

BOROUGH OF PITMAN
WORK SESSION MINUTES
MARCH 14, 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	CFO Considine: Present
Borough Solicitor Vigilante: Present	Clerk O'Donnell: Present

New Business

Resolution No. 63, 2022 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing a Closed Meeting

The general nature of the subjects to be discussed at said meeting will be:

**Personnel: Use of Sick, Personal, and Vacation Time Prior to Retirement
Pending Litigation/Potential Settlement: NJDEP/Frank J. Fazio, & Sons, Inc.**

Action may be taken upon returning to an open meeting.

Motion: Kelly Second: Weng

Roll Call:

Council President Fitzpatrick: Yes	Councilperson James: Yes
Councilman Kelly: Yes	Councilman Mazzola: Yes
Councilwoman Milward: Yes	Councilman Weng: Yes
Mayor Razzo _____	

Discussion

Motion to Open Discussion: James Second: Weng

Time: 6:35 p.m.

2022 Municipal Budget Preparation

Councilman Mazzola presented the updated draft of the 2022 Municipal Budget which includes reductions to appropriations made by CFO Considine and the ones suggested by Council President Fitzpatrick since the February 28, 2022, Work Session meeting. Councilman Mazzola explained that 55% of the entire budget is composed of costs associated with employment, which increased more than 8% since last year.

Councilwoman Milward proposed additional funds be taken out of the budget as follows:

Police Department	
Salary	\$30,000
Part-time Employees	9700
Crossing Guards	8000

Postage	500
Bullet Proof Vests	1000
Office of Emergency Management	
Training Seminars	200
Emergency Cleaning	750
Pitman Fire Department	
Materials & Supplies	500
Equip., Maint. & Repairs	1000
Firefighter Equipment	500
Training & Seminars	500
Firefighter Gear	500
Board of Fire Engineers	
Engine Equip. & Maint.	600
Senior Outreach	1000

In addition, no reduction was made to the Fire Safety Office budget or to the Public Works budget. Councilwoman James asked that an additional \$2000.00 be added to the McCowan Memorial Library salary budget. CFO Considine addressed a question from Council by stating that the Borough's required contribution to the library is \$224,882.00 for 2022. Added to the library budget is an additional \$25,000 for the installation of new carpet.

CFO Considine said that since the February 28, 2022, meeting, an additional \$18,000.00 was removed from budget appropriations. He said that although the budget is within CAP, Council is using too much from surplus to balance the budget and has done so over the last four years by not raising taxes. He suggested that municipal taxes should be raised this year.

CFO Considine said that the Borough is receiving \$450,000.00 in 2022 in COVID reimbursement funds. For municipalities receiving less than one million dollars, these funds may be used as revenue in the Operating Budget or must be spent on allowable water and sewer projects. Councilman Weng reminded Council members of the Governor's mandate that all lead water lines be replaced and suggested that funds from the COVID relief reimbursement be used for that. Mr. Considine said that the deadline to submit the plan for how the money will be used is due by April 30, 2022. He said that the Borough can bond for water and sewer projects and that the water and sewer surplus for 2022 is \$270,000.00 over the 2021 amount of 2.9 million dollars.

Council President Fitzpatrick made the following suggestions for further appropriation cuts:

Holiday Decorations \$2000 was approved

The suggested cuts to the following appropriations were not approved:

Elections

Retiree Health Care

Updates to Borough Property

Medical

Mayor Razze asked for final figures at the March 28 meeting and said that he would like to see some of the COVID relief funds put into surplus.

7:00 – 7:10: Request for Relief of W/S Charges; 62 S. Broadway

Councilman Kelly said that the property located at 62 S. Broadway received a water bill in excess of \$8000.00 for the first quarter of 2022. He said that the owner of the property is asking for a credit to the account due to one of the tenants removing the float ball from the tank causing the toilet to run constantly for four months. Public Works sent a letter on December 8, 2021, advising the owner of the constant flow

of water being recorded by the meter, but the owner disregarded the letter thinking it was a result of increased business at the hair salon also located in the building.

Giuliano Apadula, owner of the building, asked for Council's understanding of the issue, saying that he did receive the letter from the Borough but that a combination of issues played a part in creating the problem. He explained that the tenant in the apartment is currently suffering from cognitive issues as a result of contracting the COVID virus on two different occasions. The tenant, Rebecca Gaudette, who was present at the meeting said that there was no indication of a problem with the toilet and that it was functioning properly. She also stated that due to her fear of contracting COVID for a third time, she was not letting anyone enter the apartment.

Mayor Razze asked Council if there will be a motion to grant some form of relief for the water/sewer bill for the property located at 62 S. Broadway. No motion was made by Council.

Mr. Apadula expressed his disappointment and understanding of Council's decision and asked if the Borough would support his efforts of an appeal to New Jersey American Water, the Borough's water supplier. Mayor Razze said that the Borough would provide documentation of the situation as needed to Mr. Apadula for his appeal to New Jersey American Water.

Ordinance Authorizing & Encouraging EVSE and Make-Ready Parking Spaces

Councilman Kelly called on members of the Borough's Economic Development Committee for an update on the potential installation of charging stations for electric vehicles and the submission of the *It Pay\$ to Plug In: NJ's Electric Vehicle Charging Grant* application which is due to be submitted by the committee before May 13, 2022. Barry Owen and Jason Blackmore from EDC were present to answer questions from Council on the plans and grant application.

Mr. Owen said that the EDC would like to install two or four 480v service chargers and are currently looking for a location in the business district that would be convenient for shoppers and visitors to the Uptown area. He said that the purchase of the chargers will be made with grant funds if awarded to the Borough, and Atlantic City Electric will pay ninety percent of the "make ready" infrastructure.

Councilman Mazzola asked if there was a large demand for funding and if there is a waiting list for when future funding becomes available. Jason Blackmore said that Pitman is high on the list to receive funding and that the EDC is currently weighing the options on what type of charging station would be affordable and practical for the Borough. Mr. Blackmore said that the rate of payment for a charge can be adjusted by the Borough depending on the demand at certain times. Mr. Owen asked if Council is still in favor of submitting the grant application and Councilman Weng said that Council is still in favor of moving forward.

Borough Solicitor Vigilante explained the proposed ordinance that supports the law signed by Governor Murphy on July 9, 2021, which requires EVSE and Make-Ready parking spaces be designed as a permitted accessory use in all zoning or use districts, and which also establishes associated installation and parking space requirements. If adopted, the Borough Master Plan would have to be amended to include these goals. Mayor Razze asked members of Council to review the ordinance template and suggest any changes prior to the introduction of the Borough ordinance.

Update on Pollinator Gardens at Glen Lake

Councilwoman James provided an update on the location and size of the proposed pollinator gardens to be installed at Glen Lake.

Motion was made by Councilperson James to authorize the Garden Club to plant two pollinator gardens on the south side of Glen Lake. Second: Weng

Council approves by unanimous voice vote the motion to install the pollinator gardens.

Installation of Crosswalks; Ballard & W. Jersey Aves.

Councilwoman Milward recently proposed the installation of crosswalks at the intersections of Ballard Avenue and W. Jersey Avenue at Pitman Avenue. Ms. Milward said that the Pitman Police Department has done a traffic study and approves the installation of crosswalks at both locations, and Council President Fitzpatrick suggested the use of high visibility paint due to the volume of foot traffic in both areas.

Mayor Razze suggested a review of the Code Book to see if crosswalks are already designated for those areas, and if not, a change in the ordinance will be necessary.

Miscellaneous

Councilwoman Milward asked that the date approved for the Hallowed Grounds Coffee Truck dedication be changed from March 19, 2022, to March 27, 2022, on their Event Permit Application, which is on the Formal Meeting agenda for Council approval this evening.

Councilperson James asked Council to consider permitting the rain date for the Craft Shows to be held on the Sunday following rather than on the Saturday of the next weekend which has been the practice in the past. The problem with including an additional weekend is that many of the crafters have every weekend reserved and are not available to return to Pitman for the rain date causing them to forfeit their registration fee. Councilperson James asked Council to consider the two options presented as a possible solution.

- Option 1: Removal of the restriction in the Code of having any activity before noon on Sunday.
- Option 2: Keep the noon restriction in place for all areas currently included in the ordinance with the exception of all events held in Ballard Park.

Councilperson James said that the restriction is currently found in a separate section of the Code Book, not in with the Parks and Recreation section which prohibits Sunday morning events.

Mayor Razze said that Council members should decide if an amendment to the Ordinance is necessary and be prepared to introduce the amended ordinance at the meeting of March 28, 2022.

Councilman Weng asked if members of Council had considered the request made by residents of Hazel Avenue who do not have driveways at their homes for the Borough to reserve parking spots in the Borough-owned lot on E. Holly Avenue. Councilwoman Milward said that she is reluctant to give a designated or reserved parking spot to a resident. No further discussion was made on this topic.

Motion to close discussion: Weng Second: James
Time: 7:50 p.m.

Public Portion

Motion to open to the public: Weng Second: Milward
Time: 7:50 p.m.

Paul Blass, 517 E. Holly Avenue – Mr. Blass suggested that Council add additional funds to the Grove Auditorium line item in the 2022 Municipal Budget. He said that plans have been drawn up for the replacement of the lattice that opens on the sides of the Auditorium and that with the rise in the cost of building materials there may not be enough to complete the project. He feels that the project should be completed due to the progress that has made so far as well as the cost spent for the engineering work performed by the Borough appointed engineer, Federici & Akin, LLC.

Jim Pierpont, 23 Crafton Avenue – Mr. Pierpont suggested that Council talk to the Public Works Manager and develop a ten year plan for the replacement of lead and galvanized pipes in the Borough. He suggested that there may be records at Public Works showing the areas of location and to have a cost estimate drawn up for the replacement.

Mr. Pierpont suggested to Councilman Kelly that there is a line item in the budget document designated for street repairs and is usually in the amount of \$100,000. He urged Councilman Kelly to not reduce that amount and to use the funds for small projects throughout the Borough that may have to be done in an emergency or to supplement other projects.

Mr. Pierpont, speaking to Councilman Mazzola, suggested that funds from water surplus can be moved to the water budget to finance water projects.

Giuliano Apadula, 62 S. Broadway – Mr. Apadula thanked Council for considering his request for a credit to the water bill at his property and said that he understands Council’s position. He asked if anything could be done to waive the interest that is being assessed to the open balance. Borough Solicitor Vigilante said that the interest is a statutory requirement and the Borough does not have the authority to waive interest on tax and water and sewer accounts.

Motion to close public portion: Mazzola Second: Milward
Time: 7:57 p.m.

Adjournment
Motion: James Second: Weng
Time: 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith O’Donnell
Borough Clerk/Administrator