

Stewartstown Borough Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 1st, 2025

Members present

Pamela Almony
Roy Burkins
Donna Bloom
Jason Roberts
Kimberly Carl
David Elwell
Kenton Kurtz

Others present

Mayor Brittany Barnette
Craig Sharnetzka, Solicitor
Jason Brenneman, Engineer
Ira Walker, Jr., Sewer/Water
Stacy Myers, Recording Sec'y

Visitors

Linda Miller
Kevin Brunickie

Jordan Ilyes
Paul & Louise Roscosky

Jared Briggs
Erica Rearich

1. The meeting was called to order @ 7:00pm followed by the pledge to the flag. Tonight's meeting is also being held via Microsoft Teams.
2. **General Business**
 - **Approval of Meeting Minutes**—Mrs. Carl made a motion to approve the November 3rd, 2025 Meeting Minutes. Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Approval of Financial Statements**
 - **General Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve General Fund bills dated Oct 30th thru Nov 25th, 2025, totaling \$171,308.60. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Sewer Funds**—Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve Sewer Fund bills dated Oct 30th thru Nov 25th, 2025, totaling \$107,682.69. Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Water Funds**—Mrs. Bloom made a motion to approve Water Fund bills dated Oct 30th thru Nov 25th, 2025, totaling \$86,808.47. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
3. **Visitors/Public Comment**—Jordan Ilyes was present to discuss a grant opportunity he was made aware of recently where, if awarded, could potentially award HARP a million dollars (maximum amount). Jordan would pay all involved fees to apply, but Stewartstown Borough has to be the grant applicant. The deadline to apply for this Statewide LSA Grant (Local Share Account) was November 30th, 2025, so Jordan's solicitor, Christian Miller had emailed the idea to Atty. Sharnetzka & Stacy Myers, who were amenable to Jordan completing the application by the deadline contingent on Council's approval tonight to move forward. Jordan stated he has spoken to legislators who were all in favor of his project moving forward. Atty. Miller had prepared a Resolution regarding the grant application and a First Amended Restated Developer's Agreement, which revises the Rec Fees requirement as the grant monies (if funded) would go to HARP in lieu of Jordan paying them. Atty. Sharnetzka reviewed the agreement and made some language revisions to which Jordan and Atty. Miller agreed. An additional draft agreement was emailed for Craig & Council review. The revisions remove the Mill Street railroad crossing updates and the required traffic study which have now both been completed. The amended agreement was before Council tonight for their consideration. If Council isn't in agreement, Jordan will withdraw the grant application. The grant writer said, if Jordan's grant application moves forward, even if not awarded, it would not hurt the Borough's chances of being awarded grant funds in the future. Jordan said there's still a lot of factors up in the air regarding the Railroad with land swaps between them, Jordan, and Wisnom property. Those parties want to be sure funding is secured before they agree to what's being proposed. Some Council members were a little hesitant to agree to this proposal unless Jordan would commit to continuing the project whether or not the grant funds are awarded, but Jordan and some other Council didn't see a downside or risk to the Borough letting Jordan move forward through the grant process, especially since he's paying the grant writer and all involved costs, and being that there's a potential to exceed the amount of money that HARP would receive by Jordan paying Rec Fees. Atty. Sharnetzka said the Agreement already states, if the grant doesn't get funded, Jordan can choose to move forward with his project or withdraw his plans and terminate the project. Mr. Elwell stated, should the project terminate, 13 Mill Street could be sold as a private lot (which it is) and/or could sit vacant for several years. With no further discussion, Mrs. Bloom made a motion to authorize the Council President to execute the proposed Resolution 2025-08 authorizing Council to apply for the grant and to approve the First Amended & Restated Developer's Agreement between Stewartstown Borough & Ilyes Holdings 8, LLC; Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

4. **Solicitor's Report**—Atty. Sharnetzka reported:

- **Resolution 2025-07**—Establishing Rules and Procedures for Public Participation in Borough Council Meetings by Telecommunication (via Microsoft Teams/Zoom). Ms. Almony made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-07; Mrs. Carl seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Ordinance 2025-02**—Establishing Rules and Regulations for the Discharge of Firearms, Bows, Crossbows and Atlatls in Stewartstown Borough. A couple revisions were requested by Council. Craig will make those changes. Mr. Burkins made a motion to advertise Ordinance 2025-02 with the noted revisions so it can be adopted in January; Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **CGA's Christmas gifts** were distributed to Council and Borough staff tonight. Happy Holidays to everyone!

5. **Engineer's Report**—Jason Brenneman reported:

- **2025 Street Projects**—LSA grant design work will continue over the next month in hopes of getting the storm sewer and sanitary sewer work bid as soon as possible.
- **LTAPS Truck Study**—Springwood, Ovelton, Fulton and Memory were the streets reviewed and now restricted to truck traffic (any truck 25' long & up), and Bailey Drive to truck traffic (any truck 30' long & up). If Council wishes, an Ordinance can be drafted, advertised and adopted in order for signage to be installed and restrictions to be enforced. Mrs. Carl made a motion authorizing Craig to draft an ordinance restricting trucks (by lengths noted) on the above-noted streets. Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Kings Way/Camelot Court parking issues**—Especially on trash days, if cars are parked on both sides of these streets, the trash truck can't go through to collect trash on Winters Avenue. Since letters were sent to those residents, parking has improved. LTAPS can conduct a simple study on these two streets as well, if Council wishes. Mr. Elwell made a motion authorizing Jason Brenneman to contact LTAPS about conducting the study on Kings Way & Camelot Court for possible parking restrictions on one side. Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Bridgeview Lot 3 Development**—41 residential unit townhomes are proposed as an extension of the Bridgeview Development. All building will take place in Hopewell Township with a portion of the lot in the Borough. No improvements will take place in the Borough, but Council requested Jason review the plan as he was reviewing the plan anyway for public sewer & water. He had no comments pertaining to the Borough, but sewer and water comments are to be discussed on 12/4/25 with the developer. Hopewell Township Planning Commission, as well as Stewartstown Borough's Planning Commission have recommended conditional approval of the plan, Jason concurs with that recommendation on the condition of the water and sewer comments being addressed. Mr. Kurtz made a motion to conditionally approve the Bridgeview Lot 3 Development Plan based on the outstanding water and sewer comments being addressed for Stewartstown Authority and Hopewell Township approval. Ms. Almony seconded. All were in favor; motion carried. A letter of this conditional approval will be sent to the developer within 10 days.

6. **Sewer & Water Supervisor Report**—Ira Walker, Jr. submitted his report. Expenses will go before the Authority for action. Of note:

- There are only 4 more water meters to replace in the whole system! Kudos to the water staff, especially Felicia Markline who spearheaded this project!
- Thanks to our data loggers, several water leaks have been found & fixed recently, which has decreased our daily water usage.
- Stacy reported that the Authority approved their 2026 budget with a 30% increase in water rates and a 15% increase in sewer rates. Jason Brenneman & Ira discussed some issues driving those increases. Most importantly, is the aging infrastructure of the system. The Wastewater Treatment Plant (sewer) is in the process of being updated, i.e. machinery, etc., but there have been some costly water projects that created a hit to water revenue. Most recently, a water service line replacement was necessary on Cedar Lane & Scarborough Fare; that cost was over \$400,000. One of the system's six Wells was recently rehabbed at a cost of nearly \$200,000 and while that Well was out of service, more water had to be purchased from York Water, which costs more. The cost of chemicals continues to increase, which is another hit to our revenue. During multiple budget meetings, there have been a few projects that were pushed until 2027 & 2028. In 2024, sewer rates were not increased, while the metered water rates (not the flat rate minimum) were increased approx. 10%. Low-interest financing CAN be obtained from PENNVEST (Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority) for some projects and the Authority has utilized them in the past, but the payments on that

financing must then be paid. Wherever possible, avenues are sought to provide financial relief to our ratepayers, but some repairs are inevitable to keep the system running smoothly.

7. **President/Vice-President Report**—Ms. Almony reported:

- A resident asked whether or not basketball hoops are allowed on Borough streets. There's no Ordinance that really calls that out, but Atty. Sharnetzka said it's most likely prohibited in the Vehicle Code. The resident could reach out to SRPD to verify.
- Railroad—can a letter be sent asking them to move the caboose back a bit, out of the clear sight triangle? Notice can be sent.
- A Thanksgiving potluck dinner was held with the staff, a few Council members and the Mayor. Everything was delicious and everyone enjoyed themselves! Another gathering is planned for March.
- Two young boys (Dylan & Weston) recently stopped to help Ms. Almony & her husband rake leaves. They had a good conversation, the boys were very cordial & helpful! Ms. Almony reached out to the parents to let them know of the boys' great behavior & helpfulness!
- Joyce Ryer, 54 S. Main Street, submitted a letter of interest to serve on the Sewer & Water Authority, as it was learned there may be a vacancy soon.

8. **Treasurer's Report**—Stacy Myers reported:

- **2026 Budget**—With no further discussion, Ms. Almony made a motion to adopt the 2026 General Budget. Mrs. Carl seconded. There are two separate line items on the budget spreadsheet for “Employee Bonuses/Gift Cards” One of those will be removed. Ms. Almony amended her motion to approve the budget with that correction. Mrs. Carl amended her second to include that as well. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **2026 Sewer & Water Budget**—Mr. Kurtz made a motion to adopt the 2026 Sewer & Water Budget; Ms. Almony seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Resolution 2025-05**—Reenacting and Reimposing the General Tax Rate of 2.85mils for Fiscal Year 2026. Ms. Almony made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-05. Mrs. Carl seconded. All were in favor; motion carried. Of note, *real estate tax millage has remained at 2.85mils for nearly 20 years!!*
- **Resolution 2025-06**—Appointing an Independent Auditor for the calendar year 2025. Ms. Almony made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-06 appointing Hamilton & Musser. Mr. Roberts seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **2026 Meeting Date Schedule**—Proposal to start Council meetings at 6:30pm rather than 7pm. The Sewer & Water Authority agreed to this at their recent meeting. Ms. Almony made a motion to authorize the 2026 Meeting Date schedule with this change. Mr. Roberts seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **4-H Horse Club** requested use of the Borough Meeting Room to hold monthly club meetings. Megan Herrold, 4-H President, used to meet here with the Girl Scouts and had been responsible with the property. Ms. Almony made a motion to approve the request for 4-H Horse Club to hold their meetings here on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, once staff obtains a signed list of rules & expectations that would include a controlled access list of who would be responsible for the office key. Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Fire Police request**—Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve the Fire Police request for New Freedom Borough's Annual Christmas Parade, Dec. 6th. Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
- **Agenda Amendment**—At this time, Mr. Kurtz made a motion to amend tonight's agenda for further budget discussion about rent for the upstairs apartments. Mr. Elwell seconded. Motion carried.
Both upstairs tenants are on a month-to-month rental basis, and a possible rent increase was discussed at several budget meetings.
Mr. Burkins made a motion to increase the rent by \$75/month (to \$750) for each upstairs tenant. Mrs. Bloom seconded. All were in favor; motion carried. A possible increase to the Tax Office rent was discussed also and staff will verify they are also on a month-to-month rent basis.

9. **Mayor's/Police Report**—Mayor Barnette reported:

- Congratulations to those who won seats in the recent election!
- Saturday, December 6th @ 6pm--Christmas Tree Lighting will be held at Mason Dixon Library
- Winter weather warning has been issued for tonight. Please be careful & be neighborly to those who may need help!
- Police Commission Meeting was held on November 5th. One idea that was discussed was a Shepherd's Fund to help those experiencing hard times. Officers often encounter those in need, and donations can be funneled to this nonprofit organization who would use it to purchase gift cards. This would alleviate officers from handling cash, but instead have the gift cards on hand when the need arises for a person, family, etc.

- School bus safety is a must! A child was recently “clipped” by a vehicle passing a school bus. Luckily, the child was OK, the car was identified and an arrest made.
- Reports/phone calls have increased from schools due to mandated reporters required to report all incidents. If someone knows of an assault or other suspicious incident, it can be reported by calling Safe2Say at 844-723-2729, which is an anonymous reporting system.
- Someone had reported to Mr. Kurtz that every week SRPD is at the hotel for one reason or another. Because it's a hotel and not a rental property with an actual landlord, our Disruptive Conduct Ordinance cannot be enforced at the hotel; however, Mayor Barnette stated, there is no tolerance for bad behavior. If SRPD responds, they notify management and those people are out within the week. SRPD said, for the most part, the people that are at the hotel don't want problems, but occasionally, there's a “bad apple”.
- Recent concerns to SRPD—hit & run on Ovelton Avenue, and a car mirror was hit on Main Street. Ms. Almony said speeding on Borough streets continues to increase and she requested more police presence in town. Officers were sitting on Church Street today, but if there are particular times of day when speeding seems to be a problem, let SRPD know.

10. **Committee Discussion/Other Business**—Mr. Roberts mentioned the following for discussion:

- **Discussion was held on a safety concern for the 4 N. Main Street homeowner.** A violation letter had been sent last year for all the items in the backyard. That had been cleaned up, but the property (backyard) continues to have trash & rubbish strewn around. In addition, residents and some Council are concerned that the property poses a fire hazard as it seems to have a hole in the back roof and has had no upkeep for probably 20+ years or more. There are some organizations that could possibly help, but the Borough may be limited as to how involved we can get, being a private residence. The homeowner pays all his utility bills with the Borough, although he has not had running water in a year since it was shut off due to not allowing water staff access to replace his water meter. Per the Authority's Rules & Regulations, staff must be granted access to repair, maintain, replace the water meters that, ultimately belong to the Authority. Some Council have sources they will contact and see what, if any help can be offered.
- **Sewer & Water Authority Rent to Borough**—Mr. Roberts said the topic of the Authority paying rent to the Borough came up during budget talks. The Authority has paid \$28,000 annual rent (\$14,000 from both sewer & water funds) to the Borough for office space (used mainly by the water department) and also use of the Meeting Room for their monthly meetings, staff meetings, classes, etc. Office staff searched meeting minutes, resolutions and ordinances dating back to the 80's to determine when the rent started being charged and how the amount came about, but they were unsuccessful in the search. Mr. Roberts took measurements of the office/meeting room in order to compare the rent being charged to current office space rent in nearby locations. At \$12/sq. ft., it was determined that it was a pretty good deal compared to other rental space. This was based off of the 3,616sq. ft. space, divided by the 3 entities (water, sewer & Borough). While the Authority probably does not utilize two-thirds of the space for sewer & water use, the office staff (while getting paid one-third from each entity) conducts work for all 3 entities so basically, all 3 entities do use the space. Another thought was that, since the Authority also serves the public, why wouldn't they pay two-thirds of costs? The Borough's main revenue is tax money; the Authority's main revenue is from ratepayers. Recently, there was an extensive repair necessary to the water office ceiling, which was nearly the cost of the water rent for the year & the repair was paid by the Borough. Atty. Sharnetzka said there is an agreement between the two entities and there's a bit of a difference being that the Authority has ratepayers in Hopewell Township. The Borough doesn't get tax revenue from Township residents.
- Josiah Zahn (Zahn Contracting) has purchased the Authority's old skid steer for \$12,000 and has agreed not to charge the Borough rent while using it for road salt/winter use.

11. **Adjournment**—With no further business before the Council, Ms. Almony made a motion to adjourn @ 9:02pm. Mr. Roberts seconded. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacy Myers, Recording Secretary

