

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
OF THE BOROUGH OF STONE HARBOR HELD IN THE  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

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The meeting was called to order by Mayor Davies-Dunhour at 4:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Judith M. Davies-Dunhour, Mayor  
Megan Brown, Deputy Clerk  
Marcus Karavan, Solicitor  
Manny Parada, Borough Administrator

**PRESENT**

Councilmembers  
Reese Moore  
Bunny Parzych  
Robin Casper  
Jennifer Gensemer  
Frank Dallahan  
Victor Foschini

Mayor Davies-Dunhour announced that the meeting was now open. Adequate notice of the meeting was provided by posting a copy of the time and place on the Municipal Clerk’s bulletin board and mailing a copy of same to the Press and the Cape May County Herald on January 4, 2023.

FOR THE RECORD, THIS WORK SESSION WAS HELD VIA VIDEO/TELEPHONE  
CONFERENCE IN A ZOOM FORMAT AS WELL AS IN PERSON

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Swearing in of Police Officers- Casandra Tirelli, Austin Rothman, Steven Michael Myers Jr.

**Administration & Finance Committee- Councilmember Gensemer**

**CRS Update- Ray Poudrier-** July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting went well. Danielle is cautiously optimistic about regaining the level 5 status. The Borough cannot go beyond level 5, there will have to be a special review meeting with FEMA. If the Borough requests a mid-cycle, they will only entertain that request if our clear goal is to attain another level. The reduction of premiums will not take effect until October 2024. The deadline is August 29<sup>th</sup>, so there remains a lot of work to be done. Ray is working on the repetitive loss list.

**CFO Report- James Craft-** County Equalization is to ensure that each municipality and each property within the municipality carries its fair and legal share of the tax levy. Since for the most part, we can only change the values of a property in a year after a revaluation or reassessment is performed or values stay stagnant, while the values will change with the market. So, what the county does is the county assessor & our assessor compare sales data to comparable homes and come up with a ratio and that ratio is called the real property ratio of aggregate assessed to aggregate true value. So that ratio is then used to either increase or decrease we show as the value of the town based on if the value is below one the county increases the value that we have and if it's above one the county will then reduce the value that we have to make it true value compared to the neighboring municipalities. Final equalization tables for 2022 and 2023; we had a value of 4.976 billion, but the equalized value was 6.152 billion & a ratio of 80.88%. Also, in 2022 our assessed value or equalized assessed value represent 9.67% of the total county value. Moving on to 2023 our local value increased over 5 billion from just under 5 billion, but our equalized value is now 7.52 billion from 6.152 billion and our ratio fell from 80.88% to 66.62%. The total county value only increased slightly to 9.73% from 9.67% so, year over year we increased by 1.38368 billion which one 2.24% in value and our share of the value of the whole county only increase by .06% county wide the average increase of all the municipalities is 21.42% so we were only slightly higher than countywide. This year our county tax levy is 15.67 million, last year was 14.43 million, an increase of 12.24 million or 8.6%.

**Construction Official Report- Ray Poudrier-** That was interesting what Jim Craft just went through because that 66.62% ratio is exactly what I use in the floodplain calculations to determine the actual market value of homes to see if they hit our substantial movement threshold. July construction permits are very consistent with previous Julys. No Cases were heard at Julys Zoning hearing, but this coming Monday August 7<sup>th</sup>, we will hear a case for variance relief for a second story on the courts.

**Borough Administrator Report-** Manny Parada reported.

Update on COAH- there's a lot of intricacies in the in the fair Housing Act as well as the settlement agreement that we had signed. The consultant and our Attorney are working together on that. Clerk Vacancy- 9 people showed interest, narrowed down to 3, will start interviewing in the next few weeks. Court Administrator in Avalon- Influx of calls due to parking issues this summer. Samantha Kuhns, is acting deputy court administrator. PEOSH- Voluntary program for safety. They come in and inspect and make recommendations of what we might have to correct. Parking- adding signs for park Mobile. Instructions are being printed. Banner is on hold.

**Legal Report-** Marcus Karavan, Borough Solicitor, reported.

Update: Stone Harbor VS. First Indemnity of America. Suit against the bonding company for a 2016 road project. A contractor, in our opinion, rendered defective performance. The status of that is, it's in discovery present. Mr. Karavan suspects that it's going to be in the discovery phase for quite a while because it was four or five years of active construction and litigation so there are numerous and voluminous discovery requests and it's going to be then referred to mediation.

Gallo Vs. Stone Harbor & Hafner: The Borough had a site plan that had a condition in it, we had an individual seeking to enforce the condition of that site plan. The first round of motions were favorable to the Borough. We were then scheduling an extensive discovery deposition schedule that has now been put on hold because one of the attorneys in the case is determined they have a conflict and they have been asked to file a motion to remove themselves so we're on hold until that motion is decided.

**Borough Engineer-** Marc DeBlasio- The contractor for the Bayside Control pilot project which are the three Street ends has installed all the valves and completed all the roadway improvements associated with the valve installation, one of the valves is a temporary valve, but that work has been completed roadways been paved and we were able to raise those street ends, which was plus in terms of Flood Mitigation.

The Borough was notified that \$175,000 Grant was allotted from the fiscal year 2023 NJ DOT local transportation projects fund for the reconstruction of 96 St. between Second and Third Ave. The Borough has previously received a \$200,000 Grant from the DOT Municipal Aid program, so the Borough now has \$375,000 for that roadway.

Councilmember Dallahan suggested a senior citizen parking pass be discussed and considered for next season.

**Public Works Committee-** Councilmember Moore.

Mr. Parada advised that we have a shortage of seasonal staff. Holes left on the beach are a continued issue. Street sweeping is 7 days a week. Chamber rain gutters have been cleaned. Continue to clean trails at Bird Sanctuary. Solid Waste- 353 Tons in July. 12.3 Tons of Bulk 139 Tons of Single Stream recycle, 1.5 Tons of Brush & 3:5 Tons of Leaves. Bonus Program for seasonal help. Councilmember Moore discussed the topic of changing from Gas to Electric equipment. It's in the discovery phase. The suggestion is being considered.

**Utilities Committee-** Councilmember Parzych

2 Building Projects that will start in September. Replacement of the 114th St. lift station and the second one is the I Bank project which replaces all the water lines and sewer lines along 3rd Ave. from 80th St. to 99th St. That will start in September.

Marc DeBlasio added- briefly on July 6th we had the pre-construction meeting for the I Bank project. We've been approving submittals so gearing up, and on 114<sup>th</sup> Sewer Pump Station, bids are due back on the 9<sup>th</sup>, potential contract awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in August.

Manny Parada- July last year we used 39.86 million gallons for the month of July. This July we used 40.17 million gallons, so pretty much on target. Looking good for allocation permit for the year.

**DISCUSSION:**

Reeds Relocation of Loading Zone- Michael Lario, Esq., presented the Reeds request for expansion of the loading zone, and issues they are having. The issue is during busy times cars are stacking up and getting ticketed. The Reeds is looking for solutions to try to prevent that problem from continuing. The real issue is not just from the guests loading and unloading of their vehicles but it's also the Reeds hotel itself & the associated restaurants use that loading area for supplies, so the vehicles coming in and out of there; the loading area as it is right now is simply insufficient to meet that demand and ultimately from an operational standpoint that's a concern but from a safety standpoint that's a concern both for guests for employees and pedestrians on the streets.

Feasibility Study- Councilmember Casper advised the study is available, it is about 250 pages. Some recommendations are: Refurbish the 127<sup>th</sup> street groin, conduct a pilot beach scraping program & Consider Sand Harvesting and additional recommendations are also define the optimal extent of the dunes to establish a sustainable fencing and management program while maximizing dry beach space and storm protection and also consider a regional dredging program and finally continue close cooperation with the core and NJ DEP to identify offshore sand borrow areas. Councilmember Casper has spoken to Doug Gaffney after the July 18th council meeting. Unfortunately, we have missed the opportunity to implement the GPS monitoring program therefore there was no reason for Doug to attend this meeting.

Councilmember Moore asked if the Army Corp will complete a final survey after the beach replenishment program? He expressed that we should expect this to include a technical review, that would include Doug Gaffney & Marc DeBlasio, or their representative, as well as Manny Parada as a technical review of the feasibility study. It is important to include in the feasibility study an estimate of the cost and the benefits of the different programs there. Councilmember Moore didn't see any information in the feasibility study that gave us any different information as far as the priorities and what the costs and the benefits; pros and cons of those different programs will be. That information should be included, so that that can be reviewed as part of the feasibility study.


Councilmember Casper advised that regarding the GPS program, with lacking Borough enthusiasm, both SHPOA and Matt McDonald have withdrawn their support.

Councilmember Gensemer asked Councilmember Casper who directed the feasibility study to be presented to resource agencies on 2/15/23? Also, what are the resource agencies it was reported to?

Upon motion of  
Seconded by

Councilmember Frank Dallahan  
Councilmember Bunny Parzych

That the Work Session Meeting of Mayor and Council be adjourned 5:55 pm

APPROVED , 2023

, Mayor

ATTEST , Borough Clerk