

**BOROUGH OF PITMAN
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2017**

Call to Order

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Salute to the Flag/Invocation

Councilwoman Higbee

Open Public Meetings Act Statement - Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, I hereby announce that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by adopting a schedule of regular meetings for 2017, which was posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board, sent to the "South Jersey Times" and filed with the Municipal Clerk on January 7, 2017.

Roll Call

Councilman Austin: Present
Councilwoman Higbee: Present
Councilman Razzo: Absent
Mayor Johnson: Present
Clerk O'Donnell: Present

Councilman Blass: Present
Council President Pierpont: Present
Councilwoman Rudley: Present
Borough Solicitor Alice: Present

Approval of Minutes

Work Session Minutes of December 27, 2016

Motion: Blass

Second: Higbee

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Razzo: Absent
Mayor Johnson _____

Councilman Blass: Yes
Council President Pierpont: Yes
Councilwoman Rudley: Abstain

Committee Reports

Councilman Austin read the following report:

McCowan Memorial Library

It was a busy year for the library. They were involved in numerous programs and events including the summer reading program, museum pass program, Pitman Poems on Parade, Woman's Club House Tour and their involvement in 4th Friday activities.

The Library Director attended a Disaster Planning Workshop on how the library can assist the town in the event of an emergency.

Annual attendance at the Library was reported to be 71,000 visitors, the various Story Time activities had over 4000 children participate.

Library improvements include new blinds, new bookcases in the children's area, and nine new computers.

The Library Board of Trustees did not meet during the month of December; their next meeting is on January 24.

Planning & Zoning Board and Construction Office

This year also proved to be busy for the combined offices with the much welcomed new businesses in town and the construction that accompanied them.

The Zoning Office collected approximately \$8,450.00 in fees, and issued the following major permits for 2016:

- Zoning Permits – 136
- Site Plan Waivers - 145
- Clothing Bin Permits – 5
- Outdoor Seating Permits – 5
- POD Permits - 4

The Zoning Officer also helped 212 visitors in his office on Wednesday evenings. He completed forty-nine investigations, seventeen violation letters, one Court Summons, and one Superior Court appearance.

Combined Planning & Zoning Board

The Planning & Zoning Board was also busy, and continued to process site plans and subdivisions for projects throughout the Borough. The “New Use” process for minor site plans has continued to be a success, saving both time and money for applicants.

There has been much focus on the Uptown this year. The C-1 zoning requirements for the Uptown area were updated, and the Board is in the process of revising architectural and signage standards for the Uptown in order to help stimulate economic development.

The update of the Master Plan is in progress, and will be finished in 2017. The next meeting of the Planning & Zoning Board is on January 17, at 7:00 p.m.

Construction Office

Construction Office personnel issued 698 permits, which included 231 building, 417 electrical, 109 fire, 239 plumbing, and one elevator. Fees collected in 2016 totaled \$106,898.00.

Fees collected from Community Champions for the registration of vacant properties totaled \$115,300.00. There is currently approximately 65 vacant properties still registered, which is down from about 80 when last reported.

Pitman Schools

As we so often speak about school taxes, which Council has no control over, I’d just like to make residents aware that the Pitman School District is asking for resident feedback for their strategic planning by completing an online survey. The information was published in the South Jersey Times, and the online questionnaires must be submitted no later than January 10. It is your chance to have some input in the future of the Pitman Schools, and I recommend all to complete the survey.

Finally, I personally would like to thank all of our employees and volunteers for their hard work and efforts on behalf of Pitman during 2016.

Councilman Blass

Councilman Blass stated that there are two items that he found to be most important to him this past year. The first being that Council authorized money to improve the Grove Auditorium. He stated that he has already met with the Borough’s Engineer and Planner, and an architect specializing in historic buildings in an effort to

get the plans started. He is waiting for one other report to be obtained before he moves ahead with the renovation process.

Secondly, Councilman Blass also had an inventory done of the trees in the Grove. This enables him to know which trees are closer to dying than the others, allowing him to be a little more proactive in removing these trees before they become a danger to the surrounding area.

Councilman Pierpont read the following report:
2016 was a very busy year for our Public Works Department.

We started the year by keeping our budget in line with a minimal, and contractual, increase. During the budget process, we established a Dedicated Trust Account for snow removal funds. This means that any monies not spent from the snow removal line item in our budget, are placed in an account to be used for snow operations and/or equipment in future years. Hopefully, this will save us from moving funds from line item to line item when we have bad winters by using monies saved during milder winters.

We applied for and received grant funding from the State, which should finish up the repaving of Hudson Avenue. These funds were frozen by the state a couple of months ago, but were released again a few weeks ago, and as soon as our project receives approval from the State, we will go out to bid.

We also saved money by purchasing “gently used” equipment this year. We authorized bonding money for a new leaf vacuum, dump truck, portable light tower, and emergency generator. The leaf vacuum and dump truck were purchased through state approved purchase accounts and the portable light tower and emergency generator were purchased locally. Although these two items are gently used, I am confident they can suit our needs and the savings was well over \$42,000.

Mrs. O'Donnell, Councilman Rasse, and I sat down and negotiated our contract with the Teamsters Union, who represent our Water and Sewer Division. I thank them for their time and talents in assisting me with that task.

Since late September, our department ran without a manager. I would like to commend all our personnel for the outstanding and professional job they did during this period, but would especially like to recognize Mrs. O'Donnell, Ms. Domico, Mr. Whitehouse and Mr. Paden, our Highway and Water and Sewer Division Supervisors for stepping up and filling in.

We recently hired Mr. Fred Rodi as our new Public Works Manager. Mr. Rodi was the manager in Riverton, New Jersey, and started here in Pitman just last week. With the recent winter storm, what a first week it's been. It was a long process of screening applicants and conducting interviews. In fact, we advertised the opening more than once. Again, I have to thank Mrs. O'Donnell for her assistance, and Council and our residents, for their patience in this matter. We've had four or five managers in the last eight years or so, and one we've tried twice, so I wanted to try and make the right choice and that took some time.

We've recently renegotiated the contract for our recycling disposal. This should save our residents money and our Highway Department time and man hours, because we no longer will drive our recycling to Camden for disposal.

I'm not saying everything ran smoothly in our Public Works Department. We've had equipment break down, small fender benders, and large water main breaks costing us money for repair parts, outside contract work, and overtime, but all in all things went well this year and I look forward to continuing to improve our infrastructure, equipment, and professional service, which our taxpayers and residents deserve.

The Green Team attained another 60 points towards certification under the Sustainable New Jersey Grant Program. Hopefully, with the irons we still have in the fire, so to speak, with drafts of ordinance changes, resolutions, and initiatives, which were not completed in time for submission, we can achieve our certification in 2017. I look forward to continuing my work with the team and Council to make this happen in 2017. Accordingly, certification may help us secure some grant monies to initiate or improve upon environmental, recreational, and civic programs.

The Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce had many successes in 2016. The Spring and Fall Craft Fairs had record attendance, and many new businesses opened in town. Our town has become a destination for good food and live entertainment and this is because of the hard work of our business owners and the dedication of our Chamber to promote Pitman.

We recently received a grant for the repair and/or replacement of the brick pavers, which over the years have settled and become a potential tripping hazard. This project should go out for bid very soon.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the recent passing of Lori Poisker. This young lady was the driving force behind the Craft Fairs. Her time and talent to recruit new sponsors, vendors, and volunteers will be missed. The Craft Fair has been around for years, but for the last ten years or more, it was Lori who built it into the success it is today. She was a kind person, who was always there for us. My thoughts go out to Ben and their young family.

Councilwoman Higbee read the following report:

2016 Municipal Budget:

I am proud of our 2016 Municipal Budget, and the services we were able to provide to Pitman's residents. It is difficult to ensure that our residents receive the municipal services they deserve while keeping costs down.

Pitman Clean Communities:

Pitman received a grant award of \$21,922.29 for 2016. With those funds we will be able to do seventeen clean-ups. Half of these clean-ups have been done, and the remaining half are scheduled to be performed in the spring of 2017. Other items that were financed with grant monies are:

- School assemblies at our three elementary schools
- Equipment that our Public Works Department used to keep storm drains clear
- A town-wide shredding event
- Grocery totes, and other promotional items

On a positive note, during our clean ups in Pitman, we are finding less and less trash and recycling each year.

Pitman Municipal Alliance:

Many, many thanks to our Administrator, Judy O'Donnell, for her supervision of these grant funds.

Grant amount: \$13,893.00

Municipal Alliance Activities include:

- Red Ribbon week in our elementary schools
- Bowling and a movie for Summer Playground/Pitman Recreation participants
- A self-esteem program
- Youth Week Activities

Again, thanks to Administrator O'Donnell for everything she does.

Councilwoman Rudley read the following report:

Public Safety Committee

The Public Safety Committee is in the process of revising its' Emergency Operating Plan.

Pitman's Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is scheduled to meet on Monday nights at 5:30 p.m. in the Borough Hall Conference Room on February 27, 2017, May 22, 2017, September 25, 2017, and November 27, 2017. The purpose of the LEPC is to develop plans for emergencies under SARA Title III, and also to identify hazards that we need to plan for in the future.

The County Office of Emergency Management meetings will be on Thursday nights at the Operations Center in Clayton on February 16, 2017, May 18, 2017, August 17, 2017 and November 16, 2017 at 7:00 PM. All are welcome to attend.

Pitman Police Department

The First Annual Food Truck Festival was such an enormous and wonderful success that efforts are underway for the planning of the Second Annual Food Truck Festival. This time with, hopefully, at least twice as many trucks!

The previous Pitman Police Community Appreciation Night was brought back this year and changed, to be not just Police, but Pitman Borough generally, and was another great success. The turnout was wonderful, and almost all elements of the event were free to the public. It was a great night to be in Pitman and kudos to our Chief for bringing it back.

Total Department Arrests: 325

Total Traffic Unit Statistics:

Crashes: 180

DWI arrests 24

Traffic summonses: 2255

Parking summonses: 1143

Detective Bureau Statistics

Detective investigations – 96

Arrests by the Detective Bureau – 18

Cleared investigations – 17

Firearm license background investigations – 141

Total cases involving evidence processing and lab submittal – 214

Total investigation discovery requests – 299

Body worn camera discovery requests – 94

Total SIU Narcotics Statistics

Investigations - 26

Search warrants - 15

Arrests - 32

Joint investigations with other jurisdictions - 15

Approximately \$6,000 seized

Second degree major crimes charged for narcotic distribution – 10

Fire Safety Office

Inspections:

Uniform Fire Code Inspections - 510

Smoke Detector/ Change of Occupancy Inspections - 446
 Fire Permits - 20
 Time extensions issued - 5
 Fire Investigations - 7
 Appeals - 2
 Complaints handled - 13
 Civilian burn injuries - 2
 Total fees collected - \$84,144.98

Activities:

Conducted State Fire Inspector class - 16 graduates
 Hosted Fire Prevention Week open house
 Fire investigators attended state training conference
 Two Investigators completed National Fire Academy training
 Multiple fire safety programs delivered to public
 No firefighter fatalities, 1 serious civilian injury - Burn to a child from hot coffee
 Total value of fire loss for 2016 approximately \$200,000

Pitman Fire Departments

Fire Prevention Week was a success, as was Fire Prevention Night. This year, as Public Safety Director, I have learned so much more about the extent to which our volunteer Fire Departments serve this community.

Highland Chemical Engine Company

Responded to over 300 calls for service
 Real fires - 13
 No Firefighter fatalities or serious injuries

Highland has qualified new operators, graduated two new members from fire school, two from EMT school, trained and promoted new officers, replaced outdated hose, completed testing and third party certification on all of our equipment, adjusted our training and operations to meet the changing demands of our community, and obtained federal grant funding to ensure all members have modern compliant protective equipment.

During 2016, Highland implemented a new digital radio system and were able to get the fire siren fixed at the firehouse and at Wawa.

Highland Chemical Engine Company has been awarded over \$400,000 in federal grant funding to obtain necessary equipment for our company.

Pitman Fire Company Number 1

Total Assignments – 349
 Fire Police Assignments – 28
 Drills - 50

Apparatus Responses		Mutual Aid	
2811	97	To Glassboro	15
2814	4	To Mantua	26
2816	112	To Other	21
2818	69	From Glassboro	1
2882	28	From Mantua	18

2883	28	From Other	0
M28	0		

EQUIPMENT USED

Supply Line	Hand Lines
Ladders	Saws
Hand Tools	Meters
Rescue Tools	Sta-Dri

Economic Development Committee

The EDC is currently working on a new sign at Broadway and Holly Avenue that should be completed by spring, and has plans for new planters along Broadway.

Theatre Avenue is still in the works with two fundraisers coming up in the next few months. The first is a performance at the Human Village Brewery this Thursday night, January 12, with Jason Ager playing. Tickets are \$25.00. The second is an Open House at the Broadway Theatre. This will be free to the public, but there will be various events including a talent competition for all ages, behind the scenes tours of the Historic Theatre, some items for sale, as well as additional activities. This is planned for April 9, and should be a wonderful community event.

EDC - Economic Restructuring Sub-Committee 2016 Accomplishments

- **Established** www.growpitman.com
 - Single source for vacant commercial properties
 - Resource listing for funding services, the Pitman Tax Abatement Program, the Pitman façade grant program, and state and country resources to help businesses with their needs.

- **Recruit New Businesses**
 - Hosted two property tours which brought in over forty potential business owners and investors to Pitman to look at available commercial properties.
 - Papertree Studio rented as a result of the first forum
 - Second forum has resulted in several businesses interested in coming to Pitman such as Emerald Tea from Mullica Hill who would like to be on Second Avenue, Devour Desserts, if a space with a full kitchen opens up.
 - Provide a happy and welcoming support to new businesses as they navigate process of getting up and running here in Pitman.

- **Strengthen Existing Businesses**
 - We have tried to have individual conversations with all business owners and building owners to let them know that we are here to provide support to them in any way that we can and to help them grow their business as well as to point them to the website for resources.
 - Held Finance Forum in spring which provided information to new and existing businesses – this forum helped several businesses including Manninos!

Special Events

The **Shop and Stroll Pitman** Digital Media Event resulted in incredible activity online with almost 2,000 views of the video of gifts available in Pitman, more pedestrian traffic Uptown at the shops, as well as a great number of selfies and confirmations via Facebook that Everybody Likes Pitman. This was a zero budget event and the Grand Prize Winner will be announced this weekend. Various Uptown businesses donated items to the Grand

Prize Winner and many of them will be present together to give the prize to the winning family. In all, we had almost forty participating businesses and organizations. Presenting a unified front is important for any business district and I believe, for any Community.

Patrick Bradley reported that, even in the face of freezing temperatures, the Shop and Stroll helped contribute to the Friday before Christmas as being one of Alaura's top ten busiest days of the year.

The **Pop-up Entertainment** along Broadway was somewhat hampered by the freezing cold, but we did have Jazz Hands Dance Academy performing on Friday, December 9, in Ballard Park, while the Mayor's Dinner was taking place at Mannino's. Several individuals from other towns in the county mentioned how festive the Uptown was, and how neat it was to have the entertainment. The First Baptist Church caroled along Broadway on Saturday, December 10. They enjoyed themselves and would like to get more involved in Pitman's community events in the future. This pop-up entertainment was merely a first step to hopefully having Pitman's own Winter Village where we can draw community members in for shopping and holiday merriment, and as a complement to our already great events and attractions put on by Mr. and Mrs. Fortney, as well as Mr. Brown.

The **First Annual Haunted Tales of Pitman Ghost Tour** went off this year as a huge success despite having no budget. This event was held over the course of six evenings during the month of October. Stories and experiences were contributed by residents, and former residents, throughout the summer and fall. Local author, Jason James, worked with the Historic Museum and independently researched some Pitman history and wove them together into a script. In addition, Councilwoman Higbee provided Jason a tour of the Grove along with some information to include.

The tours were given by volunteers, including Maureen Fitzpatrick, Jeff Kreacher, Vanessa James, Jessica MacFarland, Jason James, and myself. My Mom and former Pitman resident, Nancy Eckler, read stories to the younger children, as well as Lisa Conley. Eighth grader Rylee Moorman dressed up in ghoulish makeup and scared some tour goers which was very festive and very kind of her. My own daughters Kendall and Erin Rudley, as well as my husband Daniel Rudley, volunteered every single night, greeting tour goers and offering information. I want to also publicly thank the residents of First Avenue and Circle Avenue who went all out in decorating of their own homes to provide a great atmosphere for the tours, as well as the Friends of the Grove who lent the tour hundreds of pumpkins for added décor. There are a few children who live near the Grove Auditorium who I could count on each night to help me turn on the lights for the luminaries, as well as the children of the bride whose rehearsal and wedding took place on tour nights. Thank you also to Kevin Austin for helping move pumpkins and other props to make way for the wedding. Though I cannot recall her name, she was so good humored about the two events existing on the same day, as well as her rehearsal. In fact, her bridal party was the first tour to go out and I believe they enjoyed it. Thank you to Paul Blass and to Jim Pierpont and their families for taking the tour and providing me with their feedback. Thank you also to Sarah Weng for hand crocheting the enormous spider webs, as well as Kelly Crispin Frost for providing the birdcage, Woodbury Antiques for giving me the raven, the Weng family for buying the large black spiders, as well as Jeanette and Zoe Fleming, Mark Kummer, Lisa, Mitchell, and Kara Conley, and Melissa Jordan for contributing the winning Jack O'Lanterns as well as all of the Jack O'Lantern contest participants.

VFW Post 6469 was also kind to bring over jugs of apple cider, as well as cups for the tour goers. That was such a nice touch, and I really appreciate Rob Glass for noticing the need and stepping up right away.

The business portion of this tour involved many participating businesses and the library. This allowed those who came to the tour an excuse to check out the participating stores and businesses, and was the first of many customer engaging events I plan to organize throughout town. It is my thought that people need more than just shopping in order to get them to come out from behind the screen and shop in person. For our retail-only

establishments, an engaging game helps accomplish that purpose and gives them an excuse to peek their head in stores they may have never otherwise seen.

Finally, I am proud to serve as the Public Safety Director and as the liaison to the Economic Development Committee, as well as to serve as a Councilwoman for our Borough. Everyone in this room, as well as every community member, can be an ambassador to Pitman. Let's work together and talk positively about Pitman, each other, our business district, and our restaurants.

Miscellaneous

Councilwoman Rudley asked Councilman Austin if the 71,000 visitors to the library is the number that the people counter on the door recorded.

Councilman Austin replied that he did look into that, and that he is going to have another discussion with the director. He said that the way they take the count is by the counter on the door. Sometimes, when there is just bathroom traffic this person will be counted again. They do take their total figure and divide by half. This is something that has to be looked at again.

New Business

Ordinance No. 1, 2017 – Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, Amending the Borough of Pitman Historic Preservation Commission Design Guidelines of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, New Jersey

First Reading

Motion: Austin

Second: Blass

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razzo: Absent

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Resolution No. 26, 2017 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Appointing Martin Finger as Deputy Licensed Water Treatment Operator for the Borough of Pitman

Motion: Pierpont

Second: Higbee

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razzo: Absent

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Resolution No. 27, 2017 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Refund of the Cost of Clearing a Sewer Pump at 619 McKinley Avenue, Block 175 Lot 1.01 in the Borough of Pitman

Motion: Pierpont

Second: Higbee

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razzo: Absent

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Resolution No. 28, 2017 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing an Increase in the Annual Base Rate of Pay of Water and Sewer Department Employee Matt Paden for Attaining Licensure in the Categories of Water Distribution Class I and Water Treatment Class I

Motion: Pierpont
Roll Call:
Councilman Austin: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Razzo: Absent
Mayor Johnson _____

Second: Higbee
Councilman Blass: Yes
Council President Pierpont: Yes
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Resolution No. 29, 2017 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Supporting the Gloucester, Salem, and Cumberland Counties Municipal Joint Insurance Fund’s Safety Programs

Motion: Higbee
Roll Call:
Councilman Austin: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Razzo: Absent
Mayor Johnson _____

Second: Blass
Councilman Blass: Yes
Council President Pierpont: Yes
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Resolution No. 30, 2017 – 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 shall be:

- Contract negotiations for PT Public Works Employees
- Reorganization of Public Works Department Workforce

Action may be taken upon returning to an open meeting.

Motion: Pierpont
Roll Call:
Councilman Austin: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Razzo: Absent
Mayor Johnson _____

Second: Blass
Councilman Blass: Yes
Council President Pierpont: Yes
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Resolution No. 31, 2017 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Accepting the Corrective Action Plan as Submitted by the Borough’s Chief Financial Officer for Year 2015

Motion: Higbee
Roll Call:
Councilman Austin: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Razzo: Absent
Mayor Johnson _____

Second: Pierpont
Councilman Blass: Yes
Council President Pierpont: Yes
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Payment of Bills

Motion: Higbee
Second: Rudley

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Abstains to #33190; votes to approve all others
Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Council President Pierpont: Abstains to #33189; votes to approve all others
Councilman Razze: Absent
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes
Mayor Johnson _____

Event Permit Applications

Applicant: Pitman Athletic Association
Event: Registration and Monthly Meeting Dates

Time: See application for various times
Location: Council Chambers; Borough Hall
Contact Person: David Ricciardelli

Motion: Blass

Second: Austin

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Razze: Absent
Mayor Johnson _____

Councilman Blass: Yes
Council President Pierpont: Yes
Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Public Portion

Motion to open to the public: Blass
Time: 8:35 p.m.

Second: Austin

No public comment.

Motion to close the public portion: Pierpont
Time: 8:35 p.m.

Second: Blass

Closed Meeting

Motion to Enter into a Closed Meeting: Blass
Time: 8:35 p.m.

Second: Pierpont

Motion to Return to an Open Meeting: Pierpont
Time: 9:27 p.m.

Second: Blass

No action was taken as a result of discussion in the closed meeting after returning to an open meeting.

Adjournment

Motion: Blass
Time: 9:27 p.m.

Second: Rudley

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith O'Donnell
Borough Clerk/Administrator

