

BOROUGH OF PITMAN
WORK SESSION MINUTES
August 14, 2023
7:00 P.M.

Call to Order

Time: 7:01 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 and the Courier Post, posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board, and advertised on the Borough of Pitman website.

Roll Call

Council President Fitzpatrick: present
Councilman Kelly: present
Councilwoman Milward: present
Mayor Razze: present
Clerk McCafferty: present

Councilperson James: present
Councilman Mazzola: present
Councilman Weng: present
Borough Solicitor Vigilante: present

Discussion

Motion to Open Discussion: Weng
Time: 7:02 p.m.

Second: James

LED Sign Discussion

Councilman Kelly opened the discussion about the LED Sign by listing the three estimates provided by the Economic Development Committee--Astro Sign (Glassboro), Sign Boy (Woodbury Heights), KC Signs (Aston, PA). KC Signs was found to be the best option. The Economic Development Committee is willing to pay a portion of the cost from their budget. It was discussed that some other departments could contribute a portion of the cost from their budgets also. Any remaining balance could come from Public Properties and the general fund. The Council all agreed that the sign needs replacement. Councilperson James mentioned that the Economic Development Committee would also take over the annual cost of the cellular service required.

Chairman Barry Owens of the Economic Development Committee added comments on some of the features of the proposed sign from KC Signs. He also listed other organizations within the area that use and are happy with their services.

Councilwoman Milward asked if the sign could have messages updated remotely to prevent someone having to come on site, which is the way the current sign operates. Mr. Owens stated that this would be possible with the new sign.

After some discussion, it was decided that Mr. Owens would reach out to other departments to see what they would be willing to contribute towards cost.

Ordinance Changes for Commercial Vehicle Parking

Chief McAteer presented the Council with the current parking ordinances which incorrectly imply that commercial vehicles are prohibited from parking on the street at any time. The original intent of the ordinance was to prohibit overnight parking for these vehicles. After looking into it, the Chief believes that it was mistakenly entered under the wrong ordinance. He is requesting that Council repeal and replace the ordinance to reflect the correct information.

Councilman Kelly asked if construction vehicles are allowed to leave equipment on streets overnight while working on projects. Chief McAteer stated that this wasn't allowed according to the ordinance, but so long as notice is given to the police, reasonable arrangements can be made to accommodate these types of situations.

Chief McAteer opened a discussion to answer any questions regarding the one-way street changes. Borough Solicitor Vigilante mentioned that since the changes won't be voted on until after the school year starts, perhaps the Chief could be

authorized to implement some regulations earlier so people get used to those streets being one-way. The Chief mentioned that the police department already had a plan in place if given authorization to do so.

Councilperson James mentioned the disruption these changes might cause for residents, particularly around Albert Ave., and asked the Chief to elaborate on any possible alternatives. The Chief mentioned his main concern was the school and sports fields. Some alternatives included making the one-way time sensitive and only applying to 1) School hours, Mon-Fri from 8 a.m.- 3 p.m., or, 2) School hours, Mon-Fri from 8 a.m.- 3 p.m. during school months only (Sept-June).

Councilman Weng mentioned that residents of the Pitman Mews also have concerns about the change at Clinton Ave.

The Mayor and Council consulted Borough Solicitor Vigilante and discussed moving forward with the changes as they are, with the option to amend before the second reading. Borough Solicitor Vigilante doesn't feel there should be any issue with the Chief making temporary regulations until the ordinance is passed.

Borough Solicitor Vigilante feels that if the one-way usage is modified to certain times and hours, people tend to think it is flexible, and therefore, take it less seriously. This creates a safety risk if people ignore the signs and use the road as a two-way during restricted hours.

Administrator Updates

Administrator McCafferty mentioned the hire of a new Water/Sewer employee who comes from the Public Works department. She will be placing an advertisement for a new Public Works employee soon.

Justin Milillo from the NJ DMAVA provided Administrator McCafferty with a remedial action report for the Armory. Councilman Weng suggested inviting Mr. Milillo to attend a future meeting so Mayor and Council can ask questions in person and gain some clarity on the report. Councilman Weng also mentioned that an estimate was received from Colliers Engineering for remediation, but he feels that the Borough should shop around for a better price.

ProChamps, who has been handling the Borough's vacant property registration has gone out of business and is not returning our records. Administrator McCafferty has spoken with CFO, Steve Considine and believes that, if necessary, we could handle this process in house moving forward. The Mayor and Council would like to locate the original Shared Service Agreement to see if any further legal action can be taken to secure records. Borough Solicitor Vigilante mentioned that ProChamps has been successfully sued by other towns for this same issue.

Administrator McCafferty asked the Mayor and Council to consider giving our Zoning and Code Enforcement officers authorization to give daily fines for violations. These officers currently do not have this ability, but if granted this would provide some leverage in court action. This procedure has worked successfully in other towns. Borough Solicitor Vigilante will review the current ordinances to see if we can make this a possibility for our officers.

Miscellaneous

Councilman Kelly requested that the event permit process be amended for the South Jersey Film Office and other filming institutions to make us more competitive with other towns. Mayor Razzo suggested getting a sample Resolution from the South Jersey Film Office to be presented at a future meeting.

Motion to close discussion: Weng
Time: 7:48 p.m.

Second: James

Public Portion

Motion to open to the public: Mazzola
Time: 7:48 p.m.

Second: Kelly

Paul Blass, 517 East Holly Ave addressed the Council regarding the one-way change to Clinton Ave. Mr. Blass has concerns about accidents at the corner of Clinton Ave. and East Holly Ave. and feels the proposed one-way will help.

Lucille Petrillo, 4 Holly Glenn Drive asked the Council for an update with the Holly Glen HOA reimbursement. Mayor Razze mentioned that the information provided by the HOA was being reviewed, and that he is working with the Borough Solicitor on a draft agreement to present to Council. Holly Glen would also be given a copy for review. If all parties agree, the Mayor and Council can move forward with the HOA reimbursement.

Tessa Black, 56 Hazel Ave addressed the Council regarding the fact that she and her neighbors have paid for parking decals but are still unable to park near their house due to theatre traffic. She is requesting “Permit Parking Only” signs for 8-10 spaces in the Hazel Ave. lot so the few houses who don’t have driveways have a chance to park near their homes. Councilman Weng mentioned that having previously lived in this area, he can attest to the difficulty of finding parking on this one-way street. Discussion continued amongst the Council about similar complaints from residents in the Grove and the apartments over Broadway about the lack of parking available because of events happening Uptown. Councilperson James would like the Council to brainstorm some ideas on how to address this. Councilman Mazzola also mentioned that it’s not enough to place the signs, because people still ignore them, there needs to be enforcement also.

Debra Guarni, 455 Locust Ave addressed the Council about her concerns over traffic near the Pitman Mews with the one-way change on Clinton Ave. She feels drivers are already reckless and make shortcuts through their complex, and she feels this will just become worse with the one-way. Chief McAteer answered, acknowledging that the police know this has been a problem area, and listed some of the precautions the police intend to take should the change go into effect.

Motion to close public portion: Mazzola
Time: 8:02 p.m.

Second: Milward

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Weng
Time: 8:02 p.m.

Second: James

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra McCafferty, Borough Clerk