

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION AND  
AGENDA MEETING  
March 8, 2022  
7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**SALUTE TO COLORS**

Mayor Zdichocki invited all those present to stand in a salute to the colors.

**MAYOR'S STATEMENT AS TO COMPLIANCE WITH P.L. 1975**

Adequate Notice of this Meeting has been provided according to the Open Public Meetings Act, Assembly Bill 1030. Notice of this Meeting was included in the Annual Meeting Notice sent to the New Jersey Herald and the Daily Record on January 5, 2022 and was placed on the Official Bulletin Board in the Municipal Building and on the official website of the Borough of Stanhope.

In the event the Mayor and Council have not addressed all items on this Agenda by 10:00 PM and they are of the opinion that they cannot complete the Agenda in a reasonable time period, the Mayor and Council may exercise their option to continue this meeting at an agreed to date, time and place. Please turn off all cell phones for the duration of this Meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Council Members:

Councilwoman Kuncken – present	Councilman Thornton – present
Councilman Riccardi – present	Councilman Vance – present
Councilman Romano – present	Councilman Wronko – present

Mayor Zdichocki – present

Mayor Zdichocki amended the agenda and moved Resolution 072-22 forward.

**Mayor's Appointment**

**Resolution 072-22**

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING ANGELICA L. SABATINI AS  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER/TAX COLLECTOR/QPA OF  
THE BOROUGH OF STANHOPE**

**WHEREAS**, the current Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector for the Borough of Stanhope, Dana Mooney, will retire effective March 31, 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough is now in need of a Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:9-140.10a, the Governing Body of every municipality in New Jersey is to appoint a Chief Financial Officer with a term of (4) years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Stanhope has advertised for the position of Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector/QPA for the Borough; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough has determined that Angelica L. Sabatini, a Certified Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector/QPA with the State of New Jersey, meets the statutory qualifications to hold the position; and

**WHEREAS**, Angelica L. Sabatini has agreed to accept such appointment, effective March 30, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, the appointment of Angelica L. Sabatini as Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector/QPA shall be at a salary of \$95,000.00 per year.

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Sabatini has informed the Borough of previously scheduled vacations, totaling fifteen (15) work days in 2022, and the Borough has agreed to accommodate the vacation leave in 2022 only.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, that the appointment of Angelica L. Sabatini as Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector/QPA as described above, at an annual salary of \$95,000, starting March 30, 2022, for a term of four (4) years, is hereby authorized; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Ms. Sabatini shall be permitted a maximum total of fifteen (15) vacation days for 2022 due to pre-planned vacation prior to hire, and as of January 1, 2023, she shall receive vacation day benefits in accordance with Borough Handbook and applicable policies, which currently provides a total of 12 vacation days annually for employees employed by the Borough for up to seven (7) years; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council are hereby authorized to take all such actions necessary to finalize the appointment of Angelica L. Sabatini as Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector/QPA.

On motion by Councilman Romano, seconded by Councilman Wronko and unanimously carried by voice vote, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted.

Mayor Zdichocki called for a five-minute recess and invited Ms. Sabatini to come forward to meet the council members. The Mayor and council congratulated Ms. Sabatini and welcomed her to Stanhope.

## **2022 BUDGET DISCUSSION**

Administrator McNeilly stated this evenings budget discussion will include capital and salaries. Materials for review were sent to the governing body, by the CFO, shortly after the last meeting.

Dana Mooney, CFO, stated she has provided a handout with recent note interest rates. Two versions of the capital budget were presented. The first is the capital budget as approved at the previous meeting. The second capital budget includes personal protective equipment for the Fire Department. The final budget page, which is currently calculated with the 2% salary increase, has been revised to include the Recycling Tonnage Grant. This does not really change anything because on the other side there is a revenue for the same amount anticipated. It is essentially an even exchange. Ms. Mooney also provided a raise comparison for the employees affected if the 2% salary increase is changed to a different percentage.

*Capital Budget* - Councilwoman Kuncken stated a committee meeting was held earlier this evening with the Fire Department. The Fire Department has a 2022 capital request which Ms. Mooney had not received. Councilwoman Kuncken stated the governing body now has to determine if the request will be included in the 2022 budget. Ms. Mooney stated Capital Version A is the version the governing body agreed to at the last meeting. The Capital Version B includes the personal protective gear totaling \$15,700. There is an old Ordinance, 2018-08, which has \$4,743 still available which can be used toward this purchase. The original ordinance was fire department related. Using the remaining funds would close out this ordinance. Councilman Vance asked for clarification on the backup documents provided. There are four documents. One for \$19,323, another for \$9,441 and two with the same amount of \$6,042. Ms. Mooney stated the \$19,323 was a quote the Fire Department received in August of 2021. The Fire Department had a question regarding what they were going to receive in their capital budget this year and Ms. Mooney stated she had never received their request. The Fire Department then sent two requisitions, one for \$9,441 and another for \$6,042. Mayor Zdichocki stated the procedures and policies were explained to the Fire Department members and Ms. Mooney has explained where the funds are coming from. Administrator McNeilly stated it is the decision of the council to decide which version of the capital plan presented will be chosen. Version A does not include the Fire Department request and Version B includes the request which totals approximately \$16,000. This is a personal protective equipment request and it is based upon a need. Councilman Riccardi asked if the price quote is still valid. Ms. Mooney stated the quote is still good and it is through the state contract. Administrator McNeilly stated the Fire Department was asked to monitor their equipment closely

to be aware when equipment, which has reached its expiration, needs to be replaced. Much discussion took place regarding the problem that arose with this request not being received by the CFO in a timely manner. Councilwoman Kuncken stated, at the request of the Fire Chief, the Finance Committee will meet with the Fire Department each year at budget time to review their budget and requests to avoid any issues. Ms. Mooney stated in the past she was included in the discussions early on during the budget discussions. This year she was not brought in until the end and that makes her job more difficult. Ms. Mooney asked to have the CFO involved more from the beginning of the budget discussions in the future. Administrator McNeilly stated in the future all submissions will be submitted electronically and that will reduce the possibility of papers being lost. Ms. Mooney stated \$10,957 will be from the capital improvement fund which will be fully funded and \$4,743 will come from an older Ordinance, 2018-08.

Councilman Wronko stated when there is a rise in the number of members joining the Fire Department, the old equipment is issued first, but there could be a need to purchase additional equipment that could be unforeseen. Administrator McNeilly stated that is one of the reasons why the fore fathers wrote the ordinance in 1905, which calls for only 50 standing members. The reason for this is still just as important today, as it was back then when gear may have been \$12.00 per member, as it is today at a cost of \$1,200 per member.

Mayor Zdichocki polled the governing body asking if they were in favor of selecting Version B of the Capital Budget which includes the Fire Department's capital request. The results are as follows: Councilwoman Kuncken – yes; Councilman Vance – yes; Councilman Wronko – abstained; Councilman Riccardi – yes; Councilman Thornton – yes; Councilman Romano – yes. The governing body approved Version B which includes the Fire Department's capital request.

Budget Totals – Ms. Mooney stated the last page of the budget has been updated to include the Recycling Tonnage Grant funds. The funds have increased over those received last year.

Salaries – Mayor Zdichocki asked the governing body to review the spreadsheet showing the dollar figures and percentages for salary increases ranging from 2.0% to 2.75%. Councilman Vance stated he is in favor of 2.75%. Councilwoman Kuncken asked for confirmation on the cost of living adjustment (COLA) for this year. Ms. Mooney replied the COLA is 2.5% for 2022. Councilwoman Kuncken stated she is in favor of a 2.5% salary increase. Councilman Wronko stated he supports the 2.75% as well. Councilman Riccardi stated he is in favor of 2.75%. Councilman Thornton stated, in light of present-day circumstances, he is agreeable to 2.5%. Councilman Romano stated he is in favor of 2.5%. The result of the poll was a tie. Mayor Zdichocki voted to break the tie and stated she is in favor of a 2.5% increase. As a result of the poll, it was decided the percentage of increase for salaries will be 2.5%.

Mayor Zdichocki stated this concludes the discussions for the 2022 budget. Mayor Zdichocki thanked Ms. Mooney for her work on the budget. Administrator McNeilly stated the budget will be introduced at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Ms. Mooney thanked the Mayor and Council and stated having Nisivoccia as the Borough Auditors has been very beneficial. The audit has been completed and the final report may not be available prior to her retirement but she is thankful it is done. The Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Mooney again for her work.

## **ENGINEER'S REPORT**

Kelly Place/Furnace Street Project - Eric Keller, Borough Engineer, stated there is a change order resolution on tonight's agenda for the Kelly Place and Furnace Street project. Mr. Keller stated the change order meets his approval for the work done. The amount of the initial change order request from the contractor was reduced by a third. The plantings will be done when weather permits. There are some punch list items to be completed as well.

Sparta Road – Mr. Keller stated there are some punch list items to be completed on Sparta Road when the weather permits. The trail issues will be addressed after the contracts have been closed out.

Capital Projects - Mr. Keller stated a proposal has been prepared for the Valley Road/Delaware Avenue Project which is a Local Aid Project which has to be completed this year. Mr. Keller stated he anticipated that the Elizabeth Avenue Project would be done and he has submitted a proposal for that project to Administrator McNeilly. The proposal for the water main replacement is in the process of being finalized, in the event that it moves forward.

Crosswalk Study – Mr. Keller stated work is also being done for the crosswalk study requested by the Police Chief. It has been two years since this was first discussed. New pricing for the counts has to be obtained.

Mr. Keller stated he hopes to have the two outstanding proposals finalized and sent to Administrator McNeilly by the end of the week.

Valley Road/Delaware Avenue Project - Councilwoman Kuncken asked Mr. Keller to describe the work which will be done for the Valley Road/Delaware Avenue Project. Mr. Keller stated the project will include sidewalk replacement in the areas where there is serious deterioration, curb replacement similar to what has been done in other neighborhoods, ADA ramps, milling and resurfacing and installing echo style castings. Administrator McNeilly stated the DPW will replace the saddles and the services to the curb. The DPW Superintendent will start the work as soon as the weather permits. The main on one side of Delaware Avenue is located in the grass, not in the road. On Valley Road there will be an issue with traffic during times when students are being picked up.

Mr. Keller stated the intent for the water main replacement for Sunset Avenue/Overhill Road, is to put it back into the same trench. On Mountainview Road it will be looped. The water services will also have to be replaced to the house. Administrator McNeilly stated this will be done due to the new legislation which was passed regarding the requirement to remove any lead services or galvanized pipes. The homes will have to be inspected from inside to determine what type of piping is in use. Stanhope Borough has done a great deal to eliminate lead in the system by changing over to the ceramic water meters years ago. This neighborhood, consisting of 36 homes, likely contains galvanized pipe. Mr. Keller stated a determination will have to be made regarding what exists from the street to the house. Mayor Zdichocki stated research is ongoing to find out how this work will be funded.

Stormwater – Administrator McNeilly stated the costs for stormwater inspections have increased and he asked Mr. Keller if he had any updates. Mr. Keller stated the regulations require his office to conduct quarterly stormwater inspections and to inspect after every significant rainstorm, which DEP has determined to be one inch. Last year, there were five extra inspections. Mr. Keller stated the budget for this year was approximated based on last years totals. The requirement also creates more work for the DPW with regard to the maintenance issues.

The mayor and council thanked Mr. Keller for attending this evenings meeting.

## **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Administrator McNeilly stated he had no report for this evening.

Trees – Councilman Wronko stated he sent an email earlier regarding an issue with a tree located at 22 Elizabeth Avenue. Administrator McNeilly stated there is a point on the curve, across from 17 Elizabeth, where the properties meet with the property owned by the liquor store on Route 183. The only trees which can be followed up on by the Code Enforcement Official are dead trees. Administrator McNeilly stated with the recent wind there was a tree that fell on Elizabeth Avenue and on West Drive which were cleared by the DPW. Councilman Wronko asked what the Borough does to identify at risk trees. Mayor Zdichocki stated anyone can contact the Shade Tree Commission and they will review the situation. Administrator McNeilly stated, with the current work force, it is not possible to identify every tree with an issue. Any issues with trees are complaint driven. Residents have no problem contacting the office when they believe the tree in question is a Borough tree. Mayor Zdichocki suggested that neighbors who know of a dead tree on their neighbor's property should notify their neighbor, which makes the neighbor responsible

if something should happen. They should also contact the Shade Tree Commission and Code Enforcement. Administrator McNeilly stated any issues with live trees or damaged live trees would be reviewed by the Shade Tree Commission.

*Towpath Lane Driveway Apron Repair* – Councilman Vance stated back in November he had mentioned that he received some complaints from residents on Towpath Lane regarding their driveway aprons and the need for repair. Administrator McNeilly stated those repairs have not been completed to date due to weather conditions. There are also some manholes which need to be reset. The DPW Superintendent does have this on his list of items to be fixed.

## **WORK SESSION**

*Sussex-Warren Energy Cooperative* – Administrator McNeilly stated an email was received from the Sussex-Warren Energy Cooperative which he has forwarded to the governing body. The BGS rate will be determined by March 25, 2022. At that time, a determination will be made with regard to whether or not the cooperative should release the bid for the energy auction to be held in late April or early May. Councilman Thornton stated, initially when the program began, the expectation was that there would be a ten percent savings for the residents. Administrator McNeilly stated when the program was first offered, the Borough did set the expectation for residents to save ten percent or the total of one month's payment, the Borough did not have to approve it until after the auction took place and the rate could never be higher than the BGS rate, which were all favorable to the governing body. At the next auction, all three of those items disappeared and the cooperative stated as long as the auction resulted in a savings of at least a penny it would be accepted. There have been occasions where the BGS rate went lower than the cooperative price. Councilman Thornton asked if that information was relayed to the residents or the governing body at that time. Administrator McNeilly stated the information was not made available. Administrator McNeilly stated the governing body needs to decide as to whether or not to remain in the cooperative with the current parameters. If the Borough is going to opt-out, this has to be done as soon as possible so the cooperative can update their paperwork to the BPU prior to the auction. Much discussion took place regarding the program. Councilman Thornton asked if there is a way to keep the residents better informed if the rates change. Administrator McNeilly stated if the governing body wants more administrative oversight of this program, then his recommendation is for the Borough to withdraw from the program. Every time the contract ends, very wordy documents are sent out by JCP&L stating they have been informed that the provider is terminating your service and the minute residents receive those letters, the phone starts ringing in the Clerk's office asking for an explanation. Councilman Romano stated the BGS rate can change many times during the time period for the cooperative contract and monitoring it can be time consuming and it is a gamble. Administrator McNeilly stated JCP&L can ask the BPU for a rate change at any time for a multitude of reasons and if BPU approves it, it happens. Councilman Riccardi asked if the information is posted on the Borough website when it is received. Administrator McNeilly stated he believes the information is posted on the website as a news article.

Mayor Zdichocki took a straw poll of the governing body and asked if they want to remain in the Sussex-Warren Area Energy Cooperative. The results are as follows: Councilwoman Kuncken – yes and information needs to be posted on the website; Councilman Vance – yes; Councilman Wronko – yes, residents can opt-out if they wish; Councilman Riccardi – yes; Councilman Thornton – yes; Councilman Romano – yes. Mayor Zdichocki stated as a result of the poll, the Borough will remain in the program and the information should be placed on the website as soon as it becomes available.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Zdichocki offered the following resolutions which were read by title.

### **Resolution 068-22**

### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 FOR THE FURNACE STREET, KELLY PLACE AND WATERLOO ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

**WHEREAS**, a contract was entered into for professional construction services for the Furnace Street, Kelly Place and Waterloo Road Improvement Project between the Borough of Stanhope and Reivax Contracting Corporation, for an original contract price of \$192,193.50 by the adoption of Resolution No. 175-21 on September 28, 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, Reivax Contracting Corporation has submitted Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$15,010.84, which resulted from a concrete subbase within Kelly Place where the drainage improvements were being installed. The net amount of the Change Order after the adjustment of \$4,576.00 is \$10,434.84; and

**WHEREAS**, although this was not an item within the construction documents, the Borough Engineer, Eric Keller, approved of an extra work cost with Reivax Contracting Corporation and their subcontractor, CrossRoads Paving Construction for a total net cost increase of \$10,434.84.

**WHEREAS**, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that there are available funds to award Change Order No. 1.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, authorizes Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$10,434.84 for the Furnace Street, Kelly Place and Waterloo Road Improvement Project, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-11.3 et seq., and increasing the overall contract cost to \$202,628.34.

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, seconded by Councilman Thornton and unanimously carried by the following roll call vote, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Kuncken – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Riccardi – yes	Councilman Vance – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wronko – yes

**CONSENT AGENDA** (All items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the Borough Council and were enacted by one motion of the Borough Council with no separate discussion.)

**Resolution 069-22 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF ESCROW FUNDS**

**WHEREAS**, Isolatek International (US Mineral) had placed funds on deposit in escrow with the Borough of Stanhope for engineering fees for Block 11202, Lot 5 on July 22, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, Eric Keller, Borough Engineer, has stated that the project is complete and there is no further billing forthcoming; and

**WHEREAS**, there are unused funds in the amount of \$754.92

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, that a warrant be drawn to the homeowners below in the designated amount representing a refund of unused escrow funds, as follows:

Isolatek International (US Mineral) \$754.92  
41 Furnace Street  
Stanhope, New Jersey 07874

**Resolution 070-22 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF ESCROW FUNDS**

**WHEREAS**, Chris Olivo had placed funds on deposit in escrow with the Borough of Stanhope for engineering fees for Block 10209, Lot 1 on November 4, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, Eric Keller, Borough Engineer, has stated that the project is complete and there is no further billing forthcoming; and

**WHEREAS**, there are unused funds in the amount of \$500.48.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, that a warrant be drawn to the homeowners below in the designated amount representing a refund of unused escrow funds, as follows:

Chris Olivo \$500.48  
10 Deer Run  
Fredon, New Jersey 07860

**Resolution 071-22**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF  
REDEMPTION MONIES TO OUTSIDE LIEN HOLDER**

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector has received payment for the redemption of Tax Title Lien No. 2021-003, representing 2020 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11102, Lot 13 known as 33 Linden Ave, assessed to Jonathan Kumetz & Allison Zotynia, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector certifies that reimbursement is now required to be made to the following lien holder for the required redemption amounts as shown below:

To Lienholder:	Ridgeback Ventures LLC P.O. Box 503 Mount Freedom, NJ 07970
Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2021-003 and Interest to Date of Meeting \$ 595.02 Premium Paid by Lienholder <u>800.00</u>
Total From Current Fund:	\$ 595.02
Total From Tax Premium Account	800.00

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, that the Borough Treasurer be authorized to prepare the necessary check as stated above and to forward same to the lien holder.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a certified copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Borough Chief Financial Officer/Tax Collector.

On motion by Councilman Riccardi, seconded by Councilman Wronko and unanimously carried by the following roll call vote, the foregoing resolutions were duly adopted.

Roll Call:  
Councilwoman Kuncken – yes                      Councilman Thornton – yes  
Councilman Riccardi – yes                      Councilman Vance – yes  
Councilman Romano – yes                      Councilman Wronko – yes

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

**Resolution 073-22**

**RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE  
BOROUGH OF STANHOPE AUTHORIZING PAYMENT  
OF BILLS**

**WHEREAS**, the Chief Finance Officer has certified that funds are available in the proper account; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief Finance Officer has approved payment upon certification from the Borough Department Heads that the goods and/or services have been rendered to the Borough;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope that the current bills list, dated March 8, 2022 and on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the Chief Finance Officer and approved by the Chief Finance Officer for payment, be paid.

On motion by Councilman Romano, seconded by Councilman Vance and unanimously carried by the following roll call vote the foregoing resolution was duly adopted.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Kuncken – yes  
Councilman Riccardi – yes  
Councilman Romano – yes

Councilman Thornton – yes  
Councilman Vance – yes  
Councilman Wronko – yes

**AGENDA ITEMS**

All items listed on the Agenda for March 22, 2022 were approved.

**CITIZEN'S TO BE HEARD**

Mayor Zdichocki opened the meeting to the public after advising attendees that there is a five (5) minute time limit for each speaker.

Maria Grizzetti, 13 Sparta Road, asked if a notice could be placed in a water/sewer bill mailing to inform residents prior to them receiving the energy program letter. Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough does not know ahead of time when the letter will be sent. Ms. Grizzetti stated when she receives paperwork, like the energy letter, and she is not sure who it comes from she throws it away. If a notice went out ahead of time, saying a letter will be coming within a certain timeframe, it might help people now it is legitimate. Administrator McNeilly stated unfortunately what will happen is people will call the office to say they have not gotten their letter.

Seeing no one from the public wishing to speak, Mayor Zdichocki closed the public portion of the meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Mayor Zdichocki stated a closed session was not necessary for this evening.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Councilman Romano, seconded by Councilman Vance and unanimously carried by voice vote the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Approved:

Linda Chirip  
Deputy Clerk for  
Ellen Horak, RMC  
Borough Clerk