

**BOROUGH OF PITMAN
WORK SESSION MINUTES
July 8, 2024
7:00 P.M.**

Call to Order

Time: 7:03 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 Mazzola: present
Councilman Uyehara: absent
Clerk McCafferty: present

Councilperson James: present
Councilwoman Milward: absent
Mayor Razze: present
Borough Solicitor Vigilante: present

Discussion

Motion to Open Discussion: James
Time: 7:04 p.m.

Second: Fitzpatrick

Tree Ordinance

Solicitor Vigilante presented a further revised version of the tree ordinance which was voted down at the June 24th Council meeting. The current changes refer back to some original language proposed by the NJDEP regarding exemptions and the number of trees that may be removed per lot size. Council President Fitzpatrick mentioned that the reason the last ordinance was voted down was due to the feeling that a large number of Pitman residents would fall below the lot size of “one quarter acre or greater.” He felt that all residents should receive an exemption of one tree per year regardless of lot size and made some comparisons to what other towns were adopting.

Mayor Razze opened up the discussion to representatives of the Environmental Commission.

Robert Holwitt, 606 Highland Terrace, Chairman of the Environmental Commission, feels that by providing the exemption to remove one tree per year, this will result in a net loss of trees over time. Mr. Holwitt stated that this change of language for exemptions would exclude a large majority of the town, thus defeating the original intent of the ordinance. The EC’s proposed language does not prohibit a resident from removing a tree, however, it gives options for the method of replacement that would be in accordance with State guidelines: 1) replace tree in kind on property 2) donate a tree for another location within the Borough, or 3) Pay into the tree fund. Mr. Holwitt feels the proposed fee is very reasonable compared to other towns and that despite many residents having smaller lots sizes, they would not have a problem with replacement by one of these methods in order to preserve natural resources of oxygen, shade, and stormwater control.

Councilperson James stated that she was happy with the prior ordinance, as was the Environmental Commission. Both Councilperson James and Councilman Mazzola felt that enough time and energy had been spent on the tree ordinance.

Mr. Holwitt felt that the Environmental Commission had been more than willing to compromise with Council during the process and would like to see the ordinance adopted with their previous recommendations.

Solicitor Vigilante stated that she can move forward with whatever recommendations Council wanted. Councilperson James suggested adopting the prior ordinance and seeing how it works, amending later if adjustments need to be made.

Chicken Ordinance

Solicitor Vigilante presented the latest draft ordinance amending Ordinance No. 3, 2021 regarding the keeping of chickens within the Borough. Suggestions from previous meetings were incorporated regarding the number of chickens per license, the size of coops, license fees, and the inspection and enforcement of regulations for coops. Council was in agreement on the proposed changes. Solicitor Vigilante will work on finalizing the ordinance for possible introduction at the next meeting.

Administrator Updates

Administrator McCafferty presented the July Engineer's report for Mayor and Council to review. Mayor Razze asked for an update on the drainage issues at Lakeside Ave and Lakeview Ave. Some yard debris washed down the street during recent heavy rains and clogged the drain. Once the debris was cleared, everything drained quickly and effectively. Public Works is in the process of finding some solutions to keep yard debris from reaching the drains.

Administrator McCafferty gave an update on the cleanup at Glen Lake spillway and informed Council that the State is now recognizing it as a dam. Preparations are being made to meet State requirements, including a manual, some cleanup and repairs, and scheduling an inspection moving forward.

Administrator McCafferty mentioned that the Pitman High School has expressed interest in hanging banners to celebrate the 100th graduating class in 2025. There were no objections from Council.

Administrator McCafferty presented a tentative application for messages on the new LED Sign. The Borough has been receiving requests from various organizations wanting their information to be displayed. Discussion ensued about what types of information would be permitted to display, and what guidelines should be in place. Mayor Razze felt that advertising should be restricted to community events and non-profit groups, as opposed to promoting businesses.

Administrator McCafferty reminded Council about establishing guidelines for Committee Facebook pages.

Administrator McCafferty reiterated to Council that they should send her their "wish list" for projects within the Borough so she can work on allocating funds for their completion.

Miscellaneous

Council President Fitzpatrick asked for an update on the Armory appraisal that began work some time ago. Administrator McCafferty will follow up with the appraiser. There are a few parties who expressed interest in the property.

Council President Fitzpatrick mentioned forming the committee to review proposals for the Sony property. As discussed at a previous work session, this committee will include members of Council and the Planning and Zoning Board. Councilperson James expressed interest in participating, along with Council President Fitzpatrick. Mayor Razze would also like to be involved if possible. Council President will reach out to the Planning and Zoning Board to see which members they would like to include.

Motion to close discussion: James
Time: 7:41 p.m.

Second: Fitzpatrick

Public Portion

Motion to open to the public: Mazzola
Time: 7:41 p.m.

Second: James

Walt Madison, 152 West Ave shared a story about a tree ordinance that was discussed years ago when he served as a Councilman.

Mike Grillo, 155 West Ave asked what the proposed fee would be if residents chose the option of paying into the tree fund. Solicitor Vigilante informed him that it was \$25.00 for small diameter trees and \$50.00 for large diameter trees. Mr. Grillo explained several trees have needed to be removed near his home over the years for a variety of reasons, and he does not feel that these fees would be prohibitive to him or his neighbors.

Motion to close public portion: James
Time: 7:47 p.m.

Second: Mazzola

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: James
Time: 7:47 p.m.

Second: Fitzpatrick

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra McCafferty, Borough Clerk