

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
December 12, 2023
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 4, 2023 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 the Daily Record on December 5, 2023 and was placed on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Building.

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 (arrived 6:50pm)	Councilman Wachterhauser – present
Councilman Romano – present	Councilman Wronko – present

Mayor Zdichocki – present

CLOSED SESSION

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

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exists;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter(s).
2. The general nature of the subject matter(s) to be discussed is as follows:
 - 1 – Personnel
3. It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matter(s) will be made public at the conclusion of each individual specified subject matter.
4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

The Mayor and Council went into Closed Session at 6:03 P.M.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

At the conclusion of the Closed Session, the Mayor and Council reconvened the public meeting at 6:31 P.M. with all present.

PRESENTATION

Recognition of Mayor Zdichocki's Service - Councilwoman Kuncken stated, on behalf of the Borough of Stanhope, this token of our appreciation is being presented to Mayor Patty Zdichocki in appreciation for her service and commitment to the community and the people of Stanhope. The audience congratulated Mayor Zdichocki. Mayor Zdichocki thanked everyone for the gift.

Jason Laliker, Borough Tax Assessor – Jason Laliker, Tax Assessor, stated there is some good news and one concerning issue, which he mentioned last year, regarding the ratio of assessed value to market value, due to how the market has been since 2020. Every municipality is experiencing a precipitous drop in that ratio. The projected assessed valuation total aggregate in town will increase next year to approximately \$1.6 million. This is good news and it is due to some new construction this past year. In terms of the line items for residential and commercial, they are very typical to what they were last year and previous years. The ratio of assessed value to market value for 2024 is 69.22%. This is the average home assessment to what it's market value would be. The average property in town is assessed at 69% of what the market value would be. Typically, when a municipality gets into the 80th percentile, the County Tax Board will call the Tax Assessor in to discuss the issue. Because of how the market has been over the past few years, the Tax Board has held off doing this. The Board does not want to create a situation where they order re-valuations to be done and then the market drops, which would require another re-valuation three to five years later. At this time, the Tax Board is of the opinion that we will not see a drop in pricing like what occurred in 2008 and 2009 and Mr. Laliker stated he agrees. Mr. Laliker stated it will slow and maybe take a step back but he does not expect a big drop. The County Tax Board will be starting to require re-valuations. Mr. Laliker stated he has been called to meet with the Tax Board on December 20th to discuss Stanhope and a couple other municipalities. For 2023, the ratio of assessed value to market value was 76% and this is a big drop to 69%. This is not uncommon. All the municipalities are experiencing this. Some other factors will be looked into as well. Those are the number of appeals filed and the coefficient of deviation, which is basically the study of uniformity. They will look at the useable sales for two years, the ratio of assessed value to market value individually, and how far those figures are from the average. The Borough's coefficient of deviation in 2023 was 9.10%, which is great. This percentage needs to stay under 10%, which means that the Borough is uniformly assessed. This means that everyone in town is low across the board. The other item to be concerned with is the sales ratio for 2023 sales, which is at 56.37%. When the Board looks at the overall sales, it is a two-year average and therefore it is always a little behind what is going on. The 2023 percentage is low but we only had one appeal. The appeal was withdrawn and the Borough did not have any reductions due to appeals. When ratios drop, that is when appeals typically go high and this erodes the uniformity. Because the market is so good, the appeals that do get submitted can be defended due to the high values. Even with the current ratio, the Borough is in fine shape. However, the ratio is the reason that the County Tax Board has requested a meeting. There are a few municipalities that are pushing to conduct a re-valuation. Administrator McNeilly stated this could take the pressure off of Stanhope. Mr. Laliker confirmed and stated there is only one company available to conduct the re-valuations.

Discussion took place regarding the current trend in the market. Mr. Laliker stated in other counties the municipalities are choosing to conduct annual re-valuations. This entails having a main re-valuation and then they enter into a four-year contract with the company. There are two components to the contract over each year. One hundred percent of the properties will be re-valued each year. A new value letter would be sent out and it will be reflective of what happened in the market for that current year. Only 25% of the properties would be inspected. At the end of the four years, everyone gets inspected. Councilman Wachterhauser asked when the re-valuation was last conducted in Stanhope. Mr. Laliker stated the last re-valuation took place in 2006 and there was a reassessment in 2013. Administrator McNeilly stated when a municipality contracts to do this annually, it is an increase that has to be budgeted for each year. Stanhope has been able to stretch the last re-valuation out over the past ten years. Mr. Laliker stated towns with a great deal of diversity and lots of big appeals can benefit from the annual reassessments. Towns with lots of sales are needed in order for the reval company to value the various types of houses such as; split levels, colonials, multi-family homes and single-family homes. If there are not enough sales, you cannot support change. Mr. Laliker stated this is not something to be considered at this time. When the time comes that the Borough is ordered to conduct a re-valuation, he will meet with the

governing body to provide all the pros and cons of the various types of reassessments. Mr. Laliker is of the opinion the Tax Board will hold off on ordering a re-valuation for this year and it will be reviewed again next year. Councilman Wachterhauser asked if the 69% ratio of assessed value to market value means that, for example, if a home sells for \$100,000 the Borough is only assessing it at \$69,000. Mr. Laliker confirmed this and stated the fact that everyone was assessed in 2013 in the same market is beneficial. Therefore, it does not matter if the assessments are at 100% or 20% as long as they are all relative. Time, appeals and sub-markets shifting differently is what erodes the uniformity. Mr. Laliker stated the County Tax Board is very reasonable and they like to work with the towns. Councilwoman Kuncken asked how much notice the Tax Board would give if a re-valuation will be required. Mr. Laliker stated if the Tax Board tells him at the upcoming scheduled meeting that this issue will need to be tabled until next year, it would be reviewed in December of 2024. If the Tax Board orders the re-valuation, then the Borough would go out to bid and secure a company by February 2025. This would provide plenty of time to complete the project which would include a 100% assessment. Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough would have to bond for those funds. Mr. Laliker stated a decision would not have to be made at that time regarding the annual assessment option. The bid request would ask for two options; one for the re-valuation and the second for the annual assessment option. At that time, Mr. Laliker stated he will provide all the pros and cons and his concerns. Discussion took place regarding the market over the past several years and the effect it has had on the municipalities' assessments. With no further questions, the governing body thanked Mr. Laliker for attending this evenings meeting.

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.

Lana Leguia stated she is a resident of Stanhope speaking tonight as a Representative of the NJ Libertarian Party. Ms. Leguia stated she is here this evening, not only as a matter of procedure, but also out of concern for the community. Ms. Leguia stated she also sent an email to the governing body this morning, December 12th. Year after year, at the January Reorganization Meeting, the Council automatically approves a resolution setting the maximum legal interest rates on delinquent property taxes at 8% on the first \$1,500 and 18% for any amount beyond that. The resolution usually passes without any real discussion and it should not be just a routine administrative act. This has severe repercussions on residents who are already struggling to pay for their taxes, groceries, bills, etc. Ms. Leguia is not suggesting that the Borough waive interest on unpaid taxes because that would be unfair. However, the interest rates should be fair to everyone and not exorbitant in her opinion. Charging up to 18% interest is excessive and punitive, placing an unreasonable burden on already struggling residents. Why penalize residents sometimes hundreds or thousands of dollars when trying to settle their tax debts. On January 1st, rather than just passing a resolution for these extreme rates and penalties, Ms. Leguia urged the governing body to adopt the federal discount rate which is currently set at 5.5% for overdue taxes. This approach provides a reasonable return to the Borough on overdue taxes, while not overburdening Stanhope residents who are already struggling. This is a fair middle ground. The NJ statute states the rate shall not exceed 8% on the first \$1,500 and 18% on an excess of \$1,500. The shall not exceed language gives the governing body room and discretion to set the interest rate lower if they so choose. Ms. Leguia asked the council to thoughtfully consider moving this item from the consent agenda at the reorganization meeting and discuss it thoroughly. Given the current economic issues this deserves to be considered. It is also an opportunity for the governing body to show understanding and support to the community members who need it the most. Mayor Zdichocki thanked Ms. Leguia for speaking this evening.

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

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

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

November 6, 2023 Special Meeting
November 28, 2023 Business Meeting & Closed Session

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, seconded by Councilman Romano and unanimously carried by voice vote, the minutes for November were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE *(List Attached)*

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

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, seconded by Councilman Romano and unanimously carried by voice vote, the Council Committee Reports were waived.

Public Safety – Councilwoman Kuncken/Councilman Wachterhauser
(Police, Fire, Ambulance, Court & Violations Bureau, Emergency Management)

Finance & Administration – Councilman Romano/Councilman Thornton

Community Development – Councilman Wronko/Councilman Riccardi

Municipal Infrastructure – Councilman Thornton/Councilman Romano
(Water Distribution, Sewer Collection System, Road Construction & Maintenance, Buildings & Grounds)

Information Technology – Councilman Riccardi/Councilman Wronko

Boards/Commissions – Councilman Wachterhauser/Councilwoman Kuncken

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Cannabis Presentation Request – Administrator McNeilly stated the representatives from Bud City LLC are requesting time at the January 23, 2024 meeting to make a cannabis presentation. Councilwoman Kuncken stated as long as the presenter is aware that the Borough is waiting to go out to referendum next year, the governing body would agree to hear their presentation. The governing body agreed.

Auditor – Administrator McNeilly stated Ray Sarinelli, Borough Auditor, had a conflict with tonight’s meeting schedule and was unable to attend. Mr. Sarinelli will attend the January 23, 2024 Mayor and Council Meeting if requested. The governing body agreed.

Employee Handbook Update – Administrator McNeilly stated the Employee Handbook updates should be ready in the next few weeks.

DPW Leaf Collection – Administrator McNeilly stated leaf collection is ongoing. As we await the repair of the vacuum trailer, the DPW is continuing to remove the leaves piled throughout the Borough using the backhoe and dump truck. The crews are out evenings and Saturday’s in addition to the regular work hours. The vendor is aware of our pressing need and they are expediting the replacement parts. The new leaf trailer has been ordered with a delivery date in 2024. Councilman Riccardi asked what part is needed for the leaf machine. Administrator McNeilly stated the part needed at this time is the flywheel, which is a John Deere part. John Deere items are intensely proprietary. Once the new trailer is received, the current trailer will remain in operation as long as possible in order to have them work in conjunction. Trying to obtain a rental unit was unsuccessful due to the company’s insurance coverage requirements. Options are still being researched. Councilman Wachterhauser stated there are Facebook forums where residents are complaining. More information needs to be shared with the residents. The first Nixle message was just sent out today. Councilman Thornton agreed that communication has been lacking. Administrator McNeilly stated there are two issues. The first is that the equipment is at the end of its life and lack of communication all lands in his office. The second is that the leaf pick up service has had issues every year back to the beginning of time. The leaves always get picked up. Sometimes it has taken until February but it gets done. It now seems that leaf pickup has been elevated to the same urgency as the water system, sewer system, police or fire issue. If that is the case, then this service needs to have a redundancy built into it. This would require a commitment from the governing body to provide additional equipment going forward. Instead of purchasing new equipment at the end of life, in approximately 18 years, a backup will need to be purchased in three to four years at the cost of another \$150,000. Discussion took place regarding the option of bagging leaves and bringing them to the recycling center on Wednesday’s and Saturday’s. Councilman Wronko suggested sending a Nixle message that would let the residents know what area or a range of streets

are being worked on week to week. Administrator McNeilly stated he is hesitant to send out a message that is subject to change. Discussion took place regarding how communication should have been handled.

Animal Control Agreement 2024-2028 – Administrator McNeilly stated a resolution is needed for the January 23rd Mayor and Council meeting to authorize the Mayor and the Clerk to sign the new animal control agreement. Councilman Romano, who is also President of the Board of Health, stated the agreement has been reviewed by the Board of Health and all of their questions have been addressed.

20 Main Street (Tannery) – Administrator McNeilly stated the Zoning Department, the Borough's Construction Department and the County Fire Marshal are currently involved with active enforcement regarding the current occupation/use of the Tannery building. Councilman Wachterhauser asked if the Code Enforcement Officer has issued a cease and desist order because there are still children at that location. Administrator McNeilly stated the Code Enforcement Officer does not issue cease and desist orders. A summons is issued with a timeframe given for compliance.

Budget 2024 – Administrator McNeilly stated budget discussions can begin at the January 23rd meeting if the governing body so chooses. Mayor Zdichocki stated the January 23rd meeting will have a 6:00pm start time. Councilman Wachterhauser stated Blue Diamond had sent a letter with regard to an increase in fees and asked how that will affect the Borough. Administrator McNeilly stated the letter was a form letter sent to all their customers. The contract with the Borough has set hauling fees and we were aware the tipping fee would be increasing for the first time in many years. Attorney Leo stated the municipality is responsible for paying the increase in the tipping fees during the course of the contract.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Sagamore Road/Spencer Street Improvements – Eric Keller, Borough Engineer, stated the only remaining work on the Sagamore Road/Spencer Street Improvement Project is the striping. Denville Line Painting was working of the striping today. Yellow lines were completed except for the end of Spencer Street by Valley Road. The results of the pavement cores from Key-Tech have been received. The testing is required under Local Aid requirements to determine compliance with the specifications. There is a two percent (2%) penalty for air voids on this project which will result in a reduction in the pay request for the resurfacing. This reduces the payment for the HMA by \$1,403.43. The bill will be placed on the January meeting agenda.

Lenape Road/Woods Avenue/Lepont Street Improvements – Mr. Keller stated a pay requisition recommendation has been submitted for the Lenape Road/Woods Avenue/Lepont Street Improvement Project in the amount of \$86,350.84 or \$17,636.46 less than the engineer's estimate of \$103,987.30. This project is now complete.

Sunset Avenue/Ridge Road/Overhill Road Water Main Replacement Project – Mr. Keller stated the Sunset Avenue/Ridge Road/Overhill Road Water Main Replacement Project was advertised on October 31st and the bid opening is scheduled for Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 2:00pm at Borough Hall. As of last week, 11 bid packages were purchased. This is a good turnout. Mr. Keller stated all of the USEPA forms have been completed, to his knowledge, and we are awaiting final confirmation of the grant.

NJDOT Route 183 Crosswalk Study at the American Legion – Mr. Keller stated a meeting was held on November 28, 2023 with representatives of the NJDOT, their consultant, Gannett Fleming, NJ Transit, Lakeland Bus and various Borough representatives, including some governing body members to discuss a grant regarding the crosswalk on Route 183 in front of the American Legion. This grant covers approximately a dozen crosswalks located within Sussex and Morris Counties. Mr. Keller stated this is a slow process. The first notification on this issue was received a year and a half ago. We also had the opportunity to talk about two other issues within the Borough. One of which is the signal crossing at Linden Avenue and Route 183 and the other is the crossing at Main Street and Route 183 by the lake. Mr. Keller will follow up with the consultant to see what his thoughts are on these issues.

Salt Storage Building Truss Repair – Mr. Keller stated the repairs to the damaged trusses in the salt storage building have been completed. A site visit will be scheduled with the DPW Superintendent to review the work and then the project will be closed out with POSHA.

Elm Street & Grove Road Local Aid Project – Mr. Keller stated the Local Aid Grant for FY22 for ADA curb ramp replacements, milling and resurfacing of Elm Street and Grove Road must be designed and constructed in 2024. The proposal for these services is being prepared and the plan is to get an early start on the ADA ramps and curb work next year. Councilwoman Kuncken stated this work will have to be done in conjunction with the gas line installations. Mr. Keller confirmed this and stated the plan is to be able to pave during the summer.

Route 183 Speed Limit Change – Councilman Thornton stated he was pleased that during the meeting with NJDOT the subject of reducing the speed limit to 35mph was discussed. It seemed as though the representative was receptive to the request to lower the speed limit from Route 206 to Linden Avenue due to the amount of commerce in that area. However, Councilman Thornton stated he is shocked that the representative insists on having a 40mph speed limit from Linden Avenue on because there is no traffic. Councilman Thornton stated that in order to maintain uniformity between Byram Township and Netcong Borough the speed limit should be 35mph all the way through the Borough. Councilman Thornton asked Mr. Keller to continue to stress the governing body’s desire to have the entire stretch of roadway posted at 35mph. Administrator McNeilly stated when the time comes for that decision to be made, NJDOT does not usually move forward unless there is a resolution from the local entity. The governing body will need to prepare a resolution of support stating all the reasons why the 35mph speed limit is necessary. Mr. Keller stated he will review Title 39. There are minimum segments of roads where speed limits should be different. From Route 183 in Netcong to Dell Road, other than the stretch from Brooklyn Road to Linden Avenue where there is not much activity, the rest of it has a number of businesses, driveways, and cross streets. The number of driveways was the criteria the Borough used to have the speed limit lowered on Route 206 to Acorn Street, along with the change in the character of that roadway that is different than south of there. The level of activity, known as friction, also plays a part in the decision to lower the speed limits. Mr. Keller stated, in his opinion, to remove the section from Linden Avenue to Brooklyn Road is not supportive. Having a section of road increase to 40mph is not consistent for driver’s expectations. Administrator McNeilly stated the speed limit should remain at 30mph from where it begins in Netcong all the way to Acorn Street.

Playground Equipment Installation – Mayor Zdichocki asked if the playground equipment has all been installed. Administrator McNeilly stated the vendor has completed their portion of the project. There is some restoration work to be completed by the Borough.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

2024 Reorganization Meeting – Ellen Horak, Borough Clerk, stated the reorganization packets were distributed to the Administrator and the Governing Body members for review prior to the meeting. Ms. Horak asked if there were any changes or corrections needed. There were no changes or corrections needed.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

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

Resolution 183-23

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT THAT DESIGNATES PHOENIX ADVISORS, LLC AS CONTINUING DISCLOSURE AGENT AND INDEPENDENT REGISTERED MUNICIPAL ADVISOR

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope received Continuing Disclosure Agent and Independent Registered Municipal Advisor services from Phoenix Advisors, LLC in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Phoenix Advisors, LLC has submitted an Agreement, annexed hereto for the continuation of said services for the year 2024; and

WHEREAS, the term of this appointment is one (1) year;

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to retain Phoenix Advisors, LLC for said services in 2024, as set forth in said Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, New Jersey as follows:

1. That the Borough is hereby authorized to execute the Agreement with Phoenix Advisors, LLC, 625 Farnsworth Avenue, Bordentown, NJ 08505, for Continuing Disclosure Agent and Independent Registered Municipal Advisor services.
2. This contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a “professional service” in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a) of the Local Public Contracts Law.
3. Award of this contract is contingent upon the certification as to the availability of funds by the Chief Financial Officer.
4. The term of service shall be from the date of acceptance of the Professional Services Agreement until its completion, in full accord with the terms and conditions thereof.
5. Notice of this action shall be published in the *New Jersey Herald* within ten (10) days of the passage thereof.

On motion by Councilman Wronko, seconded by Councilwoman Kuncken 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 Wachterhauser – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wronko – yes

Resolution 184-23

RESOLUTION APPROVING SUBMITTAL OF GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTION OF GRANT CONTRACT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FOR THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FIREFIGHTER GRANT (ARPFPG)

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for approximately \$59,000 to carry out a project to replace end of life Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Oxygen equipment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Borough of Stanhope does hereby authorize the application for such a grant: and, recognizes and accepts that the Department may offer a lesser or greater amount and therefore, upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of any such grant agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of funds pursuant to the terms of the agreement between Borough of Stanhope and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Administrator are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of the Borough of Stanhope.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Administrator are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the Borough of Stanhope and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, seconded by Councilman Romano and unanimously carried by a majority roll call vote, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted. Councilman Wronko abstained.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Kuncken – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Riccardi – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wronko – abstain

Councilwoman Kuncken asked what this grant for the firefighter's includes. Administrator McNeilly stated the grant is for personal protective equipment (PPE), and bottles. Councilwoman Kuncken asked, in the event that the grant is received, would this reduce the cost that the Borough would be covering. Administrator McNeilly confirmed this would be the case.

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 185-23

**RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
RE: TRAP-NEUTER-RELEASE PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope does not currently have or belong to any Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program; and

WHEREAS, any cost of any TNR work done within the Borough will be the responsibility of the owner and/or complainant;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope that the cost of any TNR work done within the Borough of Stanhope will be the responsibility of the owner and/or complainant.

This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Resolution 186-23

**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. 2023-011 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11010, Lot 11 known as 4 Ridge Rd, assessed to Sambets, Michelle E, 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:	Pro Cap 8 FBO Firstrust Bank PO Box 774 Fort Washington, PA 19034
Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-011 and Interest to Date of Meeting \$ 1,171.60 Premium Paid by Lienholder <u>300.00</u>
Total From Current Fund:	\$ 1,171.60
Total From Tax Premium Account	300.00

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.

Resolution 187-23

**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. 2023-026 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11603, Lot 2 known as 3 James St, assessed to Illescas, Mario J, 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:	Pro Cap 8 FBO Firstrust Bank
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PO Box 774
Fort Washington, PA 19034

Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-026 and		
	Interest to Date of Meeting	\$	1,055.73
	Premium Paid by Lienholder		<u>300.00</u>

Total From Current Fund:	\$	1,055.73
Total From Tax Premium Account		300.00

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.

Resolution 188-23

**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. 2023-030 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11701, Lot 13.18 Qual C0508 known as 508 Stonegate Ln, assessed to Jacobellis, Thomas F Jr & Kathleen, 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: Pro Cap 8 FBO Firstrust Bank
PO Box 774
Fort Washington, PA 19034

Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-030 and		
	Interest to Date of Meeting	\$	1,067.41
	Premium Paid by Lienholder		<u>300.00</u>

Total From Current Fund:	\$	1,067.41
Total From Tax Premium Account		300.00

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.

Resolution 189-23

**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. 2023-021 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11501, Lot 2 Qual C0300 known as 16300 Dell Pl, assessed to Martini, Mark, 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: Pro Cap 8 FBO Firstrust Bank
PO Box 774
Fort Washington, PA 19034

Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-021 and	
	Interest to Date of Meeting	\$ 299.81
	Premium Paid by Lienholder	<u>400.00</u>

Total From Current Fund:	\$	299.81
Total From Tax Premium Account		400.00

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.

Resolution 190-23 **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. 2023-002 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 10301, Lot 6.01 known as 162 Brooklyn Rd, assessed to Venezia, Lisa, 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:	Pro Cap 8 FBO Firstrust Bank
	PO Box 774
	Fort Washington, PA 19034

Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-002 and	
	Interest to Date of Meeting	\$ 532.48
	Premium Paid by Lienholder	<u>300.00</u>

Total From Current Fund:	\$	532.48
Total From Tax Premium Account		300.00

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.

Resolution 191-23 **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. 2023-019 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11501, Lot 2 Qual C0160 known as 9160 Ashland Ct, assessed to Schuchman, Mark S, 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:	Park Finance, LLC
	PO Box 109
	Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927

Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-019 and	
	Interest to Date of Meeting	\$ 16,639.33
	Premium Paid by Lienholder	<u>6,800.00</u>

Total From Current Fund:	\$	16,639.33
Total From Tax Premium Account		6,800.00

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.

Resolution 192-23

**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. 2023-022 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11501, Lot 2 Qual C0303 known as 17328 Aspen Ct, assessed to Smith-Stank, Amy E, 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:	Pro Cap 8 FBO Firstrust Bank PO Box 774 Fort Washington, PA 19034
Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-022 and Interest to Date of Meeting \$ 1,164.78 Premium Paid by Lienholder <u>300.00</u>
Total From Current Fund:	\$ 1,164.78
Total From Tax Premium Account	300.00

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.

Resolution 193-23

**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. 2023-024 representing 2022 property taxes and/or utility charges on Block 11501, Lot 2 Qual C0328 known as 17328 Aspen Ct, assessed to Smith-Stank, Amy E, 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:	Pro Cap 8 FBO Firstrust Bank PO Box 774 Fort Washington, PA 19034
Redemption Amount:	Tax Title Lien #2023-024 and Interest to Date of Meeting \$ 982.06 Premium Paid by Lienholder <u>300.00</u>
Total From Current Fund:	\$ 982.06
Total From Tax Premium Account	300.00

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 Wronko and unanimously carried by the following roll call vote, the foregoing resolutions were duly adopted.

Roll Call:

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

Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Wachterhauser – yes
Councilman Wronko – yes

Mayor's Acceptance of Resignation

Resolution 194-23

RESOLUTION OF MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION OF COUNCILMAN WRONKO FROM HIS POSITION AS BOROUGH COUNCILMAN WITH COUNCIL CONCURRENCE

WHEREAS, Eugene Wronko was heretofore elected to the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope; and

WHEREAS, on November 20, 2023, Councilman Wronko submitted to the Borough Clerk a written resignation of his Council position effective December 31, 2023;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Council of the Borough of Stanhope that they do hereby concur with the Mayor's acceptance of Councilman Wronko's resignation from the position of Borough Councilman effective December 31, 2023.

On motion by Councilman Romano, seconded by Councilwoman Kuncken and carried by a majority voice vote, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted. Councilman Wronko abstained.

Resolution 195-23

MAYOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE RESIGNATION OF MARIA GRIZZETTI 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 Maria Grizzetti's resignation as an appointed member on the Recreation Commission, effective December 31, 2023.

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken (regrettably), seconded by Councilman Riccardi and unanimously carried by voice vote, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted.

Mayor Zdichocki thanked Maria Grizzetti for all her years of service on the Recreation Commission. The council members also thanked Maria and stated the Christmas event held this year was very nice.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Resolution 196-23

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 12, 2023 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 Romano 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 Wachterhauser – yes
Councilman Wronko – yes

ATTORNEY REPORT

Cannabis Referendum - Ursula Leo, Borough Attorney, stated there would be no additional cost to have a referendum, regarding cannabis, placed on the next election as long as the request is submitted to the Clerk’s Office in the proper timeframe.

Redevelopment Plan – Attorney Leo stated the governing body needs to send the draft redevelopment plan to the Land Use Board for consideration in order to keep the process moving forward. The Planner had reviewed the plan and made one change to allow a specific type of vinyl, if the Board approves that. After reviewing the parking issue, which the engineer had questioned, the rest of the plan has remained the same. Authorization is needed this evening to send the draft redevelopment plan to the Land Use Board. Once the Land Use Board has approved the plan it will return to the Governing Body for approval. Councilman Wachterhauser asked if the parking for the plan is remaining unchanged. Attorney Leo confirmed the parking will remain at 1.7 as drafted. After review, the Planner and the Engineer feel this is appropriate. Councilman Riccardi stated there was also a contradiction issue with the type of businesses which would be permitted in the area. Attorney Leo stated she will check to see if that has been corrected but the plan can be sent to the Land Use Board at this time.

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken and seconded by Councilman Romano, the governing body voted on whether or not the draft of the Redevelopment Plan should be forwarded to the Land Use Board for consideration. The vote resulted in a tie, therefore, Mayor Zdichocki voted – yes. Approval was granted to send the draft of the Redevelopment Plan to the Land Use Board for consideration.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Kuncken – yes
Councilman Riccardi – no
Councilman Romano – yes

Councilman Thornton – abstain
Councilman Wachterhauser – no
Councilman Wronko – abstain

Councilman Wachterhauser and Councilman Riccardi stated they are concerned about the parking.

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.

Nancy Hoyt, stated the holiday decorations out front look very nice. Mrs. Hoyt asked if the streets which are being closed are being sent out on Nixle alerts every day. Administrator McNeilly confirmed this and stated at this time the only street being closed with any regularity is Furnace Street. Administrator McNeilly stated there have been two instances where NJ Natural Gas has not notified him. Mrs. Hoyt asked when the Borough calendars will be received. Ms. Horak, Borough Clerk, stated the calendars are currently at the printer and will be mailed at the end of the month.

Rosemarie Maio, stated she would like to thank Mayor Zdichocki for her four years of service which included a good number of accomplishments. Mayor Zdichocki stated she has been very proud to be the representative for the Borough and thanked Ms. Maio for her comments. All those present applauded the Mayor.

Carmen Pico, stated he would like to thank the governing body for all that has been going on this past year especially with the gas line installations. Mr. Pico is a bus driver and detours can pose a problem when trying to pick up children at certain locations. Mr. Pico thanked Mayor Zdichocki for all the work she has done and stated he enjoyed working with her. Mr. Pico congratulated the incoming Mayor and stated he hopes that the good work of the past will continue.

Seeing no one further 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 7:43 P.M.

Approved:

Linda Chirip
Deputy Clerk for
Ellen Horak, RMC
Borough Clerk