



STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 26, 2026 7:00 P.M.

Held through Zoom

Mayor Aaron Lipsen called the special meeting of the Stockton Borough Council to order on March 26, 2026, 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 Star Ledger 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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE:

ROLL CALL

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

Excused: Councilperson Brander

Mayor Lipsen announced that there are 22 members of the public present.

NEW BUSINESS

HAEC GEA Program - 2026 Participation -Renewal

Mayor Lipsen stated under new business that we have a resolution for the Hunterdon County Energy Aggregate program and asked Attorney Maddox to explain to the public the purpose.

Attorney Maddox explained that, several years ago, the municipality adopted an ordinance indicating that it was interested in participating in an energy aggregation program with Hunterdon County. Periodically, the municipality has to sign up for continuation in that program. This resolution enables the municipality to continue its participation in the next round.

Mayor Lipsen added that this program is something that the Council worked very hard on. The members of the public were automatically registered unless they chose to opt out, and the borough also signed up for the municipality's energy resources, so we'll be saving 4-7% in energy costs. So the borough is renewing the program.

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Gilinger to approve Resolution 2026-47.

Discussion: Brown commented that those who run this program are going to be entering into the marketplace to buy energy services, aggregation services, at the cheapest price possible. Brown added that if they are not able to do so, then the borough is not bound by this, and he encourages the Council to go for this.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

**STOCKTON BOROUGH
HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 - 47

**AUTHORIZING THE COMPLETION AND SUBMISSION OF THE 2026 PARTICIPATION
FORM FOR THE HUNTERDON AREA ENERGY COOPERATIVE ENERGY AGGREGATION
PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey has enacted a regulatory scheme designed to encourage and support energy aggregation for the purchase of electric utility service (N.J.A.C. 14:4-6.1 et seq.); and

WHEREAS, by Ordinance 19-08, Stockton Borough established an energy aggregation program, the purpose of which is to provide a savings to Stockton Borough residential customers on their electrical bills; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution 2024-74, Stockton Borough joined the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative as a participating member of the cooperative pricing system (DCA ID# 270HAEC); and

WHEREAS, Concord Energy Services ("CES") serves as the energy consultant for the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative; and

WHEREAS, at the direction of the Borough of Califon, the Lead Agent for the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative, CES is preparing a Request for Proposals ("RFP") to solicit participation by licensed electric power suppliers in an online auction in calendar year 2026, for the supply of electric power to residential customers in the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative, and an Agreement for Provision of Energy Supply Services ("Supply Agreement") for the prevailing bidder to execute with the Lead Agency for the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative; and

WHEREAS, CES has requested participating members of the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative, including Stockton Borough, to complete and return a Participation Form before April 17, 2026, which indicates Stockton Borough's decision to be included in or excluded from the online auction date in 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Stockton Borough, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey that:

1. The completed Participation Form for the 2026 energy auction(s) for the Cooperative Pricing System known as the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative (DCA ID #270HAEC), of which Stockton Borough is a participating member, is required from each participating member prior to the bid release for any energy auction for the HAEC.
2. The Mayor is hereby authorized and directed to authorize the appropriate representative of Stockton Borough to complete and return the 2026 HAEC Participation Form to Concord Energy Services prior to close of business on Friday, April 17, 2026.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT – PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mayor Lipsen made the following statement before opening the floor for comment:

This is a special meeting; it's not a regular meeting. The goal of the meeting is to attend to some specific matters, so we're not going to have committee reports and some things that we would usually have at a regular meeting. We do have regular public comment periods. If you're planning to discuss any of the ordinances that are on the agenda for tonight's meeting, the ones specifically about the Stockton School grant program financing, the capital ordinance for the water system, the water rates ordinance, or the lead inspection ordinance, we recommend and suggest that you make the comments during the public hearings for those items, so they can be reflected on the record to go along with the ordinance.

Michael Odenwald commented that he can't believe he is the only person that wants to make a comment. Stated to Mayor Lipsen that it's great, we got 5% of the community participating tonight. 22 people of about, like, 400 or so. Stated that he would like to talk about the budget, water and sewer system, and the school, and potential solutions. Odenwald went on to say that in the budget, for those who are not familiar and who've not followed social media, we've got a \$1 million budget. There's \$87,000 that we collect in tax revenues a year from the occupancy tax from the inns, and the cell phone tower rental, which, of course, we have to keep in shape in order to make sure we can still rent it. What we want to talk about next is water and sewer. We have a \$1.8 million obligation. Remember, we have a \$1 million budget, but we are on record, because we spent thousands of dollars for an engineer to tell us that we have a \$1.8 million problem, and if we have to borrow for that, because we will, that's \$237,000 of interest. Mr. Odenwald stated that he doesn't believe that that is something that can be ignored. Mr. Odenwald continued his public comment regarding the school and stated that it is a distressed asset and stated that the facts are out and the only justification for holding onto the school, much less invest \$125,000, which is up for a vote tonight, is sentiment.

Mr. Odenwald inquired about the committees and stated that he doesn't know who is on the cannabis committee. Asked why the borough would want to invest in the building to serve the general welfare of the community.

Mayor Lipsen called a point of order and stated that committee chairs are not in charge and explained that they coordinate the actions of the committee, and the members of Council on those committees work to bring those items to the Council, where the Council makes the final decisions, except for some very minor decisions. And, as mentioned, Mayor Lipsen stated they will discuss the other item of the school later in the meeting.

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

ORDINANCES 2nd Reading

Mayor Lipsen explained the need for Ordinance 2026-03 Lead Inspections, which is a state requirement that rental properties be inspected for lead if they were built before a certain date. It is something we have an obligation to do, and we're going to go ahead and consider the matter.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2026-03, all were in favor.

Mayor Lipsen called for Council comments:

Brown stated that this is something we have to do. It's a state mandate and we are obliged to pick up. It also has an important health and safety aspect. Added that he thinks the borough can put the administrative support into it at a relatively cheap operational price. Brown also stated that he thinks it's a good idea, because we have to do it, and because it's healthy and helps people.

Gilinger stated that it is very relevant in a town like ours that has so many old buildings, as so many of the homes are very old. Mr. Gilinger stated that he thinks it's a good thing that they are moving forward with this. Fisher stated that he agreed.

Attorney Maddox added that this program will essentially enable the municipality to hire a contractor to conduct the lead inspection. The cost will not be paid by the municipality. Ms. Maddox went on to explain that, essentially, the way it works is that the contractor will bill each homeowner and then the homeowner pays for it directly. This is how it's done in a lot of municipalities, particularly those municipalities, like the borough, who do not have on-staff people to do the lead inspections.

John McNeill: 53 South Main, stated that he is for lead reduction and added that he ran his own water test recently through a local company. The results came back positive on PFAS, the forever chemicals, and stated that he was not sure if this ordinance would include those PFASs and asked if this was something that can be addressed. Mayor Lipsen replied that he did see his email and referred it to the water operator to investigate further, as this subject would not be under this ordinance. Brown added that the borough's water is regulated through the New Jersey DEP and that the borough is in compliance with the DEP standards.

Michael Odenwald stated that he thinks it's important that we bring light to these things such as lead inspection. Stated that he wants to confirm that it's a burden by the homeowner and wanted to clarify what he heard Lisa Maddox say that, in fact, it is something that homeowners will need to pay for. And added he thinks it is very important before a vote is done on any of this, but agrees that it should be voted on and it should be a yes. Asked over what time will this happen. Mr. Odenwald continued with his comments and stated with respect to the water operator, who just celebrated his retirement, his name is Bob Ent, and stated that he's awesome and that he built this town's water system but now the borough doesn't have a water operator. Mayor Lipsen thanked Mr. Odenwald and stated that we need to get things back on track with public comment and added that he is welcome to address this in regular comment, but right now they are trying to focus on the public hearing for lead inspections. Mayor Lipsen stated that the borough does have a water operator.

Mayor Lipsen addressed the comments made by Odenwald and stated that they did send a mailer out notifying landlords that this would have to take place. It is only for rental units; it's not for your own home. They are in the process of preparing a new mailer, in which we will also include the same information and do it as affordably as possible. But yes, as Ms. Maddox said, the burden does fall upon the property owner who is renting the property, only for buildings of a certain age.

Attorney Maddox commented that initial inspection will need to be done within a certain amount of period after the ordinance is done, and then they are done every 3 years, unless there's a rental turnover. So if there's a rental turnover, it needs to be done at that point. But if a renter stays, then you don't have to do it more than every 3 years. This is all mandated by state law, so the town really doesn't have a choice as to that. The town can either hire someone to do it, which would be very expensive for the municipality, or can contract it. That's what the law provides, and it's definitely more economical for the municipality to contract someone to do it.

Odenwald asked if anyone on the call received the mailer and asked if anyone on the call had questions. Odenwald inquired about the age of the buildings for the inspections. Mr. Odenwald stated he has a lot of good ideas and wants to contribute but that it needs to be clear on the cost and its burden.

Mayor Lipsen replied that the price will fall upon the landlord to pay for the lead inspection. Since we haven't contracted it yet, we can't guarantee an exact price. It'd probably be in the couple hundred dollar range. Mayor Lipsen reiterated that, again, it's a state mandate, and mailers were sent around a while ago. Another mailer will go out in the next month or so once the specifics are in place.

Attorney Maddox stated that it's buildings built before 1978, and other specific details are set forth in the ordinance and referred to the ordinance for those items but stated that the only thing not in the ordinance is the precise price, because it depends on what the contractor will charge, and that is actually set forth in the ordinance. It basically says it's going to be the cost that the landlords in the town will pay.

Odenwald asked what percent of the homes in the borough are older than 1978. The intent of the question is to really know what is the impact to people who are likely on fixed income, living in a house that has been here before 1978. Mr. Odenwald stated he would like to help the town with data to make better decisions.

Andrew Rose, 11 North Main Street, stated that he feels Council has done a pretty good job as far as giving all the information that we need. Stated that as a property owner who has buildings that are pre-1978, including his house, other folks are renters who brought this to his attention a while back. Stated that the letter program, sending it out worked just fine. Stated that it's not one person, himself or otherwise, who should just jump into it, that's what Council is for and stated that he feels Council is doing a fine job with it.

Hearing no further public comment, motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Mann to close the public hearing, all were in favor.

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Brown to adopt Ordinance 2026-03.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

ORDINANCE 2026-03

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON ESTABLISHING LEAD-BASED PAINT HAZARD INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS FOR RENTAL DWELLING UNITS

WHEREAS, pursuant to P.L. 2021, c. 182, as amended by P.L. 2024, c. 74 (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-437.16 et seq.), all municipalities are required to inspect every rental dwelling unit, and in a building consisting of two or three dwellings, the common area within each building that contains a rental dwelling unit, located within the municipality at tenant turnover for lead-based paint hazards or within three years of the effective date of P.L. 2021, c. 182, whichever is earlier; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of these requirements is to prevent the poisoning of residents by requiring that the presence of deteriorated lead-based paint on the interior and exterior of pre-1978 structures be identified and correctly addressed by reducing and controlling lead-based paint hazards which may be present, in order to prevent human exposure to such hazards; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and in the best interests of the residents of the Borough of Stockton to impose regulations, procedures and standards for the completion of inspections for lead-based paint in rental dwelling units, in order to conform to and ensure compliance with State law.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, as follows:

Section 1. The following standards, procedures and requirements are hereby enacted for purposes of regulating lead-based paint inspections for rental dwelling units in the Borough:

**LEAD-BASED PAINT INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS
FOR RENTAL DWELLING UNITS**

§1. Definitions.

For purposes of this ordinance only, the following words and terms shall have the meaning as used in, and in accordance with, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-437.16 and N.J.A.C. 5:28A-1.1 et seq.:

Common area means the interior portions of a building used for residential rental purposes that are generally accessible to residential tenants, but not including the interior of individual dwelling units. Common areas shall include, but not be limited to, hallways, stairs, foyers, basements, laundry rooms, and the interior of attached or detached garages, if the areas are generally accessible to residential tenants and the areas are not located within the interior of an individual dwelling unit.

Dust wipe sampling means a sample collected by wiping a representative surface and tested, in accordance with a method approved by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and as conducted pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:28A-2.3.

Dwelling means a building containing a room or rooms, or suite, apartment, unit, or space that is rented and occupied, or intended to be rented and occupied, for sleeping and dwelling purposes by one or more persons.

Dwelling unit means a single-family living space, including a single family home, or an apartment, room, or rooms within a two-family or multiple-family building, that is occupied or intended to be occupied for sleeping or dwelling purposes by one or more persons living independently of persons in similar dwelling units.

Lead evaluation contractor means a firm certified by the Department of Community Affairs to perform lead inspection and risk assessment work pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:17. This includes the ability to perform dust wipe sampling.

Lead-safe certification means the certification required under this ordinance, which confirms that a periodic lead-based paint inspection was performed, and no lead-based

paint hazards were found. This certification is valid for three years from the date of issuance, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:28A-2.4

Periodic lead-based paint inspection means (except as otherwise provided in section 5a of this ordinance), the initial inspection of all applicable dwelling units at the earlier of three years from the effective date of P.L. 2021, c. 182 (July 22, 2022) or tenant turnover and, thereafter, the earlier of three years or upon tenant turnover, consistent with N.J.A.C. 5:28A-2.1, for the purposes of identifying lead-based paint hazards in dwellings subject to this ordinance.

Remediation means interim controls or lead abatement work undertaken in conformance with this ordinance and applicable law and regulation to address lead-based paint hazards.

Tenant turnover means the time at which all existing occupants vacate a dwelling unit, and all new tenants move into the dwelling unit, or the time at which a new tenant enters a vacant dwelling unit.

§2. The Borough's lead evaluation contractor; ability to hire lead evaluation contractor directly; inspections authorized.

- a. The Borough shall designate a lead evaluation contractor authorized to perform periodic lead-based paint inspections for lead-based paint hazards in every rental dwelling unit and, in a building consisting of two or three dwelling units, the common area within each building that contains a rental dwelling unit in the Borough. The Borough's lead evaluation contractor shall be authorized and empowered to conduct the required periodic lead-based paint inspections required by law, and take such other action on the Borough's behalf as set forth in this ordinance and applicable law.
- b. The owner or landlord (referred to herein as "owner") of a dwelling subject to the inspection requirements of this ordinance shall be permitted to directly hire a lead evaluation contractor of their own selection to conduct the periodic lead-based paint inspections for lead-based paint, subject to compliance with N.J.A.C. 5:28A-2.1(d).

§3. Exemptions.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:27D-437.16(c) and implementing regulations, a rental dwelling unit shall not be subject to inspection and evaluation for the presence of lead-based paint hazards as required by this ordinance if:

- a. The dwelling unit was constructed during or after 1978;
- b. The dwelling unit is a single-family or within a two-family seasonal rental dwelling that is rented for less than six months duration each year by tenants that do not have consecutive lease renewals;

- c. The dwelling unit has been certified to be free of lead-based paint, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:17;
- d. The dwelling unit is in a multiple family building that has been registered with the Department of Community Affairs as a multiple family building for at least ten years, either under the current or a previous owner, and has no outstanding lead-based paint violations from the two most recent cyclical inspections performed under the Hotel and Multiple Dwelling Law, P.L. 1967, c.76 (N.J.S.A. 55:13A-1 et seq.); or
- e. Is a dwelling unit that has a valid lead-safe certification issued in accordance with this ordinance.

§4. Dwelling owner responsible for obtaining inspection and payment of fees; applicable fees.

- a. The owner of every rental dwelling unit offered for rental, unless otherwise exempt hereunder, shall be required to obtain an inspection of the unit for lead-based paint hazards as required by this ordinance.
- b. To obtain the required inspection, the owner shall arrange for same with the Borough's lead evaluation contractor or directly hire its own lead evaluation inspector.
- c. The owner shall be responsible for scheduling the inspection and paying all applicable and required fees directly to the contractor. The lead evaluation contractor completing the inspection shall ensure that the proper type of inspection or assessment (i.e., visual assessment or dust wipe sampling, or both) is performed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:28A-2.3.
- d. The fee for the cost of the periodic lead-based paint inspection completed by the Borough's lead evaluation contractor shall be as determined by the Borough and lead evaluation contractor annually, and shall be based on the actual cost charged for the inspection. The owner shall pay the Borough's lead evaluation contractor directly for each inspection.
- e. In addition to the foregoing, the Borough shall also charge the owner a fee of \$20.00 per unit inspected by each lead evaluation contractor, unless the owner demonstrates that it has already paid this inspection fee pursuant to the provisions of section 10 at P.L. 2003, c. 311 (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-437.10).
 - 1. When due, the fee paid under this subsection e. shall be paid by the owner to the Borough's lead inspection contractor.

2. The Borough's lead inspection contractor shall submit the fees collected under this subsection e. to the State for deposit into the Lead Hazard Control Assistance Fund established under section 4 at P.L. 2003, c. 311 (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-437.4).

§5. Timing for required inspection.

- a. The initial inspection for rental dwelling units subject to this ordinance shall take place upon tenant turnover or within three years of the effective date of P.L. 2021, c. 182, whichever is earlier. If, upon the effective date of this ordinance, an owner has not completed the required initial inspection, then the owner shall not be in violation of this provision as long as the owner completes the initial inspection for rental dwelling units subject to this ordinance within ninety days of the effective date of this ordinance.
- b. After initial inspection, all such dwelling units shall be inspected for lead-based paint hazards each time there is tenant turnover, or at least once every three years, whichever occurs earlier. However, if the dwelling unit owner has obtained a valid lead-safe certification for the dwelling unit, then inspection of that dwelling unit shall not be required at each tenant turnover during the three-year period the certification is valid.
- c. Each subsequent periodic lead-based paint inspection shall be counted from the most recent inspection which resulted in a valid lead-safe certification.

§6. Notice of tenant turnover to be given; time for Borough to complete inspections.

Whenever any dwelling unit subject to this ordinance is scheduled for a tenant turnover, the owner shall provide the Borough's lead inspection contractor with prior written notice of at least fourteen business days of the date scheduled for tenant turnover and advise whether the owner will hire the Borough's lead evaluation contractor or its own lead evaluation contractor. The owner shall be responsible for scheduling the inspection, ensuring proper access to the dwelling unit and paying the contractor for the inspection. The failure to provide this notice to the Borough in the required time-frame shall be deemed a failure to complete the necessary inspection.

§7. Inspection results.

- a. If the lead evaluation contractor completing an inspection on a dwelling unit finds no lead-based paint hazard, then the contractor completing the inspection shall certify the dwelling unit as lead-safe on the form prescribed by the Department of Community Affairs. The lead-safe certification shall be valid for a period of three years from the date of issuance.
- b. If the lead evaluation contractor completing an inspection on a dwelling unit finds that a lead-based paint hazard exists, then the owner shall be responsible for

remediation of the lead-based paint hazard consistent with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 5:28A-2.5, as well as compliance with, and costs associated with, all applicable additional requirements, inspections, abatement and procedures established by N.J.A.C. 5:28A-2.5.

§8. Additional owner responsibilities.

The owner of a dwelling that is subject to the requirements of this ordinance shall:

- a. At the time of tenant turnover, provide to the tenant evidence of a valid lead-safe certification obtained as required hereunder. The owner shall also include a copy of the certification as an exhibit to the tenant's lease.
- b. Maintain a record of the lead-safe certification, which shall include the name or names of a unit's tenants, if inspection was conducted during a period of tenancy.
- c. Inform the Borough's lead inspection contractor of all tenant turnover activity to ensure any required inspection may be scheduled.

§9. Obligations of the Borough.

- a. The Borough shall maintain a record of:
 1. All dwellings subject to the requirements of this ordinance which shall include up to date information on inspection schedules, inspection results and tenant turnover; and
 2. All lead-safe certifications issued hereunder, whether issued by the Borough's lead evaluation contractor or independent lead evaluation contractors hired by owners.
- b. The Borough shall deliver to the Department of Community Affairs a list identifying each dwelling unit inspected and each dwelling unit determined to contain a lead-based paint hazard.

§10. Violations and penalties.

The penalties for violating this ordinance shall be as follows:

- a. If an owner has failed to conduct the required inspection or initiate any required remediation, then the Borough shall issue written notice to the owner that the owner has thirty days to cure the violation.
- b. If the owner fails to cure the violation within the thirty-day period, then the owner shall be subject to a penalty not to exceed \$1,000.00 per week, until the required inspection has been conducted or the remediation efforts have been initiated.

Remediation efforts shall be considered to be initiated when the dwelling owner has hired a lead abatement contractor or other qualified party to perform lead-hazard control methods.

2. Repealer. All ordinances and resolutions or parts thereof inconsistent with this ordinance are repealed.

3. Severability. If any section, paragraph, subsection, clause or provision of this ordinance shall be adjudged by the courts to be invalid, such adjudication shall apply only to the section, paragraph, subsection, clause or provision so adjudged and the remainder of this ordinance shall be valid and enforceable.

4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect upon its adoption and publication as provided by law.

Mayor Lipsen gave a brief statement for the need of Ordinance 2026-04 and stated that Bridge Street has been experiencing some problems with large tractor trailers, causing damage in which they knocked down multiple stop signs. Last summer, one took out power lines, took out a fire hydrant, and could have caused a major fire. They talked to the bridge police, and on weekend days, up to a dozen tractor trailers or large trucks turn down Bridge Street and must turn around because they are prohibited from going across the bridge to Pennsylvania, due to a 5-ton weight limit. They are asked to turn around in the downtown, causing traffic problems. The DOT was contacted, and they did a study, and they endorsed the idea of having us lower the weight limit on Bridge Street so that we could add additional signage. It was decided to bring this ordinance forward, which will lower the weight limit to 5 tons, which is the same weight limit going across the bridge, except for local deliveries. This is an effort for us to try to improve pedestrian, residential traffic, and safety on Bridge Street.

Motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Brown to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2026-04, all were in favor.

Council Comments:

Gilinger stated that with the problems they've already had on Bridge Street, this is a no-brainer to just say, hey, you don't need to be going down to cross that bridge anyway. Gilinger stated he sees a truck getting turned around at least once a week and stated this is a good call for this ordinance.

Meltzer seconded what Gilinger stated and added that she feels like this is, especially as the weather is getting warmer, is a no-brainer.

Brown stated he agreed with everything that has been stated.

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor for public comments

Michelle Purcell, 7 Bridge Street, stated that she gets to witness, in fact, sometimes by entertainment, all the trucks that turn around on Bridge Street. Stated that she wonders if they can't read the signs on Route 29 what is going to make them read signs on Bridge Street. Asked if there are other things in the works to try and mitigate this problem. Stated that she appreciates any efforts to make it stop, because it's a problem, and it really does cause traffic issues. Mayor Lipsen replied that they have spoken with the DOT many times to improve their signage. A lot of ideas have been looked at and we'll see how many of those will work. Mayor Lipsen discussed possible future traffic calming measures and pedestrian safety.

Michael Odenwald discussed the fines and penalizing people who come down that road and allow people who travel these bridges. Stated that if fines are going to be discussed tonight for people who sell Christmas trees then fines should be for trucks also that mess up the roads. Stated that it is great news about roads being resurfaced. Stated that he has many ideas he would like to share and to call, text, or email him.

Attorney Maddox responded to the penalties inquiry and stated that there are penalties that already apply. The general penalty, at a minimum, is \$2,000 per violation. The borough has a general ordinance that if our general ordinance doesn't have a more specific fine, that the general penalty kicks in, and added that the state may even impose a higher penalty for these types of violations. Enforcement is a huge element with this. This is something definitely to work with the state police, and, if we need to make any further amendments to the ordinances, that's something that can be done.

Andrew Rose, 11 North Main Street, stated as someone who has driven large trucks for a living, there is never enough signage being that the main thing is issues with GPS. Stated that more signage is always a good thing and compared the same issue in Lambertville. Recommended that a larger sign on Route 29 would help.

Fisher asked Attorney Maddox if he is ok to comment and vote being that he is on Bridge Street. Attorney Maddox replied that yes, he is fine, because this is a very general ordinance that impacts everyone.

Fisher stated that he thinks this is a great idea and cited the hassle the trucks cause and it is good to remediate it.

Brown stated he appreciated Mr. Rose's comments and suggested to bring those comments back to DOT.

Motion made by Mann to close the public hearing, motion seconded by Brown, all were in favor.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-04 made by Mann and seconded by Gilinger.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-04

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON
REDUCING THE WEIGHT LIMIT FOR VEHICLES ON BRIDGE
STREET BETWEEN STATE ROUTE 29 AND CENTRE BRIDGE
TO PENNSYLVANIA**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton recently requested that the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) investigate the current commercial weight limit of 33,000 pounds on Bridge Street in the Borough of Stockton, in light of the 5-ton restriction on Centre Bridge to Pennsylvania (which connects Bridge Street to Pennsylvania); and

WHEREAS, NJDOT's Division of Traffic Engineering (Division) completed its investigation of the current weight limit on Bridge Street and factors surrounding it, and by letter dated January 23, 2026, notified the Borough that its findings support the Borough's request to reduce the current weight restriction on Bridge Street to align with the 5-ton limit of the Centre Bridge to Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, the Division further determined that this adjustment to the weight limit aligns with requests from Borough officials and enhances traffic safety on Centre Bridge as well; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:4-197(1)b., the Borough is authorized to limit the use of streets in the Borough to certain class of vehicles with the Commissioner of Transportation's approval.

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

Section 1. Weight Limit – Bridge Street (Between Route 29 and Center Bridge to Pennsylvania). The weight limitation for vehicles on Bridge Street in the Borough of

Stockton between Route 29 and Centre Bridge to Pennsylvania is hereby amended as follows:

Within the jurisdiction of the Borough of Stockton, vehicles having a total combined weight of vehicle plus load more than 5 tons are hereby excluded along Bridge Street between Route 29 and Centre Bridge to Pennsylvania except for the pick-up and delivery of materials or when permitted by applicable regulations and laws.

Section 2. Severability. Each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase of this ordinance is declared to be an independent section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase, and finding or holding of any such portion of this ordinance to be unconstitutional, void, or ineffective for any cause or reason shall not affect any other portion of this ordinance.

Section 3. Repealer. All ordinances or parts thereof inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 4. Submission to Commissioner of Transportation. Upon adoption, a certified copy of this ordinance with raised seal, along with a statement of concurrence from the Borough Engineer, shall be filed with the Commissioner of Transportation, and to the following addressee:

Jaime M. Oplinger
Director of Traffic Engineering
New Jersey Department of Transportation
1035 Parkway Avenue
PO Box 600
Trenton, NJ 08625

Section 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and publication as required by law and also upon approval of the Commissioner of Transportation.

Mayor Lipsen gave a summary on Capital Ordinance 2026-06 and explained that this ordinance sets aside money for the water and sewer utility.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to open the public hearing, all were in favor.

Brown gave a statement to the condition of the system, stating that it is aging, and they are making decisions on key steps to improve it.

Mayor Lipsen explained that the borough joined the Morris County Co-Op to get the meters at a cheaper price. The meters will be part of making sure that they are billing people accurately and not losing money in underestimating bills. Mayor Lipsen went on to report meetings he had with the water personnel and spoke on private water leaks that occurred.

Gilinger stated that making these improvements that not everyone sees is keeping the system running. Mayor Lipsen opened the comments to the public.

Michael Odenwald commented on the collaboration and was happy to see it. Inquired about the number of meters that have been installed. Mayor Lipsen responded that they are looking to accelerate the install of the meters and are looking to install about 50 meters this year, focusing primarily on the troubled meters first. Odenwald went on and commented about the amount the borough would need to borrow. Odenwald went on and commented that businesses in town and those that consume water like the brewery and spoke on a permit to expand the brewery, in what Odenwald stated he feels they consume more water than 40 homes a year. Mayor Lipsen advised Mr. Odenwald to keep comments pertaining to the ordinance. Odenwald went on to comment on the importance of investing in the water system and stated that \$100,000 is not enough.

Mayor Lipsen reiterated the importance of the ordinance and made statements on the importance of making long term improvements to the water system.

Mayor Lipsen turned comments over to Council.

Meltzer stated that this is our water system and it's a must have and agrees with the work that has been done so far. Stated that improvements and investments over time keep the borough up to date with certain things that are must haves.

Hearing no further comments, motion made by Gilinger to close the public hearing, motion seconded by Meltzer, all were in favor.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to adopt Ordinance 2026-06

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

ORDINANCE 2026-06

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON IN HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING AS A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT REPAIRS, IMPROVEMENTS AND PURCHASES RELATING TO THE WATER/SEWER UTILITY INCLUDING BUT

**NOT LIMITED TO METERS, VALUE REPLACEMENT, LEAK DETECTION, SEWER
JETTING (I & I) AND SANITARY SEWER CLEANING/INSPECTION AND
APPROPRIATING \$110,000 THEREFOR FROM THE WATER/SEWER UTILITY
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THE FINANCING THEREOF**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton in the County of Hunterdon as follows:

SECTION ONE:

The Borough of Stockton, in the County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, (the “Borough”) is hereby authorized to make repairs, improvements and/or purchases relating to the water/sewer utility including but not limited to meters, value replacement, leak detection, sewer jetting (I & I) and/or sanitary sewer cleaning/inspection (the “Work”).

SECTION TWO:

The sum of \$110,000.00 is hereby appropriated from the Water/Sewer Utility Capital Improvement Fund of the Borough for the payment of the cost of the Work authorized and described in Section One hereof.

SECTION THREE:

Said Work described in Section One includes improvements that are lawful capital improvements of the Borough having a period of usefulness of at least five (5) years. Said Work shall be made as general improvements and no part of the cost thereof shall be assessed against the property specially benefited.

SECTION FOUR:

The following matters are hereby determined, declared, recited and stated: The said purposes described in Section One of this ordinance are not a current expense and are the property of and the improvement of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey.

SECTION FIVE:

This ordinance shall take effect upon its final passage and publication according to law.

Mayor Lipsen gave an explanation and history of Ordinance 2026-07 Capital Improvement for the Stockton School building. Mayor Lipsen explained the acquisition and the current condition of the school along with grants that have been obtained. This ordinance would set aside money to apply for a grant. Mayor Lipsen went on and discussed the need for a new borough hall, and the school could be an option for that and office space.

Motion to open the public hearing made by Mann and seconded by Gilinger, all were in favor.

Mann stated that no matter what they decide to do with the school, it is important to maintain the value of the school. Stated he would like to see it used as a borough center and a community center and possibly as rental to non-profits or someone else who can carry the costs.

Mayor Lipsen opened the comments to the public.

Public Comment:

Michael Odenald commented on money that was spent for an archaeologist and directed a question to Mann and stated that the borough has owned the school for three years and asked why didn't they do anything with it. Suggested to sell the school for \$400,000 and put it towards the water system, being that it's a must have as Meltzer mentioned earlier. Commented on the cost of maintaining the school and suggested selling both borough hall and the school to a developer for the borough to get \$750,000. Odenwald went on to state he offered a discount on the sale of his barn to the borough to make it a borough hall, OEM center, and a transit center for the Link system to accommodate the median age of 55. Stated that his business at minimum will increase the budget line by 10%. Stated that if any more money is spent on the school, it is a financially irresponsible decision of any municipal government in the State of New Jersey because there's no justification for it other than sentiment.

Mayor Lipsen made the following statements in response to Odenwald's statements. The school is a valuable, historic building. They did take over ownership, and part of that ownership is to protect the building. Our existing borough hall is a problem. It has no parking lot, it has a lot of deficiencies, and it would be quite expensive to bring that up to standards. The office is used by multiple different borough employees, and we do need the office space for real purposes. In addition, we're not now, tonight, spending any money; we're right now setting aside money. We're basically setting it aside in the column, saying it's set aside for use for the school. We're applying for the grant. We're going to find out this fall whether we get the grant or not. Once we find out if we get it or not, we have all that time to come up with the next step of our plan. We'll assess the feasibility, the usability of it. Having a warming center is not a luxury; it's something that the county expects us to have. And maybe they're willing to give us some assistance for that. Right now, we need a building. We no longer have a fire company in town. Delaware Township is serving us very well, but we don't have the building. We don't have a public meeting space. No one can say right now what the final decision would be, which building we're going to keep, whether there's going to be another building in play, but this decision tonight is just this decision.

John McNeill, 53 South Main, stated that he is excited about the prospect of having this center, and all the points that Mr. Mann and the Mayor went through are fantastic. Asked if the archaeological report could be a part of the newsletter and stated he thinks that'd be really interesting for everybody to learn about. Stated that he thinks that the prospect of having a historical center and a town council center along with all the other benefits are really fantastic. I don't see any reason to not move forward with this.

Dennis Bertland, 22 Risler Street, stated that he totally supports the motion to pass the ordinance. Added that as other people have said, this is a valuable historic resource in the identity of the community, and we own the building, and we can control its destiny for the public benefit. Many

communities have done this, as the mayor has said, and there are so many advantages to it; we're going about it carefully and judiciously. But if we don't take these initial steps, we need to protect the building for long-term to protect our investment in it. It's a resource for all the community, and we need to preserve it. Applauded the Council for moving forward with this grant.

James Gallagher, 58 South Main Street, expressed his support for moving forward with the ordinance. Stated that the school building could be a tremendous resource for the town. Expressed that the architect that the borough selected has been fantastic to work with in the past, and hopes that this can work out and bring that asset on board as a useful center, whatever the decision is, for its ultimate disposition.

Mayor Lipsen expressed appreciation to Mann who's been working super hard on this, and also Ms. Brander, who, as a new Council member, invested a lot of time and expertise into the process. And to the rest of the Council, who have been really thinking it through for the taxpayers, and for the future of the community.

Debbie King, 3 South Main Street, stated her support for the ordinance. Stated her appreciation for what the Council has done to preserve the character and the history and legacy of Stockton. And added that she thinks Stockton has invested in a valuable resource for the future.

Andrew Rose stated he wants to express his support and thanked Mann for all his work on this. Stated his sentiment and memory of being in fifth grade when they did the letters to make it a historic landmark. Stated the school has a lot of potential and stated that it's better to invest in the heart and soul than to sell it. Suggested to look for volunteers for some of the work that needs to be done.

Karen Edwards thanked the Mayor and Council for their time and service and stewardship of Stockton Borough. Stated her support of the restoration and preservation of the school. Ms. Edwards gave a history of her background in association with the school and reflected on both of her children attending the school. Stated that the school taught children for 180 years and survived through civil and world wars and the Great Depression. Stated that the school should be given equal opportunity to be valued by choosing to protect and maintain a historical landmark. Stated that she believes that moving forward with the restoration and preservation of the school plays a key role in upholding the town's character, it's history, and legacy.

Mann reminded everyone that by taking this step, it continues the possibilities. Stated he realizes this takes time, but by taking proper steps they can move forward and make something great.

Meltzer stated she echoes what most people in town have mentioned. Spoke on the preservation and improving property values with a historic space, attracting new visitors and local businesses. Stated they have to continue to be thoughtful about how to create a plan with regards to the grants and phased restorations.

Steve Giocondo echoed all the comments made and stated his support of the school. Stated that the school is part of the DNA of Stockton. Thanked the Council for the methodical and planned way they are going about it and stated his appreciation for all the work that has been done.

Brown stated that there will be challenges with the structure, but added that by taking this step, they preserve the value of the property, and it's a practical decision. It increases the value of the property not just by monetary but by historical value.

Hearing no further comments, motion made by Mann and seconded by Brown to close the public hearing, all were in favor.

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Brown to adopt Ordinance 2026-07.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

ORDINANCE 2026-07

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON IN HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING AS A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT REPAIRS, IMPROVEMENTS AND PURCHASES RELATING TO THE STOCKTON SCHOOL BUILDING INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO DRAINAGE AND, MOLD REMEDIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$125,000 THEREFOR FROM THE GENERAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THE FINANCING THEREOF

BE IT ORDAINED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton in the County of Hunterdon as follows:

SECTION ONE:

The Borough of Stockton, in the County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, (the "Borough") is hereby authorized to make repairs, improvements and/or purchases relating to the Stockton School building including but not limited to Drainage and Mold Remediation (the "Work").

SECTION TWO:

The sum of \$125,000.00 is hereby appropriated from the General Capital Improvement Fund of the Borough for the payment of the cost of the Work authorized and described in Section One hereof.

SECTION THREE:

Said Work described in Section One includes improvements that are lawful capital improvements of the Borough having a period of usefulness of at least five (5) years. Said Work shall be made as general improvements and no part of the cost thereof shall be assessed against the property specially benefited.

SECTION FOUR:

The following matters are hereby determined, declared, recited and stated: The said purposes described in Section One of this ordinance are not a current expense and are the property of and the improvement of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey.

SECTION FIVE:

This ordinance shall take effect upon its final passage and publication according to law.

Mayor Lipsen gave a brief explanation for the next Ordinance, 2026-07. Stated that they have not raised the water rate since 2023. Unfortunately, with the aforementioned water leaks, there has been higher usage, higher chemical costs, and also doing the meter installation. Mayor Lipsen continued on with an explanation for the increase. Stated that they have made tremendous gains with our understanding of the needs of the system. Within the next 12 months, they are looking to apply for large funding assistance to make major improvements, but this one is just to make sure that we're remaining solvent. Stated, as a reminder, the water system finances are separate from regular municipal finances.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to open the public hearing, all were in favor.

Brown stated that this is a prudent step and stated every system in the state has seen an increase in costs. Stated that they need to continue funding the system with rising costs and inflation and bringing on employees.

Mayor Lipsen spoke on possible grants, organizations that have helped (free of charge) detect leaks, and train employees to better understand the system. Stated that this is a step to help pay for some of the basic costs.

Brown added that the GIS mapping system is a foundational effort and the we were able to get that for free.

Attorney Maddox noted an error in the amount of the first Whereas clause that is for historical reference and stated that it should be \$3.85 per gallon not \$4 dollars.

Mayor Lipsen stated that the first bills with the increase will be in June.

Gilinger stated that they are getting to a point with this work where we're not just looking for the problems we have to fix; we're looking at the things we can improve. We are using this to look at the future of this system. Added that it's something we have to do if we want to continue having a great water system in a very small town.

Meltzer stated that this is a proactive approach and that's its incremental. Meltzer spoke on small increments of rate increases rather than one large one for a lesser impact to the residents. It helps people manage it better over time with a proactive approach.

Fisher commented that all these points being made are good with what Council has stated. Stated he liked the incremental approach and it being easier on the residents.

Michael Odenwald stated that it was great to see all the collaboration tonight even though he disagrees with a lot of it. Inquired about his \$286 bill and a fixed fee. Stated that the borough needs to look at all the resources if it wants to make a dent on its obligations. Stated his support on soliciting bids for selling the system to a private entity. Stated that they need to look at other assets other than the school, but applauded everyone's efforts, but stated that the school has no value whatsoever with respect to the identification of the town.

Mayor Lipsen addressed comments made by Odenwald. He questioned Mr. Odenwald's characterization of a bad financial state. Stated that the town is on solid footing. There are needs that must get paid for, and they are doing their best to minimize cost by seeking grants which allow things to be paid for by money that we paid into taxes from the county, from the state, and from the federal government. Gave an example of the new sewer pump generator being paid for with money from the county and federal government. Stated that they are looking to make some major improvements to the water system, with major funding that's not available to private water companies. Stated that if we sell our water system, the cost of those upgrades is going to be passed on to the customers. We're not saying that that is a closed door, maybe it's something that we decide to do, but, at this point, we are looking at all options, and so far, our plan is to see what we can do about upgrading our own water system. They have spoken to some private companies, but at this point they are following this course. We may decide to change that at some point. Mayor Lipsen added that they are looking at resources as closely as they can, and are working super hard on it and making lots of personal sacrifices to make sure that we're serving our community.

Andrew Rose stated that he wanted to say that he is absolutely in agreement at this point with what Council is trying to do. Commented that he is always going to be for as much autonomy as possible. He has been here for 51 years and stated that he has the best water around. Stated his support to keep the system and not have it beholden to an entity that doesn't care.

Jim Gallagher, 38 South Main Street, stated that he had the opportunity to meet a couple of the new water and sewer workers. They came to his house, contacted him earlier this week, about replacing a water meter that wasn't working. They came to the house, they were fantastic, they got it done in probably 20-25 minutes. Stated that he agreed with Mr. Rose and added that Council has done its due diligence on these things and expressed his appreciation

Steve Giocondo stated he agrees with Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Rose and stated that the borough should not sell the water system. Added that he would not be in favor of selling that resource, because once we sell it, it's gone. Stated that he wanted to point out that he has met some of these newer employees. They're great, and their backgrounds are solid, and couldn't be in better hands and stated to Brown, that he has done an awesome job and really getting it in shape is something to really be proud of.

Hans Felixb stated his support for keeping the water supply. Asked if there is a plan to maintain this knowledge and how is that going to be maintained for the future. Thanked Council for their work.

Mayor Lipsen replied to Mr. Felix's comments. Right now, we have more water employees than we have had in quite some time, though they're working fewer hours than maybe the previous employees were. They are in the process of diffusing knowledge through to our employees. In addition, we have new leadership. Also, within our office staff, we're helping to coordinate between the new office staff and our water departments. The goal is to share the knowledge with them, so that they can try to fully understand the system. Mayor Lipsen also reminded the public that the members of Council pay the same water fees, so we're raising our own water rates, too. We're all in the same boat together.

Gilinger commented that he thinks it is a very good thing that the borough owns and operates its own water system. It's not to make a profit off of it; it's to provide the best service they can to the people in the community. Reiterated that he is speaking for himself.

Brown stated, regarding the GIS mapping, over the summer, Bob Ent was out there in 95-degree weather helping the GIS mappers locate valves and curb cuts, and we understand that he did pass along a tremendous amount of information.

Hearing no further public comment, motion to close the public hearing made by Gilinger and seconded by Mann, all were in favor.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Mann to adopt Ordinance 2026-08 as amended, as Attorney Maddox pointed out.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

BOROUGH OF STOCKTON

ORDINANCE 2026-08

AN ORDINANCE INCREASING WATER RATES FOR USERS OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON WATER SYSTEM AND FURTHER AMENDING AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE PRESCRIBING CHARGES, RENTALS, RULES AND REGULATION FOR THE MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEM FOR THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY"

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton charges users of the Borough of Stockton Water System (“Water System”) based on a usage rate of \$3.85 per thousand gallon for all size meters and a flat rate user (annual) charge for all size meters of \$400.00; and

WHEREAS, the current rates have not been increased since 2023; and

WHEREAS, due to the needs of the Water System, including, but not limited to, the need to install and replace water meters and other obligations to meet water supply system needs, it is necessary for the Council to increase the applicable user rate and flat annual user charge at this time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, as follows:

1. User and Flat Rate Increases. The Borough hereby amends its water system user rates as follows, and to go into effect on April 1, 2026:

The following rates are hereby adopted for the use of water in the Borough of Stockton Water System based on meter readings:

All size meters: A rate of \$4.00 per thousand gallons

The flat rate user charge per year for all size meters is \$500.00.

2. Repealer. All ordinances and resolutions or parts thereof inconsistent with this ordinance are repealed.

3. Severability. If any section, paragraph, subsection, clause or provision of this ordinance shall be adjudged by the courts to be invalid, such adjudication shall apply only to the section, paragraph, subsection, clause or provision so adjudged and the remainder of this ordinance shall be valid and enforceable.

4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect upon its adoption and publication as provided by law.

RESOLUTIONS

Motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Mann to approve Resolution 2026-48.

Attorney Maddox noted the following changes and stated that this is the resolution that allows the municipality to make the application to the New Jersey Historic Trust for which the funds were adopted pursuant to the capital ordinance for the school earlier tonight. This resolution is to authorize the submission of the application. There were three revisions under the now, therefore, be it resolved. There were two additions that were language from some of the samples that the architect provided, so the one change would be, number four, the facts, figures, and information contained in the application, including all attachments, are true and correct. And number five would be the borough agrees to abide by the time frame set forth in the grant guidelines. Stated that they're more boilerplate than anything, but it's still good to have that language in the resolution.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

Stockton Borough Council**Resolution #26-48****Authorizing Application for 2026 New Jersey Historic Trust Capital Level I Grant**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton owns the Stockton School, a historic structure which is in need of remediation of environmental conditions and site drainage work; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to undertake and fund this work by pursuing a Capital Level I Grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust, which requires a 3:2 match; and

WHEREAS, the Borough will seek a \$150,000 grant and will appropriate \$100,000 for purposes of funding its portion of the work if the grant is awarded; and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2026, the Borough adopted Ordinance 2026-07, which authorizes the Borough to make repairs, improvements and/or purchases in furtherance of the foregoing work for an amount up to \$125,000 from the General Capital Improvement Fund for the payment of the cost of this work; and

WHEREAS, the Borough's matching funds shall be available upon the effective date of Ordinance 2026-07.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey that, upon Ordinance 2026-07 going into effect:

1. The Mayor shall be authorized and directed to complete the application materials on behalf of the Borough in furtherance of the Historic Trust Capital Level I Grant identified in the "Whereas" clauses.
2. If awarded the Grant, Borough matching funds in the amount of \$100,000 are committed to complete this work within the required time frame.
3. Any funds received through said Grant will be expended in accordance with the terms and conditions of N.J.A.C. 5:101 and the grant agreement to be executed with the New Jersey Historic Trust.
4. The facts, figures and information contained in the application, including all attachments, are true and correct.
5. The Borough agrees to abide by the time frame set forth in the grant guidelines.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor to public comment.

Michael Odenwald stated that he felt he brought awareness to the importance of participation. Referenced Gilinger's remark of him saying that we are not looking to make a profit on our water system and went on making remarks of a 1.8 million debt and stated it needs to be reconsidered to not selling. Stated he applauds the people for standing up and speaking their sentiments with regards to the school. Stated that he got the figure of 1.8 million from the CFO giving him the budget in which he went through it. Commented that he saw the CFO walking past his house and he yelled out to her asking if the CFO was going to attend the meeting, and the CFO said no. He questioned why the CFO was not on the meeting. Commented on the Council needing a solution on the school and the utility.

Mayor Lipsen noted some corrections for the record: We do not have a \$1.8 million debt. I'm not sure exactly what Mr. Odenwald is saying. It might be our overall expenditures, including to the county and the schools. It might be our total tax income to the school districts, but we definitely do not have a \$1.8 million debt. Also, our CFO is exceptional. CFOs do not typically attend Council meetings, except for budget hearings, so that they can be available for questions, so there's no expectation for CFOs to be on meetings. Ms. McDaniel, our CFO, is very, very professional and does an excellent job. We're so lucky to have her.

Andrew Rose stated that one of the most important things about more people getting involved, the more involved and the more informed we are, the better. Commended Council for keeping it professional.

Debbie King echoed the sentiment on hearing the meeting and civility and respect that Mayor Lipsen shows to people is really inspiring.

Brown stated that he is stepping off the dais for a moment to comment. He has been in circumstances where employers have not valued employees, and thinks that the team is being built here, and encouraged people to spend a moment to get to know the DPW because they're doing a great job. And that happens at every stage back at Borough Hall in the office, Diane, Kim Franklin, Laurie --

they're working hard. Joanna Slagle, our lawyers, they're really working hard. It's important to maintain respect for them, and to honor and value their work.

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

NEXT MEETING

Mayor Lipsen announced the next regular meeting is April 20, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Laurie A. Courter

Laurie A. Courter, Borough Clerk