

**Borough of New Stanton**  
**Borough Council**  
**New Stanton Council Chambers**  
**July 5, 2022**  
**Minutes of Meeting**

**Attendance**

Council members: Todd Bartlow, Alex Brown, Linda Echard (Via Telephone), George Miller, Ray Strosko and Tom Theis and Edwina Zack. Mayor Tom Smith.

Also in attendance: Borough Solicitor John Campfield, Borough Engineer Steve Eby (Steve arrived at 5:55 PM) and Borough Manager Jeffrey McLaughlin.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge was recited.

**Prayer**

Jeff recited a prayer.

**Call to Order**

President Alex Brown called the regular July 5, 2022 council meeting to order at 6 PM.

**Approval of Bills**

Edwina made a motion seconded by Todd to approve the bills in the amount of \$18,205.18. Motion passed with all voting in favor with the exception of Ray who abstained.

**Approval of Minutes of the June 7, 2022 Meeting**

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2022 meeting. Motion passed with all voting in favor with the exception of Linda and Ray who abstained.

**Opportunity for Public Comment -- Items Not on the Agenda**

There were no comments.

**Opportunity for Public Comment -- on Agenda Items Only**

*Richard Nedrow, 205 Florence Dr.*

Mr. Nedrow thanked council for putting highway noise from I-70 on the agenda. He said that his desire is that by placing this item on the agenda council will acknowledge that the noise is a problem and that it will not be resolved without council's involvement. He said that he appreciated council's dedicated work and hopes that the council will be relentless in resolving this serious problem.

**Agenda**

**1. Discussion and Update on I-70 Traffic Noise**

Jeff stated that he spoke to an acoustic engineer, who said that during the design phase of a road, PennDOT does sound modeling to determine how much noise the road is predicted to generate. The engineer told Jeff that PennDOT should have a copy of the sound modeling results.

Jeff said that the engineer commented that PennDOT is loath to build sound barriers because of their relative ineffectiveness and their expense.

Alex stated that he felt that there are a couple of problems with taking steps to address any sound issues: even if it were found that walls would address the noise, they could have an adverse effect, blocking travelers' view of the business district; and the topography with the number of major roads that go through the community would make it very difficult to appreciably lower noise levels.

George said that he sympathizes with the residents especially the longtime residents because the amount of traffic probably has increased especially the number of trucks, but it would be very difficult to come up with a practical solution.

Edwina said at the very least maybe the study could be updated which may result in PennDOT installing *No Jake Brake* signs on I-70.

George made a motion seconded by Todd to have Jeff get a copy of the noise study from PennDOT. Motion passed unanimously.

**2. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on Joint Petition Regarding Tax Assessment for Comfort Inn, 106 Bair Blvd. Parcel ID #: 64-03-00-0-088, Owned by Regency Hotels, Inc.**

John reviewed the proposed agreement between, Regency Hotels, Inc. the owner of the Comfort Inn and the county, school district and borough.

Alex said the agreement would result in a 25% lower assessed value.

Tom T. made a motion seconded by Edwina to give John Campfield the authority to sign the joint petition with Regency Hotels, Inc. on behalf of the borough. Motion passed unanimously.

**3. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on Eddington Subdivision, 341 Arona Road, Parcel ID#: 64-04-00-0-088**

It was decided to discuss item 4 on the agenda before this item, giving Steve, who was just arriving, time to get situated.

**4. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Schedule and Advertise a Public Hearing Regarding the Transfer of a Liquor License by CBOCS Pennsylvania, LLC for Use at Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, 154 W. Pennsylvania Ave.**

John said that the license would be coming from outside of New Stanton, specifically from Webster, so it is still in Westmoreland County.

The idea of holding the hearing just before the August meeting was discussed. John said, if for some reason there is not a quorum at that meeting, it could be tabled to the September meeting since there is a 60-day window to hold the hearing.

Todd made a motion seconded by George to schedule and advertise a public hearing on Tuesday, August 2, 2022 at 5:30 PM regarding the proposed transfer of a liquor license to the Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, 154 W. Pennsylvania Avenue. Motion passed unanimously.

***Returned to Item 3.: Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action on Eddington Subdivision, 341 Arona Road, Parcel ID#: 64-04-00-0-088***

Jeff reported that the Planning Commission reviewed and recommended that council approve the Eddington subdivision.

Charles Zelnek from CZ Surveyors stated that the reason for the proposed subdivision into two lots is that the property owner is planning on constructing two modular homes, but because of supply chain issues it could take at least up to two years to get the homes. At this point the property owner is looking to get approval of a simple subdivision. Steve said that he was okay with what was submitted.

Todd made a motion seconded by George to approve the Eddington Subdivision, 341 Arona Road, Parcel ID#: 64-04-00-0-088. Motion passed unanimously.

**Reports**

**Administrative**

**Planning Commission**

Jeff reported that the commission met in June and the only item of business was the Eddington subdivision.

**Borough Manager**

Jeff reported that:

- The borough hosted the June 23, 2022 Central Planning District meeting at the borough building. Alex, Edwina, Tom and Jeff attended on behalf of the borough. The meeting included presentations from PennDOT and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission representatives. Alex said the lesson learned from the meeting was to get any projects that a municipality is interested in on PennDOT's radar as soon as possible, because it could take multiple years for a project to begin.
- The Public Works crew has completed installation of a catch basin near the Arona Road culvert location. This project is a necessary part of the culvert project.
- The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is interested in discussing the planting of perennials in the Rachel Dr. Roundabout. Perennials would be preferred to annuals because they withstand drought conditions better and there is no access to water at the roundabout. They could also possibly be planted this fall. Alex said he would like to have the Community Betterment Committee take this on. Tom T. brought up the idea of locating a flagpole in the roundabout. It does not appear that PennDOT would approve a flagpole in the roundabout.

- The owners of the former Comfort Inn have applied for a signage permit to change the name of the hotel to Wingate by Wyndham.

### **Code Enforcement Report**

Jeff reported that he:

- Is scheduled to attend a third hearing with the magistrate regarding 366 Arona Rd. on July 11, 2022.
- Spoke to the owner of 106 N. Center Avenue regarding high weeds and grass abutting a neighboring property. The owner said that he would address it. Will follow up.
- Spoke to the owner of 229 Wentsler Avenue about the poor condition of the outer envelope of a cottage-type structure on the back of his property. He said he is hoping to repair it instead of tearing it down. I will follow up with him in one month.
- Followed up with the owner of 108 Broadview Rd. regarding high grass. They said that they were working with their landscaper to address. A couple of days later the situation was addressed.
- And John Barnes have taken photos of 430 S. Center Avenue and consulted with John Campfield and John Sweeney regarding numerous violations at the site. He reported that he is in the process of putting together Notice of Violation. Tom said that a number of residents adjacent to this property have approached him about the situation at this address and he has told them to file a complaint with the borough.

### **Solicitor's Report**

John pointed out that there is a bump out in the PennDOT right of way outside of the roundabout where a flagpole could possibly be considered. George said that perhaps the Community Betterment Committee could raise the issue with PennDOT, of not only the roundabout, but the possibility of putting the flagpole in the right-of-way adjacent to the roundabout.

### **Engineer's Report**

Steve reported that:

- He contacted the PennDOT maintenance garage about them cutting the grass at the former interchange.
- He stated that with the exception of sealing the road edges Folino has completed the paving of Florence, Virginia and Swartz. The total came in at \$72,120.21 an approximately \$3,800 savings from their original bid. Steve asked for a motion to pay Folino, but before they are paid he will ensure that they seal the edges and that they submit all of the paperwork.

George made a motion seconded by Edwina to pay Folino Paving \$72,120.21 for the paving of Florence, Virginia and Swartz. Motion passed unanimously.

- He conveyed to the developers of Broadview Estates that he would not okay the installation of the speed hump until after they install the speed hump signage.
- He attended the pre-construction meeting regarding the Arona Road Bridge. Work to move the sewer line is tentatively set to begin on August 15<sup>th</sup>.
- He said that he has contracted the railroad to try to get vehicle access to the property the borough owns across the creek from the park and that he also made contact about a stream permit to construct a pedestrian bridge to connect the two properties on either side of the creek.

### **Fire Department Liaison**

Ray said that the fire department meeting was going on simultaneously with the borough meeting. He reported that the fire department general fund had a balance at the end of June of \$89,970.57

Jeff had not received Rob's report but said that he reached out to Dave Hauger about getting a general fund report and Dave responded with monthly financial reports for every month of 2022 and it appears that Dave will be providing them on a monthly basis from now on.

### **Council President**

No report.

### **Mayor**

No report.

### **Administration**

Alex would like to begin to review the ordinances which he hopes would result in more commercial and housing development.

### **Public Works/MS4 & Parks**

No report.

### **Community Betterment**

There was a discussion on continuing the existing community events and possibly renewing the community picnic and/or baseball. Tom also mentioned about bringing back the newsletter to promote events. Jeff said that perhaps a one-page newsletter that lists the dates of upcoming community events should be sent out. Tom S. mentioned that if council wanted to renew baseball, work would have to begin now.

Jeff reported that he spoke to Michael Witty who has served as the Market Manager for the Farmer's Market. Michael stated that at this point he would just wait until next year to hold the farmer's market. He like the idea of moving the market to the fire department next year. Jeff reported that he spoke to Dave Hauger about the idea. Dave said that it would have to go to the fire department board for consideration. Jeff stated that the benefit to the fire department would be minimal. They would have to have someone keep the building open during the market. George asked if there was a way to

determine how many vendors there would be and if there were a good number perhaps council could rent the fire hall on the farmers' market behalf.

Linda suggested and Alex agreed that the at the next meeting a vote be taken on the type of events that council wants to hold.

### **Workplace Safety Committee**

Jeff reported that the committee met in June and would be scheduling a meeting for July.

### **Personnel**

Alex said that there was a short meeting before the council meeting about getting some additional assistance to help Jeff with code enforcement. Alex asked Jeff to reach out to possible interested parties regarding assisting with code enforcement.

There is \$2,500 still currently available in the 2022 budget for code enforcement. Tom S. and Tom T. brought up the Westmoreland County Land Bank. Jeff said that he would reach out to the Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority which operates the Land Bank.

### **Finance Report**

Todd then reviewed the financial report: as of June 30, 2022, there was a checking balance of \$606,950.31; the total of all savings accounts was \$1,825,327.87 and the taxes remitted from May 31, 2022 through June 30, 2022 was \$22,880.31.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Announcements**

Alex said that he doesn't foresee a need for the second meeting of the month, so the next meeting will be on August 2, 2022.

On behalf of council, Linda expressed her condolences to John Campfield on the loss of his law partner, William Ferrara, who passed away recently. Alex expressed his appreciation for Mr. Ferrara's contributions to the Westmoreland County Bar Association over the years.

### **Adjournment**

Todd made a motion seconded by Edwina to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM. There were no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey McLaughlin  
Secretary