

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
WORK SESSION AND
AGENDA MEETING MINUTES
August 11, 2026
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 public meeting has been made in accordance with P.L. 2025, c.72, N.J.S.A. 35:3-2, and the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq., inasmuch as a notice has been published on the Borough's official Internet website, www.stanhopenj.gov, which is accessible and available to the public free of charge. A direct hyperlink to legal notices published on the Borough's official Internet website is conspicuously placed on the website's homepage. Notice was also 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:

Councilman Riccardi – absent
Councilman Romano – present
Councilman Simpson – present

Councilman Smith – absent
Councilman Thornton – present
Councilman Wachterhauser – absent

Mayor Wronko – present

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Milling & Paving – Administrator McNeilly stated this is a busy time in the Borough. There are many streets being milled and paved by NJ Natural gas. Most of the milling has been completed except for Oak Drive, Hickory Drive, Delaware Avenue, West Drive, and East Drive. On Friday, Dell Road, James Street, Young Drive and Maryann Terrace will be milled, which will complete the milling. The paving schedule for Thursday will be Church Street, Bell Street, Bedford Avenue, and King Street. Stanhope School has been asked to provide us with their parking lot paving schedule because that paving needs to be done prior to paving Sagamore Road, Spencer Street, Linden Avenue etc. This will prevent their trucks from damaging the Borough's new pavement. The school plans to pave the parking lot on Thursday or Friday of this week. After the paving crew completes that area, they will finish up with Dell Road, James Street, Young Drive and Maryann Terrace. The lines will be painted at a later date. Mayor Wronko asked if we have stressed to the gas company the importance of communication from them. The Borough's communication with the public is based on the timeliness and accuracy of the information they provide to us. Administrator McNeilly stated he has been telling this to the gas company. Fortunately, the weather has been good. The rain we have had has been in the afternoon after the gas company has finished work for the day. Mayor Wronko asked if any inspections are being done after the paving is done to ensure everything is being done properly. Administrator McNeilly stated he and the DPW Superintendent have been going out and checking on the work. There have been some items called out such as a broken casting during milling, which they have replaced, along with some parts of the catch basins and faceplates. There have been some calls received relative to small piles of blacktop which have been left behind. The DPW has taken care of those, which are small issues. Some of the paving which has been done has gone above and beyond in the area of Baker Place and Highland Avenue. Some of the berms are very impressive which go across certain areas.

Councilman Thornton stated the minutes from the July 28th meeting state there was a pre-construction meeting held in mid-July with the gas company. The Infrastructure Committee was not informed about this meeting and did not have the opportunity to express the importance of the communications. Councilman Thornton stated in his opinion more people at the table stressing the importance would have been helpful. Administrator McNeilly stated he attended the meeting along with the Borough Engineer, the DPW Superintendent and the representatives from NJ Natural Gas. Administrator McNeilly stated due to the complexity of this project, it is going as he expected. Usually, we are doing one or two roads at a time. On Monday, there were thirteen roads called out. There were so many that the Nixle message had to be sent out with multiple messages because all the streets could not fit in one message.

Administrator McNeilly stated several roads have only one lane being paved. Councilman Thornton stated paving needs to be done after the school paves their parking lot. Administrator McNeilly confirmed that Sagamore Road and Spencer Street will be paved after the schoolwork is complete. The cul-de-sacs will be completely milled and paved because the vendor could not guarantee that they could get the water to run the right way. Sagamore Road, Spencer Street and Valley Road were milled today. Tomorrow should be the balance of Oak Drive, Hickory Drive, East Drive, West Drive and Delaware Avenue. Then the machines will get moved over to Dell Road. Councilman Thornton asked if the gas company is communicating daily as to where they are milling and paving. Administrator McNeilly stated the process is clunky, but we are getting the best information we can from them. The information is received the day before. At first, it was being sent in big chunks but that was not accurate enough. The goal is to complete the project before school begins. All of the gas mains have been installed out past the high school. No more mains need to be installed in the Borough. Whatever happens or does not happen with the Highpoint and Stonegate Condominiums is up to those associations. The next round of paving will happen on Thursday. The actual schedule has not been provided as yet.

Liquor Licenses – Councilman Thornton asked if there are six liquor licenses in the Borough. Administrator McNeilly stated there are two club licenses, one package license, and four consumption licenses. Councilman Thornton asked if any of these licenses are transferrable to another municipality. Administrator McNeilly stated there was an incorrect posting that he saw as well and after seeing that Administrator McNeilly stated he reviewed the statute. Even without the current revision, which is about to be signed, the statute states that two municipalities would have to make an agreement to move a pocket license from one to the other. The share of the revenue from the sale of the license to the next municipality that sells it. The municipality that has the license has to agree to it and it also has to go into a redevelopment zone. It cannot just be used wherever. There are very specific steps that would have to be adhered to in that process. Administrator McNeilly read the procedures that would have to be followed to transfer a liquor license to another municipality. It appears that a private seller cannot initiate this process. Administrator McNeilly stated he would argue that if anyone thinks there is a land connection to Roxbury Township, needs to talk a walk through the marsh on the far side of Lake Musconetcong. Councilman Thornton stated he had seen the advertisement and Byram Township has some addresses with a Stanhope address. The license that was lost was an asset of the Borough. Administrator McNeilly stated once a liquor license is lost, you cannot get it back.

WORK SESSION

Ordinance 2026-13 Adopting a New Chapter 131, Tree Removal-Replacement [Tabled on 6/23/26] – Mayor Wronko stated Ordinance 2026-13 Adopting a New Chapter 131, Tree Removal-Replacement was tabled previously in order to discuss the issue with the Shade Tree Commission. Administrator McNeilly stated there are some members of the Shade Tree Commission in the audience this evening and he suggested holding the discussion at the Mayor and Council meeting at the end of the month in order to have input from the Borough Attorney as well. The ordinance takes the current Shade Tree structure and turns it all over to a Code Enforcement issue on the enforcement side. The Code Official does not have enough time in that office to do all that is called out in the ordinance. Administrator McNeilly asked everyone to look closely at the ordinance and prepare questions to go over with the attorney to find out what the options are relative to how to comply without having to go so hard into the enforcement world. Mayor Wronko asked Rosemarie Maio, Shade Tree Commission member, present in the audience, to meet or speak with Administrator McNeilly prior to the next meeting to voice her concerns. Ms. Maio agreed.

Spring Street Resident Issue [Emilie Kay – Roadway Conditions] – Administrator McNeilly stated what happened on Spring Street was pretty tragic. The road was milled and then there was a rainstorm with approximately five inches of rain on Monday. A two-foot trench occurred and exposed the household gas lines. Spring Street does not have any drains. The lake is the drain essentially. The homeowner sent in pictures. The contractor, Gray, went in and basically rebuilt the road. Base was put in and the sides were all compacted. Administrator McNeilly stated he drove through the area prior to paving, and it looked better. Mayor Wronko asked if the Borough is required to do any work with regard to stormwater management. Administrator McNeilly stated there are no requirements. The paving has been completed, and the berms are back on the sides. The road is better than it was four weeks ago. The resident is still concerned. Everything relative to this would be a capital budget. Tearing up the road and installing pipes for drains is a problem because there is nowhere to run them to. It is one thing for the water to find its way down the hill through the woods behind the church. But the water cannot be directed there without an open discharge permit, which may not be an option. The curbing has been replaced back to what it was before the storm hit, before the road was milled. Spring Street does have its own set of problems. It is called Spring Street for a reason. Administrator McNeilly estimated that to do drainage work on Spring Street could be a minimum cost of \$60,000-\$70,000.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

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 119-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF ESCROW FOR BLOCK 11701 LOT 9.01 & 9.02

WHEREAS, Danbro Properties was required to post an escrow deposit for Block 11701, Lot 9.01 & 9.02; and

WHEREAS, the review is complete; and

WHEREAS, the work is complete and there is no further billing forthcoming; and

WHEREAS, there are unused funds in the amount of \$1,000.00.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, that the Borough shall refund to the following owner the following amount:

Danbro Properties	\$1,000.00
307 Bloomfield Ave	
Ste 303	
Caldwell, NJ 07006	

Resolution 120-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT OF TAXES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2026

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope conducted a townwide revaluation for calendar year 2026; and

WHEREAS, block 11701 lot 13.18A, also known as Stonegate Lane, owned and assessed to Stonegate Condo Association, is a common area to the condo association and has had a change in assessed value to \$0 due to the revaluation; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has determined that the property taxes are paid through the 2nd quarter 2026; and

WHEREAS, as the assessed value is now \$0, an overpayment on the account exists and needs to be refunded.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, that the Tax Collector be authorized to refund all of the preliminary 2026 taxes collected in the total amount of \$9.32.

Resolution 121-26

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 100% DISABLED
VETERAN EXEMPT STATUS TO OWNER OF BLOCK
11009 LOT 9 FOR TAX YEAR 2026 AND THE
CANCELLATION OF TAXES FOR 2026**

WHEREAS, Nicholas J. Sisto, Jr. is the lawful owner of Block 11009, Lot 9, also known as 47-49 Brooklyn Road, and has been deemed 100% disabled by the Department of Veteran's Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Nicholas J. Sisto, Jr. has applied to the Stanhope Borough Tax Assessor for a 100% Disabled Veteran exemption in accordance with 54:4-3:30, which will be granted for the year 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor has recommended that this exemption be retroactive to July 9, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has determined that the property taxes are paid through the 2nd quarter 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector is to cancel a pro-rated amount for 3rd quarter 2026 taxes and the full amount of 4th quarter 2026 taxes in the total amount of \$4,930.47.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, that the property be classified as 100% exempt effective July 9, 2026, and the Tax Collector be authorized to cancel a pro-rated amount of 3rd quarter 2026 taxes and the full amount of 4th quarter 2026 taxes in the total amount of \$4,930.47.

Resolution 122-26

**RESOLUTION AMENDING STANHOPE
BOROUGH'S EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope maintains an Employee Handbook, last revised December 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Attorney has reviewed certain provisions within the Handbook and made amendments in compliance with the Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund 2026 Employment Practices Risk Control Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, that the Employee Handbook is revised to incorporate the changes recommended by the Borough's Attorney to be in compliance with the Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund 2026 Employment Practices Risk Control Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Employee Handbook is amended effective as of this date to include these changes.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase in this resolution is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this resolution.

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

Roll Call:

Councilman Riccardi – absent
Councilman Romano – yes
Councilman Simpson – yes

Councilman Smith – absent
Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Wachterhauser – absent

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

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Resolution 123-26

**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 11, 2026, 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:

Councilman Riccardi – absent	Councilman Smith – absent
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Thornton– yes
Councilman Simpson – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – absent

Resolution 124-26

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PROFESSIONAL
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES FOR THE STANHOPE NEW
STREET IMPROVEMENTS – LOCAL AID PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stanhope requires construction services for the New Street Improvements – Local Aid Project (the “Project”); and

WHEREAS, on May 11, 2026, Bowman Consulting Group, Ltd. submitted a proposal to develop construction documents and provide construction administration and observation services related to the New Street Improvements – Local Aid Project in the total amount not to exceed \$26,150.00; and

WHEREAS, there exists a need for Bowman Consulting Group, Ltd. to include an assessment of the existing speed hump layout and configuration to determine if any changes are warranted.

WHEREAS, this contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a “professional service” in accordance with from N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5 of the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law, due to specialized engineering services; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, that Bowman Consulting Group, Ltd. is hereby appointed to provide limited professional construction services regarding the New Street Improvements – Local Aid Project, in the total amount not to exceed \$26,150.00; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the award of this contract is subject to certification of the availability of funds by the Chief Financial Officer.

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

Roll Call:

Councilman Riccardi – absent	Councilman Smith – absent
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Thornton– yes
Councilman Simpson – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – absent

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER #2 AND
PAYMENT TO PORTOFINO BUILDERS FOR MAIN
STREET SIDEWALK/CROSSWALK WORK**

WHEREAS, a contract was entered into for Main Street sidewalk and crosswalk work (the “Project”), between the Borough of Stanhope and Portofino Builders, after public bid and award, and as part of a Local Aid grant, for an original contract price of \$73,803.30, on October 14, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Portofino Builders previously submitted Change Order #1 for Invoice #1278 in the amount of \$6,929.00, for completion of the sidewalk and driveway apron replacements and installation of the detectable warning surfaces for the Project, which was approved by the adoption of Resolution 046-26 on January 27, 2026, for a total contract price of \$80,734.00; and

WHEREAS, Portofino Builders has now submitted Change Order #2 for Invoice #1332 in the amount of \$625.00, which is a result of an increase in the quantity of Item 16 – Thermoplastic Crosswalk Treatment for 25SY; and

WHEREAS, with the change order increase of \$625.00, the total contract award of \$80,734.00, which increased the total amount by 10.24% to \$81,359.00.

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer has reviewed the invoices, and agrees to a change order and the total payment request for \$49,878.32 (after 2% retainage), in accordance with the two change orders; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that there are available funds to award Change Order No. 2.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stanhope, that the Borough approve of the change order and payment to Portofino Builders of \$49,878.32 for Main Street sidewalk and crosswalk work, resulting in a total contract amount of \$81,359.00 is approved.

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:

Councilman Riccardi – absent	Councilman Smith – absent
Councilman Romano – yes	Councilman Thornton – yes
Councilman Simpson – yes	Councilman Wachterhauser – absent

AGENDA ITEMS

All items listed on the Agenda for August 25, 2026, 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.

Nancy Hoyt asked if the berm will be replaced by her home within the next few months. Administrator McNeilly asked where the berm was located. Mrs. Hoyt stated it ran along the front of the property and around the side of Canfield Street. Administrator McNeilly stated that he will make sure the berm is replaced. Mrs. Hoyt thanked Administrator McNeilly.

Dave Silverthorne, Sussex County Commissioner, introduced himself to the Mayor and Council and stated even though he is not the liaison for the Borough, he wanted to let them know he is available for any assistance they may need in the future. Mayor Wronko stated the Borough has been dealing with an issue on Brooklyn Road where the guardrail was damaged and is missing. The Borough has reached out several times to the Commissioners asking for the guardrail to be replaced. Mayor Wronko asked Commissioner Silverthorne if he could please look into that issue. Commissioner Silverthorne asked Administrator McNeilly to please email him with the specifics,

and he will check on the issue. Administrator McNeilly stated he will send the email. Councilman Thornton asked Commissioner Silverthorne if he knew who the liaison for Stanhope Borough is. Commissioner Silverthorne stated he is of the opinion it may be Chris Carney, but he is not certain.

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

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Councilman Romano, seconded by Councilman Simpson and unanimously carried by voice vote the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Approved:

Linda Chirip
Deputy Clerk for
Ellen Horak, RMC
Borough Clerk