of \$66,152.52 to E.J. Brenneman, LLC. Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
The 2nd payment for Contract #1 (for the remainder of the contract) would be for \$17,696.55 but Jason is waiting for final paperwork to be received from the contractor.
The payment for the materials portion of the contract (Contract #2, payment #1) is for \$29,681.87 but Jason also wants to verify some things on this before payment is released. Mr. Burkins made a motion to conditionally approve Payment #2, Contract #1 for \$17,696.55 and Payment #1, Contract #2 for \$29,681.87 contingent on engineer approval; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Laurel/Locust Street low point**—the area was surveyed & Jason met with Kinsley there; however, because the street is very flat, Kinsley didn't feel confident that they could fix it without causing another road problem elsewhere. This low spot in the pavement has been like this for years & residents were concerned about mosquitoes when rainwater sits there too long. Otherwise, the road is in good shape. Jason said an inlet could possibly be installed there with a stone trench, but being in the right-of-way, he doesn't recommend that. Another option is to install an inlet & run a storm sewer pipe down to a storm culvert drain on Forest Road (approx. 600'), but that would be quite expensive.
- **High Street paving**—Keystone Custom Homes confirmed they have two remaining lots in Cloverfield with one currently under construction, so paving of High Street won't happen this year.

- **Storm Inlet/Pipe Inspection**—this work is continuing with Lucas (from Jason’s office) and Borough staff, taking pictures & video. Within the next 1-2 months, this should be complete.
 - **Dollar General’s Land Development Plan**—evidently, a private, screening fence was installed in a sewer/stormwater easement. The stormwater line is private since it’s on private property, but Jason will research this to confirm. Evidently, a manhole was missed on the LDP, so when the fence was installed, a fence post was driven into the storm sewer pipe. More research needs to be done to determine responsibility. Jason will update Council as he knows more.
5. **Solicitor’s Report**—Craig Sharnetzka reported:
- **Snow & Ice Removal Bid Specs**—the specs were presented to Council and will be advertised this month for a bid opening at the September 3rd, 2024 Council meeting, and hopefully for an award of a bid that night or in October
 - **Corrective Deeds/Recreational Use of Property at College Ave/Camelot Ct.**—the necessary paperwork has been provided to DCNR for recording.
 - **Parking Agreement with Caliber Collision**—this was forwarded to Council for their review. The agreement will be sent to Caliber’s tenants & the executives/landlords for their review & signature.
6. **Sewer & Water Supervisor’s Report**—Ira Walker, Jr. submitted his report & the following:
- One of the solar speed signs in the Borough needs a new battery, so a quote of \$1,720 was obtained from Traffic Logix to replace all five (5) batteries, since all the signs were bought at the same time. Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve the purchase for \$1,720; Mr. Roberts seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
7. **President/Vice-President Report**—Mr. Burkins reported:
- An update on the Police pension plan--The Commission has been researching plans with other investors. SRPD has had their plan with PMRS (Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System) for 25-26 years. PMRS attended the most recent Commission meeting for discussion & to answer any questions. Moving the plan from PMRS requires at least 75% agreement from both active and retired officers. The goal is to try & move before the end of 2024. A few meetings have taken place to discuss the move, and many officers seem anxious to do so. They will get 1.25-1.50% more pension funds upon retirement by going with a different investor. In addition, after retirement COLA insurance would be available to them which PMRS doesn’t offer. The Commission stands to save approx. \$147,000 if SRPD leaves PMRS. The officers are also looking forward to changing investors because they haven’t been satisfied with the lack of communication from PMRS. Mr. Burkins said a vote will probably take place at the next Commission meeting this Wednesday, 8/7.
 - Case Construction invoice for repairing Ira’s office ceiling—the original invoice for \$9,104.94 had been approved by Council last month, but there was additional patch work done on the Borough office ceiling resulting in a Change Order in the amount of \$985.64. Ms. Almony made a motion to approve the Change Order in the amount of \$985.64 for the additional work; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
8. **Treasurer’s Report**—Stacy Myers reported:
- **Fire Police request** was received from Jacobus Lions Ambulance for the 2nd Annual Community Appreciation Day, September 28th, 2024. Ms. Almony made a motion to approve this request; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Church Street/40 S. Main Street Subdivision**—due to the 90-day timeframe to have this plan recorded expiring, the church submitted a new plan to be reapproved & signed by Borough Council & Planning Commission members. Nothing had changed with the plan; the time to have it recorded had simply expired. Mr. Elwell made a motion to reapprove & sign the subdivision plan; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

- **Informational items—**
 - **A new Emergency Management Coordinator is being sought** for the Borough. The County has training available for a Borough resident who is interested in serving in this voluntary position. Ira stated discussions are being held through Eureka Consolidated of an attempt to consolidate the EMC's serving Eureka's area into one. That would be Stewartstown Borough, Hopewell Township, North Hopewell & East Hopewell.
 - **YTD Budgets** are in Council packets for review.
- 9. **Mayor's/Police Report**—Mayor Barnette reported:
 - Tuesday, August 6th @ 6pm—National Night Out will be held at Marge Goodfellow Park in New Freedom. SRPD will be there, as it's a great opportunity for the officers to educate the community and for everyone to come together.
 - This year's Eureka Carnival went well. Ira agreed and stated the gross profits raised is around \$100,000, but all expenses aren't known yet. Ira also stated the Proclamation presented to Eureka by Mayor Barnette was very much appreciated.
 - After being involved in a serious accident, Officer Saylor's daughter is showing signs of improvement & may be moved to a rehab facility soon. Great news!
- 10. **Executive Session**—Council recessed to Executive Session @ 8:25pm to discuss personnel issues.
- 11. **Reconvene**—Mr. Burkins made a motion to reconvene the Council meeting @ 9:25pm. Mrs. Carl seconded. Motion carried. No decisions were necessary; no action was taken.
- 12. **Adjournment**—With no further business before Council, Ms. Almony made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 9:25pm Mr. Burkins seconded. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacy Myers, Recording Secretary