

**BOROUGH OF PITMAN  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 11, 2021**

**Call to Order**

Time: 7:11 p.m.

**Salute to the Flag/Invocation**

Council President Blass

**Open Public Meetings Act Statement** - Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, I hereby announce that adequate notice of the time and date of this meeting was published in the South Jersey Times on January 7, 2021, posted on the Borough Hall front door, and advertised on the Borough of Pitman website continuously since January 7, 2021.

**Roll Call**

Council President Blass: Present  
Councilwoman James: Present  
Councilwoman Rudley: Present  
Mayor Razze: Present  
Clerk O'Donnell: Present

Councilman Fitzpatrick: Present  
Councilman Mazzola: Present  
Councilman Weng: Present  
Borough Solicitor Krachun: Present

**Approval of Minutes**

Council Meeting Minutes of December 28, 2020  
Reorganization Meeting of January 2, 2021

Motion: Blass

Second: James

Roll Call:

Council President Blass: Yes  
Councilwoman James: Yes  
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes  
Mayor Razze \_\_\_\_\_

Councilman Fitzpatrick: Yes  
Councilman Mazzola: Yes  
Councilman Weng Yes

**2020 End of Year Council Reports**

**Councilman Mazzola**

**Clean Communities** - Despite a later than usual start and strict social distancing guidelines, we were still able to pull off several Clean Communities projects. The Scouts, Girls Soccer Booster Club, Women's Club, Knights of Columbus, VFW, and the Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce were all able to conduct clean up projects in various locations around town and raise much needed funds to continue to give back to the community. In 2021, I will remain as the coordinator and I look forward to returning to a more normal schedule of cleanup activities. I will also be looking into ways to possibly use these grants to do recurring litter patrols along Broadway, keeping our Uptown district looking its best.

**Public Property** - This year the Economic Development Committee was able to procure new tables and chairs for Theatre Avenue as well as three box planters to improve the pocket park. Discussions are underway to provide greenery once the weather is more conducive. Sunset Auditorium saw significant use

this summer and fall due to the indoor restrictions on events. Unfortunately, a tree has fallen and damaged a section of the roof and we are waiting for estimates for the repair and insurance inspection.

**Board of Education** - While the hybrid learning model is in place, Pitman Schools are still providing a week's worth of breakfasts and lunches for pickup at Pitman High School in the Auditorium parking lot. This past week they provided food for 550 children (7,700 meals). Pickup times this week resume the regular schedule of Tuesday 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Wednesday 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m., and Thursday 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. All Pitman families with children aged 18 and under are encouraged to participate as there are no qualifications to receive the food. Check the District website for more information at [pitmank12.nutrislice.com](http://pitmank12.nutrislice.com).

#### Councilwoman James

2020 Liaison: Finance & Audit, Personnel, Welfare Office, Library Board, Chamber of Commerce, Municipal Alliance, Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion

2021 Liaison: Parks & Recreation, Public Events, Library Board, Chamber of Commerce, Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion

#### **Finance & Audit, Personnel**

It was truly my pleasure to spend my first year as a Councilperson serving as the liaison to the Finance & Personnel Department. Thank you to Administrator O'Donnell and CFO Considine for your patience and responsiveness in my new role. The entire Finance Department is an extremely dedicated group, and they should be commended for all their hard work, especially considering the challenging year that we faced in 2020. As the Council Liaison I was proud to pass a budget in 2020 with no municipal tax increase. We were also able to refinance some outstanding bonds which will save the Borough over \$500,000 over the life of those bonds.

I also had the opportunity to work on the redesign of our Borough website, which just went live last week. Thanks to our Borough Webmaster Andy Fox and Borough Administrator Judy O'Donnell for their help with this project and to Mayor and Council for their support and feedback. I also want to thank all the Pitman residents who contributed photos and videos for this project. I am very pleased with how the website turned out and I am certain it will be a useful tool for Borough residents.

#### **Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce**

The pandemic made 2020 a very challenging year for the Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce. Despite the adversity they faced, the Chamber still managed to support each other and the community by shifting to outdoor and online events. Thank you to all the residents who continued to support our local businesses through the Chamber's online gift card sale, Pitman Bucks sale, and online ornament sale, as well as choosing to focus on eating and shopping local. Your patronage of our businesses is appreciated. The Chamber is looking forward to a brighter 2021!

#### **McCowan Memorial Library**

While many other local libraries remain closed to the public, McCowan Memorial Library has worked hard to come up with creative procedures that allowed it to reopen and remain open safely once it was permitted to do so. Not only does the library provide books and other media materials to the public, it also provides free computers and internet which is a resource in high demand. The library also managed to maintain its

children's program throughout the year through both virtual and in-person programming. During 2020, 26,581 people visited the library. There were 1,231 internet users. There were 241 children's programs with 1,127 people in attendance and 11,258 views virtually. Thank you to Director Coldren and the entire library staff for all your hard work.

### **Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion**

This summer, Mayor and Council voted by resolution to create the Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion so they could make recommendations to Mayor & Council on ways to promote diversity and inclusion in our borough. More than fifty people volunteered to serve on the Task Force and the group that was ultimately selected by Mayor & Council is comprised of a diverse group of representatives from our schools, business community, faith community, residents, the Pitman Police Department and Borough Administration. The members have been working diligently over the last six months on researching Pitman Policies, Procedures & Training; opportunities for Community Outreach & Education; and Business Outreach & Accessibility. They anticipate presenting their recommendations to Mayor & Council in the summer of 2021.

Despite the challenges of a global pandemic, it has been a rewarding first year being able to serve the residents of Pitman alongside the Mayor and my fellow Councilmembers. I'm looking forward with hope to 2021 and a new challenge as I take on the role of Liaison to the Parks & Recreation Department.

As always, I am available to answer any questions or concerns via email at [vanessa.james@pitman.org](mailto:vanessa.james@pitman.org) or by phone at 856-244-1854.

### Councilwoman Rudley

Please accept the following as my year-end report for the 2020 year from my assigned departments and commissions.

### **Environmental Commission**

The Environmental Commission made the best of the circumstances presented by the pandemic. To increase public awareness and knowledge of our native trees, identification signs were placed at many trees in Betty Park. They include the trees' common and scientific name, features, and other information. More signage will be added in the future.

Pitman was recognized for its 17<sup>th</sup> year as being honored as a Tree City USA Member.

The Environmental Commission was able to hold a socially distanced tree planting event last fall with five group participating. The Environmental Commission also contracted the planting of two additional street trees along Broadway, filling our last two vacant tree pits.

The Environmental Commission created the recycling subcommittee to begin their efforts for the 2021 calendar year.

Additionally, the Environmental Commission members provided input and consideration to several site plan and subdivision applications to the Planning and Zoning Board, as well as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the Borough, and its inclusion in the Master Plan.

### **Senior Outreach Committee**

In February, we launched our first Senior Speaker Series event. We hosted representatives from the State of New Jersey who led our Seniors through the internet searches regarding their unclaimed property. We hosted many Seniors who found considerable unclaimed monies which belonged to them. The remaining speakers will be rescheduled once it is safe for us to assemble.

During the pandemic, the Committee coordinated care packages for nominated Seniors and for our regular bus riders. The bus continued to take our Seniors to the grocery store throughout the darkest time of the pandemic and our bus driver, Steve, deserves much credit for keeping the Seniors safe and able to meet their shopping needs. We are looking forward to seeing our Seniors again in person in the 2021 year.

### **Pageants and Parades**

The Miss Pitman Pageant, the Fourth of July Parade, and the Santa Parade were all cancelled this year. I am sure each of the volunteers will make 2021 festivities even more amazing.

### **Recreation Commission**

Despite the pandemic, we were able to hold a micro-mini soccer season, as well as summer tennis, and a basketball clinic. We used the down time to work on our parks and fields.

We were able to successfully hold the Pitman Freedom Four Mile Run in a virtual format and it was wonderful. For those in the know, you could run it in reverse and avoid the hills, which inspired me to participate for the first time (by walking!)

I want our Parks and Recreation employees, our Environmental Commission members, and our Senior Outreach Committee members to know that I thank them for making the best of a bad situation. Working with each of you has been my pleasure.

Finally, should any members of our community ever wish to reach me, please feel free to e-mail me at [amy.rudley@pitman.org](mailto:amy.rudley@pitman.org) or call me at 609-214-6342.

### Council President Blass

#### **Economic Development Committee**

The Economic Development Committee last met on November 19th. The group was updated on a video campaign for Small Business Saturday. The group approved the purchase of new banners for the lamp posts uptown.

#### **Sustainable Pitman**

Sustainable Pitman, formerly the Green Team, hosted a special presentation on November 18<sup>th</sup> titled "Calming Holiday Stress in the COVID-19 Era." Therapist Sile Keane provided helpful hints in dealing with stress.

#### **Public Works**

Since our last meeting, the Highway Department performed the following tasks:

Collected ten loads of trash totaling 134.53 tons

Collected ten toads of recyclables totaling 39.32 tons  
Collected seventy-four yards of brush and yard debris  
Collected 2,523 yards of leaves  
Spent nine hours patching and repairing potholes and sink holes  
Spent eighteen hours grinding leaves and brush for mulch  
Ran the street sweeper for four hours

The Water and Sewer Department performed the following tasks:

Fulfilled seventeen water and sewer mark out requests  
Plunged out eight sewer stoppages  
Jetted one sewer main  
Collected water samples  
Read seven meters for real estate settlements  
Re-read one meter for billing questions  
Replaced one meter body  
Upgraded two meter heads

Councilman Weng

**Pitman Police Department**

Detective Unit: Investigator Bailey

Total Criminal Case Investigations:	42
Total Case Investigations Cleared/Closed:	39
Total Cases Requiring Evidence Processing:	160
Lab Submittals (Evidence)	37 (Drugs, Guns, DNA, Arson, Specimens, etc.)
Total Firearm Background Applications:	357
Total Employment Background Investigations:	8
Total Megan's Law Registrations:	18
Total Cases Requiring Discovery/OPRA:	112

Special Investigations/Narcotics: Detective Barbetta

Narcotics Overdoses:	21
Narcan Deployments/Saves:	4/4
Overdose Fatalities:	3
Narcotics Distribution Investigations:	10 (6 closed, 4 active)

Patrol: Sergeant Carson

Total Calls for Service:	13,523
Reactive:	11,162
Proactive:	2,361
Total Patrol Arrests:	183
Total Patrol Investigations:	577

Drug Recognition Experts (DRE): P/O Hoffman & P/O Weist are DRE trained & certified for the PPD

DRE Evaluations: 6 (Several other evaluations were declined in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions)

1. East Greenwich Township Police Department (Hoffman)
2. Monroe Township Police Department (Hoffman)
3. Washington Township Police Department (Hoffman)
4. Washington Township Police Department (Hoffman)
5. West Deptford Police Department (Hoffman)
6. Washington Township (Weist)

K9 Unit: Corporal Parker & K-9 Ranger

Total Calls for K-9 Service:	48
Calls within Pitman:	32
Calls outside Pitman:	16
Narcotic Related:	14
Patrol Related:	6
Active Trainings:	22
Demonstrations/Community Activity:	15 (Decrease from 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions)

TAC (TERMINAL AGENCY COORDINATOR): Corporal Pierson

- Ensured compliance with state NCIC Policies and Regulations
- Unified agency responsibility for system user discipline
- Addressed routine and non-routine NCIC, NLETS matters, as needed
- Oversaw monthly validations of NCIC records
- Maintained training and certification of operators
- Quarterly audits of all personnel on CJIS (CCH) requests to confirm accordance to procedural policy
- Maintained and controlled the TAC User Agreement

IT: Corporal Pierson

- Maintained and performed maintenance on all computer terminals in agency
- Installed and configured appropriate computer hardware/software
- Completed UCR through Pro Phoenix system
- Provided and completed new user access requests
- Installation of new DNS server (Network)
- Installation of new Firewall
- Installation of battery back-up for server
- Installation of three new computers
- Upgraded host files to ensure all computers have access to proper systems
- Began upgrade of the PPD email system for all officers (necessary for Use of Force Portal)
- Formed and bolster a working and contractual relationship with Pitman Based IT Company, J2

Traffic: Sergeant Streater

- DUI Arrests: 11
- MV Crashes: 104
- Parking Summonses: 346
- Traffic Summonses: 613
- Supervised numerous special events and traffic related details

Internal Affairs: Deputy Chief Zander

There was a total of seven Internal Affairs Complaints filed with the Pitman Police Department in 2020. A total of six of the Internal Affairs Investigations are closed and one is still open and under investigation.

The seven Internal Affairs Complaints contained a total of eleven allegations/complaints against officers.

Exonerated:	8
Not Sustained:	1
Sustained:	1
Active Investigation:	1

PPD Officers wear body cameras when interacting with the public. New/updated cameras (Axon Body 3) were just recently received as part of the contractual agreement with the body camera host, Axon.

PPD Training: Deputy Chief Zander

Coronavirus Preparedness Training: 03/20  
Firearms Training (range)/ Use of Force: 10/20 &11/20  
Mandatory Annual Recertification Training for all officers  
Pursuit Training 06/20, additionally given to each officer at annual Recertification Training  
Handle with Care Symposium: 12/20  
CLEAR Institute Training, Cultural Diversity, De-escalation, and Bias Crime Reporting: 12/20  
CLEAR Institute Training, Handling of Transgender Individuals: 09/20  
Real World De-escalation: 07/20

Office Administrator: Ms. Susan Wilson

Municipal Discovery Requests	49
Infoshare posts to Gloucester County Prosecutors Office	30
Juvenile Discovery requests to Gloucester County Prosecutors Office	44
Ticket Discovery requests to Municipal Court	43
OPRA/Common Law requests	169
DCP&P Investigation Report requests	53
Firearm Application requests (based on background invest numbers)	357



School Resource Officers (SRO): Sgt. Leach, P/O Stefanopoulos and P/O Khoury

Sgt. Leach provided the following synopsis:

As a Sergeant assigned as the SRO to the Pitman School District in the year that was primarily restricted due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was quite a challenge. Integrity checks inside and outside of all the schools were conducted when school was in session. Communication between school, myself, staff, and students was vital in creating a positive and professional relationship regardless of the pandemic. Patrol Officer Stefanopoulos and I made ourselves readily available to the school administration, staff, and students. Beginning in January, P/O Stefanopoulos and I began teaching L.E.A.D to the fifth-grade students. Approximately five weeks of instruction was provided before the shutdown of the schools. Along with teaching L.E.A.D we taught over twenty-five classes within the elementary schools, instructing and just talking to students about 911 emergencies, bullying, internet safety, conflict management and bike safety along with other topics that drew the student's attention. The object was to create friendly positive interactions with the students and for us to learn and listen to their concerns. We instructed at the Middle School, covering topics pertaining to internet safety, bike safety and bullying. I, along with P.O Stefanopoulos, also spent many hours in the high school health classes during driver's education. It was stressed to these student drivers the importance of the danger of using a cellphone while driving and the distraction it poses. In my role as SRO I attended Board of Education meetings in person, and eventually virtual, when the pandemic shut down the schools. During the closure of schools I continued to have communication directly with school administration and expressed the message that P/O Stefanopoulos and I were still available, and at their disposal. An SRO email and Facebook page were created in May and was available to anyone who wanted to communicate with P/O Stefanopoulos or myself. Food distribution to the families in town started in April, was patrolled by P/O Stefanopoulos and I, and continued through the end of the year. This occurred three days a week and the hours varied. On patrol duty during the summer months, I continued to have communication with school administration. Exterior checks of all the schools were performed to maintain the safety and security of the schools. I was assigned to oversee the Crossing Guards for the school year and was fortunate enough to hire one new full-time guard. I maintained coverage at crossing posts with patrol officers when guards were not able to work. School resumed on October 5th with students and staff attending in person instruction four days a week. As such, integrity checks resumed along with attending virtual classes in the high school. The re-start of school in October brought challenges due to the severity of the pandemic and the approach some teachers had taken to remain safe and healthy within their classroom. As an SRO I worked four high school football games and the girls and boy's playoff soccer games. P/O Khoury assisted, and her assignment to the schools for a few weeks was beneficial to the entire school district. She, along with P/O Stefanopoulos and I, were able to spend many hours and visit many more schools each day. We continued to be active inside the schools interacting with the students and staff while they were on premises up until Christmas break.

**Fire Department:**

The Fire Department had a year like no other. The fire stations were shut down from March to July granting limited access except for essential operations only. It affected department meetings and training, which are the things that make fire departments a family. However, they were able to persevere and stay the course for the betterment of their departments. No fire department suffered any serious injuries. The Junior Fire Fighters Program continues to run well, training young members, and preparing them to become members of the Fire Department when they become of age. Three junior members took that step to the brotherhood of the Fire Department in 2020.

A gear extraction machine was made available to each station so that personnel can clean their firefighting gear. This is a necessary step in helping to prevent firefighters from contracting cancer.

The two Pitman fire stations responded to a combined 274 calls, four of them were very serious. Without the brave actions of our Fire Department members, it could have been much worse.

In addition, Fire Company #1 members provided 104 hours of volunteer service to the Borough this past year, and Highland Chemical Engine provided 122 hours of voluntary service.

Highland Chemical Engine Company graduated four new recruits from basic training. The company planned and supported multiple demonstrations, and provided mutual aid to surrounding towns, including Salem and Cumberland Counties. Unfortunately, Highland had to cancel their carnival because of COVID-19 restrictions this past year. This has had a large financial impact, but they were still able to meet all their required responsibilities during this year.

Chief Ryan Pierson has stated that it has been an honor to have served as Chief of Highland Chemical Engine Company, a very fine organization, over the last four years. He looks forward to his retirement but will continue to serve our community in a different capacity going forward.

The Fire Safety Office responded to 505 Uniform Fire Code inspections, 425 smoke detector inspections, and nineteen Fire Permit inspections. Permit and inspection fees collected totaled \$79,496.52.

Councilman Weng concluded his report with the following statement, by first addressing Mayor Razze: The final thing I would like to say Mayor, is that this has been an incredibly challenging year for our Public Safety Department. I have always been proud to be a Pitman resident, and to be associated with our Police Department and our Fire Department. I am especially proud of how we responded and how we handled the challenges related to the COVID-19 virus. I also want to say how honored I am to serve with all of you. (referring to Council) It's been a very challenging year and serving with you, speaking with you, working with you, the way you all adjusted, you all provided leadership to the Borough and it makes me proud.

#### Councilman Fitzpatrick

#### **Combined Planning and Zoning Board**

The Planning and Zoning Board added the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to the Borough's Master Plan in 2020. Pitman has applied for the NJDOT Set-aside Grant to help with some of the costs associated with implementing the Plan.

The Planning and Zoning Board approved the changes that the Historic Commission recommended and approved for the Historic District Guidelines. These changes were presented by a joint committee of Historic Commission and P/Z Board members.

Members of Council and some P/Z Board members have had many meetings about the former Sony property on Woodbury-Glassboro Road. Nothing relating to its' redevelopment is happening there at the present time.

There were also meetings about the former Armory site on Delsea Drive which will be discussed further at Council's Work Session meeting on January 25, 2021.

The Construction Office personnel did a fine job of taking care of the taxpayer and building contractor's needs by staying open during COVID-19.

Mayor Razze made the following statement at the conclusion of Council Reports:

I echo everyone's sentiments and thanks to all our Borough employees and departments who kept the Borough going over the past year. I'd also like to thank all our volunteers, and I'd like to thank all of you. (Council) I know I shared this at Reorganization on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, but considering the events of last Wednesday, (referring to the storming of the U.S. Capitol by rioters) I would like to take this opportunity to again let everyone at this meeting know how much I, and many others, appreciate you taking time away from your families, careers, and lives to serve our community. I am quite certain that many of us do not agree on local or national issues, but we still work together in this forum, and more importantly, we greet each other while we are out around town; we greet one another while we are on the sidelines at our children's games, and while we are all out supporting our residents and the causes important to them. I know this doesn't sound like much, but at a time in our history where people on all sides of the issue have lost their sense of humanity, or simple respect for one another, the fact that we can do all these things without throwing punches or hurling insults at one another is worth noting. In the wake of the deplorable activity that took place in Washington D.C., as individuals make the decision to storm the Capitol and attack our democracy, a great many individuals have made statements of condemning what took place and promoting unity. That is a start, but many of those same individuals are to blame for the division we are experiencing in our nation. I believe that what we do here is the only real course to bring about healing and positive change...we debate, we discuss, and we lead by example by treating one another with respect.

### **New Business**

#### **Resolution No. 28, 2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Approving Form of Maintenance Guarantee Submitted for Approval for a Project Affecting the Parcel Known as 33 Elm Avenue, Block 198 Lot 11 on the Official Tax Map of the Borough of Pitman, Gloucester County, New Jersey**

Motion: Mazzola

Second: Blass

Roll Call:

Council President Blass: Yes

Councilman Fitzpatrick: Yes

Councilwoman James: Yes

Councilman Mazzola: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Councilman Weng: Yes

Mayor Razze \_\_\_\_\_

### **Payment of Bills**

Motion: Mazzola

Second: James

Roll Call:

Council President Blass: Yes

Councilman Fitzpatrick: Abstains to #40005, approves payment of all other items.

Councilwoman James: Yes

Councilman Mazzola: Abstains to #39983 and #16492; approves payment of all other items.

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Councilman Weng: Abstains to # 39989 and #16493; approves payment of all other items.

Mayor Razze \_\_\_\_\_

**Public Portion**

Motion to open to the public: James  
Time: 7:39 p.m.

Second: Fitzpatrick

No public comment.

Motion to close the public portion: Weng  
Time: 7:39 p.m.

Second: James

**Miscellaneous**

Admin. O'Donnell thanked Councilwoman James for spearheading the development of the new website. She mentioned that there was difficulty for some to find the link to this meeting and said that although the website is now live, they will continue to make appropriate changes as needed or suggested.

**Adjournment**

Motion: Blass  
Time: 7:43 p.m.

Second: Fitzpatrick

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith O'Donnell  
Borough Clerk/Administrator