



24 Analomink Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Phone: 570.421.8300 Fax: 570.421.5575 Web: [www.eaststroudsburgboro.org](http://www.eaststroudsburgboro.org)

**2025 Budget  
Questions from the Public  
Answers from the Borough Manager  
(Q&A):**

1. Where is the 2023 Audit?
  - a. East Stroudsburg Borough Independent Audits are posted on the Borough website. When the 2023 Audit is received and accepted by Borough Council the 2023 Audit will be posted on the website.
2. Why isn't the 2024 audit completed?
  - a. The 2024 independent audit cannot be started before the year 2024 is completed.
3. We want transparency about the 2025 Budget.
  - a. The 2025 Proposed Budget is posted on the Borough website.
4. We want transparency regarding Borough finances:
  - a. Every two weeks, the Borough financial statements are posted on the Borough website within the Meeting Minutes.
5. What was the General Fund-Fund Balance deficit at the end of 2023?
  - a. On December 31, 2023, the General Fund – Fund balance was in a deficit (\$580,000).
  - b. On December 31, 2024, we project the General fund – Fund Balance will be a deficit of (\$680,000). The (\$680,000 is the main reason for the 2025 tax millage increase!
6. Will the Borough use of Covid funds be 100% transparent.
  - a. Yes, \$1.8 million funded the Borough's extensive water meter replacement project.
  - b. Yes, the remaining \$543,743.09 was invested in the General Fund.
  - c. The Borough has reported these figures several times, including in motions on April 25, 2024.
7. The public notice indicates that most of the mill rate for the 2025 tax increase will be allocated to the General Fund?
  - a. Yes, For the fiscal year 2025 the proposed allocation of the total 7.9654 mills is proposed as follows:
    - i. Tax Rate for General Fund 6.3841
    - ii. Tax Rate for Street Fund 0.0
    - iii. Tax Rate for Fire Apparatus Fund .0575
    - iv. Tax Rate for Recreation Fund .4464
    - v. Tax Rate for Street Lighting Fund 0.0
    - vi. Tax Rate for Pension Fund .1107
    - vii. Tax Rate for Debt Service Fund .9668
8. In dollar amounts the 7.9654 mills is projected to collect a total of \$3,641,094, allocated as follows:
  - a. \$2,918,261 General Fund

**Borough Manager** – Kelly Lewis

**Mayor** – Victor Brozusky

**Solicitor** – John C. Prevoznik, Esquire

**Engineer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**Engineer, Sewer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**President of Council** – Sonia C. Wolbert (1<sup>st</sup> Ward)

**Council Vice President** – Carrie Panepinto (4<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Edmund T. Freeborn (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Paul Shemansky (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Jane Gagliardo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Erika Huber (6<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Finance Officer** – Layla Richard-Rau

**DPW Director** – Lee Philips

**Zoning Officer** – Sam D'Alessandro

**Health Officer** – Tom Detweiler

**Building Code Official** – Municipal Code Solutions



24 Analomink Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Phone: 570.421.8300 Fax: 570.421.5575 Web: [www.eaststroudsburgboro.org](http://www.eaststroudsburgboro.org)

- b. \$26,270 Fire Apparatus Fund
  - c. \$204,036 Recreation Fund
  - d. \$50,591 Pension Fund
  - e. \$441,935 Debt Service Fund
9. Keep in mind the \$2,918,261 allocated to the General Fund from the 7.9654 mills, doesn't even cover the \$3,066,493 annual expense for our Stroud Area Regional Police Department.
10. How much will the proposed monthly and annual cost of the 29% tax increase to 9.7654 mills?
  - a. For a property assessed at \$100,000, the tax increase to 7.96534 mills will be \$179.07 annually, or \$15 per month.
11. How much will the proposed 29% increase in water rates cost monthly, quarterly, and annually?
  - a. \$3.46/month, \$10.39/quarter or \$41.56/year for low water use - residential
  - b. \$4.22/month, \$12.66/quarter or \$50.64/year for high use family – residential
12. How much is the 9% trash increase per month, and year?
  - a. In 2024, trash rates were:
    - i. \$20.33/month, \$244/year – 32-gallon refuse cart.
    - ii. \$28.40/month, 369.20/year – 64-gallon refuse cart.
    - iii. \$41.54/month, \$498.50 – 96-gallon refuse cart.
  - b. In 2025, trash rate will be:
    - i. \$22.16/month, \$265.96/year – 32-gallon refuse cart.
    - ii. \$30.96/month, \$402.43/year – 64-gallon refuse cart.
    - iii. \$45.28/month, \$543.37/year – 96-gallon refuse cart.
  - c. The proposed increase in 2025 will be:
    - i. \$1.83/month, \$21.96/year in 32-gallon refuse cart.
    - ii. \$2.56/month, \$33.23/year in 64-gallon refuse cart.
    - iii. \$3.74/month, \$44.87/year in 96-gallon refuse cart
- 13. For the average family in East Stroudsburg, the tax, water and trash increase will be \$275.52 per year, or \$22.96/month.**
14. We're upset that East Stroudsburg has the highest tax increases.

**Borough Manager** – Kelly Lewis  
**Mayor** – Victor Brozusky  
**Solicitor** – John C. Prevoznik, Esquire  
**Engineer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS  
**Engineer, Sewer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**President of Council** – Sonia C. Wolbert (1<sup>st</sup> Ward)  
**Council Vice President** – Carrie Panepinto (4<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Edmund T. Freeborn (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Paul Shemansky (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Jane Gagliardo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Erika Huber (6<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Finance Officer** – Layla Richard-Rau  
**DPW Director** – Lee Philips  
**Zoning Officer** – Sam D'Alessandro  
**Health Officer** – Tom Detweiler  
**Building Code Official** – Municipal Code Solutions



24 Analomink Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Phone: 570.421.8300 Fax: 570.421.5575 Web: [www.eaststroudsburgboro.org](http://www.eaststroudsburgboro.org)

- a. Global inflation, cost-of-living salary increases, contractual salary increases has caused many municipalities to increase taxes in 2025.
    - i. Beaver Borough in Beaver County, 56% tax millage increase
    - ii. State College Borough in Centre County, 15.09% tax millage
    - iii. Allegheny County, 36% tax millage increase
    - iv. Lackawanna County, 33% tax millage increase
    - v. Emmaus Borough, 25.7% tax millage increase
15. Why are 2025 expenses lower than 2024, in that 2024 Budgeted Expenses totaled \$14,214,616. And the 2025 Proposed Budget Expenses are \$13,290,983 (a 6% reduction primarily due to lower water fund expenses)?
- a. Correct. Despite the impacts of global inflation, contractual salary increases, and extraordinary litigation/RTKL expenses we will be operating the 2025 budget as closely as we can.
  - b. The 2024 Budget included the \$1.8 million water meter replacement project.
  - c. In 2025 expenses only \$400,000 is needed to complete the Water Meter replacement project.
  - d. In 2025, capital expenses are not included in the 2025 operational budgets, and capital expenses will be paid with capital dollars.
  - e. We are strategically restructuring our debt in January 2025, so our operating expenses are paid with operational revenue, and capital expenses are paid with low interest financing.
  - f. We are also undergoing cost savings projects in our largest expenses to find as much savings as we can.
16. The three largest line item increases outside of Debt Services (a combined total of \$366,847) are as follows:
- a. Major medical (BC/BS): There is a 27% increase, totaling \$204,847.
    - i. Despite global inflation, and contractual salary increases, our health coverage cost/employee increased less than 2% in 2025.
    - ii. The sole reason major medical is projected to increase in 2025 is correcting the number of employees covered by health insurance from the prior budget year.
  - b. Legal Services WTP: There is a 429% increase, totaling \$109,500 (allocated to the water fund).
    - i. These accounts are significantly impacted by RTKL, related requests, and litigation.
  - c. Legal Services WWTP: There is a 162% increase, totaling \$52,500 (allocated to the sewer fund).

**Borough Manager** – Kelly Lewis  
**Mayor** – Victor Brozusky  
**Solicitor** – John C. Prevoznik, Esquire  
**Engineer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS  
**Engineer, Sewer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**President of Council** – Sonia C. Wolbert (1<sup>st</sup> Ward)  
**Council Vice President** – Carrie Panepinto (4<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Edmund T. Freeborn (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Paul Shemansky (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Jane Gagliardo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Erika Huber (6<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Finance Officer** – Layla Richard-Rau  
**DPW Director** – Lee Philips  
**Zoning Officer** – Sam D'Alessandro  
**Health Officer** – Tom Detweiler  
**Building Code Official** – Municipal Code Solutions



24 Analomink Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Phone: 570.421.8300 Fax: 570.421.5575 Web: www.eaststroudsburgboro.org

- i. These accounts are significantly impacted by RTKL, related requested and litigation.
17. The General Fund's 2025 proposed budget shows a 9% increase from 2024, with major medical (BC/BS) representing 44% of that increase.
  - a. The sole reason major medical expenses are projected to increase in 2025 is correcting the number of employees covered by health insurance from the prior budget year.
18. Why is there a 27% increase in medical costs, especially when industry averages suggest increases of around 6–12%?
  - a. Despite global inflation, and contractual salary increases, our health coverage cost/employee increased less than 2% in 2025.
  - b. The sole reason major medical is projected to increase in 2025 is correcting the number of employees covered by health insurance from prior the budget year.
19. Has the borough negotiated with BC/BS or initiated a request for proposals (RFP) to explore alternative insurance carrier plans? Are there specific factors, such as high-risk claims or demographic shifts among staff, contributing to this significant cost increase?
  - a. The Borough's health insurance provider, Pennsylvania Municipal Health Insurance Cooperative, (PMHIC) increased our premium costs by less than 2% in 2025.
  - b. In fact, the Borough's health insurance, PMHIC has performed well for the past three years with low premium increases. Our health-related claims submitted by individuals covered by the Borough health insurance have been below projections.
  - c. The sole reason major medical is projected to increase in 2025 is correcting the number of employees covered by health insurance from prior the budget year.
  - d. By further answer, in addition to strong results (low increases) supporting our existing provider, our union contract specifically identifies our current health insurance, PMHIC, in the union contract, making it complicated to switch providers.
20. What is driving the 429% increase in Legal Services for the water fund and 162% increase for the sewer fund?
  - a. These accounts are significantly impacted by RTKL(Right-To-Know Laws), related requests, and litigation.
21. If these expenses are tied to Mr. Prevoznik's services, could you confirm whether this results in over \$345k in payments for borough legal services? If accurate, this seems unusually high.
  - a. As above referenced, the Borough has been significantly impacted by RTKL, related requests, and litigation.
  - b. In 2024, Legal fees through December 6, 2024, were \$755,187.65, of which Attorney Prevoznik has been paid \$206,221.

**Borough Manager** – Kelly Lewis  
**Mayor** – Victor Brozusky  
**Solicitor** – John C. Prevoznik, Esquire  
**Engineer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS  
**Engineer, Sewer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**President of Council** – Sonia C. Wolbert (1<sup>st</sup> Ward)  
**Council Vice President** – Carrie Panepinto (4<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Edmund T. Freeborn (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Paul Shemansky (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Jane Gagliardo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Erika Huber (6<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Finance Officer** – Layla Richard-Rau  
**DPW Director** – Lee Philips  
**Zoning Officer** – Sam D'Alessandro  
**Health Officer** – Tom Detweiler  
**Building Code Official** – Municipal Code Solutions



24 Analomink Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Phone: 570.421.8300 Fax: 570.421.5575 Web: [www.eaststroudsburgboro.org](http://www.eaststroudsburgboro.org)

- i. Water Fund legal fees were \$478,682.72, predominately relating to the Middle Dam and RTKL litigation.
    - ii. Sewer Fund legal fees were \$128,789.90.
    - iii. General Fund legal fees were \$147,715.03.
  - c. In 2023, Legal fees were \$322,048.17, of which Attorney Prevoznik was paid \$155,162.37.
    - i. Water Fund legal fees were \$100,485.
    - ii. Sewer Fund legal fees were \$50,663.54.
    - iii. General Fund legal fees were \$180,899.63.
- 22. By way of further answer, Attorney Prevoznik delivers **excellent** counsel guiding the Borough through the maze of litigation, municipal planning code issues, zoning, codes, building codes, water, sewer, recycling, trash, and contract issues. The Borough greatly benefits from John Prevoznik's experience and advice.
- 23. Cost Savings Initiatives: The Borough is and will be conducting cost savings initiatives across its largest cost centers to find savings, efficiency, and better ways to deliver services to our residents and guests.
- 24. The Borough is and will be consistently reviewing its capital spending needs to capitalize and restructure appropriate expenses. Long-term equipment and investments in our Borough, street, water and sewer infrastructures can be financed with low-interest debt.
- 25. In 2025, the Borough will undertake a formal Capital budgeting process to review all capital needs and requirements, as well as prioritizing capital needs.
- 26. By strategically restructuring the Borough debt, the Borough can accelerate street paving projects, as well as needed water and sewer investments. We want to get our Borough streets repaved and in good condition as soon as possible.
- 27. East Stroudsburg and Stroudsburg comparisons:**
  - a. East Stroudsburg has 10,000 residents, Stroudsburg has 6,000 residents.
  - b. East Stroudsburg has 9 more miles of Streets.
- 28. East Stroudsburg leads Monroe County with more than \$1 billion non-taxable properties:
  - a. ESU: East Stroudsburg proudly hosts East Stroudsburg University. With 5,400 students ESU occupies 258 acres in the Borough with 57 buildings, including residential housing for 2,970 students.
  - b. Pocono Hospital: East Stroudsburg proudly hosts Pocono Hospital, the only fully accredited Level III Trauma Center in Pennsylvania. With 264 beds, Pocono Hospital is Monroe County's only on-site open-heart surgery program as well as a Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

**Borough Manager** – Kelly Lewis  
**Mayor** – Victor Brozusky  
**Solicitor** – John C. Prevoznik, Esquire  
**Engineer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS  
**Engineer, Sewer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**President of Council** – Sonia C. Wolbert (1<sup>st</sup> Ward)  
**Council Vice President** – Carrie Panepinto (4<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Edmund T. Freeborn (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Paul Shemansky (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Jane Gagliardo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Erika Huber (6<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Finance Officer** – Layla Richard-Rau  
**DPW Director** – Lee Philips  
**Zoning Officer** – Sam D'Alessandro  
**Health Officer** – Tom Detweiler  
**Building Code Official** – Municipal Code Solutions



24 Analomink Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Phone: 570.421.8300 Fax: 570.421.5575 Web: [www.eaststroudsburgboro.org](http://www.eaststroudsburgboro.org)

- c. Cancer Center: East Stroudsburg proudly hosts the Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center and many other medical facilities.
- d. Affordable Housing: East Stroudsburg proudly hosts 7 affordable housing complexes, 120 Section 8 apartments, 90 public housing units, and 119 approved low-income housing units.

29. TAX MILLAGE: The proposed East Stroudsburg millage would be 7.9654 mills.

- a. The proposed Stroudsburg millage will be 11.202 mills.
- b. The Stroudsburg millage rate is 3.2366 mills higher than East Stroudsburg.
- c. For a property assessed at \$100,000, East Stroudsburg taxpayers pay \$323.66 LESS than Stroudsburg taxpayers.
- d. A property assessed at \$100,000 is worth ~\$265,000.

30. WATER RATES: East Stroudsburg's base water rate will be \$65/quarter in 2025.

- a. For Stroudsburg and Stroud Township, the Brodhead Creek Regional Authority 2024 base water rate was \$63.55/quarter.
- b. Mount Pocono is \$56.40/quarter.
- c. East Stroudsburg water rates are \$1.45/quarter more than Stroudsburg.

31. SEWER RATES: East Stroudsburg base sewer rate will be \$45/quarter in 2025.

- a. Stroudsburg base sewer rate is \$55/quarter.
- b. Stroud Township base sewer rate is \$170/quarter.
- c. Pocono Township base sewer rate is \$85.54/month, which is \$278.01/quarter.
- d. The Mount Pocono base sewer rate is \$280/quarter.
- e. East Stroudsburg sewer rates are \$10 LESS per quarter than Stroudsburg.
- f. East Stroudsburg appears to have the lowest sewer rate in Monroe County.

**32. For the average family in East Stroudsburg, the tax, water and trash increase will be \$275.52 per year, or \$22.96/month.**

**33. SCORECARD:**

- a. East Stroudsburg
  - i. Tax Millage: 7.9654 Mills, 40.6% lower than Stroudsburg.
  - ii. Base Water: \$65/quarter, 2.2% higher than BCRA.
  - iii. Base Sewer: \$45/quarter, 22.2% lower than Stroudsburg.
- b. Stroudsburg
  - i. Tax Millage 11.202 Mills
  - ii. Base Water: \$63.55/quarter through BCRA
  - iii. Base Sewer: \$55/quarter

**Borough Manager** – Kelly Lewis

**Mayor** – Victor Brozusky

**Solicitor** – John C. Prevoznik, Esquire

**Engineer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**Engineer, Sewer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**President of Council** – Sonia C. Wolbert (1<sup>st</sup> Ward)

**Council Vice President** – Carrie Panepinto (4<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Edmund T. Freeborn (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Paul Shemansky (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Jane Gagliardo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Council Member** – Erika Huber (6<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Finance Officer** – Layla Richard-Rau

**DPW Director** – Lee Philips

**Zoning Officer** – Sam D'Alessandro

**Health Officer** – Tom Detweiler

**Building Code Official** – Municipal Code Solutions



24 Analomink Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Phone: 570.421.8300 Fax: 570.421.5575 Web: [www.eaststroudsburgboro.org](http://www.eaststroudsburgboro.org)

34. Despite having 40% more residents, 9 more street miles, and major non-taxable institutional impacts,
  - a. East Stroudsburg tax millage is 40.6% **lower** than Stroudsburg taxes.
  - b. East Stroudsburg water rates are 2.2% higher than 2024 Stroudsburg rates.
  - c. East Stroudsburg sewer rates are 22% lower than Stroudsburg.
35. For a property assessed at \$100,000, on an annual basis,
  - a. East Stroudsburg taxpayer pays \$323.66 less in taxes than Stroudsburg.
  - b. \$5.80 more in water and
  - c. \$40.00 less in sewer,
36. In total, an East Stroudsburg taxpayer pays \$357.86 LESS than a Stroudsburg taxpayer for a property assessed at \$100,000, or a market value of \$265,000.

---

**Borough Manager** – Kelly Lewis  
**Mayor** – Victor Brozusky  
**Solicitor** – John C. Prevoznik, Esquire  
**Engineer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS  
**Engineer, Sewer** – R.K.R. Hess, Division of UTRS

**President of Council** – Sonia C. Wolbert (1<sup>st</sup> Ward)  
**Council Vice President** – Carrie Panepinto (4<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Edmund T. Freeborn (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Paul Shemansky (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Jane Gagliardo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward)  
**Council Member** – Erika Huber (6<sup>th</sup> Ward)

**Finance Officer** – Layla Richard-Rau  
**DPW Director** – Lee Philips  
**Zoning Officer** – Sam D'Alessandro  
**Health Officer** – Tom Detweiler  
**Building Code Official** – Municipal Code Solutions