

BOROUGH OF PITMAN
WORK SESSION MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2022

Call to Order

Time: 6:30 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 6, 2022, posted on the Borough Hall front door, and advertised on the Borough of Pitman website continuously since January 6, 2022.

Roll Call

Council President Fitzpatrick: Present	Councilperson James: Present
Councilman Kelly: Present	Councilman Mazzola: Present
Councilwoman Milward: Present	Councilman Weng: Present
Mayor Razzo: Present	Borough CFO Considine: Present 6:30 – 7:00
Borough Solicitor Vigilante: Arrive 7:00 p.m.	Clerk O'Donnell: Present

Discussion

Motion to Open Discussion: James	Second: Milward
Time: 6:35 p.m.	

2022 Municipal Budget Preparation

Borough Chief Financial Officer Steve Considine reviewed the Budget Preparation Worksheet which was prepared with the department budgets submitted at this time as well as the contractual and statutory items such as capital, insurance costs, and salaries. CFO Considine said he will have a better idea of how the budget stands by the February 10, 2022, meeting. By then he anticipates that all budgets will have been submitted.

For the new members of Council, Mr. Considine explained the budget process, the CAP, and the difference between the water/sewer budget and the general budget. Discussion also touched briefly on the new property assessments recently received by Borough residents from the Gloucester County Tax Assessor's Office in relation to the tax rate.

Outdoor Eating on Public Property or Right-of-Way

Councilman Weng suggested that the outdoor seating ordinance be reviewed, suggesting amendments to the section pertaining to the number of tables permitted in front, the type of furniture to be used, and the storage of the outdoor furniture overnight. Council President Fitzpatrick suggested that the prohibition of BYOB during certain public events could also be re-evaluated for the future. Copies of the ordinance were distributed for Council review before further discussion at the January 24, 2022, meeting.

106 S. Broadway Additional Tables Outside

Councilman Weng stated that one of the owners of Merryman's Pub has requested that he be permitted to have more than the specified four tables in front of his restaurant due to the large frontage of the building. Currently only four tables are permitted by ordinance. It was pointed out that 10.3 feet of the sidewalk across the front of the building belongs to Merryman's. Any additional tables to be placed in the public right-of-way will require an Outdoor Seating Permit from the Borough.

Vacant Property Registration Fee Ordinance

Council President Fitzpatrick distributed a copy of a letter from the Fund Solicitor for the TRICO JIF advising member municipalities to review their vacant property registration and fee ordinances based on recent successful lawsuits brought by challengers on the amount of the fees, the escalation of fees over time, and the amount of the fee being assessed on the period of time that the house is vacant regardless of a change in ownership. Council President Fitzpatrick said that he feels the Borough should particularly review the amount of the fees imposed and the increase

in the fee schedule based on the duration of time that the property is vacant.

Former National Guard Armory

Referencing the former National Guard Armory building on Delsea Drive, Councilman Weng said that there has been a new caution issued by the company overseeing the remediation about dry cleaning fluid being found on the property. He said that there has been recent interest from a developer who would like to build a storage facility on the property. Councilman Weng said that he would like to see a “No Further Action” letter issued from the NJDEP for the property to be sure that it has been sufficiently cleaned up before any sale takes place.

Additional issues with the property include the size of the wetland’s designation and the listing of a protected species nesting there. Councilman Weng said that the Borough should seek to obtain an “intermediate determination” to reduce the buffer around the wetlands.

Planning and Zoning Board Chairman Nick Aspras responded to Mayor Razze’s request for his opinion by suggesting that the Borough consider an economic analysis of the property by the Borough’s Planner in order to assess the value of commercial development versus residential development.

Borough Solicitor Vigilante stated that it is critical that the Borough obtain a “No Further Action” report from the NJDEP following an evaluation from the company performing the remediation efforts before selling the property.

Miscellaneous

Construction Office Assistant

Council President Fitzpatrick announced that interviews were conducted for a part-time clerical assistant in the Construction Office and that he is prepared to offer the position to Lynn Hoffman with Council approval. Resolution No. 32, 2022 was added to the agenda for action by Council.

Resolution No. 32, 2022 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Appointing Lynn Hoffman to the Part-time Twenty Hour Per Week Position of Construction Office/Housing Office Clerk at the Rate of \$14.00 Per Hour.

Motion: Fitzpatrick

Second: Kelly

Roll Call:

Council President Fitzpatrick: Yes

Councilperson James: Yes

Councilman Kelly: Yes

Councilman Mazzola: Yes

Councilwoman Milward: Yes

Councilman Weng: Yes

Mayor Razze: _____

Amendment to an Event Permit Application

Councilwoman Milward requested an amendment to the Event Permit Application submitted by the Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce for the Winter Village Craft Show in December. The Event Permit Application is on the Formal Meeting Agenda tonight for Council approval. The time of the event should be amended to begin at 9:00 a.m. instead of 10:00 a.m. as stated on the application. By voice vote Council approved amending the Event Permit Application.

Pride Flags

Councilwoman Milward asked if the Borough Ordinance allowing groups to hang flags on the Borough-owned lamp posts along Broadway has been amended. Mayor Razze replied that there is nothing in place regulating flags and banners being hung. The Event Permit Application process currently being used is for the event of installing the flags, not for the flags themselves.

Borough Solicitor Vigilante stated that the Borough cannot dictate or have a point of view as to what kind of flags are hung. She recommended that Council revisit the application process and possibly adopt a monthly honorary list of flag designs based on Federal designations such as Black History Month in February, or only use flags and banners that are content neutral. This policy would end the use of the Event Permit Application altogether for flags and banners. Solicitor Vigilante strongly suggested that the Borough revisit the entire process being careful not to pick and choose one design or type of flag or banner over another.

Councilwoman Milward asked about the insurance requirement for flags and banners. Mayor Razze said that the insurance requirement has been waived in the past, in limited cases.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

Councilperson James reminded everyone of the upcoming Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service on January 17, 2022. She described various volunteer opportunities that have been coordinated throughout the community.

Acknowledgements

Mayor Razze read ‘Thank You’ notes received from former Council members Amy Rudley and Paul Blass acknowledging gifts received to honor their service to the Borough at the end of their terms.

Mayor Razze offered condolences to the families of Pitman residents Thurman Gustafson and Marie Plum. Mr. Gustafson was a lifetime member of Pitman Fire Company No.1 and Ms. Plum was a schoolteacher in Pitman for twenty years, served as a member of the Pitman Planning Board for twenty years, and served as a Gloucester County Election Board Worker for thirty years.

Motion to close discussion: James
Time: 7:35 p.m.

Second: Kelly

Public Portion

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

Second: Milward

No public comment.

Motion to close public portion: Weng
Time: 7:40 p.m.

Second: Mazzola

Adjournment

Motion: James
Time: 7:40 p.m.

Second: Kelly

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith O’Donnell
Borough Clerk/Administrator