

**BOROUGH OF PITMAN
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 22, 2021**

Call to Order

Time: 8:00 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

Formal Minutes of October 25, 2021

Work Session and Formal Meeting Minutes of November 8, 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

Council Reports

Councilman Fitzpatrick

Combined Planning and Zoning Board

The Planning and Zoning Board met on November 15, 2021. The application submitted for a business on Poplar Avenue was denied. The business on W. Holly Avenue and Cedar Avenue was directed by the Board to get a site plan and return to the Planning Board for a determination.

The next Combined Planning and Zoning Board meeting is on December 20 at 7:00 p.m. The hearing for Fazzio Concrete, which began at the October meeting, will continue at this meeting. All are welcome to attend.

The Borough will conduct a Tax Lien Assignment Sale on December 6, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. in Borough

Hall. Three properties with municipal liens will be auctioned as a block, and a vacant lot with a municipal lien will also be for sale. The minimum bid for each is \$30,000.00.

Councilwoman James

Santa Parade

The Santa Parade is this Saturday, November 27 at 5:00 p.m. along Broadway.

Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce

There are a ton of fun holiday events happening this holiday season in Uptown Pitman!

- Santa will be at Ballard Park starting this Saturday, November 27, and thereafter on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- This Saturday is Small Business Saturday! Make sure to purchase your Pitman Bucks starting at 11:00 a.m. at Borough Hall and then support our Pitman businesses both on and off Broadway.
- December 2 at 5:00 p.m. is Girls Night in Pitman.
- December 4 is the Pitman Winter Village from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. along Ballard Avenue.
- December 9 is Candlelight Shopping Night in Pitman starting at 5:00 p.m.
- December 11 is the Holiday Sing Along at 6:00 p.m. in the Grove Auditorium.

Huge congratulations to the newly elected officers and board members of the Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce!

President: Jenny Lehto Mazzola

Vice President: Keryl Hausmann

Treasurer: Benjamin Leis

Secretary: Kara Knauss

Board Members:

Patrick Bradley

Lauren Canna

Bronwyn Lyman

Stacey Myers

Amanda Kent Budd

Ashley Elliott Shaw

As always, I am available to answer any questions or concerns via email at vanessa.james@pitman.org or by phone at 336-407-8604.

Council President Blass

Economic Development Committee

The Economic Development Committee met on November 18. The members authorized money for the purchase of sunshades for Theatre Avenue.

Jason Blackmore has taken the lead on getting an estimate for an electric charging station.

The Committee will be switching out the patriotic banners on Broadway streetlights to winter banners this Wednesday afternoon.

Public Works

Since our last meeting on November 8, 2021,

The Highway Department provided the following services:

- Trash collected totaled 119 tons
- Recyclables collected totaled 35 tons
- Brush collected totaled 184 yards
- Collected 681 yards of leaves
- Spent five hours patching and repairing potholes and sinkholes
- Ran the street sweeper for eight hours
- Dropped off a truck for yard debris to two residences and picked up the next day
- Completed about forty curbside inspections per week of recycling containers
- Delivered Santa Shed to Ballard Park
- Repaired a fence at Sixth Avenue

Leaf collection is going at full throttle. Mr. Rodi is using overtime to keep up with the demand.

The Water and Sewer Department

- Performed fourteen water and sewer mark out requests
- Performed routine maintenance at the wells
- Collected water samples
- Read six meters for real estate settlements
- Upgraded three water meter heads

On November 16, the Water and Sewer Department employees replaced twelve feet of a ten-inch sewer main on N. Brentwood Avenue.

Councilman Mazzola

Finance Office

Borough offices and services will be closed this Thursday and Friday in celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday. The employees of the Finance and Construction Offices wish everyone a safe and joyous Thanksgiving holiday.

The new tax assessments have been sent out from the Gloucester County Tax Assessors Office. There have been a few explanations posted online about how this could affect taxes in the Borough. After discussing with the Borough Chief Finance Officer, I can confirm that we do not yet know the average increase in the Borough, and these new assessments will be used for the 2022 - 2023 tax calculation in August 2022.

The Borough will receive an insurance dividend from the TRICO JIF in the amount of \$69,102.00. As usual, we will accept the dividend in the form of a credit against our 2022 assessment. The total amount of dividends being divided among participating JIF municipalities is \$1,800,000.00.

Residents should be advised that the shut off moratorium for water and sewer service remains in effect until January 1, 2022. On or after January 1, 2022, charges and penalties may be imposed for delinquent payments, and any payments remaining delinquent may be referred to a tax lien sale held by the municipal Tax Collector.

Clean Communities

I would like to thank the Pitman VFW for their demanding work in cleaning Brown and Harmon Fields since our last meeting. They spent their Saturday morning pulling litter from the surrounding brush and cleaning out the dugouts and bleachers. They collected about 20 pounds of trash in total.

As the weather gets colder we are seeing fewer Clean Communities projects, but if you would like to apply for your non-profit to receive a \$500 grant in return for cleaning litter from public property, please reach out to me!

Councilman Weng

The following is my report for the Council meeting being held this evening, Monday, November 22, 2021. Please let me know if you need any clarification or have any questions. Thank you.

Police Department

Overnight parking enforcement will remain suspended through the Christmas & New Year holidays.

The Pitman Police Department would like to make everyone aware that with winter coming, anyone who may be or knows someone who is struggling with maintaining housing or their home heating, should contact the PPD for assistance with referrals.

Additional auto and foot patrols are being utilized by the PPD to help ensure that the coming holiday season is as safe as possible within our community. Please drive safely and observe and respect pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrians should make sure to practice safe passage and know the law with regard to their responsibilities. Anyone that has concerns or needs information regarding traffic safety can contact the PPD to gather further information.

Councilwoman Rudley

Environmental Commission

The last few weeks have been busy with tree related improvements. The Environmental Commission members participated in the following events:

- Members pruned all street trees along Broadway and the Borough parking lot at the intersection of Broadway and Holly.
- A vendor was contracted to complete pruning of straight trees along W. Jersey Avenue and Pitman Avenue.
- A vendor was contracted to install two additional street trees along Broadway.
- Members of the Commission installed four new trees in Borough parks, including Sunset, Sunrise, Epworth, and Betty.
- A vendor was contracted to remove a tree located on Borough property on Fifth Avenue that posed a risk to an adjacent private property.
- Shrubs have been ordered and delivered to be installed at Glen Lake to screen an existing electrical box. This work should be taking place next week.

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time. These members have saved the Borough of Pitman approximately \$1,600.00 by doing some of this work themselves as volunteers.

The Senior Outreach Committee

The Senior Outreach Committee hosted a successful open house with members of the VFW. My sincere thank you to former Councilman Jim Pierpont, who arranged with us for the afternoon, as well as to all members of the committee who have been tireless volunteers in support of my vision for bringing more opportunities for socialization and information to our Borough Seniors.

The Pitman Memorabilia Committee

The Memorabilia Museum is open routinely on the second Saturday of each month and on Fourth Friday. Volunteers always staff the Museum, and we thank them for their efforts and their time.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you need my assistance with anything. My cell remains 609-214-6342 and my email is amy.rudley@pitman.org for a few more weeks.

New Business

Consent Agenda – All matters listed under Consent Agenda are considered routine by this Borough Council and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Resolution No. 169, 2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Directing the Distribution of Borough of Pitman Net Returned Surplus Funds Held in Trust by the Gloucester, Salem, and Cumberland Counties Municipal Joint Insurance Fund

Resolution No. 170, 2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Advertisement and Procurement of Proposals for a Concession Agreement for Advertising Space on the Borough’s Municipal Sign

Resolution No. 171, 2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Confirming the Report of the Tax Collector in the Matter of Pest Control Services: 349 Boulevard Avenue - \$65.00

Resolution No. 172, 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 by Root 24 Hour Plumbing, Inc. Affecting the Parcel Known as 218 Embury Avenue, Block 27 Lot 5 on the Official Tax Map of the Borough of Pitman, Gloucester County, New Jersey

Resolution No. 173, 2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, Appointing a Recording Secretary for the Borough of Pitman Combined Planning and Zoning Board – Andrea Whilden

Resolution No. 174, 2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, Appointing a Recording Secretary for the Borough of Pitman Historic Commission – Andrea Whilden

Resolution No. 175, 2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, Approving a 3% Salary Increase for All Non-Contractual Employees of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester

Resolution No. 169, 2021 – Resolution No. 175, 2021

Motion: Blass

Second: James

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: Weng

Roll Call:

Council President Blass: Yes

Councilman Fitzpatrick: Yes

Councilwoman James: Yes

Councilman Mazzola: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Councilman Weng: Yes

Mayor Razze _____

Event Permits

Event: One Mile Run

Date: Saturday, January 1, 2022, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: See attached map

Sponsor: Good Day for a Run, LLC

Contact Person: Ken Culbertson

Motion: James

Second: Fitzpatrick

Roll Call:

Council President Blass: Yes

Councilman Fitzpatrick: Yes

Councilwoman James: Yes

Councilman Mazzola: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Councilman Weng: Yes

Mayor Razze _____

Approval is contingent upon the applicant providing a Certificate of Liability Insurance naming the Borough of Pitman as Additional Insured.

Event: Mock Trial

Date and Time: December 14, 2021; 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Council Chambers

Contact Person: Paul Blass

Motion: James

Second: Fitzpatrick

Roll Call:

Council President Blass: Abstain

Councilman Fitzpatrick: Yes

Councilwoman James: Yes

Councilman Mazzola: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Abstain

Councilman Weng: Yes

Mayor Razze: _____

Public Portion

Motion to open to the public: Mazzola
Time: 8:23 p.m.

Second: Weng

Scott McIlvaine 818 S. Broadway - Mr. McIlvaine thanked Councilwoman James for speaking to him before the meeting about diversity in our community and stated that he would like to learn more. He also stated that he feels that if the formation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee brings the community closer together, then he is favor of it. Mr. McIlvaine said that he is also in favor of appointing two or three members from outside the community and business owners to be members of the committee.

On local taxes and tax rates Mr. McIlvaine said that he is not against the taxes or the appraisals that were recently performed by the Gloucester County Tax Assessors Office, saying that he owns several homes in Pitman and feels that many houses are undervalued. He asked if someone could shed some light on the tax rates and what could happen in the future.

Mayor Razzo explained that if Council sees a total assessment of all property values going up, then the tax rate would go down. He used the example that if at the start of the day the borough collects \$100.00 in total tax revenue, then at the end of that same day, the borough will still only collect \$100.00 due to the lowering of the tax rate.

Councilman Mazzola explained that the tax rate is a function of what the borough collects in taxes divided by the value. It depends on the average appraisal of all homes in town. If your appraisal is higher, you may get more of a tax burden; if you are less then it will be less. The municipal budget is the thing that drives the tax rate, and any budget increase is capped at 2% each year.

Mr. McIlvaine concluded by asking Council that when making their selection of members for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to also provide diversity in those who are selected.

Patrick Rumaker, 41 Simpson Avenue – Mr. Rumaker asked if membership on the DEI Committee is voluntary, and Councilwoman James replied that all Committee, Commission and Council positions in the Borough are voluntary.

Beth Portocalis, 301 Washington Avenue - Ms. Portocalis asked if the County Assessor’s Office has notified the Borough of the overall percentage of the assessed value for the properties in Pitman.

Mayor Razzo replied that the Borough has not heard as yet, and that the Borough has not been advised of the timing for determining the final tax rate.

David Hoh, 101 Colonial Avenue - Mr. Hoh said that he has spoken with the person who did the assessment of his home and was told that residents will be receiving a second correspondence from the Gloucester County Assessor’s Office during the first or second week in December. He said that he was also told that residents will have until January 15, 2022, to formally appeal their assessments.

Mike Grillo 155 West Avenue - Mr. Grillo commended Pitman Police Chief Daniel McAteer for performing his job and treating members of the public with grace and dignity during the last couple of Council meetings when many attendees were upset and attendance was large enough to require crowd control measures to be put in place.

Motion to close the public portion: Weng
Time: 8:33 p.m.

Second: Rudley

Miscellaneous

Mayor Razzo wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving and reminded all Pitman High School alumni that the annual Thanksgiving breakfast, held at the high school, will take place this year on Thanksgiving morning beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Adjournment

Motion: Blass
Time: 8:34 p.m.

Second: James

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith O'Donnell
Borough Clerk/Administrator