

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION AND  
AGENDA MEETING MINUTES  
August 12, 2025  
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 8, 2025, 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 Riccardi – present  
Councilman Romano – present  
Councilman Simpson – present

Councilman Thornton – present  
Councilman Wachterhauser – present  
Councilman Zampino – present

Mayor Wronko – present

**ENGINEER'S REPORT**

Mayor Wronko invited Eric Keller, Borough Engineer, forward to present his report.

Sunset Avenue/Ridge Road/Overhill Road Milling & Resurfacing – Eric Keller, Borough Engineer, stated a road milling and resurfacing project is scheduled for Sunset Avenue, Ridge Road and Overhill Road. The water mains were replaced on these roads last year and gas mains have been installed. Tilcon is the contractor through the co-op and they have set the date for the milling and paving to be done in October. There is extra time available for this project. All of the funds from the USEPA were not utilized when the water main work was done. They were gracious enough to allow us to process this as a micro purchase, because we had included this in the work plans to repave the roads. There is \$45,000 left in the USEPA funds. The balance of the project will be funded by the Borough, which will be approximately \$35,000 to \$40,000 depending on the cost of the asphalt and fuel adjustments.

Main Street Milling & Resurfacing Local Aid Project – Mr. Keller stated Main Street is a Local Aid Project which needs to be milled and resurfaced this year. Normally he would wait for NJDOT approval before sending this in, but he did not wait. Mr. Keller stated he is of the opinion that NJDOT is not going to have an issue with the milling and resurfacing. Mr. Keller stated he will try to have both projects done around the same time. The representative Mr. Keller was dealing with at Tilcon has been moved to another location but Mr. Keller will continue to work with Tilcon and try to schedule a date sooner. Mayor Wronko asked how long the projects will take. Mr. Keller stated it takes a day to mill the roads and another day to resurface them. If given a choice, Main Street will be done first.

Water Tower Grant Documents – Mr. Keller stated he and Administrator McNeilly are working on the HUD grant documents for the Water Tower Project. A proposal for the geotechnical services and preliminary engineering design were previously submitted and are pending Council action. The geotechnical services will be provided by a sub contractor and the engineering services will be provided by Mr. Keller's firm. Mayor Wronko asked what the timeline is. Administrator McNeilly stated there is still work to do but they are working with a good representative and HUD is anxious to close out all of the initial information packets by the end of this month. We cannot move forward with the items mentioned by Mr. Keller until there is a commitment made guaranteeing the Borough will receive the funding. Administrator McNeilly stated he sent a list of 50 questions to Mr. Keller the other day asking for information that they need. Progress is being made.

Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance – Mr. Keller stated he has been reaching out to a representative at the state regarding the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance with no response until recently only to be told he is not the proper contact person. Mr. Keller stated he now has the name and number of the proper NFIP State Coordinator and he will contact him tomorrow. Mr. Keller stated his written report lists all the comments as a reminder. This was last discussed in April. Administrator McNeilly stated this will require ordinance changes. Mr. Keller stated it is mostly a boiler plate document. There are some limited areas where the Borough has the option of making some changes. The changes are actually making the ordinance more stringent than what the basic model ordinance from the state would be. Councilman Riccardi asked if the Borough Attorney has reviewed the document. Administrator McNeilly stated the attorney has reviewed a lot of it but she will review it again. Councilman Thornton asked what the timetable for this is. Administrator McNeilly stated we are months behind as it is but there is no penalty. This should be done in the next two months or so.

Mayor Wronko thanked Mr. Keller for his report this evening.

## **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Laura Court Island – Administrator McNeilly stated that the DPW has completed a refresh project on the center island of the cul-de-sac on Laura Court. The overgrown shrubs and tall grass have been replaced with river stone. The area looks great and will no longer need DPW to regularly maintain the grass there. This will work well for the future when the road is repaved.

Dell Road Park – Administrator McNeilly stated the DPW gave the Dell Road Park a deep going through on Friday. The concerns about fungus in the mulch and trace poison ivy behind the fence have been taken care of.

DeskPro Kick Off – Administrator McNeilly stated the DeskPro software is ready to be rolled out. The finance issues have all been taken care of. The rollout should take place later this week.

Canal Trail – Administrator McNeilly stated the Canal Trail is the area that goes off of the foot behind Well #5, which leaves Stanhope across the dilapidated concrete bridge, the one that says State of NJ. This goes to the NJDEP property which is the Canal Trail, formerly known as the Braille Trail which goes into Mt. Olive in Morris County. Administrator McNeilly stated that DPW Superintendent Titsworth has made contact with the staff at Hopatcong State Park to point out the need for trail maintenance. Mt. Olive was previously taking care of the area but they have stepped away from it. The state park is working on getting this placed on the work schedule. The DPW Superintendent will oversee this issue to make sure it gets done. The trail was built by a corporate grant from Givaudan and it was then maintained by Mt. Olive Township. Prior to this Hopatcong State Park had maintained the area a few times a year.

FY2026 Congressionally Directed Spending – Administrator McNeilly stated it appears that the Borough's request was not included in the FY2026 appropriations bill. The agricultural subcommittee senator spending bill only lists three towns. Only one of the three received one hundred percent funding and that was for a fire truck for \$186,000 in Hopewell Township. The Borough of Dumont was for a ladder truck and they received only thirty five percent of their requested amount. The Runnemede Fire Department asked for upgrades to critical infrastructure and they received only fifty five percent of their requested amount. The Borough's request will be resubmitted again next year. There were awards for construction of operation centers. Readington Township requested three million dollars under the congressman's side and they were awarded \$1.95 million but Readington can probably provide the balance.

Well Pump Repair – Councilman Wachterhauser asked for an update on the well repair. Administrator McNeilly stated the pump is still out for repair and the standby pump is working fine.

## **WORK SESSION**

Eagle Scout Project – Councilman Simpson stated Justin Dannecker has presented a proposal for his Eagle Scout Project. Councilman Simpson stated Justin would like to repair the wooden fencing and install a horseshoe court at the Pennyton Park located on Dell Avenue. The proposal lists two possible locations for the horseshoe court. One proposed location is in the large grass area and the other option would be near the basketball court. Councilman Zampino asked if the horseshoes would be provided or would residents need to bring their own. Councilman Simpson stated the horseshoes would be provided as part of the project. For an Eagle Scout Project the plan has to be created and it has to be financed by the scout. Councilman Zampino stated he is concerned the horseshoes will go missing. Administrator McNeilly stated he is concerned that horseshoes is not a good idea. Responsible people with horseshoes is one thing but there are young children using the park and there could be an issue with horseshoes flying out into the road. Councilman Simpson introduced Justin who was present in the audience. Councilman Wachterhauser asked Justin if a pickle ball court could be planned instead. Administrator McNeilly stated pickle ball would be very expensive. Councilman Romano stated he has seen horseshoe courts in other areas and the people have to bring their own horseshoes. Administrator McNeilly stated he likes the plan to have backboards on the pits. Having the freestanding pins in the ground poses a hazard for people to trip and fall and become impaled by the pins but having the backboard there serves as a warning. Administrator McNeilly stated, if the horseshoe court was to be built, he is of the opinion the best location would be the large grass area. The other area is too close to the basketball court and the playground. A pickle ball court has been discussed in the past but not agreed to. A grant would have to be obtained and the cost is \$80,000. Councilman Simpson stated he and Justin did take measurements of the park to determine where the court could be placed. The council discussed the proposal, and they appreciate that Justin wants to provide the improvements to the park. There is concern about the option A location because the horseshoes would be thrown going toward the street. There is concern that the horseshoe court may not get utilized if people have to bring their own horseshoes. The question of whether there is a way to have a deposit made to get the horseshoes and then have the deposit returned when the horseshoes are returned was brought up. The council would like to have an activity available at the park but suggested that perhaps Justin could research another option. Councilman Simpson stated Justin has already had to apply to the Boy Scout Council for an extension for his Eagle Scout Project. Justin's petitioner for the project, present in the audience, stated she was told that Justin needs to provide the Boy Scout Council with the estimated timeframe and they will generally grant an extension for three to six months. The petitioner stated another option that might be acceptable would be to provide a cornhole game. The council members stated that is a popular game and does not have safety concerns. The governing body suggested Justin revise his proposal and change it from a horseshoe court to cornhole and invited him to attend the next meeting two weeks from now.

5 Ridge Road – Councilman Wachterhauser stated he heard from the company that purchased the lien for 5 Ridge Road from HUD. They have to go through the foreclosure procedure. However, the previous owner has passed away and there was a reverse mortgage. Hopefully, by the end of the year this will be taken care of and the property can then be sold. This will eliminate one more abandoned property in town. Administrator McNeilly stated 13 High Street is also going through this process.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

## **RESOLUTIONS**

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

### **Resolution 142-25**

### **RESOLUTION TO AMEND BUDGET TO INCLUDE SAFE & SECURE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of**

any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount thereof was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget, and

**WHEREAS**, said Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for an equal amount, and

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Council of the Borough of Stanhope in the County of Sussex, New Jersey, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget of the year 2025 in the sum of \$10,346.88, which will be available as a revenue from Safe & Secure Communities Program in the amount of \$10,346.88.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a like sum of \$10,346.88 is hereby appropriated under the caption of:

General Appropriations

(A) Public and Private Programs Offset by Revenues:  
Safe & Secure Communities Program, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the above is the result of funds from the Safe & Secure Communities Program in the amount of \$10,346.88.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Chief Financial Officer submit one copy of the Chapter 159 certification form to the Director of Local Government Services.

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

Roll Call:

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

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

**Resolution 143-25**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN AN  
ELECTRONIC TAX SALE**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 54:5-19.1 authorizes electronic tax sales pursuant to rules and regulations to be promulgated by the Director of the Division of Local Government Services; and

**WHEREAS**, the Director of the Division of Local Government Services has promulgated rules and regulations for electronic tax sales; and

**WHEREAS**, the Director of the Division of Local Government Services has approved NJ Tax Lien Investors/RealAuction.com to conduct electronic tax sales; and

**WHEREAS**, an electronic tax sale is innovative and provides a greater pool of potential lien buyers, thus creating the environment for a more complete tax sale process; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey wishes to participate in an electronic tax sale.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to participate in the electronic tax sale and submit same to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services if necessary.

**Resolution 144-25**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ELECTRONIC TAX SALE  
NOTICE FEES**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 54:5-19.1 authorizes electronic tax sales pursuant to rules and regulations to be promulgated by the Director of the Division of Local Government Services; and

**WHEREAS**, the rules and regulations require a municipality to send two (2) notices of tax sale to each property included in said sale; and

**WHEREAS**, the rules and regulations allow said municipality to charge a fee of \$25.00 per notice for the creation, printing and mailing of said notice; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey wishes to balance the effect of fees upon the property owner which may be experiencing financial hardship, and the other residents which should not have to bear any additional costs. The Borough therefore wishes to set a onetime fee of \$25.00 for the two (2) required notices that will be assessed specifically to the delinquent accounts that are causing the need for a tax sale and not to the general tax base.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey that a onetime fee of \$25.00 is hereby authorized and is to be charged to each property owner appearing on the 2024 electronic tax sale list.

**Resolution 145-25**

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

**WHEREAS**, at the Municipal Tax Sale held on October 30, 2024, a lien was sold on Block 10303 Lot 2, also known as 159 Brooklyn Road, for 2023 delinquent water and sewer charges; and

**WHEREAS**, this lien which is known as Tax Sale Certificate #24-00001 was sold to RTLF-NJ II, LLC at 0% interest and a Premium of \$300.00; and

**WHEREAS**, Pennymac, mortgagee, has effected a redemption of certificate #24-00001 in the amount of \$1,388.00; and

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

Redemption Amount: Outside Lien #24-00001 and Interest	\$1,388.00
Premium Paid by Lienholder	300.00
Total From Current Fund:	\$1,388.00
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 Governing Body acknowledges that RTLF-NJ II, LLC is entitled to the redemption in the total amount of \$1,688.00; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to issue a check in the total amount of \$1,688.00 for the total redemption of certificate #24-00001 payable to RTLF-NJ II, LLC, PO Box 71054, Chicago, IL 60694-1054; and

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

**Resolution 146-25**

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

**WHEREAS**, at the Municipal Tax Sale held on October 30, 2024, a lien was sold on Block 10605 Lot 7, also known as 21 Highland Ave, for 2023 delinquent property taxes, water and sewer charges; and

**WHEREAS**, this lien which is known as Tax Sale Certificate #24-00003 was sold to Trystone Capital Assets, LLC at 0% interest and a Premium of \$12,200.00; and

**WHEREAS**, Karen Masterson, property owner, has effected a redemption of certificate #24-00003 in the amount of \$20,744.34; and

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

Redemption Amount: Outside Lien #24-00003 and Interest	\$20,744.34
Premium Paid by Lienholder	12,200.00

Total From Current Fund:	\$20,744.34
Total From Tax Premium Account	12,200.00

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey that the Governing Body acknowledges that Trystone Capital Assets, LLC is entitled to the redemption in the total amount of \$32,944.34; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to issue a check in the total amount of \$32,944.34 for the total redemption of certificate #24-00003 payable to Trystone Capital Assets. LLC, PO Box 1030, Brick, NJ 08723; and

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

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

Roll Call:

Councilman Riccardi – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – yes
Councilman Simpson – yes	Councilman Zampino – yes

#### Mayor's Appointment

#### **Resolution 147-25**

#### **RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF MAXWELL J. MULHOLLAND, AS A MEMBER OF THE STANHOPE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Mayor's appointment of Maxwell J. Mulholland, as a member of the Stanhope Fire Department.

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the Borough of Stanhope that they do hereby concur with the Mayor's appointment of Maxwell J. Mulholland, as a Member of the Stanhope Fire Department effective immediately.

On motion by Councilman Wachterhauser, seconded by Councilman Riccardi and carried by a majority voice vote, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted. Councilman Simpson abstained.

#### **PAYMENT OF BILLS**

#### **Resolution 148-25**

#### **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 August 12, 2025, 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 Riccardi – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – yes
Councilman Simpson – yes	Councilman Zampino - yes

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

All items listed on the Agenda for August 26, 2025, 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.

Rich Perry asked for an update regarding the Ryan Homes development proposed for Sparta Road. Administrator McNeilly stated nothing has been submitted as yet. Mr. Perry asked if they are waiting on something from the Borough or are we waiting on them. Administrator McNeilly replied the Borough is waiting on them.

Dave Badolato, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Chief of the Stanhope Fire Department, asked the Council to consider a tax exemption for the Fire Department members. Other states in the tri-state area are now providing this. This would help in bringing people into Stanhope and having them join the Fire Department and keeping them around. In Maryland this was just passed and it is based on points obtained which is similar to LOSAP. Each call is 2 points, training is 1 point, and then it is tiered. For so many points on the lower end you would get a 20% exemption and it goes all the way up to 100%. Pennsylvania just passed a plan which is a tax reimbursement. Based on a certain percentage for the year, it is possible to qualify for a 100% refund. New York is more of a flat percentage. If a certain percentage of fire calls and drills are made for the year, a tax break is given. Councilman Thornton asked for clarification that this would be an exemption for an individual’s property tax. Mr. Badolato confirmed this and stated New Jersey has a bill which has been stalled for the entire state. Other states like Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York have been providing the exemption by individual town in order to boost volunteer membership for fire departments and to keep the members. Mayor Wronko asked Mr. Badolato to explain what LOSAP is. Mr. Badolato stated LOSAP stands for Length of Service Award Program. There are tiers in the program. If you make from 0% to 25% of calls and drills for the year that would be Tier 1. Tier 2 would be from 25% to 50% and Tier 3 would be from 50% to 100% and this puts money into a retirement account. It is an annuity fund that can be moved around in stocks and bonds but the money cannot be touched until you are 65 or fully retired from the fire department. Mr. Badolato stated he does not know of any New Jersey towns which have approved the tax exemption program to date. LOSAP is a great program but it does not benefit anyone until they retire. The tax exemption is an immediate benefit and might help to get volunteers. Councilman Wachterhauser suggested that a meeting be scheduled for the Public Safety Committee to meet with the Fire Department. Administrator McNeilly suggested during that meeting that the clothing allowance be looked at which already has a method in place and adjusting that number. Councilman Thornton stated he appreciates having the incentive to participate and all that the volunteers do but he asked what kind of burden would this program put on the other residents of the Borough due to the fact this is a small municipality. There are many variables that would go into this. Mr. Badolato stated he understands this is something new and it is just beginning to pop up more across the country. The Borough may not be able to do what larger towns provide but maybe a 20% set amount could be agreed to for current active responding members based on their number of calls and drills. Administrator McNeilly stated it would be best to discuss all of

this at the Public Safety Committee meeting. Mayor Wronko thanked Mr. Badolato for bringing this issue to their attention.

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

### **CLOSED SESSION**

1. The general nature of the subject matter(s) to be discussed is as follows:

1 – Contract

2. 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.

3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

The Mayor and Council went into Closed Session at 7:39 P.M.

### **RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

At the conclusion of the Closed Session, the Mayor and Council reconvened the public meeting at 7:50P.M. with all present.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Councilman Riccardi, seconded by Councilman Wachterhauser and unanimously carried by voice vote the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Approved:

Linda Chirip  
Deputy Clerk for  
Ellen Horak, RMC  
Borough Clerk