



STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 20, 2026 7:00 P.M.

Held through Zoom

Mayor Aaron Lipsen called the regular meeting of the Stockton Borough Council to order on January 26, 2026, 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 Star Ledger 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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE:

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilperson Brander, Councilperson Brown, Councilperson Fisher, Councilperson Gilinger, Councilperson Meltzer, Council President Mann (left meeting at 8:10PM), Mayor Aaron Lipsen, Borough Attorney Lisa Maddox, and Borough Clerk Laurie A. Courter.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Brown to approve the following minutes:

- 02-09-2026 Regular
- 03-16-2026 Regular

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Abstain: 2 March 16th minutes: (Brander and Mann)

Motion passes.

OLD BUSINESS

- Parking-Mayor Lipsen reported that he has been looking into some old ordinances and there is old history with a lot of parking ordinances, especially downtown. Council will hopefully work on this in the summer. Mayor Lipsen reported on the concerns of Mr. Singh, owner of the deli that used to be the old railroad depot.

- Park Master Plan Update Proposal-Mayor Lipsen turned the meeting over to Meltzer. Ms. Meltzer reported on the progress on the Park Master Plan with Colliers and the boroughs Engineer, Adam. This project will be capped at \$13,000 for the master plan. A lot of grant funding has been received over the past couple of years. There are a few opportunities to get additional grant funding for the grounds, which they are in a good pace to start making improvements. They will work with the residents to get input, then council can work with Colliers to get direction and move into concept and design. Mann inquired about a small kid playground set up. Meltzer stated that yes, it's part of some of the inputs they have. Meltzer reported that maintenance of the park has gone very well and thanked council and those who have helped support this.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion: Codification-Mayor Lipsen reported that the borough received the grant from the county. Funds haven't been received yet. The borough will make a contract with General Code, which is the only company that does this. They will be codifying the land use documents. Gilinger stated this is good to start this process, which is something that has been talked about for a while.

OEM REPORT

Mayor Lipsen gave the OEM report: They met and went over the Emergency Operation Plan, which they have the final draft. This was sent to the county for review. They came back with some small changes, by next meeting hopefully the plan will finally be finalized. Mayor Lipsen thanked Patrick and Sharon for their hard work on this. Mayor Lipsen continued on and reported that both Sharon and Patrick attended the April 6th NAWAS drill.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT – PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor to public comment:

Ellie Siegel, CEO Longview Strategic, Marlton NJ: stated that Longview Strategic is a consultant agency that helps businesses open, getting permits, etc. Ms. Siegel gave a brief background on herself, she is an attorney, who went to Rutgers and received her MBA and post graduates certificates in medical product development and regulatory affairs and compliance for pharmaceuticals. She came here to address the topic of the borough's cannabis ordinance and application process. Stated that her goal would be here in Stockton, in the borough, to figure out exactly what that process looks like. She hopes to have the ability to carefully help an operator work with the borough to be able to be exactly the operator that the town would like to see in the space. She stated that she comes tonight just to listen and to understand and sees that there was a moratorium. Inquired about the moratorium being lifted and asked who is on the cannabis committee. Inquired about whether the rubric will be the same or if there will be changes.

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

ORDINANCES-1st Reading

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Meltzer to approve on first reading for Ordinance 2026-09, public hearing will be May 18th, via Zoom.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

**Borough of Stockton
Ordinance No. 2026-09
CALENDAR YEAR 2026 ORDINANCE TO EXCEED MUNICIPAL BUDGET
APPROPRIATION
LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.4)**

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget up to 2% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and,

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton in the County of Hunterdon finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2026 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council hereby determines that a 3.5% increase in the budget for said year, amounting to \$8,604.14 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and,

WHEREAS the Borough Council hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, in the County of Hunterdon, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2026 budget year, the final appropriations of the Borough of Stockton shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5%, amounting to \$20,076.33, and that the CY 2026 municipal budget for the Borough of Stockton be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.

ORDINANCES 2nd Reading

Motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Brown to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2026-05, all were in favor.

Mayor Lipsen explained that this ordinance updates the boroughs fines, penalties and fees for violations of the zoning ordinance, this hasn't been updated since 1975. Brown added that its been a long-time that fines were set in place. In 1975, \$500 bucks was a lot of money, it still is, but, it's the \$1,250, threshold does not even reflect the rate of inflation and added that he think it's a very reasonable increase, and a timely one. Gilinger stated its reasonable and its becomes an actual deterrent at this level. Lipsen added that it's not a mandated penalty, it's a maximum penalty, so the judge would have discretion.

Hearing no further public comment, motion made by Brown to close the public hearing, motion seconded by Gilinger, all were in favor.

Motion to adopt was made by Gilinger and seconded by Meltzer.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

Ordinance 2026-05

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON INCREASING FINES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE, AND AMENDING ARTICLE 16 OF "THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON ZONING ORDINANCE OF 1975"

WHEREAS, Article 16 of "The Borough of Stockton Zoning Ordinance of 1975" ("Zoning Ordinance") contains provisions governing enforcement, violations and penalties under said ordinance; and

WHEREAS, section 16.02 of the Zoning Ordinance currently provides for a maximum fine of \$500 for each violation of the Zoning Ordinance, which maximum fine has not been increased in some time; and

WHEREAS, Council seeks to increase the maximum fine for violations of the Zoning Ordinance so they are commensurate with other ordinance violations in the Borough and other municipalities.

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

Section 1. Section 16.02 of Zoning Ordinance – Violations. Section 16.02 of Article 16 of “The Borough of Stockton Zoning Ordinance of 1975” is hereby amended to read as follows (additions are underlined; deletions are ~~bracketed and struck~~):

Article 16.

ENFORCEMENT, VIOLATION AND PENALTIES

§16.03 Violations.

Any owner or agent, and any person or corporation who shall violate any of the provisions of this Ordinance or fail to comply herewith or with any of the requirements thereof or who shall erect, structurally alter, enlarge, rebuild or move any building or buildings of any structure, or who shall put into use any lot or land in violation of any detailed statement or plan submitted hereunder, or who shall refuse reasonable opportunity to inspect any premises, shall be liable to a fine of not more than \$~~500~~1,250 or to imprisonment for not more than ninety (90) days, or to both such fines and imprisonment. Each and every day such violation continues after the expiration of an abatement notice or after initial construction as the case may be, shall be deemed a separate and distinct violation.

Section 2. Severability. Each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase of this ordinance is declared to be an independent section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase, and finding or holding of any such portion of this ordinance to be unconstitutional, void, or ineffective for any cause or reason shall not affect any other portion of this ordinance.

Section 3. Repealer. All ordinances or parts thereof inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 4. Referral. This ordinance shall be referred to the Planning Board before the public hearing pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-26 and -64.

Section 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and publication as required by law and the filing of a copy with the Hunterdon County Planning Board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-16.

RESOLUTIONS

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to approve Resolution 2026-49.

Discussion: Mayor Lipsen explained we received four bids, and stated that our thought would be to go with the lowest bid, which is National Water Main Cleaning Company, for \$22,400. Attorney Maddox stated that she just wanted to make a quick clarification. There were some questions about the proposal and Mr. Brown had noticed that the proposal only referenced 10-inch lines, and we did clarify with the engineer that it also includes 12-inch lines, so we're making that change to the specifications that'll be included in the agreement. Mayor Lipsen added that this is an investment to save money for the town and to protect the environment and sewer lines. Brown stated to clarify, we have an agreement with the Lambertville Municipal Utilities Authority whereby we pay a rate based on the volume that we send down there to be processed. So if there is infiltration into the water line, from, old, manhole covers, or welds along where the lines are, and some of the line does run through areas that are, experiencing of water, moisture, rain, in periods of heavy rain., then the volume that we have to have processed in New Hope increases and we pay more, for atmospheric water that's gotten into the system. This will help us tighten up and identify where those leaks are.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2026-49

Award of Contract for Inspection and Cleaning of
Various Sanitary Sewer Mains

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton (“Stockton”) sought quotes from qualified firms to CCTV inspect approximately 4,000 linear feet of sanitary sewer line along various roads within the Borough; and

WHEREAS, four firms responded to the Borough’s Request for Quotes (RFQ); and

WHEREAS, the following proposals were received:

<u>Contractors</u>	<u>Business Location</u>	<u>Fee</u>
National Water Main Cleaning Co.	Kearny, NJ	\$22,400.00
Oswald Enterprises, Inc.	Belford, NJ	\$24,987.00
Montana Construction	Lodi, NJ	\$28,600.00
Vortex Services LLC	Freehold, NJ	\$37,500.00

WHEREAS, the proposals received were reviewed by the Borough Engineer; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer has advised that National Water Main Cleaning Co. (“NWM”) is an experienced CCTV contractor and has the ability to perform the required work enumerated in the RFQ; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer is recommending that the Borough Council award a contract to NWM for the project.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that a contract in the amount of \$22,400.00 be awarded to NWM for the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this award is subject to the availability of funds for this project.

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Brown to approve Resolution 2026-50

Discussion: Brown stated his support for this which they have been working within the limits of the budget. It firms up the organizing and identifying the most current version and eliminating ones that are no longer in effect. Stated that this is a very important step the borough is taking.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

Stockton Borough Council

Resolution 2026-50

Authorizing the Award of a Services Agreement to General Code for Land Development Ordinances Codification Services, Not to Exceed Contract Amount of \$14,630.00

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton desires to retain the services of a qualified company to codify the Borough's Land Development Ordinances, digitize the ordinances and maintain said ordinances on a digital platform; and

WHEREAS, General Code has provided a written proposal to the Borough for purposes of performing the sought-after services for the not to exceed contract amount of \$14,630.00; and

WHEREAS, the sought-after services will not exceed the applicable bid threshold and additionally, the Local Public Contracts Law, *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(x)*, authorizes the Borough to award an agreement for services in connection with the revision and codification of the municipal ordinances without public bidding; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that sufficient funds are available to pay for said services in _____.

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

1. The Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute an agreement with General Code for codification of the Borough's Land Development Ordinances, digitization of the ordinances and maintenance of said ordinances on a digital platform, consistent with this Resolution and General Code's proposal.
2. The final agreement shall be subject to the approval of the Borough Attorney.
3. General Code shall be paid a fee not to exceed \$14,630.00. The term of the agreement

shall commence upon execution of the agreement by the parties and shall continue for a term of two years, or whenever the services are completed, whichever occurs first. The term of the agreement may be renewed for up to two additional one-year terms.

4. A copy of this Resolution and the agreement shall be placed on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk.

Motion made by Mann and seconded by Gilinger to adopt Resolution 2026-51.

Mayor Lipsen stated that the deputy clerk and deputy registrar are statutory positions. Office Manager is just an internal position where she will be helping us organize the office and make sure things are running smoothly. Meltzer added this is needed and will make things run more efficiently. Mayor Lipsen gave special thanks to Ms. Franklin stating that she has worked for the borough in the past and is a very capable employee who has already done a lot of good things over the time period she has been working as office manager. Brown commented that this is the type of office personnel infrastructure that is needed.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2026-51

RESOLUTION APPOINTING KIMBERLY FRANKLIN AS DEPUTY MUNICIPAL CLERK, DEPUTY REGISTRAR AND OFFICE MANAGER FOR THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON HUNTERDON COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A 40A:9-135 permits a municipality to have a Deputy Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to appoint a Deputy Clerk, Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics and Office Manager due to a vacancy in the office of the Deputy Clerk.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, that, based on the recommendation of the Municipal Clerk, Kimberly Franklin is hereby appointed as Deputy Clerk, Deputy Registrar and Office Manager, which appointment shall be subject to reappointment each year thereafter by the Municipal Clerk, for an annual salary of \$14,560.00 and the terms and conditions offered to the appointee.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to adopt Resolution 2026-52.

Discussion: Gilinger stated that he thinks this is a good thing and it seems like we've established a reasonable rate for it, especially since it is something we needed to do because of a state mandate.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

RESOLUTION 2026-52

AWARDING CONCESSION AGREEMENT TO LEW ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, LLC TO PROVIDE CERTIFIED LEAD EVALUATION CONTRACTING SERVICES TO THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON FOR TERM OF ONE YEAR

WHEREAS, by Ordinance #2026-03 adopted on March 26, 2026, Council enacted regulations for lead-based paint inspections for rental dwellings in Stockton Borough, and in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:27D-437.16 *et seq.*; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance #2026-03 requires the Borough to designate and hire a lead evaluation contractor authorized by law to perform periodic lead-based paint inspections for lead-based paint hazards on rental units; and

WHEREAS, based on its research, the Borough found that the requisite services may be provided by certified lead evaluation contractors who will not charge the Borough for any fees or costs in connection with its inspection services but rather assess individual property owners for the cost of each inspection at standard rates; and

WHEREAS, the Borough has further determined that the aggregate value of the services to be paid by residents for a term of one year is not anticipated to exceed approximately \$14,000.00 (\$200.00 per inspection for up to 70 inspections); and

WHEREAS, there are no costs to the Borough as part of these services, except as may be necessary to provide general oversight and administration of the agreement with the selected contractor; and

WHEREAS, because the aggregate value of these services is not anticipated to exceed the applicable bid threshold, the Borough is authorized to solicit informal quotations and award the contract based on which quotation is most advantageous, price and other factors; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the above, the Borough has solicited informal quotations from potential lead services contractors to render the sought-after services and based thereon, recommends that the firm of LEW Environmental Services, LLC be hired to provide the services at a cost of \$200.00 per inspection, to be paid directly by homeowners, based on price and the qualifications of this contractor; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Attorney's Office has opined that these services may be procured and awarded as a concession pursuant to the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 *et seq.* and N.J.A.C. 5:34-9.4.

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

1. The above preamble is incorporated herein as if set forth at length.
2. A concession agreement is hereby awarded to LEW Environmental Services, LLC for a term of one year.
3. The Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute an agreement with LEW Environmental, LLC in accordance with this resolution and proposed agreement on file with the Borough Clerk’s office. The final agreement shall be subject to the approval of the Administrator and Borough Attorney.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Meltzer to adopt Resolution 2026-53.

Discussion: Brown stated this goes back to the infrastructure we're trying to build, the personnel infrastructure. We have brought on some very good people that have been returning, who've worked for the town for years, but we have new people coming on as well, and they are all doing a really good job.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

**RESOLUTION 2026-53
BOROUGH OF STOCKTON
SALARY RESOLUTION**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton that the below salaries, wages or compensation shall be paid to the officers and employees of the Borough of Stockton for the year 2026, effective January 1, 2026:

Mayor	2,366.94
Council Member	1,635.36
Borough Clerk	25,132.00
Deputy Borough Clerk (thru 3-30-26)	9,000.00
Office Manager (thru 3-30-26)	7,000.00
Deputy Clerk/Registrar/Office Manager (EFF 4-1-26)	14,560.00
Meeting Attendance	50.00/Hr
Agenda/Minutes Preparation	50.00/Hr
Tax Collector	11,852.74
Utility Collector	4,502.04
QPA	3,278.18
W/S Assistant Operator/Municipal Worker	29.00/Hr
Deputy Finance	9,500.00
Office Assistant	8,500.00
Construction Office Control Person	2,556.65

Land Use Secretary	5,463.12
Animal Control Officer	1,087.18
Water/Sewer Director	32.78/Hr
Water/Sewer Operator	13,112.72
Water/Sewer Supervisor	15,000.00
Public Works Assistant Advisor	55.00/Hr
Public Works Manager Advisor	15,000.00
Tier A	5,000.00
Meter replacement (per Meter)	100.00
Shared Service Agreement:	
Delaware Township	
Chief Financial Officer	31,000.00
Tax Assessor	8,487.20
Lambertville	
Zoning Officer	8,000.00

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to adopt Resolution 2026-54. Mayor Lipsen explained that this is the introduction of the municipal budget. This is not a hearing or a full discussion, that would take place at our next meeting. This is to set up a 1 cent increase across our tax base, so that's a relatively low, tax rate increase compared to a lot of local municipalities, just helping us keep up with inflation, and as discussed, we're trying to do a lot to build out internal operations of the town. And on each individual, if your house is assessed at \$400,000, you'd be looking at about \$10 per quarter. Stated to keep in mind that taxes also go to the county and school and library. Brown stated this budget reflects a reasonable increase compared to other towns. It's a tight budget and its keeping us on track for next year.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

**Borough of Stockton
Resolution #2026-54
Municipal Budget Introduction for 2026**

Be it Resolved, the following statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Municipal Budget for the year 2026; and

Revenue and Appropriations Summaries

Summary of Revenues	Anticipated		
	2026		2025
1. Surplus	223,000.00		149,400.00
2. Total Miscellaneous Revenues	567,930.36		403,770.55
3. Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	1,705.91		17,660.00
4. a) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes	587,662.83		561,480.67
b) Addition to Local School District Tax			
c) Minimum Library Tax			
Tot Amt to be Raised by Taxes for Sup of Muni Budget	587,662.83		561,480.67
Total General Revenues	1,380,299.10		1,132,311.22

Summary of Appropriations	2026		2025
1. Operating Expenses:			
Salaries & Wages	174,490.76		143,524.75
Other Expenses	534,486.00		615,067.15
2. Deferred Charges & Other Appropriations	291,891.25		27,767.00
3. Capital Improvements	150,000.00		90,000.00
4. Debt Service (Include for School Purposes)	94,431.09		120,952.32
5. Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	135,000.00		135,000.00
Total General Appropriations	1,380,299.10		1,132,311.22

Summary of Revenues		Water & Sewer	Utility Budget	
			Anticipated	
		2026		2025
1. Surplus		120,000.00		120,000.00
2. Miscellaneous Revenues		436,000.00		435,382.00
3. Deficit (General Budget)				
Total Revenues		556,000.00		555,382.00
Summary of Appropriations		2026		2025
1. Operating Expenses:				
Salaries & Wages		90,000.00		70,000.00
Other Expenses		350,000.00		368,205.00
2. Capital Improvements		107,400.00		75,000.00
3. Debt Service		1,698.00		16,677.00
4. Deferred Charges & Other Appropriations				20,000.00

5. Surplus (General Budget)	6,902.00	5,500.00
Total Appropriations	556,000.00	555,382.00

Balance of Outstanding Debt					
		General		Water & Sewer	
Interest		24,737.54		75.91	
Principal		505,574.65		1,598.00	
Outstanding Balance		530,312.19		1,673.91	

Be it Further Resolved, that said Budget will be published on the Borough Website www.Stocktonboronj.us on April 21, 2026.

The Governing Body of the Borough of Stockton does hereby approve the following as the Budget for the year 2026:

RECORDED ROLL CALL VOTE: Brown: _____ Gilinger: _____ Brender: _____ Mann: _____ Melzer: _____ Fisher: _____

Notice is hereby given that the Budget and Tax Resolution was approved by the Council Persons of the Borough of Stockton, County of Hunterdon, on April 20, 2026.

A hearing on the Budget and Tax Resolution will be held via zoom on May 18, 2026 at 7:00 pm at which time and place objections to said Budget and Tax Resolution for the year 2026 may be presented by taxpayers or other interested persons.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to adopt Resolution 2026-55.

Mayor Lipsen explained the need for the resolution citing DEP requirements. The town received a \$75,000 grant to help implement some of the requirements and this is the most affordable option. Brown discussed the state mandates and stated that this is going to be a recurring obligation that they will have to pick up the cost for and not have much choice. Gilinger added that this is a long term responsible thing to be doing but its good for the town for cleanliness and for the water supply. Discussion on the impact of not having the debris dumped into the stormwater drains ensued. Meltzer expressed her support on everyone commenting and thanked those who have been creative with shared services with surrounding towns in keeping costs down.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Resolution 2026-55
AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF LAMBERTVILLE FOR THE PROVISION OF STREET SWEEPING SERVICES PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 et seq.

WHEREAS, the “Uniform Shared Services and Consolidation Act,” N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 through 40A:65-35 (the “Act”), authorizes local units of this State to enter into contracts with each other for the joint provision within their several jurisdictions of any service which any party to the agreement is empowered to render within its own jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton is in need of the services of licensed personnel in order to perform street sweeping services pursuant to the MS4 Tier A Municipal Stormwater General Permit requirements within its jurisdiction, and the City of Lambertville has offered to provide these services to the Borough; and

WHEREAS, at this time the parties wish to execute a Shared Services Agreement to furnish these services to Stockton, for an initial one-year term and not to exceed annual amount of \$1,200; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that sufficient funds are available for this purpose.

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

1. The Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute a Shared Services Agreement with the City of Lambertville for the provision of street sweeping services to Stockton pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 et seq. for an initial term of one year and not to exceed annual contract amount of \$1,200.
2. The Borough Attorney is authorized to make non-substantive changes to the Shared Services Agreement prior to its execution.

Motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Brander to adopt Resolution 2026-57.

Discussion: Brown stated that this is another part of that infrastructure we're building. We've worked with Mr. Sowsian in the past, we're familiar with his work, but we now have Mr. Squashic who's in a position to really oversee and make sure that that work is done properly.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Resolution 2026-57

Authorizing the Award of a Services Agreement Not to Exceed \$17,500 for 2026 Mowing and Property Maintenance on Stockton Borough Property

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton has a need to retain the services of a qualified contractor to complete property maintenance work, including but not limited to mowing and clean-up services, on the Borough's behalf from April 2026 to November 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Borough has solicited proposals in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law;

and

WHEREAS, Sowsian’s Landscapes has offered to render the services to the Borough for the following fees: \$675 per completion for maintenance and mowing at specifically identified Borough properties, including the Stockton Playground Park; and \$250 per completion for maintenance and mowing at Stockton Playground Park only; and

WHEREAS, Sowsian’s Landscapes has successfully completed these services on the Borough’s behalf previously and the Borough wishes to hire Sowsian’s Landscapes to continue the services in 2026; and

WHEREAS, the estimated contract amount shall not exceed \$17,500; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that sufficient funds are available to pay for said services.

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

5. The Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute an agreement with Sowsian’s Landscapes to complete mowing and property maintenance services on the Borough’s behalf on Borough property, and in accordance with the foregoing and written agreement between the parties.
6. The total contract amount shall not exceed \$17,500. The contractor shall be paid \$675 per completion for maintenance and mowing at specifically identified Borough properties, including the Stockton Playground Park, and \$250 per completion for maintenance and mowing at Stockton Playground Park only. The services shall be completed on a weekly basis or as needed.
7. A copy of this Resolution and the agreement shall be placed on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk.

Motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Mann to adopt Resolution 2026-58.

Mayor Lipsen asked Attorney Maddox if the resolution could clarify to say she could also work for the planning board as well if needed. Attorney Maddox stated that yes it can say to hire to assist the borough to provide clerical help on an as needed basis. Discussion: Brown stated it’s a good idea to have backup in the position, as she worked for the borough and she can fit in. Meltzer agreed and it’s a good idea to look where they can get extra help.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

RESOLUTION 2026- 58
RESOLUTION HIRING JENNIFER TEREPA TO PROVIDE CLERICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE BOROUGH CLERK’S OFFICE FOR THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON HUNTERDON COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton, New Jersey, that Jennifer Terepka is hereby hired to assist the Borough Clerk's office and provide clerical help on an as-needed, as-directed basis, at the hourly rate of \$30.00 per hour, subject to the terms and conditions offered to Ms. Terepka.

Mayor Lipsen recused himself at this point in meeting and turned it over to Brown.

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to adopt Resolution 2026-59.

Discussion: Brown discussed the changes in the proposal that have been scaled back. Meltzer added that this came from the input that they have received with regards to playground master plan. Stated that they are not rehauling everything, we are not starting from scratch. A lot of work was done just five years ago, and those needs have not changed drastically, so, it is truly an optimization and a reflection of where we are now to make sure that we are moving forward in the best way. This is so they can align as quickly as possible so that, we minimize the back and forth, we minimize the costs, we can start moving on the progress.

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

RESOLUTION 2026-59

AUTHORIZING COLLIERS ENGINEERING & DESIGN, INC. TO COMPLETE AN UPDATED PARK MASTER PLAN AND CONCEPT PLAN DEVELOPMENT ON STOCKTON BOROUGH'S BEHALF

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton has a need to complete an updated park master plan and concept plan development for the Stockton Playground Park in the Borough; and

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2026, Borough Engineer Colliers Engineering & Design, Inc. submitted a proposal to provide professional services to complete the sought-after work for \$13,000; and

WHEREAS, Borough Council seeks to authorize the Borough Engineer to complete the above-referenced work on the Borough's behalf, subject to the scope of work set forth in the proposal and terms and conditions of its existing Professional Services Agreement with the Borough; and

WHEREAS, there are sufficient funds available for this purpose as set forth in the attached Certification completed by the Chief Financial Officer.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Stockton, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, that Borough Engineer Colliers Engineering & Design, Inc. is hereby authorized and directed to complete an updated Park Master Plan and Concept Plan Development on the Borough's behalf, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the April 17, 2026 proposal and current Professional Services Agreement on file with the Clerk's office.

Mayor Lipsen retook the chair.

PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

Motion made by Brown and seconded by Gilinger to approve Resolution 2026-60

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Fisher, Gilinger, Mann and Meltzer

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion passes.

**Stockton Borough Council
Resolution 2026-60
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 \$320,980.81

MAYOR'S REPORT, BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Outreach Committee: Nina Brander (Chair): Brander reported that there has been just a little bit more work on the Red Cross Blood Drive, they are trying to make the hours later to accommodate more donors, and now that Mike's back, he's been jumping in on that and thanked Mann.

Infrastructure Committee (Water & Sewer/Stormwater/Streets): William Brown (Chair): Brown reported that they are still trying to arrange for the long-term leak detection study of the water system. They are hoping to meet with DEP about funding opportunities for some of the capital expenses. The town got through the winter very well compared to other towns that experienced water breaks and line breaks. They've done a good job of identifying leaks on service lines, and we're probably going to want to tighten that process to force people to really address the leaks on their property sooner rather than later. There's got to be a reasonable period of time in which they can be expected to act. Brown stated that he is recommending, a reasonable period of time. to enable residents to get a plumber out there to fix the leaks. Mayor Lipsen added that they will be working on updating the ordinance to address water operations. Mayor Lipsen reported that the sewer plant generator project is underway.

Brown added that the installation date has been moved back to May. Mayor Lipsen reported that the fire company came and did testing on the hydrants and are doing testing on the water pressures.

The meter installation plan has been moving forward, and several have been installed. An order for new sensors has been put in along with new meters. The new water operator did go to new training for some of the different water testing, in which new council members have been brought up to speed on the operations, so they can better understand as we move forward. Mayor Lipsen stated they are authorizing the contract with the sewer and I&I study, the water department is going to have to work on that. Over the next several months they are hoping to plan more meetings and solidifying some things and have some things to talk about over the next several months.

Brown added that Mr. Ent showed the new employees how to replace and fix the meters. They are also salvaging some of them and fixing them. This will result in more accurate reading and improve revenues. Mayor Lipsen added he received positive feedback on the new employees, they have branded Stockton vests and ID's. Residents are saying they are super nice and doing great efficient work.

Stockton School Committee: Michael Mann (Chair): Mann reported that he has started the next level for the grant and hoping to hear positive news from that. They received a letter from Karen Edwards, where she was talking about helping organize some fundraising to help, get some of the work done at the school. Stated that the borough should work to support her. Mayor Lipsen deferred to Attorney Maddox for advice on fundraising from community members to support the Stockton School. Ms. Maddox stated there is a lot of flexibility from a citizen group.

Personnel, Finance, & Operations Committee: Matthew Fisher (Chair): Mayor Lipsen reported that they have not yet replaced the Planning Board Secretary. They are letting the board chair take lead on that. Specific job descriptions will be made for each job.

Mayor's Report and Council Comments:

Mayor Lipsen thanked everyone for all their due diligence and helping run the borough from the professionals to the elected officials. Added that no matter, each and every one of you are not paid enough, and, everyone is super impressive.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Lipsen opened the floor to public comment.

Ellie Siegel, thanked council for their commitment to the work they do. Commented on the 2% tax revenue that would be generated by a cannabis establishment in the borough. Stated that she can provide reference on the revenue and talk about how its on in other places. Spoke in length about her experience and customers, she has helped in other towns.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION Time: 8:38 PM

A motion by Brown, seconded by Gilinger to approve a resolution to go into executive session, all were in favor with Fisher abstaining and being recused from executive session.

RESOLUTION

AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION UNDER THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT (N.J.S.A. 10:4-13)

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

1. The Mayor and Council will now convene into an executive (closed) session that will be limited only to consideration of an item or items with respect to which the public may be excluded pursuant to section 7b. of the Open Public Meetings Act.
2. The general nature of the subject or subjects to be discussed in said session are as follows:
 - - Possible litigation
 - - Matters falling within the attorney-client privilege in connection with cannabis moratorium/licensing,
 -
3. The matters discussed will be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

A motion by Gilinger and seconded by Brander to return to regular session at 9:10 PM was unanimously approved by voice vote.

ACTION ON ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Gilinger and seconded by Brown to adopt Resolution 2026-56.

Discussion: Gilinger began the discussion by saying that they need to reprioritize what they are doing and what they are working on. There are limited resources, with limited time and ability to address all the issues facing Stockton. Gilinger stated that they want to be responsive to the people who elected them. An inordinate amount of time has been spent on cannabis, even in the last couple of months since he came on council. They need to put their time and energy into the things they were elected to care of for the town. Brown added that it is a delicate point in council's history, and spoke of personnel, new staff, all part time, and getting them integrated into the operations of the borough. Brown gave examples of the new employees such as the new water clerk, new zoning officer, new floodplain administrator, new deputy clerk and a new planning board secretary. Brown went on to say that for the first time they have a new Department of Public Works, all part-time employees with a manager who will oversee the operations, who will be heavily involved with the water system. Brown spoke of securing substantial funding grants, which is time sensitive and will take a lot of time. Brown spoke on the operations of the 120-year-old water system and a 75-year-old sewer system that will need a lot of attention and working with the bond counsel that will also be significant with demands.

Brown spoke on the infrastructure system and working with the engineer and having leaks repaired. Lipsen corrected that they don't have a Public Works Department but public works operations. Lipsen spoke on the more than 15 meetings they had last year regarding infrastructure, including multiple hours of looking at the system as a whole including water, sewer, and stormwater; improving operations; and hiring people. The Infrastructure Committee is made up of the same council members who make up the Cannabis Committee. Lipsen spoke of the open and fair process and the amount of time they had devoted to cannabis in the previous years. They created a number of documents, responded to questions, and reviewed applications. Lipsen stated that they spent hours and tens of thousands of dollars going through this process to no avail. Lipsen stated at this point they need to focus on the Borough's primary needs, namely operations and the water and sewer systems which are part of public safety. Meltzer stated that it is incredibly clear this is an exercise in prioritization, with limited resources, limited budget, and things that are critical to the needs of the residents and are mandatory for the town to address: sewer and water, public safety, our compliance, and general operations. Meltzer added it's our job to do that, to make sure that the town is running effectively and well and up to code. Brander thanked the committee for all the work they have put in and stated she agreed with all the points that have been made. Gilinger stated that one of the things they have to do is be ready to respond to the things they don't yet know about. There are a ton of things that can happen that might end up taking their full attention. Brown followed up and discussed the work they need to do with PFAS water requirements. He stated that there are other funds out there that they can attempt to tap into, like a spill fund with the DEP. Brown also mentioned the work that needs to be done with the Stockton School, which is an ongoing, recurrent demand. Lipsen discussed the numerous meetings and work put into the projects and added that without an administrator it's a lot of hours that council has focused on. Stated that the voters elected them to run the town properly and stated he thinks they have been doing great things and they have made huge investments of time and money last year on cannabis, but for this year, they need to focus on some of the other things that the voters talk to them about. Mayor Lipsen spoke on the issues with DEP and compliance issues constantly coming up with the water system. Spoke on the ongoing project to update the website and to make the Borough's online presence ADA compliant. He also spoke on the efforts to digitize, codify, and update ordinances. All these things are being dealt with day-to-day and need our attention at this time.

Hearing no further comments from council Mayor Lipsen called for a vote:

Roll call: Brander, Brown, Gilinger and Meltzer.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Stockton Borough Council
Resolution 2026-56

EXTENDING TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON THE SOLICITATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF CANNABIS BUSINESS APPLICATIONS UNTIL JANUARY 31, 2027

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2024, Council adopted Ordinance 24-12 to define the process and criteria for municipal approval of up to one Class 5 retail license in the Borough's CR zone; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to a Request for Cannabis Applications ("RFA"), the Borough received

two applications on or before the August 6, 2025 deadline; and

WHEREAS, based on its evaluations and scoring of both applications, and its thorough investigations of the two applicants and contents of their applications, the Cannabis Review Committee issued to Council written findings and analysis which concluded that neither applicant achieved the minimum score prerequisite to consideration of issuance of a resolution of local support by the Borough, and as a result, recommended that Council deny the issuance of a resolution of support to both applicants; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 25-88, Council accepted the Review Committee's recommendations and found it to be in the best interests of the Borough to deny the issuance of a resolution of support; and

WHEREAS, the Borough utilized a significant amount of its limited resources, including municipal funding and numerous officials' time, to complete all of the work necessary to solicit, review, consider and ultimately reject the two cannabis business applications in 2025; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 26-40, Council imposed a temporary moratorium on the Borough's solicitation and acceptance of new cannabis applications for a term of 90 days, which moratorium is set to expire on or about May 10, 2026; and

WHEREAS, since the passage of Resolution No. 26-40, the Cannabis Review Committee has been in the process of reviewing the Borough's cannabis ordinance and regulations, the existing RFA documentation, as well as the Borough's options in connection with the future of cannabis licensing in the Borough, all for purposes of making recommendations to Council as to its determination as to what is in the Borough's best interests; and

WHEREAS, as part of its analysis, the Cannabis Review Committee has continued to consult with the Borough Attorney and as well as special counsel hired to assist the Cannabis Review Committee during its review; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 26-40 provides that the temporary moratorium may be extended by subsequent resolution of Council should Council and the Cannabis Review Committee need additional time to complete their analysis and review; and

WHEREAS, at this time, the Cannabis Review Committee requests that Council extend the moratorium until January 31, 2027 to enable the Cannabis Review Committee and Council to have additional time to consider all of these matters; and

WHEREAS, Council acknowledges the Cannabis Review Committee's concerns, and in support of these concerns, finds the following:

1. The Borough has very limited resources and staff, and therefore relies heavily on

the Mayor and Council members to undertake many of the necessary administrative and executive town functions and to assist staff with running the town on a day-to-day basis; and

2. Currently there are more pressing matters facing the Borough and community which demand the Mayor and Council members' attention and limited time; and
3. The urgency of the other issues and matters necessitating immediate attention is driven by increased State regulatory mandates, as well as by deferred operational, maintenance, and capital demands, and require all members of the governing body to prioritize, plan for, implement, and monitor critical and complex new policy and administrative changes; and
4. It is in the public interest that these matters take priority in the use of the Borough's limited resources and officials' limited time; and
5. As a result of the foregoing, Council and its Cannabis Review Committee cannot prioritize the cannabis analysis over other critical municipal needs.

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

1. The recitals in the above "Whereas" clauses are hereby incorporated herein as if fully restated.
2. For the reasons set forth above, Council hereby extends the temporary moratorium on the Borough's solicitation and acceptance of new cannabis business applications until January 31, 2027.
3. The purpose of this temporary moratorium is to enable Council and the Cannabis Review Committee sufficient time to complete the appropriate analysis and review of the Borough's cannabis ordinance and all matters related to cannabis licensing thereunder, including but not limited to a thorough review and analysis of: the current status of cannabis business licensing and regulation throughout the State; relevant market conditions; and the Borough's options in connection with the future of cannabis business licensing in the Borough.
4. The temporary moratorium may be extended by subsequent resolution of Council should Council and the Cannabis Review Committee need additional time to complete their analysis and review.

NEXT MEETING

Mayor Lipsen announced the next regular meeting is May 18, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Gilinger and seconded by Meltzer to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 PM.

Laurie A. Courter

Laurie A. Courter, Borough Clerk