

**BOROUGH OF STOCKTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

OFFICIAL MINUTES
APPROVED: 1/03/22

**REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 2021**

The December Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton was called to order by Mayor Timothy Nemeth at 7:11 pm on December 16, 2021. The meeting was held online using Zoom technology due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor Nemeth read the "Sunshine Statement" indicating the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Ms. Michele Hovan called the roll. The following members of Council were present: Ms. Rebecca Hendricks, Mr. Aaron Lipsen and Mr. Michael Mann. Mr. Nic Messina arrived at 7:32pm and Mr. Donald Vandegrift arrived at 7:45pm. Mr. Adam Juncosa was absent. Borough Attorney Michael Butler and Borough Administrator/Clerk Michele Hovan were also present. There were 9 members of the public present.

Mayor Nemeth opened the meeting to the public. Mr. Norman Torkelson, 18b Risler Street, asked if he could see the members of the public in attendance and it was explained that in the webinar format, the panelists were viewable only. There being no questions or comments, the meeting was closed to the public on motion by Mr. Mann, seconded by Mr. Lipsen and carried.

Proclamations

Mayor Nemeth read the following Proclamation in full in appreciation of volunteer Karl Darby:

In Appreciation of Karl Darby for His Extraordinary Volunteer Efforts

WHEREAS, in advance of the Christmas Holiday Season in 1981, resident, electrician and volunteer Karl Darby organized the Stockton Civic Committee to adorn Stockton Borough streets with holiday decorations; and

WHEREAS, with help from fellow volunteers – residents and members of the Stockton Fire Company, Karl Darby has committed himself to serving his community each holiday season since, organizing fundraising efforts to fund the decorations and dedicating personal time to ensure that Borough streets were always festive and bright; and

WHEREAS, year after year, without prompting or a desire for acknowledgment, Karl Darby would install the lights on the utility poles in the Borough for the enjoyment of all: and

WHEREAS, due to Mr. Darby's efforts, Stockton Borough became the envy of many towns with its annual seasonal display; and

WHEREAS, when the time came to replace the lighted ornaments, Mr. Darby and his band of civic-minded partners researched and sought donation funds for new lights, for a new era; and

WHEREAS, the holiday decorations that adorn Stockton's streets today would not have been possible without the leadership and resolve from Karl Darby and his dedication to the Borough;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, on this, the 16th day of December 2021, and on the 40th anniversary of Karl Darby's initial Christmas gift to the Borough, that we, on behalf of the citizens of Borough of Stockton, do hereby extend deep appreciation to

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Stockton Civic Committee Member Karl Darby for his decades of generosity and service to the Stockton Borough community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, with much appreciation and gratitude, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted herewith to Mr. Karl Darby.

Resolution No. 2021-61, and entitled: Request to NJDOT to Pause/Explore Alternatives for the Route 29 Rockfall Mitigation Project was presented. Mr. Stephen Freeman, 36 Bridgefore Lane, Pipersville, PA, presented information via Power Point in support of the resolution and described in detail the potential environmental hazards of the NJDOT Rt. 29 Rockfall Mitigation Project in Kingwood Township that runs just north of the Devil's Tea Table to Byram, and another leg that runs from Lambertville to West Amwell Township. He stressed that the impacted area has no history of rockfall accidents and that the threat to endangered species, plants, scenic views and water quality are among the most major areas of concern. In response to a question by Mayor Nemeth, Mr. Freeman said that Lambertville and New Hope had not yet been approached for support but that they would be. Ms. Hendricks asked about similar projects elsewhere and if they were deemed effective and successful. Mr. Freeman said that they were, but typically in places that have rockfall incidents and dangerous areas, unlike Rt. 29. In response to a question raised by Mr. Butler, Mr. Freeman explained that it is a reinforced concrete structure, similar to an awning.

On motion by Mr. Mann, seconded by Ms. Hendricks and carried, Resolution No. 2021-61 was adopted:

Roll Call: Ayes: Hendricks, Lipsen, Mann, Messina
Nays: None
Absent: Juncosa, Vandegrift
Abstain: None

With Mr. Messina's arrival, Mayor Nemeth returned to the Proclamation portion of the agenda. It was noted that Mr. Vandegrift also arrived at this time. Mayor Nemeth read the following Proclamation, in full, in appreciation of Council President, Nic Messina, on the day of his last meeting as a member of Council.

In Appreciation of Council President Nic Messina

WHEREAS, on December 31, 2021, Nic Messina completes elected public service tenure as a Stockton Borough Councilman, a position he has held since 2004 and through six consecutive terms; and

WHEREAS, beginning on that January day in 2004 when he took his Oath of Office and in all the days and years that followed, Councilman Nic Messina has demonstrated a caliber of service consistent with the fundamental principles of good governance; and

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WHEREAS, Councilman Messina was unanimously elected as Borough Council President in 2015 and re-elected in the six ensuing years, usually in absentia, and he always welcomed the opportunity to lead and serve and assume the responsibilities of the office; and

WHEREAS, Council President Messina has always served his community in a boots-on-the-ground manner, whether helping fellow residents during natural disasters, or reaching out to the Borough's legislative delegation to secure aid and assistance to address Stockton's needs; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, it was Councilman Nic Messina that nearly single-handedly helped to secure the massive \$2.2M Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission CAI grant award that funded transportation and pedestrian improvements to Bridge Street and Railroad Avenue; and

WHEREAS, Council President Nic Messina's service has been unwavering, always willing to dedicate the time needed to complete any project or fulfill any initiative for the betterment of the Borough; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, on this, the 16th day of December 2021, that we, on behalf of the citizens of Borough of Stockton, hereby extend deep appreciation to Council President Nic Messina for his years of dedication to the Stockton Borough community, and he can leave office knowing it is indeed a better Stockton because of his years of tireless effort to make it so;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that sincere wishes for continued success in all future endeavors be extended to Council President Nic Messina and that a copy of this resolution be transmitted herewith to him.

Mayor Nemeth thanked Mr. Messina for his service, and his friendship. Mr. Messina humbly thanked everyone and said that serving the community has been a very satisfying and gratifying experience. He said he appreciated working with Council and the community over the years.

Ordinance No. 20-07 - Second Reading/Public Hearing

“BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT AND WET WELL CLEANING FOR THE SEWER PUMP STATION, APPROPRIATING \$125,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$125,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE A PORTION OF THE COSTS THEREOF, AUTHORIZED IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY”

Ms. Hovan read the Ordinance by title and explained that it was re-advertised for public hearing due to a publishing error and required re-adoption. Mayor Nemeth opened the meeting to the public. There being no questions or concerns, the meeting was closed to the public on motion by Mr. Mann, seconded by Mr. Vandgrift and carried. Resolution No. 2021-62, as filed in the Borough Clerk's office and to adopt Ordinance No. 20-07, was adopted on motion by Mr. Messina, seconded by Mr. Vandgrift and carried unanimously:

Roll Call: Ayes: Hendricks, Lipsen, Mann, Messina, Vandegrift
Nays: None
Absent: Juncosa,

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Abstain: None

Minutes: The meeting minutes from the November 8, 2021 Regular Meeting were approved on motion by Mr. Lipsen, seconded by Mr. Mann and carried.

The following Resolutions, No. 2021-63 through 2021-66, as filed in the Borough Clerk's office and listed below, were approved on motion by Mr. Messina, seconded by Mr. Vandegrift and carried.

2021-63 Municipal Alliance Grant Funding Request (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)

2021-64 Budget Transfers

2021-65 Cancellation of Stale Checks

2021-66 Utility Collector

Roll Call: Ayes: Hendricks, Lipsen, Mann, Messina, Vandegrift
Nays: None
Absent: Juncosa,
Abstain: None

Claims for Payment – Mr. Lipsen asked about the ditch on Woolverton Road and Mr. Nemeth explained it was repaired. The claims for payment, as attached, were approved on motion by Mr. Lipsen, seconded by Mr. Mann and carried unanimously.

Roll Call: Ayes: Hendricks, Lipsen, Mann, Messina, Vandegrift
Nays: None
Absent: Juncosa,
Abstain: None

Mayor Nemeth opened the meeting to the public. Ms. Eileen Foley, 11 Bridge Street, commended Council for supporting the rockfall mitigation resolution and said that she would probably miss Mr. Messina. There being no additional comments or questions, the meeting was closed to the public on motion by Mr. Vandegrift, seconded by Mr. Messina and carried.

Mayor's Report/Council Liaison Reports

Mayor Nemeth said that the recent Tik Tok video going around has been determined as not a credible threat by the NJ State Police and that law enforcement would be present in schools, etc.

Mr. Lipsen said he wanted to publicly thank Charlie Horner, who volunteered with clean up and also scraped off the mud on the tennis court with his backloader. He also said he would be sending pictures of the sink hole on Mill Street. He also said that there are old metal poles and

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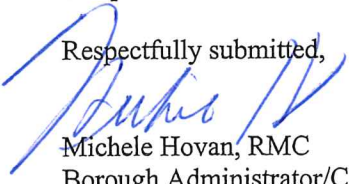
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the mangled no truck sign at the park and Mr. Vandegrift said he would ask the contractor that is removing the bleachers to take the other metal too. Mr. Lipsen reported on the grants committee and said that areas of focus are a new well, stormwater and fire department equipment. He said that the scope of a stormwater grant requires a study and said that he hope to secure funding for that. Mr. Mann said that he attended a meeting of the Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic committee and that he intends to apply for funding through them. Mr. Vandegrift said that he met with Mr. Mann and Mr. Juncosa and a contractor about concrete slabs and ways to secure the picnic tables. He said that the bleachers should be cut up and removed in a couple of days.

Mayor Nemeth announced the next meeting would be the 2022 Reorganization/Regular meeting would be held on January 3, 2022, at 7pm via Zoom.

On motion by Mr. Messina, seconded by Mr. Lipsen and carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Michele Hovan, RMC
Borough Administrator/Clerk

