

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
December 13, 2022
6:00 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.

Furthermore, notice of the meeting time change was sent to the New Jersey Herald and Daily Record on December 2, 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

2023 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Angelica Sabatini, CFO, stated new budget sheets have been provided showing actual data which was charged for prior years. The last budget discussion ended with section 7 of the budget book.

8-a Road Maintenance – Administrator McNeilly stated there is no change on the overall dollar amount. Councilman Vance asked why *Line 10529012 Overtime* has increased. Ms. Sabatini replied the charged amount for this year is as of October and with the salary increase the overtime amount will increase. No changes were made.

8-b Solid Waste – Ms. Sabatini stated these figures are estimates based on what is being seen with other contract renewals. Administrator McNeilly stated the current contract expires May 31, 2023. A resolution to authorize the Borough to go out to bid will be on the work session or business meeting during the month of January. Administrator McNeilly stated he will be consulting with the Borough Attorney. This bid process has very specific criteria to be followed. Much discussion took place regarding the projected increase in the cost. Mayor Zdichocki stated information regarding ways to reduce recycling costs will be discussed in the future. Administrator McNeilly stated the tipping fee for solid waste has been flat and will most likely continue to be. However, the fuel and the manpower costs are the variables. Some discussion took place regarding what recycling issues may arise for the new contract. Ms. Sabatini stated two neighbors have indicated their costs have risen by fifty percent. The trucks with the mechanical arms were brought up as options for those towns but they did not like that option. Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough does not have enough in-house office management to change over to that process and the upheaval in the familiarity for the 3700 people involved. The administrative side of trash cans being missing, knocked over etc. would be too much to handle. In Mt. Olive, they did switch over

to the mechanical arm and the cost of the original trash can purchase was worked into the contract. Each customer received a 96-gallon roller or a 62-gallon. Then the issue arises when there is a change in tenant or ownership and who pays for a damaged can or missing can. The Borough does not have enough staff to handle the customer service end for all the cans that will be broken or missing. Much discussion took place regarding recycling and the possibility of having a recycling coach to educate the public. This budget is set at \$413,900. No changes were made.

8-c Bldg & Grounds – Councilman Riccardi asked about the funds for the crosswalks and stated the budgeted amount for 2023 is not needed. Administrator McNeilly stated the crosswalk light at Maple Terrace was funded in 2019. Then a year was skipped. The funds for Maple in 2021 should still be sitting somewhere. The crosswalk for Lloyd was budgeted in 2022. Administrator McNeilly stated a confirmation will be made to determine the funds for two crosswalks are still available and then the \$10,000 budgeted for this year can be removed. Councilman Vance asked why the budgeted amount is approximately five times more than what was charged in 2022. Councilwoman Kuncken stated \$10,000 is going to be removed from the 2023 figure. Administrator McNeilly stated all of the 2022 charges have not been recorded to date. Much discussion took place regarding why the budgeted amounts for the past few years was much higher than the actual costs expended. Administrator McNeilly stated there are things which go wrong and are unexpected. Funds have to be available for those instances. It is his recommendation that lowering the budget to other than what is listed will do real damage to the operation. Councilman Riccardi stated if you take into account the \$10,000 for the crosswalks which was budgeted in past years, but was not expended, the difference between the budgeted amount and the actual is only about \$5,000. Councilwoman Kuncken stated the budgeting process is philosophical. Do you budget for just what will be needed or do you budget for the what if situations? Once the money is removed and something goes wrong where does the funding come from. Councilman Romano stated we are very good at micromanaging and focusing on one line at a time which is a good thing, but at the same time we sometimes lose perspective on the big picture. We need surplus and we need to build surplus. We have to bank for a rainy day and we are lucky we have not had a rainy day. There has to be a balance. Administrator McNeilly stated that is what has been done and everyone knows that just because there is a budgeted amount for a line item does not mean that it has to be spent.

9-a Shade Tree – No changes were made.

9-b Vehicle Maintenance – Administrator McNeilly stated this is another example of how some years are good and some years are bad. On this evenings agenda there is a resolution for repairs to the mason dump which is an example of a bad year. Councilman Wronko asked how funds were acquired for 2021 where the budgeted amount was \$44,000 and the actual expenditure was \$69,000. Ms. Sabatini stated this would have been done with a budget transfer. Budget transfers do not appear as part of this report. Only the original budget is shown. No changes were made.

9-c Board of Health – No changes were made.

10-a Recreation – No changes were made.

10-b Environmental Commission – No changes were made.

11-a Electricity – Administrator McNeilly stated up until June the Borough was in the SEM program, which is the municipal version of the energy aggregation program. The SEM program encountered the same problem as the other program where they could not get a rate to compete with the basic rate. All those increases which were held off briefly by the SEM are now exhausted and we will see those costs increase. Thankfully, we did adjust the costs for this a few years ago. There is a sufficient amount of funding available. Mayor Zdichocki asked Administrator McNeilly if the new lights on Sparta Road will affect the costs and if the old lights will be removed at some point. Administrator McNeilly stated the new lights are LED so they should not pose an issue. Administrator McNeilly will talk with JCP&L about turning off the COBRA lights in the future. The light by the entrance to the high school cannot be removed.

11-a Telephones – Mayor Zdichocki asked if the current telephone system, which was put together with gum and goo last year, is still working. Administrator McNeilly stated the system is working and the repairman is still in the area and has replacement parts. No changes were made.

11-b Petroleum Products – Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough has done well over the past few years. Because the number was always left alone, it would go up and come down without affecting us. However, this year there will be a big change in costs. Administrator McNeilly stated all of the generators run on diesel. Councilman Wronko asked why there is a negative number listed. Ms. Sabatini stated those were reimbursements from the Ambulance Squad and the school. They pay the Borough back for fuel costs.

12-a Condo Services – No changes were made.

12-a PERS etc. – Ms. Sabatini stated the pension bill is based on recorded salaries for the prior year.

12-b Stormwater Management – Administrator McNeilly stated this is another example of a state mandated requirement, which is not funded by the state. The retention basins have to be inspected by the engineer after each rainfall where more than an inch of rain has fallen. Manuals were also required to be written. Councilman Thornton asked what types of items are typically charged to *Line 10551021 Supplies*. Administrator McNeilly asked Ms. Sabatini to make a note to check on this line item. To date there are no charges for 2022.

12-c Municipal Court – Mayor Zdichocki stated there has been talk about moving over to a County Court System. Administrator McNeilly stated nothing is going to happen without legislation. Typically, a pilot county would be selected to see how the process would function.

13-a Capital/Grant Expenditures/Reserve/Debt Service – Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Fire Department is receiving a grant for the oxygen tanks and personal protective equipment. At this time, the money in their capital request will remain in place until everything is resolved with the grant. Administrator McNeilly stated for the 2023 capital the Fire Department requested 10 bottles costing \$17,500. Councilman Wronko stated the grant request was for bottles and personal protective equipment. Administrator McNeilly stated the total amount for the grant needs to be accounted for in either the capital budget or the expenditure side. Administrator McNeilly stated the Fire Department will be contacted and asked to supply the correct dollar amounts.

14-a Water Operating Revenue – Councilman Romano asked what level of support, if any, does the Borough plan to take for residents who will be required to change out the lead water lines, even if it is in the form of a loan. Administrator McNeilly confirmed that the number of water line services replaced this year has met the quota required annually for this year. Councilman Romano stated if a loan system is going to be implemented, it has to be budgeted for. Administrator McNeilly stated the state is mandating these replacements but is not funding them. For small towns like Stanhope, the replacement costs fall to the homeowner. In larger cities, the costs are covered by those municipalities. Mayor Zdichocki stated there are many issues to be figured out such as residents who refuse to have the system replaced and sign a waiver, or the residents who recently replaced their system and now the neighbor's system is being done with support from the Borough. Administrator McNeilly stated the water grant program has been causing the Borough to drag it's heels on the project for Overhill Road, Ridge Road and Sunset Avenue. This project is going to force the governing body to make a policy decision soon. The solid recommendation is to provide a zero-interest loan to be paid back over a certain amount of time. The cost per residence to replace the water lines can range between \$5,000 to \$10,000. The CARES Act funds could be utilized for this purpose. Discussions will take place in the future regarding this issue.

CITIZENS 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.

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

PRESENTATIONS

Ray Sarinelli, Borough Auditor, stated it is interesting to watch the governing body go through the budget line by line and witness what a struggle this is. Other municipalities and county level local governments have gone through a period of relative stability where the 2% caps and the 2 ½%

caps which we have to deal with were reasonable because inflation was at or around 2% or less for roughly the past ten years. Then a pandemic occurs which was predicted to turn everything upside down but then it did not because the government prints a lot of money and everyone is kept whole. Then as the pandemic winds down, there is a whole lot of money floating around and inflation is a little bit out of control. It is up over 8%, give or take, and there is talk of an impending recession. This is a lot to absorb in one budget and on top of that you are dealing with unusually large increases in certain expenses which are beyond the Borough's control such as; trash removal costs, large increases to health insurance and pension expenses. All the items within the Borough's control are carefully scrutinized. No one can squeeze to make a list as tight as Stanhope can. Mr. Sarinelli stated he has seen Stanhope do this for many many years and the Borough absolutely makes sure they get their moneys worth with the appropriations in the budget. The Borough is dealing with pretty high inflation and the expectation that there might be a recession makes it difficult to pass along an increase in the future. The increases have been relatively under control, at or below the cap. There is some cap bank which we have not discussed as yet but the Borough may need to go into that cap bank. Some of the expenses which have been put on the Borough are not necessarily outside of the cap and there is no appetite at the state level to give the Borough any assistance. Other municipalities are struggling with the same issues. This is a circumstance that could not be expected. Mr. Sarinelli stated he has helped the Borough to plan for a period of time when things will not be as stable and balanced as they have been the past several years. The Borough has taken the advice and is in pretty good shape going into this budget. Mr. Sarinelli stated his only fear is that without passing some of this increase along to the taxpayers, future years are going to be much more difficult if the economy goes where it is projected to go. The Borough has been good at keeping the increases at or below inflation for a long time. It has been below 2% for almost ten years but maintaining that this year may not be possible. The governing body can keep this under inflation and do a really good job at 6% or 7% because inflation is at 8%. The Borough worked hard to keep the past budgets under inflation of 2%. The Borough is not at the point yet where the tax levy has been projected. Mr. Sarinelli stated he looked at the budget structurally from last year and the Borough has been doing all the right things as far as anticipating realistic revenues and appropriating realistic appropriations. The Borough is going along in a very reasonable manner. This year is going to present some real challenges as where to go with the tax levy. Going forward for the next several years with a recession and the challenges that poses to residents may be difficult. The only good news is that there is more money out there than we expected. The Borough will probably be in a fairly stable position because of being frugal and there are no cap restrictions due to the fact in previous years some of the cap was able to be banked. Other towns are struggling more with the expense side. Councilman Wronko asked Mr. Sarinelli if other municipalities have already determined their levy and what their increase looks like. Mr. Sarinelli stated increases between 4 and 7 percent are not going to be unusual. Councilwoman Kuncken stated over the past few years the Borough has been paying down it's debt and she asked Mr. Sarinelli, in a year like this, where are we? Mr. Sarinelli stated last year the paydown was increased but a revenue was brought in to offset some of that out of reserve to pay debt service. Mr. Sarinelli stated he assumes the Borough is trying to stay within the six to ten-year payback. The projection is \$442,000. Short term money is going to be cheaper than long term money. The Borough is looking to paydown less in principle and the interest rate is increasing slightly. This seems like a reasonable plan. Administrator McNeilly stated it was not that long ago that the amount was \$285,000 which was not a bad number and we kept inching it up. Mr. Sarinelli stated if any questions arise moving forward, feel free to contact him. The governing body thanked Mr. Sarinelli for attending tonight's meeting.

Jason Laliker, Borough Tax Assessor, stated this is his 8th year giving this report. Mr. Laliker distributed a handout to the governing body. The assessed valuation for this year increased \$2.4 million which is great. Everything else has basically remained the same. The market over the past two years has come to affect the Borough along with every other municipality in the state. The ratio of assessed to market value for 2023 is 76.08%. Last year, for 2022, the rate was 84.77%. The year before that the rate was 89% which was a good place to be. There are no worries with tax appeals or values. At 76%, that is a low ratio. The County Tax Board will usually consider ordering a re-evaluation at the mid 80% ratio level. However, at this point they will be hesitant to do so because they believe the market is going to fall. A meeting was just held last week and re-evaluations will not be ordered for at least the next few years. At 76% this is a big drop of 8 points. Mr. Laliker stated he is not concerned on the residential end because he can still defend the values. The market is still strong. There are still sales going through over asking price and sales may not be going through in ten days but they are going through in 30 days. The market is still good. There could be some concern with the commercial market because some sectors have not increased like

the residential has. Apartments and industrial properties are doing great. Retail is soft. It is possible that the Borough may see some appeals on some of the commercial properties in the coming year. The good news is that there are not many of these properties. This year there was one tax appeal at the County Tax Board. Last year there were none. Mayor Zdichocki asked Mr. Laliker if residents have not appealed due to money that came out last year which was used to increase the value of their homes. Mr. Laliker said that is not the case. The added assessments are the same as they have been. People just know the market is so good that they can sell for more than their assessment. Part of the reason that the ratio has dropped so much is because it is a two-year weighted average. This is the first year we are seeing the two COVID years. Everyone has seen these kinds of drops. Last year it was five points, which was still a lot, but that was one year outside of COVID. Even at the ratio for 2023, Mr. Laliker is confident he can defend the figures for the commercial properties without any problem. If the market softens, the ratio may go up a bit. Mr. Laliker stated he is reviewing every sale and if there are improvements which were done without permits or not having been assessed, he can kick that sale out. There were 107 sales for the year, which is typical. Of those, 71% were usable sales. The 76% ratio for 2023 is the two-year average that the state looks at. If the 2022 sales are isolated out, the average ratio is 64%. The Borough is going to drop another six points next year making the ratio 70% if things stay the way they are. If the market slows, that could be a different story. The coefficient of deviation is high at 17.84%. The state wants to see this number be at 10% to 12% or below. If the market was not what it is, the County Tax Board would already have ordered the Borough to do a re-evaluation. Mr. Laliker stated he does not see any areas where anyone is being unfairly taxed. Administrator McNeilly asked what the timeline would be for the Tax Board to inform Mr. Laliker that a re-evaluation would be needed. Mr. Laliker stated the Tax Board would usually decide later on in the end of the year. He would probably be notified in September but it could be decided in December. Administrator McNeilly stated from the time of the notification, the Borough would then have approximately one year to have the re-evaluation completed. Re-evaluation falls outside of the cap and the costs would need to be budgeted. Mr. Laliker stated currently the costs are approximately \$70.00 per line which would total \$110,000 for Stanhope. The costs could increase based on gas prices etc. Once a re-evaluation is done, there is an option to review the properties annually. Annually everyone's value would be changed. Inspections would take place every five years. There are positive and negative aspects of choosing to do this. When doing a re-evaluation every ten years, you will see tax shifts. When this is done yearly, those tax shifts are minimized. After the initial re-evaluation is completed, the approximate costs to the Borough per year would be between \$25,000 to \$30,000. If the Borough is notified next December that a re-evaluation is required, it would most likely be done in 2025 for 2026. Mr. Laliker does not predict there would be large changes to assessments unless there is an error. Ultimately the tax bills remain the same. The DCA changed the rules and no longer require permits for direct replacements of kitchens, bathrooms and siding. This would be an opportunity to update the records where that type of renovation was done. Right now, there are only two companies in the state providing re-evaluation services. If the Borough were to go out to bid, only one bid would be received for this area. One company stays below Middlesex and the other above. Mr. Laliker stated there are other municipalities in the county whose percentages are lower than Stanhope's. If some of the smaller towns are required to do a re-evaluation, they may not even receive a bid. There is nothing to do right now and hopefully the market will stabilize next year which would give Stanhope a better number and that would hold off a re-evaluation being necessary. The governing body thanked Mr. Laliker for attending this evenings meeting.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Mayor Zdichocki read aloud the list of minutes being presented for approval:

November 22, 2022 Business Meeting

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, seconded by Councilman Wronko and carried by a majority voice vote, the above listed minutes were approved. Councilman Romano abstained from the minutes of November 22, 2022.

CORRESPONDENCE *(List Attached)*

On motion by Councilman Romano, seconded by Councilman Riccardi and unanimously carried by voice vote, the list of correspondence was accepted and ordered placed on file.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Safety – Councilwoman Kuncken/Councilman Vance

(Police, Fire, Ambulance, Court & Violations Bureau, Emergency Management)

Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Fire Department for the month of November reported 11 calls, 4 mutual aid calls, and 3 drills for a total of 244.75 man hours volunteered. A public safety meeting was held with the Fire Department to discuss the budget.

Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Fire Marshal for the month of November did not respond to any fire incidents or complaints. The Plumbing Store and the Fire House were inspected and there were no violations.

Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Police Department for the month of November reported 116 motor vehicle stops and the total number of calls for the month was 255. Councilwoman Kuncken stated she spoke with the Police Chief today and there was talk of him possibly recognizing some officers at the reorganization meeting. The Chief is going to take this to the State level. In these two particular instances, it raises to that level, that they should be recognized at the State level. Councilwoman Kuncken suggested that the officers be recognized at both levels. It would be nice for them to be recognized locally where they work so people could realize. Councilwoman Kuncken suggested the Chief speak with the Borough Clerk. The Borough Clerk confirmed the Chief has spoken with her.

Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Ambulance Squad for the month of August responded to 60 calls; 20 in Stanhope, 39 in Netcong and 1 standby. There were 13 out of town calls; 6 in Byram, 6 in Hopatcong and 1 in Roxbury. There were 39 patients and 27 hospital trips. The squad travelled 780 miles and had 176 hours and 56 minutes of volunteer hours. The Ambulance Squad for the month of September reported 48 calls; 19 in Stanhope, 27 in Netcong and 2 standbys. There were 14 out of town calls; 1 in Mt. Olive, 5 in Byram, 5 in Hopatcong and 3 in Roxbury. They treated 36 patients and made 26 trips to the hospital. They travelled 806 miles and had a total of 261 hours and 45 minutes of volunteer hours.

Finance & Administration – Councilman Romano/Councilman Thornton

Councilman Romano stated the tax collections for the month of November were \$734,047.72 and the year to date amount is \$12,653,203.53. Collections are on track. The overall current tax collection rate is 97.458% as compared to last year's rate of 97.634%.

Councilman Romano stated the water collections for November totaled \$8,933.41 and the year to date collection is at \$624,904.09. The sewer collections for the month of November totaled \$13,987.75 and the year to date collection is at \$730,528.87.

Community Development – Councilman Wronko/Councilman Riccardi

Councilman Wronko stated for the month of November 25 construction permits were issued. The total permit fees collected was \$5,619.00.

Councilman Wronko stated this coming weekend Santa Claus will be visiting Stanhope Borough.

Municipal Infrastructure – Councilman Thornton/Councilman Romano

(Water Distribution, Sewer Collection System, Road Construction & Maintenance, Buildings & Grounds)

Councilman Thornton stated he had no report this evening.

Information Technology – Councilman Riccardi/Councilman Wronko

Councilman Riccardi stated an Information Technology meeting is scheduled for December 21st at 3:30pm to discuss items for 2023.

Boards/Commissions – Councilman Vance/Councilwoman Kuncken

Councilman Vance stated the Land Use Board did not meet in December.

Mayor Zdichocki stated the tree lighting was well attended and the pictures with Frosty and Santa went well. The Recreation Commission did a very nice job. Mayor Zdichocki thanked the Presbyterian Church for the use of their facility and the Fire Department for their help.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

NJ Natural Gas Installation – Administrator McNeilly gave an update on the NJ Natural Gas installation which began within the Borough on November 10th. The contractor has completed the installation on McKinley Street. They attempted to move back to Brooklyn Road at McKinley Street but after just one day, Sussex County shut them down due to impending weather. The contractor repositioned to Linden Avenue at McKinley Street. As Sussex County continues to prohibit work on Brooklyn Road, the contractor will begin the gas line installation on the downtown side of Linden Avenue. The gas company still hopes to install gas lines on Brooklyn Road from Central Avenue to Sparta Road during the week of December 26th during the school’s winter breaks. Administrator McNeilly stated whenever it is required for the road to be closed, the County requires the closure to be from Sparta Road, even if the work is being done a mile away. That is the only approved road closure plan.

Things To Remember: There will be detours for the gas project for many months to come but the project is to the benefit of all of us. Yes, Stanhope residents will be getting gas lines in their street. As always, short term inconvenience will bring a lifetime of benefit. Residents can review the work scheduled at www.njng.com/constructiononyourstreet

Councilman Thornton asked if the information is included on the Borough Facebook page. Administrator McNeilly confirmed the information has been posted on Facebook, Nixle messages have been sent and it is posted on the Borough website.

Solid Waste / Recycling Contract – Administrator McNeilly stated the current contracts for solid waste and recycling end on May 31, 2023. There will be resolution on the agenda in January 2023 to begin the bid process.

Water Grant – Administrator McNeilly stated that he and the CFO have attended the first two seminars regarding the grants from the USEPA. The third seminar is scheduled for December 15th. The process is intense and more complicated than the TAP grant process.

Delaware Avenue / Valley Road Sidewalks – Administrator McNeilly stated, after a fitful start, the contractor has begun the sidewalk work on Delaware Avenue and Valley Road. All the work should be completed before Christmas. Notices will be distributed to the residents. The contractor will be struggling to complete the job in the 60-day timeframe due to their inability to get the paperwork in order. The contractor will be working on Saturday.

Sparta Dispatch Contract – Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough’s contract with Sparta Township for dispatch services ends on December 31, 2023. The agreement automatically converts to a year to year agreement with a 2% increase per year. If the governing body elects to exit the agreement, written notice must be provided not less than 120 days prior to the end of the agreement. Councilwoman Kuncken stated this subject should be kept in the forefront. The Fire Department, the Ambulance Squad and the Police Department all need to provide their input, as they are the ones using the service. The feedback received so far from the Fire Department and the Ambulance Squad is that they are not happy with the service. Mayor Zdichocki stated she and Administrator McNeilly have been in contact with Sussex County to discuss other options. Administrator McNeilly stated there are a great deal of issues involved with changing services. The Police Chief’s input will be needed as he has been through this process several times in the past. Moving from Sparta to the County is not apples to apples. There are potential equipment changes which will come at a cost. There are services provided by Sparta which are not provided by the County. Administrator McNeilly stated the end users should be consulted however, he is of the opinion quotes should be received from both entities. Councilwoman Kuncken stated she does not disagree with this but the Fire Department and the Ambulance Squad have real concerns with

Sparta's service. They are not getting the right calls, calls are being lost, and they are not being called out when they should be.

Sparta Road Speed Limit – Administrator McNeilly stated the DPW has begun to install the new signage on Sparta Road to reflect the reduced speed limit, as well as, the no parking signs for the bike lane.

Sparta Road Project – Administrator McNeilly stated the vendor was able to complete the infrared repairs to the road surface for the Sparta Road project. In addition, Sign Art will be removing the welcome sign in order to make the necessary repairs. Hopefully, the NJDOT will release the TAP funds soon. The solar powered speed limit sign also has to be replaced or repaired.

Valley Road - Councilwoman Kuncken asked if the infrared areas which were dug up on Valley Road will be redone. Administrator McNeilly confirmed this will be done in the spring.

Leaf Collection – Administrator McNeilly stated the leaf collection program for 2022 ends this Friday. All that remains is Brooklyn Road in Zone 3 and to clean up some piles in Zones 1 and 2 that were placed curbside after those areas were already visited by the leaf vacuum.

Speed Limit Sign – Councilman Riccardi asked if one of the portable speed limit signs can be placed on Sparta Road while the permanent sign is being replaced/repaired. Administrator McNeilly stated the portable one may not fit on the bracket and for snow plowing purposes the portable sign should not be placed too low to the ground.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Reorganization Meeting – Mayor Zdichocki stated tonight's meeting is the last one for the year. The next meeting will be the reorganization meeting.

Council Committees – Mayor Zdichocki stated she likes to change the council committee positions in order for people to see what is involved in other areas. The committees will be as follows: Public Safety will stay with Councilwoman Kuncken and Councilman Thornton, Finance & Administration will be Councilman Romano with Councilman Vance, Community Development will be chaired by Councilman Vance and co-chair will be Councilman Riccardi, Infrastructure Committee will be Councilman Thornton and Councilman Romano, Information Technology will be Councilman Riccardi and Councilman Wronko, and Boards & Commissions will be Councilman Wronko and Councilwoman Kuncken. Mayor Zdichocki asked if everyone was in favor of these changes. Councilman Romano stated he is not in agreement and stated he has had conversations with several of his colleagues and in his opinion, the committee designations, in this form, will not receive concurrence. Mayor Zdichocki asked why. Councilman Romano replied the governing body prefers to stay status quo. Mayor Zdichocki stated she disagrees because of the fact questions are being raised and other people need to see how the other areas are handled. In addition, there are events and functions which need to be attended and due to work or family obligations, there are people whose schedules she is trying to work with. Councilman Thornton and Councilwoman Kuncken stated they agree with Councilman Romano. Mayor Zdichocki stated again there are conflicts which require changes to be made. Attorney Leo stated if there are issues with someone being unable to attend a meeting due to a work schedule, the meeting schedule would have to be adjusted to take place when that person is available. Mayor Zdichocki stated she is very disappointed. When she was on the council she was on the same committee for six years and would have liked the opportunity to learn something different. Mayor Zdichocki asked Councilman Wronko for his opinion. Councilman Wronko stated he is content with the status quo and stated if he is moved to Boards and Commissions he would not be able to attend those meetings. He does not have that flexibility. Mayor Zdichocki asked Councilman Riccardi for his opinion. Councilman Riccardi stated his positions were not changed and he is happy to stay where he is or he would be ok with moving. Councilman Vance stated he is fine with staying where he is and Councilwoman Kuncken stated she is not in favor of any changes.

Reorganization Meeting for 2024 – Administrator McNeilly suggested that the reorganization meeting for 2024 be scheduled for January 9th instead of January 2nd. The reorganization meeting can be combined with the work session meeting. The governing body agreed to have the meeting on January 9th.

Stanhope Senior Citizen Club (Request to Use Borough's Tax-Exempt Number) – Mayor Zdichocki stated the Stanhope Senior Citizen Club sent a letter requesting permission to borrow the Borough's tax-exempt number. Mayor Zdichocki spoke with the CFO, Angelica Sabatini, and borrowing the tax-exempt number is not permitted. The Senior Club can apply for their own tax-exempt status. This is being researched. Administrator McNeilly stated the Senior Citizen Club in Mt. Olive is run differently and it is more of a township entity.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

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

**Resolution 188-22 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BUDGET TRANSFERS
BETWEEN 2022 APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS**

WHEREAS, certain transfers of funds for various 2022 budget appropriations are necessary to cover anticipated expenditures; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-58 provides for transfer of appropriations with an excess over and above the amount deemed necessary to fulfill their purposes to those appropriations deemed to be insufficient; and

WHEREAS, the appropriations subject to fund transfers hereby are not within those restricted by N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-58 for transfer purposes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope that the Chief Financial Officer shall and is hereby authorized to make transfers between appropriation accounts of the 2022 Municipal Budget as follows:

CURRENT FUND		
FROM		
Police- S&W	\$11,000.00	
TO		
Vehicle Maintenance-O.E.		\$11,000.00
TOTAL	\$11,000.00	\$11,000.00

On motion by Councilman Wronko, 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 Thornton – yes |
| Councilman Riccardi – yes | Councilman Vance – yes |
| Councilman Romano – yes | Councilman Wronko – yes |

Resolution 189-22 RESOLUTION APPROVING EMERGENCY TRUCK REPAIRS

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope became aware of an engine failure in the F550 Mason Dump and needed an emergency repair; and

WHEREAS, Hoover Truck and Bus Centers, one of the Borough's usual vendors, was directed to make the emergency repairs to the vehicle; and

WHEREAS, it was necessary to have this repair done immediately due to the need of the vehicle for the winter season and the time necessary to receive the necessary parts, and complete the repair,

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6 provides for the awarding of contracts without public advertising for bids and without the need to seek competitive quotations, when an emergency affecting the public health, safety or welfare requires the immediate delivery of goods or the performance of services; and

WHEREAS, emergency repairs to the F550 Mason Dump totaling \$31,204.64 in work performed by Hoover Truck and Bus Centers is \$24,604.64 above the \$6,600 quote threshold;

WHEREAS, the emergent condition of the vehicle was properly reported by the DPW Supervisor to the Borough Administrator in accordance with Borough practices and the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6 and N.J.A.C. 5:34-6.1.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, Sussex County, State of New Jersey, that it does hereby concur in the payment to Hoover Truck and Bus Centers for emergency repairs to the F550 Mason Dump in the amount of \$31,204.64.

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, 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 Thornton – yes
Councilman Riccardi – yes	Councilman Vance – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wronko – yes

Resolution 190-22

MAYOR’S APPOINTMENT OF TAMMY MINNITI AS WATER/SEWER COLLECTOR & ASSISTANT TAX COLLECTOR WITH COUNCIL CONCURRENCE

Mayor’s appointment of Tammy Minniti as Water/Sewer Collector and Assistant Tax Collector with Council concurrence.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Stanhope that they do hereby concur with the Mayor’s appointment of Tammy Minniti as Water/Sewer Collector and Assistant Tax Collector effective December 19th, 2022 at a prorated annual salary of \$42,561.00.

On motion by Councilman Thornton, seconded by Councilman Riccardi 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

Resolution 191-22

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. 2021-005 representing 2020 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11208, Lot 11 known as 24 State Route 183, assessed to Stanhope Fuel, LLC, 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
PO Box 503
Mt. Freedom, NJ 07970

Redemption Amount: Tax Title Lien #2021-005 and
Interest to Date of Meeting \$ 18,383.62
Premium Paid by Lienholder 0.00

Total From Current Fund: \$ 18,383.62
Total From Tax Premium Account 0.00

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

Mayor's Acceptance of Resignation

Resolution 192-22 MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION OF MARIA MASCUCH FROM HER EMPLOYMENT WITH THE BOROUGH OF STANHOPE WITH COUNCIL CONCURRENCE

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Stanhope they do hereby concur with the Mayor's acceptance of Maria Mascuch's resignation from all positions of employment with the Borough of Stanhope, effective December 15, 2022.

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

Resolution 193-22 MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE RESIGNATION OF NICOLE BOLOGNINI FROM THE STANHOPE RECREATION COMMISSION WITH COUNCIL CONCURRENCE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Stanhope that they do hereby concur with the Mayor's acceptance of Nicole Bolognini's resignation as an appointed member on the Recreation Commission, effective December 31, 2022.

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

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Resolution 194-22 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 December 13, 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 Thornton, seconded by Councilman Wronko 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

ATTORNEY REPORT

Borough Attorney, Ursula Leo, stated she had no report this evening.

CITIZENS 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.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

Approved:

Linda Chirip
Deputy Clerk for
Ellen Horak
Borough Clerk