

Stewartstown Borough Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 4th, 2024

Members present

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

Others present

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

Visitors

Ferd Dorn
Linda Miller
Janet McElwain
Josuf Stike

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 October 7th, 2024 Meeting Minutes; Mr. Butler seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Approval of Financial Statements**
 - **General Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve General Fund bills dated Oct 4th thru Oct 31st, 2024, totaling \$128,527.41; Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Sewer Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve Sewer Fund bills dated Oct 4th thru Oct 31st, 2024, totaling \$336,018.66; Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Water Funds**—Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve Water Fund bills dated Oct 4th thru Oct 31st, 2024, totaling \$67,206.83; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
3. **Visitors/Public Comment**—Janet McElwain gave an important update from Mason Dixon Library regarding a recent meeting with York County Library Systems about restructuring the 13 county libraries, half of which are member libraries, the other half, branch libraries. Mason Dixon is a member library. At the July meeting, MD was told the YCLS needed to cut operating costs by \$500,000 annually and the fastest way to do so is by cutting staffing & hours. YCLS conducted a study, developing the “Service Optimization Project” that hopes to do just that. It will affect 6 of the 13 county libraries by making them “branch” libraries rather than “members”. Mason Dixon had declined to be a branch, as Janet said the library has been operating as a member & a 501c3, nonprofit for 60 years. If YCLS makes MD a “branch”, it would be managed by York City. Discussions were being held and a meeting has been scheduled (between MD & YCLS reps) for next week at Mason Dixon. Mrs. Carl volunteered to attend the meeting as a local representative in support of Mason Dixon.
Janet stated Mason Dixon has 1 full-time & 6 part-time employees, but for a number of years, it operated with 4 part-time staff and a number of volunteers, until they were told they needed 3 hired staff on every shift. MD staff found that was not necessarily true.
Janet stated the County cannot take the Mason Dixon building, but they could freeze them out of the inter-borrowing system which means they would lose tech service, training opportunities, PR capabilities, and the opportunity to borrow & interchange materials from other libraries. More updates will be given as discussions progress with YCLS.
Janet also reported on upcoming programs & fundraisers being held at Mason Dixon:
 - Nov 20th—Breadmaking Program—1-hr. sessions (3rd Wednesday of each month)
 - Nov 25th—Grateful Bread Sale
 - Dec. 9th—Bus trip to Longwood Gardens (\$95/person)
4. **Solicitor’s Report**—Atty. Sharnetzka reported:
 - **Ordinance 2024-07**—amending the Sewer Rules & Regulations. Discussed last month, this is a request from the Authority as they’ve amended their Sewer Rules & Regulations to add/modify Industrial Discharge limitations. This Ordinance has been advertised & is ready for action.
Ms. Almony made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-07; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

- **Ordinance 2024-09**—increasing the rate of compensation for members of Borough Council and the Mayor by \$156.25/month, as authorized by current legislation. This would need to be advertised before adoption. Mr. Burkins made a motion to advertise Ordinance 2024-09; Mrs. Bloom seconded. This would take effect right away. Mr. Elwell is concerned how this would affect the 2025 General Budget being that it's a 25% increase. Until we understand the full impact of the budget, he doesn't think we should adopt any increases yet. Council agreed. Mr. Burkins withdrew his motion; Mrs. Bloom withdrew her second.
 - **Ordinance 2024-08**--This correlates to House Bill 2265, signed into effect by Governor Shapiro today. This would increase the rate of compensation for members of Borough Council & the Mayor by \$262.08/month. This would only affect newly elected officials in 2026. This also needs to be advertised before adoption. After more discussion, Ms. Almony made a motion to table both Ordinance 2024-08 & 2024-09 until more budget review is done. Mr. Butler seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Resolution 2024-06**—amends restated Right to Know Policy & related documents. Ms. Almony made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-06; Mr. Butler seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Fire & Emergency Services Tax**—there's a provision in the Borough Code that permits Council to set a millage (not to exceed 3mils) for the purpose of making appropriations to fire companies & .5mils for ambulance services. We can appropriate .5mil (of the 3mils, but not to exceed 1mil) for salaries, if there are paid fire & emergency personnel. This tax revenue can be used for fire equipment, training personnel, supporting contracts with adjacent municipalities, etc. Council can exceed 3mils, but it must be done by referendum.
 - **General Tax/Real Estate Tax**—discussion on the 2025 Budget will be held. If taxes remain the same, a Resolution can be passed & no advertising is needed, but if there is a change in the tax rate (or Council wishes to add a Fire Tax), an Ordinance must be adopted.
5. **Engineer's Report**—Jason Brenneman was not present tonight, but submitted the following:
- **13 Mill Street**—developer submitted a time extension until December, and the project is moving forward. Based on information submitted & the Ordinance, the Zoning Officer concluded the non-conforming building could be rebuilt to the same dimensions (since the April fire). A dimensional variance was recently approved by the Zoning Hearing Board.
 - **2025 Street Project**—the Borough was awarded a Local Shares statewide grant in the amount of \$982,632 for East Pennsylvania Avenue improvements which will include storm sewer replacement, sanitary sewer replacement, curb, sidewalk, ADA ramps & street reconstruction. The grant money will not be received until Spring 2025. A Thank You letter will be mailed to Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, as she played an integral part of the Borough getting awarded.
 - **Storm Inlet/Pipe Inspection Proposal**—Columbia Gas began cross bore work in the Borough & Hopewell Township. They will be televising all sanitary & storm sewer to ensure no gas lines or services are bored through these lines. All videos will be provided to our staff once the work is completed.
6. **Sewer/Water Supervisor's Report**—Ira Walker, Jr. submitted his report & the expenses will be presented to the Sewer & Water Authority for action. In addition to the expenses, Ira reported the Lead/Copper Inventory List was submitted to PADEP on 10/13/24 (due 10/16/2024). Of our 1,930 water service connections, there are 514 connections of an "unknown lead status" simply because we don't have enough evidence to prove otherwise. Ira is fairly certain there is no lead in our system; however, letters will be mailed to these residents in question. In the coming months/years, staff will be digging up at these homes (at Authority expense) to verify the type of material that makes up the water service line. It's going to be a huge task, but we are mandated by PADEP to do it.
7. **President/Vice-President Report**—Ms. Almony & Mr. Burkins reported:
- **2025 Budget**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to advertise the 2025 Budget (for public viewing); Mr. Burkins seconded. Discussion was held. Mr. Burkins gave the updated amounts to be budgeted for Fire, ALS & EMS. As American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds need to be directed by the end of 2024, Council decided to allocate part of those funds to the fire & emergency services in 2025 and part for 2026. The total amount of ARPA funds available to be directed is \$230,930.34. Mr. Elwell made a motion to advertise the 2025 General Budget with the proposed changes discussed tonight; Mr. Butler seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Dorn Electric**—Met-Ed plans to repair 11 poles on North & South Main with outlets, cables, etc. The work is to be done before or during the week of November 25th. Ferd Dorn wondered about the layout of the work Met-Ed plans to do. If Met-Ed can leave the power on the 11 poles to be repaired, then the Christmas lights

can be left on. Christmas lights were on a total of 55 poles, so once all are updated, Dorn can remove the old equipment.

\$50,000 was budgeted in 2024 for Christmas lights/repair; however, Met-Ed no longer allows private lines to be on their poles, so we had to contract with them to do the work and the cost was unknown. To date, \$7,994 was paid to Met-Ed for the work on the 11 poles.

Stacy will forward the pole numbers of the 11 poles proposed to be updated to Ferd, as well as the Met-Ed contact number so Ferd can discuss the proposed design work with them directly. For the 2024 Christmas season, Council is agreeable for Dorn Electric to conduct the necessary repairs on the Christmas lights.

- **HR Consulting update**—the Personnel Committee received the final draft of the updated Employee Handbook. That will be emailed to all Council members and Ms. Almony urged all Council to review it before the December 2nd meeting & bring any questions to the meeting. It will be presented & reviewed with all employees and adopted as of January 1st, 2025.
- **Thank You to all Veterans!** Veterans Day will be observed Monday, November 11th.
- **Back meeting room door** was discovered to be wide open on Halloween night. There is an employee that uses that door to go outside to smoke, and the door needs to be closed hard in order for it to latch. This has been addressed with the employee. An alarm bar is being proposed so that if the door is unlatched, an alarm would sound.

Isn't there a "No Smoking" policy for Borough property? There always was and Ms. Almony said the new Employee Handbook addresses this issue.

- **Amish resident at 76 S. Main Street** posting signs on the utility poles advertising estate sales, flowers & produce for sale, etc. Is this viewed as a home business? The Zoning Officer will visit the property and make that determination.
8. **Treasurer's Report**—Stacy Myers reported:
 - York County Boroughs Association Annual Dinner/Awards Banquet will be held Sat, November 16th at North Hopewell Winterstown Fire Company. Those wishing to attend, RSVP to Stacy or Missy by Thurs, 11/7.
 9. **Mayor/Police Report**—Mayor Barnette reported:
 - Next Police Commission Meeting will be held Wed, 11/6/24.
 - The newly hired officer is doing really well.
 - Saturday, December 7th—Tree Lighting will be held at Mason Dixon Library @ 6pm.
 - The County has put a burn ban into effect for 30 days, beginning Oct. 30th. After the 30 days, they'll reevaluate weather conditions.
 10. **Committee discussion/Other business**—Snow removal contract—Mr. Roberts had spoken to Joe Zahn who is working on a proposal to submit to Council. If no response is received by Nov. 7th, Mr. Roberts will follow up with him.
 11. **Executive Session**—Ms. Almony made a motion to recess to Executive Session @ 8:51pm to discuss a litigation matter. Ms. Almony made a motion to reconvene @ 9:10pm; Mrs. Bloom seconded. Motion carried, meeting reconvened. No decisions were made; no action needed.
 12. **Adjournment**—With no further business before Council, Mr. Burkins made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 9:11pm; Ms. Almony seconded. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacy Myers, Recording Secretary