

**STOCKERTOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 18, 2022**

THE BOROUGH OF STOCKERTOWN HELD A COUNCIL MEETING ON MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2022 AT 7:30 PM AT BOROUGH HALL.

**Attendance**

- Council Members present were: Council President Amy Richard, Vice President, Kathleen Zdonowski, Cindy Hower, Joe Gosnell, Renee Cantwell, Pam Davis and Kimberly Holden-Forsyth.
- Solicitor Gary Asteak, Mayor Ken Zemencsik and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Anita Caughy were present.

**The Meeting was called to order by Council President, Amy Richard, at 7:30 PM**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

- An item was added to the Agenda for Solicitor Asteak to obtain authorization from Council to Execute the Adjudication with regard to Eric K. Schwab's Police Tenure Act Appeal.
- **Motion** by Kathleen Zdonowski, Seconded by Joe Gosnell to approve adding an item to the agenda for the Adjudication of Eric K. Schwab's Police Tenure Act Appeal. Motion carried unopposed.

**Guest Speaker**

- Jeff Weiss from Accountant's office Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC presented the 2021 Audit to Council. He stated that Rachael Goughler from his office did the ground work for the audit. He felt that the audit went very smooth. Their Opinion was no different than in the past. He informed Council that the DCED Report for filing was prepared in a modified accrual format rather than in the cash basis format. He stated that they found no issues with the accounting.

**Secretary / Treasurer Report**

- **Motion** by Cindy Hower, Seconded by Joe Gosnell to approve Council Meeting Minutes of March 31, 2022, as written. Motion carried unopposed.
- **Motion** by Kathleen Zdonowski, Seconded by Cindy Hower to approve accounts payable for the General Fund and Sewer Fund through April 18, 2022. Motion carried unopposed.
- Amy Richard stated that the amount on the bottom of the payable sheet showed the balance of \$4,123.95 paid for the Jetter which was delivered without notice.

**Police**

- Amy Richard stated that Officer Christopher Ritter started a full-time position elsewhere and can no longer work for the Borough for the next 6 months until he completes his probation period. For insurance purposes, Ms. Richard asked Council

to approve removing Officer Ritter as a Borough employee. She asked for a Motion to make it official.

- **Motion** by Joe Gosnell, Seconded by Kathleen Zdonowski to remove Christopher Ritter from the Borough's employment records for insurance purposes. Motion carried unopposed.
- Amy Richard stated that if Mr. Ritter wanted to come back after his probation period is over, he can reapply and the Borough can rehire him.

### **Public Works**

- Amy Richard asked for council approval to purchase additional security cameras to be used on the public works building and for the buildings at the sewer plant. The reason for additional cameras is that there was damage found to the equipment stored in the Quonset Hut at the sewer plant. The approximate cost for the camera system at the sewer plant is \$3,450.00. The cost for extra cameras at the public works building is \$2,325.00. It was suggested to approve a set amount not to exceed \$6,500.00 for this purchase. If the cost goes above that amount, council will have to readdress the issue.
- Joe Gosnell suggested purchasing cameras for the foyer outside of the Borough Office. Different camera systems were discussed. It was agreed to research the matter further.
- **Motion** by Cindy Hower, Seconded by Joe Gosnell to purchase additional cameras for the public works building and for the sewer plant at a cost not to exceed \$6,500.00. Motion carried unopposed.
- Amy Richard informed Council that an application was completed for a part-time public works position. She stated that there have been some issues with public works employees being out on worker's compensation. They are back but they are behind and we would like to hire another part-time worker. She asked for a motion.
- **Motion** by Joe Gosnell, Seconded by Cindy Hower to hire Austin Shoffstall, as a part-time public works employee at the starting rate of \$17.00 per hour. Motion carried unopposed.

### **Solicitor**

- Attorney Gary Asteak stated that on March 31, 2022, there was an administrative proceeding pursuant to the Police Tenure Act involving written charges filed by the Mayor against the Chief of Police. A full hearing was conducted and in conclusion the vote was to sustain a three-day suspension without pay as a result of the allegations that Chief Schwab neglected his official duties and engaged in disobedience and conduct unbecoming an officer. Attorney Asteak stated that he prepared an Adjudication reviewing the record and setting forth the rationale discussed by Borough Council in determining their decision. The Chief's testimony established a pattern of insubordination where he admitted to refusing a direct order which is not only in neglect of official duty but also disobedience of an order and conduct unbecoming an officer. Borough Council determined that his conduct alone warranted the recommended discipline of 3 days suspension without pay which is generous under the circumstances. Amy Richard asked Council if they had a

chance to review the Adjudication and once they had, she asked for a Motion to authorize the execution of the Adjudication.

- **Motion** by Joe Gosnell, Seconded by Cindy Hower to authorize execution of the Adjudication of the March 31, 2022 Police Tenure Act Hearing. Motion carried unopposed.
- A letter was provided to Council from Nazareth Ambulance Corps. which Solicitor Asteak read aloud. The letter stated that they are having problems with hiring and retaining paramedics. In order for them to maintain coverage, they have entered into an agreement with Bethlehem Township to staff and provide ALS services as well as backup BLS services for Stockertown.

### **Agenda**

- Amy Richard stated that the Borough Marque has been having issues and is now turned off. The sign technician advised that the control panel is shot. Due to the age of the sign, the replacement part has been discontinued. A quote for all new parts to upgrade the existing sign has been provided at a cost of \$2,683.66 which is just for the wired option. It would be additional costs for a cellular plan. To replace the complete sign with a new one was estimated at \$60,000. Council discussed the options and decided to invest in the wired option and replace the components.
- **Motion** by Kathleen Zdonowski, Seconded by Joe Gosnell to purchase the components needed to upgrade the existing marque for the quoted cost of \$2,683.66. Motion carried unopposed.
- Information from FirstNet cellular phone plan was provided to council. This plan is provided by AT&T Services. After reviewing the plan, it was decided to stay with Verizon at this time.
- Amy Richard informed Council that the Borough received a request from Senator Lisa Boscola's office to use Borough Hall as a temporary Community Outreach Office two times a week until November. They suggested Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Several questions were brought up by Council members. It was decided that Borough Secretary, Anita Caughy, would call Senator Boscola's office to obtain additional information.

### **Public Comment**

- Mrs. Goldenberg of Old Easton Road asked if there were any updates on the speed bumps for Old Easton Road. She was advised that there were no updates. Amy Richard informed her that the Borough has been understaffed and they have not had a chance to look into that matter. Mrs. Goldenberg also asked whether the bridge at the end of Bushkill Street will ever be rebuilt. Attorney Asteak stated that there are no plans to open it up because of the danger of sinkholes and the costs involved.
- Eric Wenzelberger of Center Street questioned Zoning Officer John Soloe about the noise and odor coming from Polymer. John Soloe stated that he would call DEP regarding the odor and that he would contact them regarding the noise.

- Megan Schurz of Lincoln Avenue asked for clarification of whether the new public works employee was temporary part-time or just part-time. Attorney Asteak stated that he is a part-time employee. He is not temporary summer help. Ms. Schurz also asked whether the two public works employee who were suspended with pay have returned to work and she was advised yes, they have. She also asked if we have any police officer on duty. Amy Richard advised her that the Chief is now back on duty.

### **Council Comment**

- Kim Holden-Forsyth stated that the flags at the memorial need to be replaced. She was advised that new flags have been purchased and now that we have public works employees, they will be put up.

### **Adjournment**

- **Motion** by Joe Gosnell, Seconded by Cindy Hower to adjourn the Council Meeting at 8:18 PM. Motion carried unopposed.

The next regular meeting of Borough Council will be held on May 2, 2022

The foregoing was approved the **2<sup>nd</sup>** day of **May, 2022**.

---

President of Council

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_