

Stewartstown Borough Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 2nd, 2024

Members present

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

Others present

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

Visitors

Linda Miller
Nathan Filak
Erica Rearich
John Macomber
Derek Macomber
Steph Bryson
Joe Zahn

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 November 4th, 2024 Meeting Minutes; Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Approval of Financial Statements**
 - **General Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve General Fund bills dated Nov 1st thru Nov 27th, 2024, totaling \$48,983.49. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Sewer Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve Sewer Fund bills dated Nov 1st thru Nov 27th, 2024, totaling \$42,771.17. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Water Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve Water Fund bills dated Nov 1st thru Nov 27th, 2024, totaling \$82,549.78. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
3. **Public Comment/Visitors**—no one is present to address Council.
4. **Engineer's Report**—Jason Brenneman wasn't present tonight but submitted the following informational items.
 - **13 Mill Street**—developer submitted another time request until April 30th, 2025 in order for he & his Engineer to work on addressing comments on the plan. No formal action is required of Council, but they gave their consensus of acknowledging the time extension request.
 - **2025 Street Projects**
 - The 2025 Budget proposes to use \$23,000 for stormwater improvement work.
 - LSA State Grant—waiting for the contract to start the E. Pennsylvania Ave. work
 - **Storm Inlet/Pipe Inspection Proposal**—will wait for Columbia Gas to complete their cross-bore work before evaluating what is left to be done.
5. **Solicitor's Report**—Atty. Sharnetzka reported:
 - **Distributed knit hats to Council & staff** as CGA's Christmas gift & expressed his thanks for allowing CGA Law to serve as Borough Solicitor.
 - **ARPA Fund Update**—through research, Craig said ARPA funds can be used for government services. Some of the examples that were previously discussed by Council are road building, maintenance and other infrastructure, and Police, Fire & other safety services (purchase of fire trucks, police vehicles, etc.). At the November meeting, Council voted to designate half of the \$230,930.34 in 2025 & the other half in 2026 for those safety services.
 - **Resolution 2024-07**—As real estate taxes will remain the same for 2025 at 2.85mils, the rate can be adopted by Resolution. Borough Council is proud to say that real estate taxes have not been increased for 17+ years! Mr. Elwell made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-07; Ms. Almony seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
6. **Sewer & Water Supervisor Report**—Ira Walker, Jr. submitted his list of expenses which will be acted on by the Sewer & Water Authority. Ira pointed out a few "kudos" for the sewer/water staff:
 - Glen Rock employee, Mike Smithson called & requested help with a chlorine feed pump issue. Jonny Perry responded & was able to get the feed pump working again! Good job, Jonny!

- Last month, Felicia Markline & Tyler Robinson gave a “Career Day” presentation to 5th & 6th graders at SEIS. They did a great job!
- On 11/19, Tyler Robinson took his water license exam & was recently told that he passed! He is now a fully licensed water operator (he already had his sewer license). Congratulations, Tyler!
With that said, Ms. Almony made a motion to approve a \$2/hr. increase to Tyler Robinson, retroactive to the 11/19/24 exam date; Mr. Roberts seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

7. **President/Vice-President Report**—Ms. Almony/Mr. Burkins reported:

- **A draft of the updated Employee Handbook** was distributed to Council for review/comment. It was also sent to Craig for his review & any suggestions/concerns. If no comment, it will be set for adoption in January and will be presented to staff at that time.
- **Snow Removal Contract**—Borough Council bid their snow removal contract two separate times with no bids or responses received. At that time, Atty. Sharnetzka said the contract can be awarded to the contractor of Council’s choosing. Proposals were received from both Zahn Contracting & Macomber Specialized LLC which were reviewed tonight by Council. Both proposals were based off the Borough’s previous snow contract with equipment & labor rates listed, along with both companies’ certificates for liability insurance. Much discussion was held and some questions asked.

Some differences & similarities between the two contractors were noted.

- **Zahn Contracting/Joe Zahn**—Because no plow contract was in place, Joe helped the Borough last week during the icy weather by spreading salt which was greatly appreciated! He is local, living right outside the Borough, and has 3 other employees & equipment, for which he submitted pricing. He plans to hire another driver, should he be awarded Stewartstown’s contract.

Joe said the majority of time he will probably use his 10-ton 4x4 dump truck and a 1-ton 4x4 dump truck with a 9’ plow blade in the Borough. Both truck rates are \$225/hr. (equipment + labor).

Joe proposed a 90-minute response time to the Borough with a 4-hour minimum/occurrence.

Joe proposed a yearly mobilization fee of \$5,000 but said this is negotiable. He submits this fee to PennDOT because he plows for them also. This pays for his insurance, tax, tags, replacement & maintenance of equipment, and other similar costs.

- **Macomber Specialized/Derek Macomber**—Derek also has a few other employees who help him, along with several pieces of equipment, but also stated he would mostly use a ¾-ton or 1-ton truck with an 8’ blade or a 10k-25k GVW truck with a 9’ blade in the Borough. Rate for ¾ or 1-ton truck was \$200/hr. (equipment) + \$75/hr. (labor). Rate for 10k-26k truck is \$225/hr. (equipment) + \$75/hr. (labor).

Derek currently holds the snowplow contract in Delta & Fawn Boroughs but would have a truck in Stewartstown during a snow event until all streets are cleared/salted.

Derek proposed a maximum response time of 2 hours with a 4-hour minimum/occurrence.

Atty. Sharnetzka said he is satisfied that both contractors have ample liability coverage for this contract.

After more discussion amongst Council, Ms. Almony made a motion to award the Snow Removal Contract to Zahn Contracting; Mr. Roberts seconded. Discussion was held.

Mrs. Carl asked if negotiation of Zahn’s mobilization fee can be added into the motion, if Joe is agreeable to that. Joe agreed.

Mrs. Carl amended the motion to award the Borough’s Snow Removal Contract to Zahn Contracting with the understanding that the \$5,000 mobilization fee will be negotiated to a lesser amount; Mr. Roberts seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

Council thanked both Derek and Joe for submitting their proposals and visiting tonight to discuss them.

The Streets & Roads Committee will meet with Joe Zahn to negotiate the mobilization fee and to get a contract in place.

- **Resolution 2024-08**—to appoint Hamilton & Musser as the Independent Auditor for Stewartstown Borough for the 2024 calendar year. Mr. Burkins made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-08; Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Resolution 2024-09**—to appoint Melissa Matthews as Borough Secretary for 2025. Mrs. Bloom made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-09; Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Resolution 2024-10**—to appoint Stacy Myers as Borough Treasurer for 2025. Mr. Burkins made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-10; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Resolution 2024-11**—appointing Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS) as the 2025 municipal pension plan provider. Mrs. Bloom made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-11; Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried. Mr. Burkins also suggested looking at some other pension plan providers.

SRPD recently left PMRS and contracted with Englebert Financial Advisers where employees make approx. 1.35% more on their contributions than they did with PMRS. Employees also found Englebert was more responsive and helpful with their questions and concerns. Mr. Burkins will forward the Englebert contact information to Stacy so research can be done early 2025.

- **Resolution 2024-12**—to adopt the 2024 York County Mitigation Plan. Mrs. Bloom made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-12; Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

8. **Treasurer's Report**—Stacy Myers reported:

- **2025 General Budget**—as discussed last month, Mr. Burkins made a motion to adopt the 2025 General Budget and to designate ½ of the available ARPA funds (\$115,465.17) to offset Fire & EMS costs for 2025; the other ½ will be designated to offset Fire & EMS costs for 2026. Ms. Almony seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

Of note, discussion has started about the possibility of erecting a salt storage facility at the WWTP. Jason Lytle had estimated \$100,000 for the storage unit. We're fine for salt storage this year, but we may want to have further discussion next year.

- **2025 Sewer & Water Budget**—Ms. Almony made a motion to approve the 2025 Sewer & Water Budget; Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

9. **Mayor/Police Report**—Mayor Barnette reported:

- Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held Saturday, Dec 7th @ 6pm at Mason Dixon Library.
- The next Police Commission Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 4th. Of note, there were 16 abandoned vehicles on the report for Stewartstown. This number seems high; however, Chief said it's mostly vehicles involved in accidents, etc. that never get picked up from the storage lot. These get reported all at once, making the amount seem high.
- An attempt to steal two box trucks at Miles Appliance occurred recently. When the thieves weren't successful there, they used a Bobcat in the area to steal an outdoor ATM by loading it onto a truck they had stolen. PSP & SRPD responded. License plate readers got a hit on the plates in Annapolis, so this is being investigated. Chief Boddington is proposing to purchase 3 license plate readers to be pole-mounted in Shrewsbury at certain locations. Costs for maintenance & the 3 cameras (that include a live recording database) totals \$9,000.
- On November 30th, Mayor Barnette presented a proclamation to Stewartstown resident Lavine Wolfe on her 100th birthday, and a celebration for Lavina was held at the Senior Center.
- Library update—Mayor Barnette gave a follow-up regarding the York County Library System's proposal that Mason Dixon become a branch (versus a member) library. A meeting with YCL was held on 11/14/24, where Mason Dixon Library reps, Paul Smith Library reps, as well as other municipal officials were in attendance. YCL presented some of the study results they're using to determine these changes. If MD Library were to become a branch, hours would be cut from 47/week to 15-20/week. Paul Smith Library would also see reduced hours.

MDL Librarian Carol Stampler stated it wouldn't be possible to get everything she currently does in a 47+hr. work week done in 15-20 hours/week. At this time, Mayor Barnette said MDL isn't asking for any action, just continued support.

If made a branch, Mason Dixon's Library Board would dissolve and would become a "friends group" which is basically a fundraising group. MDL's Board conducts fundraisers, but also makes decisions on how to spend funds, etc. If a branch, YCL would be in control of money raised & Mason Dixon reps wouldn't have representation on the newly created "friends group" which consists of approx. 40-50 people; however, the public cannot attend those meetings.

In contrast to what YCL reported, Mason Dixon was not a deficit library. YCL did say MDL can still own their existing building, but that includes all bills also and rent would be \$1/year. At this meeting, Mayor Barnette asked YCL if they had looked at **their own** level of spending to see if any costs can be cut, but that question was not well received. YCL also said 70% of their budget goes towards payroll.

The YCL reps in attendance at the 11/14 meeting were President Robert Lambert, Administrative Director John Miller, VP of Finance Susan Davidson and the Director of Human Resources, as well as the woman who conducted the Service Optimization Project study.

Mr. Lambert said MDL must decide by the end of 2024 on whether or not they will join this "friends group", and if not, MDL will get no funding, no support, etc. He also stated the municipalities & elected officials would be receiving the YCL's survey and income/expenditures; however, to date, New Freedom didn't receive anything. Mayor Barnette said Buck Buchanan received the YCL Service Optimization Study survey, but it was different than what was presented at the meeting and did not include any financial data.

YCL is a nonprofit organization & is not ran by the government, but their funding is allocated by the government in a lump sum to designate as they see fit.

Borough Council agrees that this feels like Mason Dixon (& others) is being strong-armed to go along with this, and some questioned if State representatives, as well as local reps, could get involved and ask questions of YCL. Mason Dixon & Paul Smith libraries met with Julie Wheeler in October, but at that time, YCL hadn't given them much information or detail of their plan/study, so they weren't sure what to ask or how to obtain support. YCL has refused to a town hall meeting where members of the community could attend, so they're not being transparent to the public at all.

Mayor Barnette said a library can become autonomous, but by doing so, they lose all benefits of being part of a system, such as contracts with visual services and other benefits.

After more discussion, Council proposed to invite some local representatives **and** YCL representatives (specifically John Miller, Susan Davidson and the HR Director) to the January 6th, 2025 meeting in hopes of gathering more information & answers. Ms. Almony will extend the invitation.

10. **Adjournment**—With no further business before Council, Ms. Almony made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 8:50pm. Mr. Roberts seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacy Myers, Recording Secretary