

BOROUGH OF PITMAN
WORK SESSION MINUTES
JUNE 14, 2021

Call to Order

Time: 7:00 p.m.

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: Absent
Councilwoman James: Present
Councilwoman Rudley: Present
Mayor Razzo: Present
Clerk O'Donnell: Present

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

Discussion

Motion to Open Discussion: James
Time: 7:01 p.m.

Second: Weng

Overnight Parking

Councilman Weng stated that the Borough has suspended the ban on overnight street parking since mid-March 2020. No parking overnight on the streets by boats, recreational vehicles and trailers is now being enforced by the Pitman Police Department. Councilman Weng stated his opinion that if the no parking overnight on the street ordinance is to be changed, it should be up to the residents in the form of a non-binding referendum question on the November ballot.

Pitman Police Chief Daniel McAteer stated that the Police Department performed an audit, and an average of six hundred cars park on the street overnight in the Borough. He stated that the Police Department has not received complaints about vehicles parked on the street overnight but may want to consider “no parking areas” on certain streets. He stated that the presence of cars on the street has not interfered with specific policing events.

Councilman Weng stated that in the Grove area, it is difficult for Public Works and Emergency Response vehicles to pass through certain roads.

Mayor Razzo stated that the Board of Fire Engineers has expressed that as a Board they are not in favor of on-street parking overnight and has said that in certain areas damage may occur to the equipment and parked cars if a response is needed on some of the narrow streets in the Borough.

Chief McAteer said that he feels that permission to park overnight on the street should be limited, and not “wholesale” across the board.

Councilwoman Rudley said that she favors a specific referendum and likes the way Glassboro enforces their overnight parking program. She suggested that if Pitman were to follow Glassboro’s enforcement

practices, there would be a need for an Enforcement Officer who would be tasked to monitor a permit program.

Mayor Razze stated his fear that allowing vehicles to park on the street overnight will encourage property owners to turn their homes into rentals with multiple tenants/drivers as is seen in Glassboro with Rowan University students.

Councilwoman James asked Chief McAteer if there have been complaints about abandoned cars, and Chief McAteer replied that the complaints have come about unregistered cars located on private property, none have been about abandoned cars parked on the street. Councilwoman James stated that she is in favor of a specific referendum as well and asked if permitting overnight parking on the street could remain in place until after the ballot referendum. Chief McAteer replied that once the State of Emergency is lifted by Governor Murphy, the Police Department must enforce the laws of the Borough unless Mayor and Council decides to limit Police Department enforcement duties, in which case the department would act accordingly.

Councilwoman Rudley suggested that households have increased in size due to the pandemic and family members returning home.

Councilman Fitzpatrick asked Council to consider the situation in the Ridge section of Glassboro which has many rental properties. He stated that once Pitman allows overnight parking, it will not be able to go back to enforcing a ban if it becomes congested like the Ridge and creates a problem. Councilman Fitzpatrick also stated that on-street parking will always interfere with snow removal and the collection of trash, recycling, and leaves. In response to Councilman Fitzpatrick's point, Borough Solicitor Krachun said that recently Glassboro enacted a law that required properties to have one off-street parking spot per resident of the dwelling. The law was struck down by the Court.

Council agreed that at the June 28, 2021, Work Session meeting there will be more discussion on the proposed non-binding referendum and way the public question is structured.

Hire New Class II Officer

Councilman Weng stated that the annual Police Department budget contains the salary for a SLEO Class II Officer, and the funds to sponsor an individual to go to the SLEO Academy if training is necessary. He stated that for the Borough to offer to sponsor a candidate to the Academy, hopefully will bring out a larger and more diverse pool of candidates for consideration.

Mayor Razze asked if the Borough pays for the cost of the Academy, can the Borough be entitled to reimbursement if the candidate leaves our employment to work in another municipality?

Chief McAteer said that while they attend school, the Class II is paid as an employee of the Police Department. He also said that training at the Academy lasts twenty-two weeks generally, but that training for a Class II Officer is six weeks. Chief McAteer said that the funds for the Academy and for uniforms is available in the 2021 budget, and that he would like to move forward with the hiring process after the Closed Meeting scheduled to take place during the Formal Meeting this evening, and after a review of the current budget to verify that the necessary funding is available.

Renovations to Concession Stand at Betty Park

Councilman Weng said that the Police Department is interested in refurbishing the old concession stand in Betty Park for use as a public building for the community. Long abandoned, it could be used for storage or for special events such as the annual fishing tournament.

Chief McAteer said that it will be a Police Department project performed by volunteers from the department, donated supplies, and funding from the 2021 Police Department budget.

Mayor Razze said that he hopes it will be used often once it is fixed up and made secure so that it does not become a nuisance property or become the target for vandals.

Formation of a Youth Council

Councilman Weng proposed the formation of a Youth Council in the Borough that would meet monthly with a Council Liaison and act more as an Advisory Board then as a Council. The focus of the Youth Council would be to organize and complete a project that would benefit the Borough. Mayor Razze said that it was an interesting idea that he is in favor of exploring further.

In response to a question from Councilwoman Rudley, Councilman Weng stated that the Youth Council members would be selected by the School Administration. Mayor Razze suggested that they use the students elected to serve on Student Council. Councilwoman Rudley suggested appointing students who are not chosen by their peers or those who are often overlooked but want to be involved. Councilman Weng suggested having students from both Pitman High School and Pitman Middle School apply to serve on Youth Council, and Councilman Fitzpatrick suggested forming committees of interested students who would be willing to work on the project selected each year.

Miscellaneous

Councilwoman Rudley said that she has been contacted by Bill Merryman, owner of Merryman’s Pub, about extending the hours of the entertainment in Ballard Park on Thursday and Sunday evenings until 9:00 p.m. due to the popularity of the events and the lengthening summer days.

Motion to extend the ending time of the live music entertainment in Ballard Park until 9:00 p.m. on Thursday and Sunday evenings until October 3, 2021: James
Second: Rudley

Roll Call

Council President Blass: Absent	Councilman Fitzpatrick: Yes
Councilwoman James: Yes	Councilman Mazzola: Absent
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes	Councilman Weng: Yes
Mayor Razze: _____	

At the request of the Borough Clerk and approval of Mayor Razze, the following Resolutions will be added to the Agenda for the Formal Meeting this evening.

Resolution No. 86, 2021 – Approving the Submission of a Grant Application and Execution of a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Reconstruction of Lakeside Avenue in its’ Entirety Project

Resolution No. 87, 2021 – Authorizing the Execution of a Shared Service Agreement with the County of Gloucester to Provide Family Entertainment at Sunset Auditorium

Motion to close discussion: Weng
Time: 7:55 p.m. Second: James

Public Portion

Motion to open to the public: Weng
Time: 7:55 p.m. Second: James

Walt Madison, 152 West Avenue – Mr. Madison stated that he is in favor of on-street parking overnight. He also mentioned that Simpson Avenue is “a disgrace” and needs to be repaved.

Borough Clerk O’Donnell said that she has once again, and will continue to, contact South Jersey Gas to remind them of their Agreement to re-pave Simpson Avenue.

Jim Fortney, 502 Carew Avenue – Mr. Fortney stated that he is not in favor of allowing on-street parking overnight in the Borough, and that to allow it now is unfair to the residents who have gone to the expense of adapting their properties to accommodate an increase in the number of cars/drivers living at a particular property.

Barry Owen, 508 Pitman Avenue – Mr. Owen referenced the decorative light poles along Broadway and suggested that there be a calendar keeping track of who will be using the poles.

Councilwoman Rudley stated that an Event Permit should be submitted by every group that wants to hang banners along Broadway, and Councilman Weng suggested more discussion at the June 28, 2021, Work Session Meeting.

Courtney Milward, 129 Woodland Avenue – Ms. Milward asked who would be responsible for repairing the vehicles that could be damaged by Borough owned vehicles trying to maneuver roadways if the overnight parking ban is removed by the Borough.

Mayor Razzo replied that the owner of the vehicle would be responsible for the repairs.

Ms. Milward asked if there are plans to renovate the bathrooms at Sunset Auditorium, and Councilwoman James said that there has been discussion with the Parks and Recreation Director for such a project.

Motion to close public portion: Rudley
Time: 8:06 p.m.

Second: Weng

Adjournment

Motion: James
Time: 8:06 p.m.

Second: Fitzpatrick

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith O’Donnell
Borough Clerk/Administrator