

Stewartstown Borough Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 4th, 2026

Members present

Pamela Almony
Roy Burkins
Kimberly Carl
David Elwell
Kenton Kurtz

Others present

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

Visitors

Linda Miller
Louise Roscosky
Joyce & Jeff Ryer
Kevin Brunicke
Erica Rearich

1. The meeting was called to order @ 6:35pm. Tonight's meeting was to be held via Microsoft Teams; however, Council had audio but no video via Teams.
2. **General Business**
 - **Approval of Meeting Minutes**—Mr. Kurtz made a motion to approve the April 6th, 2026 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Burkins seconded. Mr. Elwell requested two corrections:
 - *Under "Public Comment", 2nd bullet point, Mr. Elwell abstained from the motion regarding the street closing for the Give Local York event because his business is participating in the event.*
 - *Under "Treasurer's Report", 2nd bullet point, "1/4-height wooden pieces on the utility poles" should be "3/4-height utility poles".*Mr. Kurtz amended his motion to approve the minutes with these two corrections. Mr. Burkins amended his second. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Approval of Financial Statements**
 - **General Funds**—Mr. Elwell made a motion to approve General Fund bills & payroll (\$3,013.24) dated March 28th thru April 30th, 2026, totaling \$184,962.92. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Sewer Funds**—Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve Sewer Fund bills & payroll (\$17,519.50) dated March 28th thru April 30th, 2026, totaling \$134,100.15. Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Water Funds**—Mr. Kurtz made a motion to approve Water Fund bills & payroll (\$23,181.64) dated March 28th thru April 30th, 2026, totaling \$123,006.15. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
3. **Public Comment/Visitors**—Joyce Ryer had a question regarding basketball nets/obstructions in the street, but this will be covered under the Solicitor's Report.
4. **Engineer's Report**—Jason Brenneman was not present tonight, but submitted the following items to report:
 - **2026 Streets**
 - **LSA Grant/E. Pennsylvania Ave**—The COSTARS proposal received from Shiloh Paving & Excavating was \$975,293.50, approx. \$80,000 over the approved grant amount. After more discussion with Shiloh Paving, along with the Streets & Roads Committee, Shiloh issued an updated proposal of \$919,584.35, approx. \$23,000 over the approved grant construction cost. This is a unit price proposal so final cost will be determined on the actual quantities used. Clarification on Borough responsibilities (stakeout of site, testing, dump site, etc.) were discussed, as well as asphalt pricing. The asphalt price in the proposal is based on the current asphalt index, but this is fluctuating, so the actual price will be based on the cost at the time of paving. Jason also noted engineering costs would not be as much as originally thought. These costs have been reduced by \$15,000 (still may be conservative) which makes the total project cost only \$8,000 over the original budgeted grant construction cost. All but \$8,000 (approx.) will be covered by grant funds for this project. Mr. Burkins made a motion to approve the COSTARS proposal from Shiloh Paving & Excavating in the amount of \$919,584.35 upon the engineer receiving all the required paperwork. This would be COSTARS Contract Number 016-E26-458 and 041-E25-044. Mr. Elwell seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.

- **Repaving of High Street**—The preconstruction meeting has not been held to date. Memory Lane washout will be discussed onsite with the contractor. Jason hopes to have a Change Order for this by the June meeting.

- **Camelot discussion**—potential for Executive Session discussion, if necessary
- **Springwood Avenue pipe settlement**—Ira noted to Jason that the storm sewer pipe on Springwood Avenue is settling. Jason visited the area & noted the pipe joints in the inlets, along with the joints between the top of the inlet & inlet box are open which allows water to penetrate into these areas. This saturates the soil/stone around the pipe & inlet, allowing the road to “sink”. To keep the issue from getting worse, all joints should be sealed with hydraulic cement or an exterior-rated expanding foam. Shiloh Paving will be working on another patch on Springwood (as part of the High Street project) so Jason will discuss this with them & request a quote for repair.
- **George Street Townhouses**—The builder requested the release of the bond that was in place for the stormwater controls of the townhouse driveways, as the porous driveways were not allowing stormwater to drain away. Jason concurred with the request to release the bond on the condition that the concrete dumped at the end of George Street was cleaned up. Ira reported that, as of tonight, it hasn’t been cleaned up yet. Borough Council denied the request for release of the bond until the concrete is cleaned up.
- **College Avenue sinkhole**—A couple of complaints were received regarding a sinkhole on College Avenue. Ira reported that this has been there for some time. The Authority completed a patch previously that was related to the water main. There still may be a question whether this sinkhole is related to that or stormwater. Ira said staff can use the sewer camera to try & verify this before the June meeting.
- **Columbia Gas/Hydramax USA**—Videoing lines for cross boring gas lines. Ira believes they should soon be completing their project, but they still have Main Street to video which will require traffic control.

5. **Solicitor’s Report**—Atty. Sharnetzka reported:

- **Armstrong Cable Franchise Agreement**—Craig’s office is still negotiating language in the agreement. Even though our contract expired in September 2024, the Borough still receives the maximum gross revenue of 5%. Craig is trying to confirm language requiring Armstrong to obtain approval before doing any work in the street, in addition to them supplying a plan for work & to bond that work. They’ve been a little resistant in other municipalities but once the language in the agreement is confirmed, Craig will bring it to Council.
- **3 South Main Street/Former Theater Lot**—The bid of \$10,175, submitted by Stewartstown Realty LLC was accepted last month. Craig said they have until May 21st to close which is 45 days from the date Council accepted the bid. The delinquent taxes on this property that were discussed last month have all been removed. Borough staff received notice that all of those have been satisfied & the County has now updated their records. Hopefully by the June meeting, the Borough will no longer own this property.
- **Obstructions in the Street Right of Way**—Per two concerns received by the Borough staff about basketball hoops in the street ROW, Craig’s office researched other municipal ordinances related to this as currently, Stewartstown has no ordinances prohibiting basketball hoops/related items in the ROW. The Borough Code allows municipalities to regulate this type of thing on their streets. If Council wishes, we could move forward with adopting such an ordinance.

One complaint referenced the net in the street ROW during a snow emergency which prohibited the snowplow from clearing the roadway. A letter was sent to that property owner. Ms. Almony & most other Council had no interest in spending money to advertise/adopt another ordinance for Borough staff to take time to enforce, when it seems it should be common sense for parents to not allow children to play in the streets. Craig said that’s not something the Borough will be able to regulate anyway; that’s more of a police/safety matter. Aside from not wanting to “parent” parents, the basketball nets are not prohibiting thru traffic.. If the Borough believes it’s a safety issue, then we should do something about it; however, the hoops are on the side of the street where a vehicle would normally park.

Joyce Ryer, who had issued a complaint about the hoops, said she’s mainly concerned with safety. Who would be liable if the hoop would fall/cause damage during a storm? Craig said the owner of the net would be responsible for damage caused. He said the Borough is aware of the nets; however, we’re not aware of any dangerous situation they’re causing. If there was a complaint that, in high winds or during a storm, the net isn’t stable, that would be different.

- **Cul-de-sac definition**—A question was raised about the definition of a cul-de-sac. Craig said, it depends on the context where its being used, but under the definition of “Street” in the Borough’s Zoning Ordinance, a cul-de-sac is defined as “*public thoroughfare which has been or will be dedicated to the public for public use*”. In the Borough’s SALDO, it specifically defines cul-de-sac as a subcategory under “Street”.

This question stemmed from a complaint about a truck parked in a cul-de-sac next to the owner's home during a snow emergency. The complainant also mentioned the truck's inspection & registration being expired. The Police contacted the owner, the registration is now current, and the inspection is going to be renewed shortly unless the owner gets antique tags for it, in which case, it won't need to be inspected annually.

6. **Sewer/Water Supervisor Report**—Ira Walker, Jr. submitted his report. All expenses will go before the Sewer & Water Authority for action.
7. **President/Vice President Report**—Ms. Almony/Mr. Burkins:
 - **Appointment to the vacancy of Zoning Hearing Board alternate**—Mr. Robert O'Farrell of 20 Mill Street, a longtime resident of the Borough and lifetime volunteer member of Eureka Fire Company, submitted a letter of interest to serve as alternate on the ZHB.
Mr. Kurtz made a motion to appoint Robert O'Farrell as alternate to the Borough's Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Police Commission Budget**—Mr. Burkins reported he recently had a brief meeting with representatives from New Freedom & Shrewsbury Boroughs (one from each). The Police Commission Budget is increasing each year with the two biggest factors being insurance and salaries for the officers. New Freedom & Shrewsbury Boroughs plan to send a letter to the Police Commission stating they're capping the budget to what it is currently until the end of 2026 pending all municipalities' review. They're requesting Stewartstown send a similar letter to the Commission as well. Mayor Barnette said, unless we reduce police coverage, the two cost factors aren't going to decrease. There is an Outreach Committee who is looking for other members to join the SRPD Commission which would lower the costs for existing members. A meeting was held with Shrewsbury Township who was receptive to the idea of joining and stated they will discuss it with their Board.
Erica Rearich (New Freedom Council member) stated Shrewsbury Borough will see a 0% increase in police costs for 2027, as they want the budget to stay the same as it is. New Freedom Borough will see a 5% increase in police costs for 2027 because the collective bargaining agreement increases by 5%.
Mr. Burkins said he believes SB & NF are requesting a budget cap until the municipalities review it and possibly fine tune it. Mayor Barnette said the collective bargaining agreement gets negotiated every 5 years and that has just recently been negotiated. There's no changing that at this time, and as stated, some of the cost factors cannot be negotiated. A change in the administration at Southern Regional consumed a lot of time and efforts last year into this year. So, while the 2026 budget was adopted, it wasn't as polished as some municipalities would have liked. A different accounting firm is now handling that administration work and getting things cleaned up since Gail Prego has retired.
The SRPD Commission budget is to be passed by September 30th (for municipal approval on October 1st). The 2026 budget was adopted & it met the legal criteria, but it wasn't polished by any means. Even though the Intergovernmental Agreement is in place, Shrewsbury wants to send a message to the Commission and by requesting a budget cap is how they're doing it. No one wants high costs, but the insurance (part of the collective bargaining agreement) can't be negotiated and cutting back on officers cuts down on police coverage. There are some officers retiring in the near future, which is a cost factor; the longer the officer is with the department, the higher his pay, the more vacation time, etc.
Mr. Burkins said he wanted to make Council aware of a possible budget freeze for 2027. As more is learned, it will be brought to Council.
8. **Treasurer's Report**—Stacy Myers reported:
 - **Fire Police request/Jacobus Lions Club**—Ms. Almony made a motion to approve the request for the July BLAST event scheduled for July 4th, 2026 from 9am-11pm (rain date is July 5th). Mr. Burkins seconded. All were in favor; motion carried.
 - **Holiday Light Line Upgrade**—Our contact person at First Energy is hoping to have this work started by July 1st.
9. **Mayor's/Police Report**—Mayor Barnette reported:
 - The next Police Commission meeting will be held this Wednesday, May 6th.
 - Liberty Tree planting—The Borough's tree, offered by the County in honor of the country's 250th birthday celebration, has been planted on the HARP grounds, as was Hopewell Township's tree. A huge thanks to Ira Walker, Jr. for digging the hole for the planting, as the County was not doing the digging. The Borough can plan a dedication event for the tree, possibly along with the Township at a later date.
10. **Executive Session**—Ms. Almony stated there's no need for an Executive Session tonight.

11. **Other business**

- A couple of the solar speed signs in town are not working. The cost for repair/replacement will be gathered for the June meeting.
- Ira reported on Saturday, May 16th @ 10am, Eureka Fire Department will hold a CPR demonstration (not a class) in recognition of a grandson who recently saved his grandfather thru CPR efforts. Anyone is welcome to attend. This is the same day as the Borough's free yard sale.

12. **Adjournment**—With no further business before Council, Mr. Kurtz made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 7:30pm. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacy Myers, Recording Secretary