

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
WORK SESSION AND
AGENDA MEETING MINUTES
October 8, 2024
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

SALUTE TO COLORS

Mayor Wronko 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 10, 2024, 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 Simpson – present
Councilman Riccardi – present	Councilman Thornton – present
Councilman Romano – present	Councilman Wachterhauser – present

Mayor Wronko – present

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Annual Stormwater Training Update – Administrator McNeilly stated he has confirmed the stormwater training seminar for November 26th at 7:00pm. Ryan has moved onto a new position outside of the Watershed Association. Linda Cerceau is now the Education and Outreach Manager and will be giving the presentation.

Borough Hall – Administrator McNeilly stated the HVAC system cleaning has been scheduled. Once that is complete, the carpets will be cleaned.

2024 NJ Best Practice Checklist – Administrator McNeilly stated the distribution of the completed best practice checklist has been delayed. Additional information regarding the COAH requirements must be obtained. These are not scored questions but, they do need to be answered. The completed document will be distributed by next Tuesday for discussion at the October 22nd meeting. The Borough needs at least a score of 35 points and currently the score is 43 points. We are not at risk of losing any type of aid going forward.

Planet Networks – Administrator McNeilly stated he reached out to Robert Boyle at Planet Networks. Mr. Boyle anticipates going live later this year. The project has zoning approval, and the Construction Official has reviewed the plan. The permit is being processed. A telephone pole will be installed at the Little League Field. The equipment will be brought in next month and after a month's worth of testing, they can go live. Councilwoman Kuncken stated that Planet Networks participated in the HSA Festival this past weekend. Mayor Wronko stated the telephone pole has been installed. Administrator McNeilly stated there was some concern regarding the water system but there is no water line on the property. The DPW Superintendent did a mark out along Sparta Road just to make sure they did not run into anything. The Little League Field is fed by its own well.

Leaf Pick Up – Administrator McNeilly stated leaf pick up for Zone One begins on October 15th. When leaf pick up gets heavier during the season, we are ready to go with two leaf machines if needed in November.

Paper Streets/Borough Lots – Councilman Thornton stated a discussion took place about paper streets located between Lloyd Avenue and Lawence Avenue at the last meeting. Councilman Thornton asked if the properties located behind the houses on Elm Street, the wooded area between those houses and the high school, came back to the Borough? Administrator McNeilly stated a good amount belong to the Borough. The Cronheim's own several as well. Administrator McNeilly stated there are other individuals that own various lots in the area. Councilwoman Kuncken stated one of the lots was recently sold at auction to a neighboring property owner. Councilman Thornton asked if any of these are buildable lots. Administrator McNeilly stated most of the area is very wet and there would be other hurdles such as being outside of the sewer service area and threatened and endangered species. Councilman Thornton asked if someone had an interest in purchasing any of these lots, would they need to just state their interest? Administrator McNeilly stated yes, they would need to state their interest, and they would have to be an adjoining property owner. Discussion took place regarding the various lots and the existence of wetlands.

Mayor Wronko asked if there was any update on the paper street request which was discussed previously. Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough needs to ensure there are no conflicts with that request for that specific area.

HSA Nixle Messages – Councilman Wachterhauser thanked Administrator McNeilly, on behalf of the HSA, for sending out the Nixle messages regarding the HSA festival which was held this past weekend. Councilman Romano stated the HSA did a great job and the event went very well. The Recreation Committee also did a great job. Councilwoman Kuncken stated the location of the Little League Field for the event was a good choice.

WORK SESSION

Affordable Housing Trust Fund (Planner William Hamilton) – Mayor Wronko invited William Hamilton, Borough Planner, to come forward to give his report. Mr. Hamilton stated he attended a prior meeting, and discussion took place then regarding how to spend the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The fund contains approximately \$50,000 which the Borough wishes to spend by the end of the year. A number of different options have been researched. We looked into rehabilitating some of the existing facilities, such as SCARC and Habitat for Humanity. Discussions were held with SCARC to determine if they needed any assistance with their residences. In speaking with Megan MacMullin, the President and CEO of SCARC, we asked if there would be interest in helping them to purchase or build a new property which would assist the Borough with the fourth-round obligation. It does not have to be for SCARC. The funds can be used for another non-profit. SCARC has realtors actively looking for an additional property in Stanhope. They currently have two homes in the Borough. Mr. Hamilton stated he has spoken at least three times with Ms. MacMullin along with the Borough Attorney, Ursula Leo. At last Monday's meeting, Ms. MacMullin asked for two weeks to consult with her Board as well as to speak with the realtors with regard to the current market. If some type of agreement can be made with them by the end of the year, the funds could be utilized for this purpose. This would ensure that the funding is used in the best way possible. Having affordable housing available for the fourth round, which is coming up in 2025, would be the best choice. On October 20th, the Borough will receive their numbers regarding what the affordable housing obligation is going to be. Mr. Hamilton stated he will be working with the Land Use Board and the governing body to determine how those numbers are going to be addressed. Ultimately it will be the decision of the governing body as to how the funds are utilized. This is just one option. Mr. Hamilton stated a report, outlining the options, will be submitted by the end of this month. Administrator McNeilly stated this topic can then be placed on the November 12th agenda for Council Discussion.

Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Borough has not had any problems with the SCARC homes or the Habitat for Humanity home. Before they were built, there was a misconception that property values would change and that it would not be good for the community. Those homes turned out to be a learning experience and they were a good thing to do. Councilman Riccardi asked Mr. Hamilton if Habitat for Humanity had a use for the funding. Mr. Hamilton stated he did not ask Habitat for Humanity if they had plans to expand in the area, but he could do that. They were asked if they needed any upgrades or assistance to the existing home, but there did

not seem to be any. Administrator McNeilly asked Mr. Hamilton, if SCARC were to use the \$55,000, would that cover some number of required affordable housing. Mr. Hamilton stated the two homes that SCARC currently owns are 4 bedrooms each. So, the Borough would get new credits for a new group home. Administrator McNeilly stated when those homes were built years ago, each bedroom was considered a separate residence unit, which equated to four (4) credits. Administrator McNeilly gave an overview of the properties which the town has received credits for in the past. Discussion took place about the Habitat for Humanity program. Mr. Hamilton stated he will contact the Habitat for Community organization. Councilman Thornton asked Mr. Hamilton if there is deadline. Mr. Hamilton stated the affordable housing numbers will be made available by October 20th and by January 25th a resolution should be adopted. There is a timeframe for agreeing or disagreeing with the numbers and there will be a period of time to appeal. Mr. Hamilton stated the plan is to have this issue completed by the end of the year. Administrator McNeilly stated the goal is to encumber the funds by December 31st. The Mayor and Council thanked Mr. Hamilton for attending this evening's meeting.

Recreation Committee - Councilwoman Kuncken stated she and Councilman Simpson attended the Recreation Committee meeting last week. There was some misinformation with regard to items which they need. One of the items needed is the pot which they cook hotdogs in. In the past they used to borrow this item from someone. Councilwoman Kuncken had suggested to the committee that they add this item to the budget along with a new canopy. The one they are currently using is torn. The Recreation Committee has already submitted their budget. A suggestion was made to the committee to purchase the items now if they still have funds in their budget. Currently, the committee owns a cotton candy machine which is stored at someone's house because there is no space in the Borough storage area. Councilwoman Kuncken stated all equipment owned by the Borough needs to be stored on Borough property. Our storage areas need to be cleaned out and reorganized to make space for everything. The meeting was very productive. Councilman Simpson stated this year the HSA Festival was an added event which was not budgeted for by Recreation. There is a line item for a summer program containing \$4,000 which was not utilized. Councilman Simpson asked how funding can be set up for miscellaneous purchases. Councilwoman Kuncken stated Recreation received a donation from the Elks Club. If a donation is given for a specific purpose, it can only be used for that purpose. If the donation does not have a specific purpose, the funds can go into the Recreation Trust and can then be used for whatever purpose it is needed for or it may end up as surplus. Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Recreation Committee needs to understand the procedure, so they know that the funds have not disappeared. Councilwoman Kuncken stated the Recreation Committee spent over \$600.00 for their booth at the HSA Festival. Councilman Riccardi asked if the CFO could write up the process for purchasing items and processing purchase orders which could be distributed to all the committees. Mayor Wronko asked Administrator McNeilly to find out the amount of funds available in the trust. Much discussion took place regarding how best to inform the committees, especially for those that have a high turnover rate. A manual should contain the information, and it should be handed down as membership changes. Councilwoman Kuncken stated the current members of the Recreation Committee are working hard, just completed their first year with several new members and they have a lot of good ideas. Administrator McNeilly stated he will ask the CFO to send the purchasing procedure to the committees. Most of the procedure is 85% common sense. However, when people go outside that box and try self-purchasing and self-donating things go wrong quickly. Councilman Riccardi asked that the Recreation Committee be informed about the trust and what it can be utilized for.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

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

Resolution 172-24

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SECOND ADDENDUM TO THE AGREEMENT WITH BOWMAN CONSULTING GROUP FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR THE SUNSET/RIDGE WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope was in need of replacement of the existing 4-inch water mains with 8-inch water mains, the replacement of water services from the new main into the houses, new fire hydrants, and associated pavement/landscape restoration on Sunset Avenue and Ridge Road, and a water main extension along West Street; and

WHEREAS, Bowman Consulting Group prepared a work plan, including a budget, for the water system improvements, which was accepted by the USEPA; and

WHEREAS, Bowman Consulting Group previously submitted an Addendum Proposal for Professional Engineering Services, requesting an additional \$16,000.00 to the originally submitted \$33,700.00 budget of Task IV, for additional construction observation services on said project, which was approved by the adoption of Resolution No. 153-24 on August 27, 2024, increasing the overall amount to \$49,700.00; and

WHEREAS, Bowman Consulting Group has now prepared a second Addendum Proposal for Professional Engineering Services, dated September 24, 2024, requesting an additional \$17,000.00 for additional construction observation services on said project, due to rock excavation and contractor issues requiring greater oversight and additional time commitments, requesting an increase to the budget of Task IV of the existing contract for said services; and

WHEREAS, the current hourly budget is \$49,700.00 and Bowman has requested an additional \$17,000.00 in hourly budget, bringing the total task amount to \$66,700.00, due to construction lags and additional days of construction observation services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope that the Borough is hereby authorized to increase the hourly budget for additional construction observation services to \$66,700.00

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, 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 Simpson – yes
Councilman Riccardi – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – yes

Resolution 173-24

**RESOLUTION APPROVING CONSTRUCTION
DEPARTMENT SPECIAL PROJECT EXTRA HOURS**

WHEREAS, there exists a need for extra hours to be worked for a special project regarding administrative application processing within the Construction Department of the Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Borough approved Resolution 169-24 at the September 24, 2024 Council Meeting, wherein the pay rate would be \$25.00 per hour, up to three (3) hours per week, for a period of one (1) year, supervised by the Borough Administrator; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the Borough needs additional hours added to allow for more catch up during evening hours; and

WHEREAS, the Borough would like to add an additional three (3) hours per week, bringing the total to six (6) hours per week; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available for this purpose in the 2024 budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope that the Borough approves the additional three (3) hours per week, bringing the total to six (6) hours per week for the administrative application processing special project extra hours for the Construction Department.

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

Councilman Riccardi asked if these extra hours are still needed. Administrator McNeilly replied the hours need to go from three (3) to six (6) for at least a short duration of time. Councilman Wachterhauser asked if anyone has applied for the position. Administrator McNeilly stated applications have been received. At this time, the hours are needed to process the piles of permits. If someone were to start now and saw the piles of permits, they would likely quit. Everyone in the office is doing great and pitching in. The goal is to get the permits caught up and then bring a new person in.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Kuncken – yes	Councilman Simpson – yes
Councilman Riccardi – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – yes

Resolution 174-24 **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT OF TAXES**

WHEREAS, the title company as well as the bank have made payment of 3rd Quarter 2024 taxes; and

WHEREAS, the double payment created an overpayment on the account; and

WHEREAS, the title company has requested a refund of the overpayment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, that a warrant be drawn to the title company as named below in the designated amount representing an overpayment of taxes, as follows:

Homeowner Information:

Block	Lot	Qual	Name & Address
11102	13		Mara M Olivia Monroe 33 Linden Ave Stanhope, New Jersey 07874

Refund Information:	Tax Year	Amount
Investment Title, LLC Attn: Jessica Leezer 150 Morristown Rd, Suite 210 Bernardsville, NJ 07924	2024	\$1,749.14

On motion by Councilman Riccardi, 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 Simpson – yes
Councilman Riccardi – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – yes

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Resolution 175-24 **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 October 8, 2024 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 Thornton 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 Simpson – yes

Councilman Thornton – yes

Councilman Wachterhauser – yes

AGENDA ITEMS

All items listed on the Agenda for October 22, 2024, were approved.

CITIZEN'S TO BE HEARD

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

Rosemarie Maio stated the trees for Dell Road will be planted on Monday. The utilities have been marked out by the DPW Superintendent. The Shade Tree Commission members are meeting with Sunnyside Landscaping on Friday to show them where the trees are to be planted. Ms. Maio stated the commission has not received any complaints from the residents. Councilman Wachterhauser stated there was a question raised which was posted on Facebook. Administrator McNeilly stated he is of the opinion that the Mayor did an excellent job of abating that issue. Councilman Wachterhauser stated the issue was with the type of tree and where they were being planted. Mayor Wronko stated there was also mention that no letter was sent out, so he posted a copy of the letter. Ms. Maio stated a letter was sent to every resident on Dell Road. Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough will take care of watering the trees once they are planted. Councilman Romano stated he has seen a great deal of tree work being done and he asked if Shade Tree is being notified about the removals. Ms. Maio stated Shade Tree has had more permit requests this year than in past years. Administrator McNeilly stated the Borough has a very due diligent team in Shade Tree. Ms. Maio stated a permit is required if more than one tree is going to be removed.

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

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Councilwoman Kuncken, seconded by Councilman Riccardi and unanimously carried by voice vote the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 P.M.

Approved:

Linda Chirip
Deputy Clerk for
Ellen Horak, RMC
Borough Clerk