



STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Date: October 21, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.

Mayor Aaron Lipsen., called the regular meeting of the Stockton Borough Council to order on October 21, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. Mayor Lipsen announced that this meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was transmitted to the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Trenton Times, was posted on the Borough Website, posted on the door at the Municipal Building and filed with the Borough Clerk.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Lipsen led those in attendance in the pledge to the nation's flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilperson William Brown, Council President Michael Mann, Mayor Aaron Lipsen, Borough Attorney Lisa Maddox and Borough Clerk, Laurie A. Courter

Absent: Councilperson Peter Folz and Councilperson Ken Kozuhowski.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None

CORRESPONDENCE

- Mike Odenwald email: Master Plan
- Mike Odenwald email: Stockton Tax Insights, Economic Dev Plan
- Mike Odenwald email-Meeting request
- Cannabis Update: Attorney Lisa Maddox

Attorney Maddox, read statement regarding opting out of cannabis ordinance and stated that certain procedures were not done correctly from 2021. The borough going forward will take the proper and necessary steps regarding this issue.

OLD BUSINESS

Route 29 Safety Report - Mayor Lipsen-introduced New Jersey State Police officers to discuss some details about safety in regard to Bridge Street and Route 29 and where Route 523 meets. Questions were taken from the public concerning traffic lights, increased traffic on weekends, ideas of slowing the traffic down such as blinking lights. Questions were also asked about the types of accidents occurring and how many speeding tickets were issued.

Council Meeting Location -Members of council discussed possible meeting locations and discussed the costs. It was agreed that they will look into the cost of having meetings through Zoom.

NEW BUSINESS

Resignation of Alisa Hendricks from the planning board.

Appointment of James Gallagher was made by Mayor Lipsen as a planning board alternate.

Sewer generator purchase -Brown gave a report on the need for a new emergency sewer generator. Stated that the old one is still in good shape and will be used as a backup. Funds will be used from the American Rescue program grant that the borough received. Discussed the benefits of a new generator such as automatic turn on if power goes off. They will be able to keep the existing generator at the site as well. Stated that the bulk of cost is funded by federal dollars. Stated that Bob Ent is one who is doing this as he understands the system and has done a lot of thought about it and also worked closely with the contractor over a year. Mayor Lipsen added that the overall cost is \$130,000 with \$40,000 coming from the grant and another \$40,000 from Hunterdon County.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT – PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor to public comment.

Paznack, Church Street, inquired about construction going on across street and stated that he is under the impression if there is going to be a building permit neighbors need to be notified. There should be good transparency. Discussed about an April 2023 OPRA request and received no response. Stated that he found some problems and addressed them to the Canal Committee and how they determine impervious surface. Trying to figure out what is going on with the latest stormwater regulations. Stated that in regards to the Steep Slope ordinance he opined that it was not followed with construction going on next to him. Inquired about an underground pipe and asked what it is used for.

Laura Lutten-8 South Main Street, brought up speed concerns on Main Street and on some side roads. Spoke about some ideas of stop signs, speed limit signs to slow people down and generate money for the borough. Suggested having kiosks on weekends to pay for parking. Also inquired about repainting lines on the railroad in big parking lot. Lines are gone and stated that its not easy to see where to park.

Mike Odenwald, Risler Street, addressed Mayor Lipsen and stated that it is now month ten where he made a public comment asking to present his economic plan. Discussed about his accusations of being suppressed by Mayor Lipsen. Discussed the missing minutes that he requested pertaining to the cannabis ordinance. Asked for a vote tonight to allow him for 45 minutes at the next meeting. Attorney Maddox responded and stated that they are looking at everything in the ordinance. Ms. Maddox went on to explain the **uses and licensing standards**. Stated that they are looking at its options for opting in and that there is nothing more the council can do at this point.

? 26 mill Street, stated they have been here in this community and are very proud of what the council is doing for the town and added that they appreciate the council.

Hearing no other members of the public speak up, Mayor Lipsen closed the floor to public comment.

ORDINANCES

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Mann to introduced on first reading Ordinance 24-11.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt and Mann

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

BOROUGH OF STOCKTON

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-11

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON IN HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING AS A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT UPGRADES TO THE WATER/SEWER UTILITY AND APPROPRIATING \$140,000 THEREFOR FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (WATER/SEWER UTILITY) AND COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FUND, AND AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2024-01

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton in Hunterdon County, New Jersey as follows:

Section 1. The Borough of Stockton in Hunterdon County (“Borough”) is hereby authorized to undertake work in furtherance of upgrades to the Borough’s water and sewer utility, and specifically, the procurement of goods and services necessary to purchase and install a new sewer generator for the sewer utility (collectively, the “Work”) in an amount not to exceed \$140,000; and

Section 2. The Work authorized by Section 1 of this ordinance shall be undertaken as a general improvement, the entire cost of which shall be contributed and borne by the Borough as a general expense, and no part of said cost shall be specially assessed against any property. The total cost of said Work shall not exceed \$140,000 unless this ordinance is amended.

Section 3. It is hereby determined and stated that the undertaking of the Work (hereinafter “Purpose”) is not a current expense of the Borough; and that the total estimated cost of said Purpose shall not exceed \$140,000.

Section 4. The sum of \$53,590.32 appropriated by Ordinance No. 2024-01 for the water utility is hereby amended to enable the use of the funds originally appropriated in said ordinance for this Purpose.

Section 5. The sum of \$40,000 is appropriated for said Purpose from American Rescue Plan funds received by the Borough through a Hunterdon County Infrastructure grant awarded by the County and now available therefor under a budget or budgets of the Borough previously adopted.

Section 6. The balance of the sum needed for said Purpose of \$46,409.00 is hereby appropriated for said Purpose from the Capital Improvement Fund.

Section 7. The capital budget is hereby amended to conform with the provisions of this ordinance to the extent of an inconsistency therewith and the resolutions promulgated by the Local Finance Board showing full detail of the amended capital budget and capital program as approved by the Director, Division of Local Government Services as on file with the Borough Clerk and is available for public inspection.

Section 8. This ordinance shall take upon adoption and publication as provided by law.

Introduction: October 21, 2024

Public Hearing/Adoption: November 18, 2024

RESOLUTIONS

PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Brown to approve resolution 2024-82.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt, and Mann.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

Stockton Borough Council

Resolution 2024-82

Authorizing Payment of Municipal Obligations

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton find and declare that certain municipal obligations have come due and are now payable; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton further find and declare that said obligations have been itemized on the annexed schedules, which are hereby attached and deemed part of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey does hereby authorize payment of said municipal obligations, in accordance with the recommendations of the Chief Financial Officer and the Treasurer in the amount of **\$272,075.46**

The attached bill list has been approved for payment by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton at their Regular Meeting on **October 21, 2024** in the amount of **\$272,075.46**

.

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Brown to approve Resolution 24-83.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt, and Mann.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

No. 2024-83

Adopted: October 21, 2024

RESOLUTION CANCELLATION OF WATER/SEWER CAPITAL BALANCES

WHEREAS, certain Water/Sewer Capital Improvement appropriation balances remain dedicated to projects now completed or no longer deemed necessary; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to formally cancel said balances;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton that it hereby authorizes the Chief Financial Officer to cancel the following unexpended and dedicated balances of Water/Sewer Capital Appropriations:

From:

Ordinance		Amount
<u>No.</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Cancelled</u>
2024-06	General Improvements to water/Sewer Utilities	\$ 140,000.00

To:

Utility Capital Improvement Fund	\$140,000.00
----------------------------------	--------------

MAYORS REPORT, BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee Reports

Community Outreach-Mann reported on the Tie the Town Pink that was held two Sundays ago. There were a lot of businesses that took part, and citizens also came out to help.

Buildings & Grounds-Mann reported that the application for the grant for \$45,000 has been approved by DEP but it still has to go through legislature. They are on the right track for the grant for the architect planning portion. Once the funds come through, they will have the architect signed up. He will also set us up to apply for more grants. Currently the upstairs meeting space at borough hall is not ADA not compliant and not fire safe as well.

Mayors Report-Mayor Lipsen reported that he is thankful to Delaware Township who agreed to send a letter to NRCS that is part of the USDA requesting the same work we are requesting from Hurricane IDA which flooded our downtown. Mayor Lipsen added that they are making some good progress on stormwater safety.

Mayor Lipsen gave a report on the Sign project: there were some missing street signs being replaced next week with the assistance of Hunterdon County. This will save taxpayers thousands of dollars. Mayor Lipsen stated that the USDA-program is having our water system mapped through GIS. Mayor Lipsen stated that at the last meeting the borough council approved the energy aggregate. A mailer will be coming out soon and in early January a letter will be mailed from the aggregate about opting out and the power consumption rates. There is also an option for the greener minded and having all green energy. Reported that they are in the final stages of the garbage bid. The bid advertising will be this Thursday. Mayor Lipsen caution residents on what may come with the bid, stating that they may not have same options as we do now. There could be some tough decisions that may need to be taken.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor to public comment.

Paznack commented that it is great the borough is applying for grants. Stated that his wife worked with Wes Hendricks, and he may have floor plans and have lot of information. He will stop by Bill's and give hm those plans.

Mike Odenwald-Risler Street, asked if there is a plan for the school and stated why we spend money if we don't know what to do with it. Commented on his opinion of council members erasing history. Attorney Maddox again responded to the issues of missing minutes and the cannabis ordinance.

Cathy Brown-7 North Main Street- asked if the opt-in ordinance is a council decision or does it go to referendum. Attorney Maddox explained the process of adopting an ordinance for opting in. And stated that it also goes to the planning board for consistency review and a hearing as well.

Hearing no other members of the public speak up, Mayor Lipsen closed the floor to public comment.

Recess-Motion

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Brown to take a 15-minute recess before going into executive session. All were in favor.

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Brown to resume meeting, all were in favor,

Motion to go into executive session made by Hunt and seconded by Brown, all were in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

**RESOLUTION
TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this governing body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of Stockton Borough, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows: Worman Road & Real Estate (Contract Negotiations/Advice of Counsel) • Cannabis Ordinance/Licensing (Advice of Counsel)
The discussion is anticipated to take approximately 30 minutes. Action may be taken.
3. It is intended at this time that the above-stated subject matter will be made public when the matter has been resolved.
4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

A motion by and seconded by to exit the executive session was unanimously approved by voice vote.

ACTION ON ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Hunt to appoint Brown, Hunt and Lipsen to the Cannabis Committee. All were in favor,

NEXT MEETING

November 18th via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mann and seconded by Hunt to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:29 PM.

Laurie A. Courter

Laurie A. Courter, Borough Clerk

