



STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL Regular Meeting Agenda

March 17, 2025 – 7:00 pm
ZOOM

Join Zoom Meeting:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83972467232?pwd=ewiTE9us6ctDGLlhx0aCYLJYpWXnA.suj97DFJYk_wMgn

+16469313860,,83972467232#

Webinar ID# 839 7246 7232

Passcode: 233212

Electronic Meeting

Electronic Meeting Commenting Policy and Instructions:

This meeting is being held via Zoom, a cloud-based web conferencing program. This meeting is being conducted pursuant to guidance from the Division of Local Government Services (“DLGS”). <https://www.nj.gov/govconnect/news/general/#8>. All members of the public participating in this meeting will be muted during the meeting. Please keep yourself muted until instructed to unmute yourself in order to prevent unnecessary disruptions. If you have a question or comment during the designated public comment period, please click “raise your hand”; at the bottom of your screen. You will need to have the “participants” window visible in order to see the “raise your hand”; button. You will be instructed to unmute yourself and turn on your camera (if able). If you have called into the meeting, please press *9 to raise your hand. The moderator will call on you and will need to press *6 to unmute yourself when it is your turn to speak. Please be advised that if you called into the meeting, you will be identified by your telephone number. The moderator will, if needed, acknowledge you by the last 4 digits of your telephone number. Your telephone number will be visible to all participants in the meeting and will be visible to anyone that watches a recording of this meeting. Before you begin your comment, please state your name and address for the record. If you are having technical issues, please use the chat function to alert the moderator. Please do not use the chat function for any other purpose during the meeting. Public comments and questions will not be accepted via the chat function.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER AND STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT:** This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by a notice mailed to the Hunterdon County Democrat and The Trenton Times, posted on the Borough Website, on the window of Borough Hall, and filed with the Borough Clerk as required by law.
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Please note, items listed on the agenda may change prior to the meeting.

3. ROLL CALL

Brown, Fisher, Folz, Hunt, Mann, Meltzer, Lipsen

4. PROCLAMATION: None

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- January 6, 2025 Re-Org Minutes
- January 22, 2025 Regular and Executive
- February 10, 2025 Regular and Executive

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- New Jersey DOT-Horizontal Curve Safety Sign Rt 29

7. OLD BUSINESS

- Pedestrian and Traffic Safety

8. NEW BUSINESS

- Open Space Grant Proposal
- Cannabis Request for Application

9. OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT

10. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

Any person desiring to address the Borough Council during periods designated for public comment shall first seek recognition by the mayor, or presiding officer, and upon recognition shall state their name and address. All comments shall be addressed to the mayor, or presiding officer. Comment will be limited to 5 minutes per comment.

11. ORDINANCES-1st Reading

- 25-01 Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption

12. RESOLUTIONS

- 2025-34 Historic Preservation Grant
- 2025-35 Final Payment-Diamond Construction
- 2025-XX Salary Resolution *(CFO to provide)

13. PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

- 25-36 Payment of Bills and Vouchers

14. MAYOR'S REPORT, BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMENTS, & COMMITTEE REPORTS

15. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Any person desiring to address the Borough Council during periods designated for public comment shall first seek recognition by the mayor, or presiding officer, and upon recognition shall state their name and address. All comments shall be addressed to the mayor, or presiding officer. Comment will be limited to 5 minutes per comment.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Cannabis Request for Application

17. POTENTIAL ACTIONS ON ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

18. NEXT MEETING – April 21, 2025

19. ADJOURNMENT

Please note, items listed on the agenda may change prior to the meeting.

**Borough of Stockton
Ordinance No. 2025-01**

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON, HUNTERDON COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, ENTITLED "TAXATION", TO ADD AN ARTICLE DISABLED VETERAN PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.30, the dwelling house and the portion of the lot that is reasonably necessary for enjoyment whereupon the same is erected, of any citizen and resident of this State, honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances, from active service, in time of war, in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States, who has been or shall be declared by the United States Veterans Administration or its successor to have a service-connected disability declared by the United States Veterans Administration or its successor to be a total or 100 percent permanent and total disability, and not so evaluated solely because of hospitalization or surgery and recuperation, sustained through enemy action, or accident, or resulting from disease contracted while in such active service, shall be exempt from taxation on proper claim made therefor; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.31, upon review and approval of the required documentation by the municipal tax assessor, the assessor shall allow said exemption from taxation for the tax year in which the claim was filed; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.32, the governing body of each municipality, by appropriate resolution, may return all taxes collected on property from prior years which would have been exempt had proper claim been timely made in writing; and

WHEREAS, the statutory intent to grant discretion to the governing body of every municipality has been affirmed by court decisions that have held that a municipality had discretion to grant or deny a taxpayer a retroactive refund of property taxes that has been paid for the effective date of the disability as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as set forth in N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.32; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council desires to establish a formal policy providing that a retroactive refund of property taxes as set forth in N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.32 shall be limited to the current year of the submission of a proper claim to the tax assessor as required by N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.30.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Governing Body of the Borough of Stockton in Hunterdon County, State of New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1. Article Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption

A refund of property taxes pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.32 shall be granted provided that the applicant submits a complete application to the tax assessor as required by N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.30. A retroactive refund shall be limited to the current year of the submission of the application to the tax assessor.

Please note, items listed on the agenda may change prior to the meeting.

Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage, approval, and publication as required by law.

Section 3. Ordinances, resolutions, regulations or parts of ordinances, resolutions, and regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistencies.

Section 4. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such a decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

RESOLUTION 2025-34

STOCKTON BOROUGH TO PRESERVE NEW JERSEY HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND ADMINISTERED BY THE NEW JERSEY HISTORIC TRUST

WHEREAS, The governing body of Stockton Borough desires to further historic preservation through a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust, State of New Jersey in the amount of \$43,875 for the following project:
District No. 98 Schoolhouse.

THEREFORE, the governing body authorizes Council President Mike Mann and Mayor Aaron Lipsen to execute a grant agreement with the State in an amount up to that awarded for the proposed project, and to seal the grant agreement.

RESOLUTION 2025-35 AUTHORIZING FINAL PAYMENT TO BE MADE TO DIAMOND CONSTRUCTION FOR THE HILLTOP DRIVE & MOORE STREET IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT AND APPROVING FINAL CHANGE ORDERS 1A AND 1B

Please note, items listed on the agenda may change prior to the meeting.

WHEREAS, by Resolution 2020-57 adopted on August 17, 2020, Stockton Borough awarded a contract to Diamond Construction for completion of the Hilltop Drive & Moore Avenue Improvements project (“Project”) for a total not to exceed amount of \$440,197.25; and

WHEREAS, construction was completed in January 2023 and to date, the Borough has paid Diamond Construction a total of \$421,239.99 through three separate payment requests; and

WHEREAS, Diamond Construction has submitted a request to the Borough for final payment in the amount of \$8,596.73, which includes retainage amounts from Payments 1, 2 and 3 previously made; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer has confirmed that the final as-built contract price is \$429,836.72 (including the final payment of \$8,596.73), which is a reduction in the original not-to-exceed contract amount of \$10,360.53; and

WHEREAS, it appears that Diamond Construction did not submit the required maintenance bond in 2023 and the two-year maintenance period for the project as described in the Form of Maintenance Bond has elapsed; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer’s review of available aerial imagery and a field inspection by the Engineer’s office indicates that the proposed improvements were satisfactorily constructed and remain in good condition, and therefore, recommends that this maintenance requirement be waived and no further action be required pursuant to bonding or maintenance of the improvements; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Stockton on this 17th day of March, 2025 as follows:

1. The recitals in the “Whereas” clauses are incorporated herein as if fully restated.
2. Final payment in the amount of \$8,596.73 is hereby approved to be made to Diamond Construction, which is inclusive of the retainage on this Project.
3. The final contract amount is reduced from \$440,197.25 to \$429,836.72.

Please note, items listed on the agenda may change prior to the meeting.

4. The maintenance bond requirement is hereby waived based on the reasons provided by the Borough Engineer.
5. Change Order Nos. 1A and 1B are hereby approved.

Stockton Borough Council(CFO to provide bill list amount)
Resolution #25-36
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 _____