



STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 17, 2025 7:00 P.M.

Held through Zoom

Mayor Aaron Lipsen., called the regular meeting of the Stockton Borough Council to order on October 20, 2025, at 7:00 P.M. Mayor Lipsen announced that this meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was transmitted to the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Trenton Times, was posted on the Borough Website, posted on the door at the Municipal Building and filed with the Borough Clerk.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Lipsen led those in attendance in the pledge to the nation's flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilperson Brown, Councilperson Fisher, Councilperson Folz(excused), Councilperson Hunt, Council President Mann, Councilperson Meltzer(excused) , Mayor Aaron Lipsen, Borough Attorney Lisa Maddox and Borough Clerk, Laurie A. Courter.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Hunt to approve the following minutes, all were in favor, October 20, 2025

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Lipsen announced the following correspondences received:

- Odenwald-Frenchtown v. Stockton
- Odenwald-Emails September & October 2025

NEW BUSINESS

- Snowplow Bids-Mayor Lipsen stated that they will be reviewing bids and make a decision to award for next year.
- Best Practices-Mayor Lipsen reported that this was received and for council members to review it.
- Hunterdon County Interlocal Agreement-after some discussion, it as recommended by Attorney Maddox to approve this by resolution.

OEM Report

Mayor Lipsen stated that there is no report for this meeting, however a more comprehensive report will be at the December meeting.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT – PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor to public comment.

Hearing no members of the public speak up, Mayor Lipsen closed the floor to public comment.

ORDINANCES-2nd Reading

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Brown to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2025-05.

Roll call: Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt, Mann.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

Mayor Lipsen asked for discussion from council. Hunt stated that it seems like a great thing to continue to pursue and stated that he believes Mr. Brown probably knows more about it than anybody.

Brown commented that although we've received substantial grants for the purchase of the emergency sewer generator, it doesn't cover the entire cost. This will provide a mechanism to use funds from the combined utility to pay for items related to either water or sewer and if needed, the Borough may borrow at a relatively low rate and then pay it off over time. Brown will have final update by next meeting. Brown added that the pad has been placed and should be cured by now. I think they're waiting for one piece, and then it should move pretty smoothly after that. Brown stated he will get a more precise timeline on this. Attorney Lisa Maddox added that the funding for the sewer generator was already put in place, so this ordinance is a little different. It allows the remainder of what's in the sewer capital improvement fund for both for water and sewer. Mayor Lipsen added that if there is any money left over they could use it for funding other projects as well. Attorney Maddox stated that's exactly what you can use those funds for.

Hearing no public comment, motion made by Hunt and seconded by Brown to close the public hearing, all were in favor

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Brown to adopt Ordinance 2025-05.

Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt, Mann.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion passes

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-05

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON
AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 19-04 TO AUTHORIZE THE**

**PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES FOR WATER AND
SEWER UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS THEREUNDER**

WHEREAS, by Ordinance No. 19-04, entitled "Capital Ordinance to Authorize the Purchase and Installation of New or Replacement Equipment and Materials for Use by the Stockton Borough Sewer Utility, by and for the Borough of Stockton, in the County of Hunterdon, and the Expenditure of \$100,000.00 from the Sewer Utility Capital Improvement Fund for the Financing Thereof," the Stockton Borough Council authorized the purchase and installation of new or replacement equipment and materials for use by the Borough's Sewer Utility and expenditure of \$100,000 from the Sewer Capital Improvement Fund for the financing thereof; and

WHEREAS, since that time, the Sewer Utility and Water Utility have been combined; and

WHEREAS, the Borough seeks to ensure that the funds previously authorized for use by the Sewer Utility may be used by the combined Water and Sewer Utility for the purchase and installation of new or replacement equipment and materials for water and/or sewer improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton in Hunterdon County, New Jersey as follows:

Section 1. The provisions of the "Whereas" clauses are hereby incorporated herein as if fully restated.

Section 2. Ordinance No. 19-04, for the purchase and installation of new or replacement equipment and materials for the Sewer Utility and expenditure of \$100,000.00 from the Sewer Capital Improvement Fund for the financing thereof, is hereby amended to enable the Borough to utilize said \$100,000.00 for the purchase and

installation of new or replacement equipment and materials for use for Water and/or Sewer Utility purposes; and

Section 3. All remaining provisions of Ordinance No. 19-04 not inconsistent herewith shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 4. This ordinance shall take upon adoption and publication as provided by law.

RESOLUTIONS

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Mann to approve Resolution 2025-85
Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt, Mann.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion passes

Stockton Borough Council
Resolution 2025-85
Risk Manager

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton has joined the Statewide Insurance Fund, a joint insurance fund as defined in N.J.S.A. 40A: 10-36 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Bylaws require participating members to appoint a Risk Management Consultant, as those positions are defined in the Bylaws, if requested to do so by the Fund; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton has complied with relevant law with regard to the appointment of a Risk Management Consultant; and

WHEREAS, the Fund has requested its members to appoint individuals or entities to that position; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that it hereby appoints USI Insurance Services, LLC, as its local Risk Management Consultant;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Borough Clerk be authorized to execute the attached Risk Management Consultant's Agreement for the fund year 2026.

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Brown to approve Resolution 2025-86
Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt, Mann.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion passes

**Stockton Borough Council
Resolution 2025-86
Appointing Fund Commissioner**

STATEWIDE INSURANCE FUND

RESOLUTION APPOINTING FUND COMMISSIONER

2026 Fund year

WHEREAS, Borough of Stockton (hereinafter "Local Unit") is a member of the Statewide Insurance Fund (hereinafter "Fund"), a joint insurance fund as defined in N.J.S.A. 40A:10-36 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Fund's Bylaws require participating members to appoint a Fund Commissioner;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the Borough of Stockton that Laurie Courier is hereby appointed as the Fund Commissioner for the Local Unit for the **Fund Year 2026**; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Diane McDaniel is hereby appointed as the Alternate Fund Commissioner for the Local Unit for the **Fund Year 2026**; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Local Unit's Fund Commissioner is authorized and directed to execute all such documents as required by the Fund.

PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

Motion made by Hunt and seconded by Brown to approve Resolution 2025-87
Roll call: Roll call: Brown, Fisher, Hunt, Mann.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

**Stockton Borough Council
Resolution 2025-87**

Authorizing Payment of Municipal Obligations

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton find and declare that certain municipal obligations have come due and are now payable; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton further find and declare that said obligations have been itemized on the annexed schedules, which are hereby attached and deemed part of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey does hereby authorize payment of said municipal obligations, in accordance with the recommendations of the Chief Financial Officer and the Treasurer in the amount of \$290,057.93

MAYORS REPORT, BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

School Committee

Mann reported that the school committee had toured the building to look through and to discuss some ideas, so that when we hear the report from the Architect will have a little more first-hand knowledge and background of how the school project is looking.

Community Outreach

Mann reported that they are planning to do a tree lighting at, the corner of, Main and Bridge Streets, where it was last year. The Starving Artist Café was instrumental in helping with this event.

Infrastructure Committee-

Mayor Lipsen gave the following report:

Mayor Lipsen stated that one of the big focuses is on pedestrian and traffic safety. This year, with other expenses and other engineering needs, we haven't been able to use our engineer for the full traffic and parking study but we did have a meeting about a week and a half ago with the NJDOT, and we discussed several matters with them, which may be heading in our direction. One has to do with the truck issue with the trucks turning down Bridge Street. They are going to look on their end to see how they can improve the signage on Route 29 before people turn down Bridge Street. There was also a petition several years ago about lowering the speed limit in town to 25 through the whole stretch of Route 29 and they seemed agreeable and interested in moving forward with that. They have a plan for signage. We'll get to discuss that in more detail. One of the suggestions would be to add a few more signs, so we'll see what comes of that. They will have to share the information with us, and then we'll have to prepare resolution. They've also been talking to us about pedestrian traffic safety, and we talked about the Bridge Street intersection and at the 523 intersection. One of the things that is up for consideration is a potential stop sign. They thought that the best area would be at the intersection with 523, because it's a four-way stop. So that was their, their suggestion.

Our engineer and their engineers are looking at it a little bit more, and they'll share the details with us if we want to move forward. One of the things they did say, if they did put that in, they would recommend having us ask them to paint the street so that on the road before you came around the S-turn, it would say stop sign ahead, since it's a new traffic feature, and they would have a whole plan with putting signs in place while people get used to the new intersection. One of our concerns was that traffic coming from Bridge Street might get backed up because of the intersection, so they're looking at the traffic data to the best of their ability, while they prepare the rest of those items. We also approached the idea of recessed parking along Route 29. A lot of residents that park on the highway, and if we could have, a couple extra feet in a couple different places, we feel like it could make it safer. It was about 2 years ago, down in Brookville that a car hit a parked car down there. So that's something that they can look into. We talked to our liaison about starting a conversation with a different group from the DOT about pedestrian safety, and they could do their own study for us on that. We haven't a lot of progress on Rt. 29, but we have a lot of things in place that we can hopefully start to see some concrete results within the next year or so. On Bridge Street, a street that we control, we've been getting resident complaints that there are no speed limit signs on Bridge Street and complaints about speeding. We looked back in the ordinances, and we found that they established a 15 mph speed limit on Bridge Street, so our workers are going to be installing speed limit signs and also installing new crosswalk signs. The crosswalks were repainted this last month. We did that in cooperation with Hunterdon County, not just on Bridge Street, but in other areas, too. And if you're looking at your street and saying, why wasn't it painted? Well, there are some other streets that intersect with Route 29 that are actually, the state's responsibility, so the state's going to have to do that. We have out in requests but they have a certain right-of-way coming in from Route 29. We also had several potholes filled throughout the town. With the MS4 stormwater, our stormwater mapping was submitted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, so they're going to be reviewing that information, giving us feedback, and then we're going to have to do a wetland or watershed study, to close out the year, so lots of stuff going on there.

Grounds Committee:

Mayor Lipsen also reported on behalf of Ms. Meltzer she would have announced that the Hunterdon County did award, Stockton Borough another \$40,000 this year for the Open Space Recreation Grant. So, now we have a nice chunk of change to make some good improvements around town for recreational purposes.

Public Safety:

Mayor Lipsen added that he wanted to throw a shout out to the New Jersey State Police. At our request, they were in town during the Halloween celebrations, just to keep our town safe.

Mayor and Council Comments:

Mr. Lipsen reported that he and Mr. Brown attended shared services meetings with Hunterdon County and the other local mayors in Hunterdon County, and we got a lot of good information. We've already been moving forward on a lot of initiatives there.

Brown made the following comments: The county is streamlining the licensing of food trucks with most of the responsibility being at the county level, we still have to notify them when requests come in, but I think that's going to reduce a fairly heavy administrative burden, so I'd like to commend the commissioners for doing that, to help out the towns. The other thing, our town's engineer and DOT agreed to look at the potential for, Traffic stoppage where people are trying to take a left off of Bridge

Street on 29 North, and should a four-way stop be placed they're going to take a look at that. So they they're going to take a closer look at that, but, you know, as I think as everybody knows, that area can get backed up particularly on holiday weekends, and summer weekends, but they specifically agreed to take a close look at that.

Mayor Lipsen stated he wanted to come back to the food truck issue, or idea and stated that its going to make it a lot easier for food trucks, because they'll get one license with the county, and then they can operate in all the different towns. The way it is now, it's very, very cumbersome, so if we wanted to have a food truck come to Stockton, they'd have to get a separate license to come here. But now they'll just have one for the whole county, so that's a great step forward, and building on what Mr. Brown said, you know, the county's been very, very helpful, cooperative, it's a great series, so very helpful to local municipalities, and I will also commend and thank him for that.

Cannabis Committee

Hunt stated that he would like to mention that, as probably everybody on this call and in the public knows, that we are not addressing the Cannabis committee work at this meeting, but it will occur in due course on a date to be determined soon. Mayor Lipsen added that the deadline for having the report completed is December 4th and having a meeting.

Mr. Hunt thanked Mayor Lipsen for his involvement with DOT on some of the traffic issues that were discussed, in particular at the intersection of 523 and, as Mr. Brown was describing, some possible approach to the intersection of Bridge and 29. As activity continues, both vehicular and pedestrian, I think this would be a huge service to the town.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor to public comment.

Hearing no members of the public speak up, Mayor Lipsen closed the floor to public comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION 7:32 PM

A motion by Hunt seconded by Brown to amend agenda and include snow plow bids for executive session approve and to approve the following resolution to go into executive session, all were in favor.

RESOLUTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this governing body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of Stockton Borough, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.

2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
 - Litigation update - Affordable Housing Fourth Round/Fair Share Housing Center challenge (N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(7))
 - Update on cannabis application review – Matters falling within the attorney-client privilege (N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(7))
 - Contractual: Snowplow bids
- The discussion is anticipated to take approximately 30 minutes. Action may be taken.
3. It is intended at this time that the above-stated subject matter will be made public when the matter has been resolved.
4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

A motion by Mann and seconded by Brown to return to regular session was unanimously approved by voice vote.

The council was in Executive Session until 8:48 PM.

Folz joined during executive session.

ACTION ON ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Lipsen announced that council has chosen to contract with John Sowskiann for 2026 for snow removal. A special meeting will be scheduled for cannabis committee decision likely December 4th or 3rd.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

December 15, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mann and seconded by Brown to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.

Laurie A. Courter

Laurie A. Courter, Borough Clerk