

Mayor, Council, Staff, East Stroudsburg Residents, and the Press:

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview of the State of the Borough, on this 6th day of February. The report will review the accomplishments of the Borough and its affiliated organizations over the preceding year. It will also address the future plans and goals of the Borough community.

East Stroudsburg Community Alliance

The Eastburg Community Alliance (ECA) is the Borough of East Stroudsburg's downtown "Main Street" organization whose purpose is to promote business activities in the Borough. The ECA office continues its use of the old Dansbury Depot train station. In addition to housing its office, the Depot is used as a rental and fundraising facility.

The annual July 4th "American Freedom Festival" held at Dansbury Park was both a financial and community success. Planning for the 2018 festival is currently underway.

Thank you Sue Randall for all your hard work and years of service.

Stroud Area Regional Police Department

The Stroud Area Regional Police Department (SARPD) continues to provide police services for East Stroudsburg Borough. Chief Jennifer Lyon and Captain Paul Gasper have assumed command of the SARPD administration. Six new officers were hired in 2017. We thank Corporal Nevil and Sergeant Greene for their years of service to the community and wish them well in retirement. In addition five officers resigned throughout the year. Scott Raymond and Thomas Lemond were promoted to Sergeant and Susan Charles, Charles Brown and John Miller were promoted to Corporal.

The SARPD continues its Quality of Life (QOL) patrols in the East Stroudsburg community. Patrols are funded by a grant from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board to help curtail problems resulting from alcohol violations and disorderly behavior. The QOL officers work with Borough residents whose neighborhoods are negatively impacted by alcohol-fueled behavior. The Department's efforts in reducing the number of violations make this program a success for the entire community.

Acme Hose Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1

Our Volunteer Fire Department, ACME Hose Co. No. 1, participated in the Fall Festival on Crystal Street, via a community outreach on Crystal Street, to educate the public of the importance of fire safety including demonstrations and also provided firetruck rides. The East Stroudsburg volunteers responded to 266 incident calls in 2017. As always, ACME Hose Co. has demonstrated its ability to rise to the occasion and provide an unsurpassed level of service and protection to the Borough and surrounding communities. On behalf of everyone in their service area, Council thanks them for their efforts and sacrifices.

Stroud Regional Open Space and Recreation Commission

The Borough continues to participate with the Borough of Stroudsburg and Stroud Township through the efforts of the Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission by providing healthful recreational and cultural programming. The SROSRC assumed the management of Dansbury Pool.

East Stroudsburg Projects and Financial Update

The 2017 year saw the beginning of several major efforts to improve and modernize Borough finances, including:

- Purchase and implementation of new accounting software that is coordinated with the utility billing software.
- Ongoing work of the Audit Committee of Council with Borough auditor, Carl Hogan, CPA, of BBD, LLP.
- Ongoing work by the Collections Committee, which was instrumental in the collection of over \$800,000 in delinquent water/sewer and garbage fees.

Capital Improvements

A Capital Improvement Plan Committee was formed to identify numerous projects to be incorporated into a business plan for future implementation. Council approved a major capital loan/refinancing of \$7.8+ million, taking advantage of continued low interest rates, in order to fund a lengthy list of deferred and needed capital improvement projects/equipment upgrades, as well as to refinance \$1.4 million+ in outstanding debt. Additionally, Borough Council took the difficult steps of increasing the real estate tax millage rate to fund the increase in debt service from the new capital loan and to pay for an increased contribution to the Regional Police Budget.

Water Systems

The Borough began an overview of its water system to determine capital needs in the near and distant future. The first major expenditure for the water system will be the rehabilitation of the East Stroudsburg Middle Dam. The dam was built in 1914. In recent years, the dam has undergone extensive engineering analysis in preparation for the pending rehabilitation project which will commence in late 2018, late 2019. Council has also identified several other big ticket capital expenditures such as leak detection, replacement of several miles of water mains due to aging infrastructure. In contemplation of the capital needs of the water system, the Borough Council increased water rates, for the first time in six years, to assist in paying for the improvements.

Sewer System

The Borough, through the Sewer Task Force Committee, has undertaken a system-wide analysis of the Borough's wastewater treatment facilities and collection system. The Borough has engaged the services of Glace Associates, Inc. to both value the system and to project capital needs for the system. The Borough is analyzing the financial model of its current rates to determine whether adjustments will need to be made in order to meet the ever increasing demands of permit conditions. I want to thank the Sewer Task Force Committee for their services.

MS4

East Stroudsburg, as well as other surrounding municipalities, has been determined to be an urbanized area for the purpose of storm water collection and remediation. The permitting of MS4 facilities is an ongoing process between the Borough and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The Borough has assembled a Committee to work with environmental counsel and Borough engineer to develop a Borough-wide storm water collection system which will include many best management practice facilities. The Borough understands that this is an expense which will continue to grow in the future, and as a result of that understanding has taken aggressive action to stay on top of what is required to stay in compliance.

Iron Bridge

The iron railroad bridge on Ridgeway Street will be replaced within the next several years. The replacement of the bridge is a multi-governmental agency process spearheaded by PennDOT. The Borough's obligation towards the replacement of the bridge will not exceed \$166,000. It is expected at this time that the cost of the bridge replacement exceeds \$2,000,000. Borough residents should be aware that until the bridge is replaced, the bridge will continue to be posted at a 13 ton weight limit. This weight limit restriction will significantly impact local traffic such as prohibitions against MCTA buses, firetrucks of specific sizes, and snow plow trucks.

Codes of Ordinances

The East Stroudsburg Codes Officer conducted 568 rental inspections in 2017 and 1296 rental licenses in 2017 were issued under the Rental Housing Licensing and Inspection Program. In addition, 115 property inspections were conducted as a result of sale or transfer of properties in the Borough. The inspection process continues to upgrade the housing stock of the Borough while preserving lives. The Borough also conducted 208 commercial inspections during the year 2017.

In 2017, the Codes Office issued 413 construction permits with a total construction value of \$4,311,148. The Health Codes Office issued 55 licenses for restaurants and food preparation facilities.

Comprehensive Plan

In 2017, the Borough continued working in updating the Comprehensive Plan. The Borough's Comprehensive Plan Board continued to work with professional comprehensive planning consultant, Gannett Fleming, to finalize its recommendation for updates to the Comprehensive Plan. Two thousand eighteen will see public hearings on the proposed Comprehensive Plan. This will give the public the opportunity to review the proposed Comprehensive Plan and to provide comments to the Borough's Planning Commission and Council. Please participate. This is your future.

University Projects

The University, in conjunction with its affiliated non-profit corporation, University Properties, Inc., completed construction of the second Phase of its student housing project. In addition, East Stroudsburg University continued its commitment to construct the Keystone Information Commons project. Both projects will be benefits to the Borough as well as the University.

Miscellaneous Projects

The Borough has been a busy place where many activities proceed to completion often unnoticed. Other Borough projects which should be recognized for their significant contribution to the Borough way of life are:

- Volunteers have stepped forward to help maintain the planters in the Downtown district.
- The ECA, in conjunction with the Borough, expanded the decoration and wreath program during the Christmas season.
- The street lighting in Downtown and Borough parking lots were repaired and now provide a safer pedestrian environment.

Personnel Milestones

- The Borough recognized the retirement of long-time Borough Manager, Jim Phillips, who served the Borough for 24 years.
- The Borough welcomes new Borough Manager Brian Bond
- A special thank you to Interim Manager Peter Marshall for his assistance in the transition period between Managers.

Future Goals

In 2018, the Borough will continue to work with PennDOT on the reconfiguration of the Interstate 80 Exit 308 interchange at Prospect Street. The reconfiguration project will require the moving of significant Borough infrastructure. This project is currently scheduled to begin after the replacement of the iron bridge is completed. After these two projects are completed, PennDOT indicated that it will then commence its Interstate Route 80 road widening project. We look forward to many years of road infrastructure improvements.

IBW property has recently undergone the last site reviews required by DEP. The Borough is in position now to market the property with the appropriate environmental covenants. This project was undertaken by the Borough to protect its residents from a badly degraded and compromised commercial property. While the steps towards a proper cleanup have been numerous, the year saw completion of the project. This will allow the sale of this formerly blighted property to create new job opportunities within our community.

The Borough will continue to review the transition of single-family housing stock to rental properties and the effect of that transition on the Borough. The Rental Housing Licensing and Inspection program is one tool which has proven successful in helping to alleviate the detrimental impacts of rental properties. The Borough will continue to assess the needs of its neighborhoods and work with interested groups to improve our neighborhoods with programs like Community Gardens and Neighborhood Playgrounds.

Along with change and growth come challenges. We must continue to find innovative ways to stimulate economic revitalization and job creation in, and for our community. Council will need to work in tandem with other public agencies to enhance our quality of life, provide quality job opportunities to our citizens, and coordinate and plan economic development and revitalization in East Stroudsburg.

Finally, it is important that we all realize that the Borough community is fortunate to have qualified and dedicated employees who administer and oversee the facets of municipal government which impact and improve its citizenry life on a daily basis. In addition to the Borough employees, the community should be very grateful for the large number of volunteers serving on boards and commissions to make East Stroudsburg a better community for all its residents. Their contribution makes the Borough a better place to work and live. I personally want to acknowledge how fortunate the Borough is to have a dedicated Mayor and Council who strive to work together to implement policy and change in the Borough.

Thank you and God Bless East Stroudsburg!

Respectfully submitted,
Roger L. DeLarco, President East Stroudsburg Council