

COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

STOWE TOWNSHIP MEETING

July 11, 2023 7:00 pm

STOWE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING

555 BROADWAY AVENUE, MCKEES ROCKS, PA 15136

ATTENDEES AT BOTH MEETINGS: Commissioners K. Cropper-Hall; C. McDermott; L. Parrilla; D. Rugh; Solicitor B. Matta; Township; Secretary R. Farls; Police Chief M. Preininger

ATTENDEES ONLY AT WORKSHOP MEETING: - Fire Chief M. Chapman

ATTENDEES ONLY AT VOTING MEETING: Engineer J. Marcink

ABSENT FROM BOTH MEETINGS: Commissioner D. Chestnutt and Public Works D. Burkhart

The commissioners' meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by President Cropper-Hall with the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for police, fire, EMS.

President Cropper-Hall stated that after the public comments there is going to be a one change. There is going to be scratch paper up on the podium and if you have any questions about anything that the board is discussing, write it down on the paper and give it to either the secretary or one of the commissioners and they will get an answer back to you. So anytime now that you have public comments, you certainly can stand up and talk about them, but as the meeting proceeds, we are not going to go back and forth with you since the Board has a lot of business to get to and that is how we are going to conduct it going forward.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC

Stanley "Stush" Papst (*from workshop meeting*)– You redid that Resolution on Sexually Oriented Business to cut it in half, not in a public meeting, but in the backroom. It was not transparent to the public. Do you have another resolution out there to override the one that we had for \$25,000? President Cropper-Hall stated that "I would think that we do, because when we discussed it in the backroom and all the commissioners were present and we all discussed it. What I believe was concluded is, my understanding was, because it was a financial commitment, that we were allowed to go ahead and cut it in half. But we will take care of that and make it a voting matter so we will go forward with that." Mr. Papst stated "that should have all been done." President Cropper-Hall stated "It should have been done. So, we made a mistake, Stush, and we apologize to you and to the community for the mistake we made." Mr. Papst said "but the reason, I think, we instituted that high price for that was to keep those types of businesses out of this town." President Cropper-Hall said "No it wasn't., Mr. Papst stated "yes it was". President Cropper-Hall continued saying that she was there (Commissioner Parrilla also stated he was there) stated that we instituted that high levy on that business because of all the trouble that business was bringing into our

town. All of the parking issues, all of the police calls we had to go down and take care of, it was not to keep the business out. If that was the case, I am sure when that whole section we had to authorize for them, for businesses like that to come to our town would have been handled at that time by the commissioners. This board was not on at that time. So, saying that, it is not to keep the businesses out of our town. Unfortunately, whatever your personal opinion of it is, we levied that strictly for the calls and the amount of police work that was happening and taking place at that business.” Mr. Papst then asked “Legally, what you did, was it right or wrong?” Solicitor B. Matta answered “legally you are not allowed to do what you just said.” Mr. Papst asked what that was. Solicitor B. Matta continued “to put a levy on somebody stating that they cannot come in and open a business. I think you remember that.” Mr. Papst continued “No, I’m saying what you did was cut it in half, is that legal without a resolution?” Solicitor B. Matta stated “yes, from a financial end, Stush, you are allowed to do it. I know you want to sit up here.” Mr. Papst stated that “no no I am just asking if it is legal.” Solicitor B. Matta said “I’m not done, I gave my answer, yes.” As Mr. Papst while turning away from the podium he stated “You’re almost done.”

Pastor Doug Black (from workshop meeting)— Introduced himself as the Pastor of the Assembly of God church on Broadway. Wanted to thank Commissioner McDermott and the police department for the water and assistance they gave during their bicycle checkup and repairs held on Saturday, June 17th.

Amy Urbano (from voting meeting)— had placed a question at the workshop meeting concerning “when and where were signs posted in Pittock notifying of street sweeping date and time?” President Cropper-Hall spoke with Danny today and he said because of the rain, they didn’t put a schedule together. But that particular day, they had extra time, it was clear and they went down. There were six (6) cars on your street. They did your street, that area, they went up and did Roosevelt and Wheeler, then they went up and Island Heights. So that’s what they did. Ms. Urbano questioned “only six (6) cars on the street?” President Cropper-Hall stated “that’s what he said.” Ms. Urbano stated that was not true and President Cropper-Hall remarked that she cannot argue with what she was told and Dan is not here to ask. Ms. Urbano stated that “she gets that but people have doorbell cameras and stuff. They went up and down several times but nothing was posted. Was it posted?” President Cropper-Hall replied “no nothing was posted, he said.” Ms. Urbano asked “Is it going to be posted in the future?” President Cropper-Hall stated “I believe, Amy, we try to do that but it is hard to know. We rely on our employees to that so I hope that he will post it the next time, they do get busy. As you know they are extremely busy and it probably was an oversight. And, yes, we would like to say he is going to post it but chances are, we aren’t going to reprimand if he doesn’t.” Ms. Urbano replied “I’m not saying reprimand but it is defeating the purpose with the cars aren’t moved. That’s where all the dirt and debris go on the sides. You are wasting his time, you are wasting water, you are wasting everything by having the sweeper come if people aren’t able to move. If there is an issue where people are going to be ticketed, they can’t be since it was not posted.” President Cropper-Hall asked “was anyone ticketed?” Ms. Urbano stated “no, no one knew it was coming down. It is going to be a regularly, like every so many months? Monthly?” President Cropper-Hall replied “I don’t know. I will try to get that answer (turned to Secretary R. Farls to write down for her). Commissioner McDermott then

responded “what we used to do post, like if they were coming on Friday, we would post it Wednesday, the 11p-7a guys would hang the signs.” Ms. Urbano replied “I think repetition cause of the past practices were posted so you knew every (example) 3rd Thursday. Well, it would be nice to have something.” President Cropper-Hall apologized and stated that “we understand.”

Ricky Stewart (from voting meeting)– just a following up from yesterday, were you guys able to discuss the engine in the executive meeting and will we have an answer today? President Cropper-Hall stated “we did have an answer and we are going to postpone the purchase of the fire truck at this time.” She also stated “we are asking at this time for Matt (Chapman) to come over and we would like to have a one-on-one conversation with Matt alone.” Mr. Stewart replied “anything with fire department business I also have to be there.” President Cropper-Hall stated “you will not be there because we want to speak with Matt alone.” Mr. Stewart replied “As the President of the department” President Cropper-Hall continued “ok then we will not...” Solicitor Matta broke in and stated “ok then they will not speak to Matt.” Mr. Stewart asked “is Matt able to share information with me once you have your meeting with him?” President Cropper-Hall stated, “absolutely, but if you have anything else, but yes, we are going to postpone the fire engine purchase at this time” Solicitor Matta stated “if you don’t want Matt or you are saying that you do not want Matt to have that meeting, then that’s up to you.” Mr. Stewart stated “I’ll have him there. It is just not the right way of going about it” Mr. Thomas DeAngelis, sitting in the audience replied “Why does Matt have to be there when he (Stewart) is the president of the organization?” President Cropper-Hall replied “because we feel that we want to discuss it with Matt, but since, Tom this is what we are going to do, we’ll cancel the meeting.” Solicitor Matta repeated “we’ll cancel the meeting.” President Cropper-Hall asked the other commissioners if they were ok in cancelling, all approved. Solicitor Matta responded “because of all the pushback you probably should cancel it” Mr. Stewart said (over top of Solicitor Matta) “I’ll have him there; I was just asking”. President Cropper-Hall stated “that’s what we want.” Mr. Stewart stated “if you want him there, I’ll make sure Matt is there as long as he can share the information with me after the meeting.” President Cropper-Hall replied “when he leaves here, yea, you guys share things so, sure, you can share” Mr. Stewart responded “I just want to give answer to the body too” President Cropper-Hall and Mr. Stewart both replied “ok”. And left the podium.

REPORTS

FINANCE – Presented by Commissioner Parrilla. It was also announced that effective Friday, July 7th, the three (3) money market accounts will be earning 3.5% APY for six (6) months then PNC will re-evaluate the interest rate market at that time.

PUBLIC WORKS – Presented by Commissioner Rugh. Also, a reminder that from Dale Street to Valley Street on Thursday, July 13th from 4:30pm – 8pm will be closed for the Faithbridge Community Church Block Party. All are invited.

POLICE – Chief M. Preininger presented. Also stated that two (2) grants were received. \$22,000 which are set for body cameras for all 13 police officers. The second grant was received for \$50,000 which will be going towards speed limit signs and additional cameras throughout the Township.

FIRE DEPARTMENT – Chief M. Chapman presented. Asked President Cropper-Hall if there was any information about moving forward with the truck. She stated it will be discussed at the executive session after this meeting.

ORDINANCE – Secretary R. Farls presented. President Cropper-Hall stated that seven (7) resumes have been received and that the commissioners will be arranging interviews.

PLANNING COMMITTEE –Next meeting is set for Thursday, July 27th at 7pm.

SOLICITOR – B. Matta presented. Stated that most will be discussed at the executive session which included occupancy permits, the resolution for 1300 Island Avenue, an update on the Workers Compensation policies as well as some personnel issues.

Commissioner McDermott asked that in the dead-end area of Stowe Avenue the road is collapsing with parking on one side of the street. Wondered if the building at the end of that street would be able to be demo 'ed to create a parking lot. B. Matta stated that it can be creatively done and will evaluate and advise on how to proceed.

ENGINEER – *(at the voting meeting)* J. Marcink. Correction made to his report that Eisler Landscaping has NOT completed the final site plantings and restoration from the Fleming Ave Storm Project. He will be following up with Eisler to get it done so the grant paperwork can be turned in and reimbursement received.

Stated that his office had a lunch and learn from Enviro 21 on July 11th who specialized in bidding of municipal waste, demolitions through a reversed auction. They are to be sending Jeff more information in which he will forward onto B. Matta with the possibility of using them in the future to work on getting lower rates with our bidding.

Commissioner McDermott stated that Lower Highland needs paved and asked if a letter had been sent to West View Water Authority since these issues occurred after they worked on the road. At this time, per B. Matta, nothing has been sent. J. Marcink and B. Matta will work together to make this happen and to get the road fixed.

Commissioner McDermott also stated that there is a duplex at the end of Stowe Ave which needs to be demo 'ed so a parking lot can be created for residents to park. She stated that residents are parking on the road that is starting to collapse and hopes this will help correct the issue along with road repair. She will get the address so it can be placed in the public hearing advertisement. J. Marcink will look into it and let the commissioners and B. Matta know.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. [Approve / Deny] regular Board Meeting Minutes from the June 13th meeting

Old Business to **APPROVE** - Motion made by Commissioner Parrilla; 2nd by Commissioner Rugh; all others approved

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. [Approve / Deny] Motion to approve bonus for Dan Burkhardt of \$4,000 to be paid in June and December yearly

B. [Approve / Deny] Motion to approve bonus for Roberta Farls of \$3,000 to be paid on the July 28, 2023 pay date

C. [Approve / Deny] Motion to approve Deputy Chief of Police Employment Agreement for Charles Wilker

D. [Approve / Deny] motion to dissolve the Resolution for True Diamonds yearly \$25,000 or reduced payment of \$12,500.

New Business to **APPROVE** items A through D - Motion made by Commissioner Parrilla; 2nd by Commissioner Rugh; all others approved all except *Commissioner McDermott approved all and abstained on Item D.*

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
\$ 1,261.42	Allegheny County	Magistrate
\$ 241.73	Allegheny County	Criminal Division
\$ 150.00	Allegheny County	Reimbursement – Election Rental
\$ 2,707.00	Blight Grant	Reimbursement from 2021 Grant
\$431,428.90	PA Municipal Services	Utility Sewage
\$ 3,116.63	Creditech	Collections - Delinquent Sewage
\$106,889.85	Jordan Tax Service	Real Estate Taxes
\$ 18,000.00	A.C. Housing Authority	In lieu of taxes
\$ 2,945.18	Jordan Tax Service	LST

\$ 1,693.36	Jordan Tax Service	Mercantile
\$ 1,139.59	Jordan Tax Service	Business Privilege
\$ 1,472.07	PA Office of the Budget	Public Utility Commission
\$ 1,073.07	PA Dept of Transportation	State Police Fines & Penalties

[Approve / Deny] motion to approve above receipt of June funds **Totaling \$572,118.80**
 Motion by Commissioner Parrilla; 2nd by Commissioner McDermott; all others approved.

III. LISTS OF BILLS

A. Motion to approve payment of June, 2023 bills **Totaling \$530,265.59**

[Approve / Deny] motion to approve June, 2023 bills
 Motion by Commissioner Rugh; 2nd by Commissioner McDermott; all others approved.

Judge Boni swore in Officer Andrew Bigger as a full-time police officer.

PRESIDENT COMMENTS

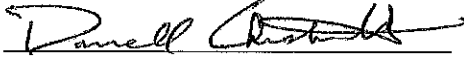
Thanked everyone for coming. Stated there are refreshments in the back room for Officer Bigger.

VOTING MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Parrilla; 2nd by Commissioner Rugh to adjourn. All approved. Meeting was adjourned at 7:31pm

(The workshop meeting was adjourned at 7:21pm with the commissioners going into executive session; Motion by Commissioner Rugh; 2nd by Commissioner Parrilla. All approved.)

 Roberta L. Farls, Township Secretary



 Darrell Chestnutt, Vice-President
 Stowe Township Commissioners