

**BOROUGH OF PITMAN
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

May 23, 2016

8:00 P.M.

Call to Order

Time: 8:05 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 2016, which was posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board, sent to the "South Jersey Times" and filed with the Municipal Clerk on January 3, 2016.

Roll Call

Councilman Austin: Present
Councilwoman Higbee: Present
Councilman Razzo: Present
Mayor Johnson: Present
Borough CFO Considine: Present
Borough Clerk O'Donnell: Present

Councilman Blass: Present
Council President Pierpont: Present
Councilwoman Rudley: Present
Borough Solicitor Alice: Present
Borough Auditor, Nick Petroni: Present

Approval of Minutes

Work Session & Formal Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2016

Motion: Blass

Second: Austin

Roll Call:

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

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

Unfinished Business

Resolution No. 82, 2016 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing the 2016 Municipal Budget to be Read by Title Only

Motion: Higbee

Second: Pierpont

Roll Call:

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

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

Resolution No. 83, 2016 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Confirming Compliance With N.J.A.C. 5:30-7; Conducting Local

Examination of 2016 Annual Municipal Budget, Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester

Motion: Higbee

Second: Pierpont

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

2016 Municipal Budget Hearing

Final Adoption and Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that the Budget and Tax Resolution of the Borough of Pitman for the year 2016 was approved by the Borough Council on April 23, 2016 and was published in the “South Jersey Times” in the issue of May 13, 2016.

Motion to adopt 2016 Municipal Budget: Higbee

Second: Pierpont

Motion to open to the public: Higbee

Second: Pierpont

Time: 8:14 p.m.

No public comment.

Motion to close public portion: Higbee

Second: Pierpont

Time: 8:14 p.m.

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Committee Reports

Councilman Austin read the following report:

McCowan Memorial Library – Our alarm contractor replaced two smoke detectors in the library, and hopefully this will correct the recent problem with false alarms that they’ve been having. During Fourth Friday events, specifically on May 27, June 24, July 22, and August 26, the library will be open at 6:00 p.m. with different activities planned for each month.

On May 5, Library Director Sharon Furgason, and library employee Margaret Ware, attended a disaster workshop.

During the month of April, 5898 individuals visited the library, and 441 children attended story time.

The Library Board of Trustees will meet on May 24th at 7:00 p.m.

Combined Planning & Zoning Board – I attended the meeting on May 16. Five Historic District applications were presented and four were approved fully, and one was partially approved to begin minimum work. The Board passed variances to allow the Borough’s parking lot project to continue, and to be put out to bid. During the Public Portion, residents were interested in knowing the number of parking spaces, and if the parking spaces would be available to residents of the Grove for additional parking.

Councilman Blass

Councilman Blass reported that several lights have been repaired at the Grove Auditorium, and that the Pitman Memorabilia Museum will be open this Friday from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Councilman Blass thanked

Councilwoman Higbee for arranging the Clean Communities sponsored Pitman High School Freshman Class clean-up along the railroad tracks this past weekend. Councilman Blass also thanked the entire Razze family for coming out to help as well.

Councilman Razze

Councilman Razze reported that parade registration will remain open until Friday, June 17. Line up information will be sent out to participants on, or about, June 24. We are also currently accepting nominations for the 2016 Parade Grand Marshal. Nominations can be submitted via email at pitmanparade@gmail.com or delivered to Borough Hall. Nominations will close on Friday, June 10.

Councilman Razze also reported that at the Joint Insurance Fund meeting, held this afternoon, a variety of issues were discussed, including transitional duty for Borough employees, exclusion of coverage for inflatable play equipment, coverage for JIF members who fail to obtain proof of insurance from an online vendor, and coverage for Social Engineering, which is when someone is tricked into sending money to a vendor due to contact via computer or other electronic communications. Councilman Razze said that he will also share these topics with the Safety Committee during their meeting tomorrow.

Councilman Razze congratulated Kids Caring Foundation, and particularly SPARC, for hosting another 5k Run last Saturday morning.

The Razze family would like to thank Councilman Blass and Mrs. Marone from Pitman High School for allowing the entire family to join them and several high school students at the Clean Communities clean-up yesterday afternoon. The treasures that were found along the railroad tracks have certainly given Carly and Lucas a lot to talk about.

Council President Pierpont read the following report:

The project on Spruce Avenue is moving ahead smoothly enough. We've been fortunate thus far that any obstacle we've encountered has been handled smoothly. The water main on North Oak Avenue was tied-in to the new main on Spruce Avenue. The sanitary sewer main was installed on Spruce and Elsie Avenues. The storm water system is the next to be repaired, with a new system to be installed on Spruce Avenue. Additionally, the curbing, driveway aprons, and sidewalks, still need to be done.

Public Works crews continue to cut back tree limbs and brush along West Jersey Avenue.

We have started mowing all Borough-owned properties. If anyone sees a Borough-owned lot in need of mowing, please call 589-1040, and identify the location of the property needing attention.

Free mulch is still available to any resident, please visit our website, or call 589-1040, to order yours.

In-street leaf collection for spring 2016 has ended. Please put your leaves in containers or bags and place them at the curb for pick up with the trash.

The Greater Pitman Chamber of Commerce Spring Craft Fair was reported to be a huge success. The weather was fantastic, however, the fair ended thirty minutes early due to a pending storm with reported winds and possible hail. Even though the storm never came to fruition, it was the right call for the safety of everyone concerned, and it enabled the Police and Public Works crews to get the street cleaned and opened for traffic just as the rain started. My thanks and congratulations to Lori Poisker and the volunteers.

Public Works crews will be out in the predawn hours this Friday to paint the curbs and parking spaces along Broadway. If you happen to be up early that morning, please be very careful and mindful of work crews on Broadway. I will be asking the Police Department to deny overnight parking on Broadway for that work to be completed.

Councilwoman Higbee

Councilwoman Higbee reported that on June 10, at 10:00 a.m., in the Council Chambers in Borough Hall, a scheduled sale for the non-payment of taxes, assessments, and/or other municipal charges will be sold. We are beginning with one hundred properties, and if history repeats itself, we will be able to cut that list in half by June 17.

Councilwoman Higbee also reported that the Borough received a Clean Communities award from the State of New Jersey for 2016. This year we were awarded \$21,922.29, an increase of \$2,000.00 over last year's amount. Any nonprofit organization, who has insurance, or who can obtain insurance, and is interested in signing up for a clean-up, should contact Councilwoman Higbee.

Councilwoman Higbee received two very nice thank you notes from Kindle School students who did a clean-up recently at Glen Lake. Mrs. Higbee said that we should be thanking them for the very good job they did cleaning up that area.

Councilwoman Rudley

Councilwoman Rudley reported that the Economic Development Committee met on April 18. They are still in the process of regrouping following the open house and the informational session that they sponsored a few weeks ago. In addition, a very exciting adventure was proposed to try and partner with Rowan University, hopefully to have some development in Pitman.

The Board of Fire Engineers met on April 17 and I wanted to thank Councilman Austin who appeared in my place for that meeting. Councilman Austin reported that the Fire Inspectors have completed their school inspections and will begin on June 1 to inspect all vacant properties. A Fire Inspector's class was held over the last few weeks, and six individuals successfully passing the course. Also, the part needed to fix the broken fire siren has been ordered, and it should be up and running soon.

The Police Department held a Bubble Ball Tournament fundraiser this past Friday, and it was a great success. Thank you to everyone who supported this event.

The following members of the Police Department underwent training:

Patrolman Decker – Bike School; May 16-20

Patrolman Parker and K9 Ranger – K9 Training; May 16-18

Corporal Streater – SWAT Training; May 12

Patrolman Carson and Patrolman Decker - ERT Training; May 3

Councilwoman Rudley stated that there are several road construction projects taking place throughout the Borough. She advised residents to please drive safely.

Also, Councilwoman Rudley stated that parking enforcement in the "Uptown" Business District is an on-going process. Drivers are urged to please pay close attention to where they are parking, and the laws that govern that space.

New Business

Resolution No. 84, 2016 - Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Accepting the Proposal for Surveying, Design, Permitting, Bid Documents, and Inspection Services for the Reconstruction/Resurfacing and Safety Improvements to Hudson Avenue-

Section II

Motion: Pierpont

Second: Higbee

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Resolution No. 85, 2015 - Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Appointing Vanessa James as a Member of the Borough of Pitman Economic Development Committee

Motion: Rudley

Second: Pierpont

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Resolution No. 86, 2016 - Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Waiving Registration Fees Related to the Gloucester County Emergency Medical Services Building

Motion: Rudley

Second: Higbee

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Abstain

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Payment of Bills

Councilwoman Higbee announced that item #71068 will be removed from the payment list.

Motion: Higbee

Second: Pierpont

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Abstains from voting on #32116; approves all other items

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Event Permit Applications

Applicant: Pitman High School Jazz Band

Event: Concert

Date & Time: May 27, 2016 (6pm-10pm)

Location: Sunset Auditorium

Contact Person: Phil Verespy

Motion: Razze

Second: Blass

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

*Council agreed to waive the Facilities Use Fee for this event.

Applicant: Endgrain Coffee

Event: Temporary Deck with Outdoor Seating

Date & Time: May 21, 2016 – August 26, 2016

Location: Borough owned parking space behind the coffee shop

Contact Person: Joe Fultano

Motion: Razze

Second: Austin

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Council President Pierpont: Yes

Councilman Razze: Yes

Councilwoman Rudley: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Public Portion

Motion to open to the public: Razze

Second: Austin

Time: 8:32 p.m.

Anthony Asbury, 130 Glen Lake Avenue – Mr. Asbury thanked Mayor and Council for their service to the community and also thanked the Public Works Department for cleaning up along West Jersey Avenue. Mr. Asbury announced that he has acquired 32 S. Broadway with the intention of opening a Tex-Mex style restaurant there. Mr. Asbury then asked of the status of the proposed liquor license.

Mayor Johnson reviewed the steps needed to be taken in order to approve the sale of a liquor license in the Borough. He told Mr. Asbury that to date no action has been taken by Council, and there is no time frame in place for consideration of this proposal.

Councilman Austin said that there are differing opinions among Council members on this issue, and that he would like to have the input of residents before going forward.

Councilman Razze said that he had not previously heard anyone outside of some Council members speak against a liquor license. He said that he was glad to hear from residents who attended the Work Session meeting earlier this evening that they were not in favor of the proposal for the sale of a liquor license.

Mayor Johnson told Mr. Asbury that there will be further discussion among members of Council on this issue, and that the public will be kept informed of any proposed action to be taken by the Borough.

Tom Nickerson, 585 Lambs Road – Mr. Nickerson said that in his opinion wine and good food go together, and that people generally do not get drunk having wine with dinner. Mr. Nickerson said that he fears that two high

quality restaurants in the Borough could possibly close based on this issue.

Mayor Johnson said that there are mixed opinions from the restaurant owners now doing business on this issue. He said that he is interested in hearing both sides of the argument, for and against liquor licenses in the Borough.

Carol Diezel, 128 Walnut Avenue – Ms. Diezel stated that she is in favor of allowing a liquor license to be sold in the Borough. She said she feels that it will help to bring people to Pitman, and that sometimes tradition is not always a good thing. Ms. Diezel also stated that it could help the Borough's tax rate as well as promote new businesses in the Borough.

Peter Slack, 160 Cyrus Avenue – Mr. Slack commended Mr. Asbury on the success he has had with his restaurant, Sweet Lula's. He said that he has concerns about the bidding process for the liquor license being open to everyone, including those who may not have an interest in the downtown area. Mr. Slack asked if it was possible to restrict the location of the license to a certain area of the Borough.

Mayor Johnson said that restrictions could be done through zoning, but could not be done as part of the bidding process. Mr. Slack replied that the Borough would be seeking top dollar in the bidding process rather than favoring local, established, businesses.

Borough Solicitor Alice said that in this process, Council must avoid showing favoritism, or even the appearance of favoritism, to one area or group over another.

Louise Asbury, 130 Glen Lake Avenue – Ms. Asbury said that as part owner of Sweet Lula's Restaurant, she sees that patrons are disappointed at not being able to purchase alcohol products when they come to her restaurant.

Councilman Austin said that he is the person who started the whole discussion on selling a liquor license in the Borough. He said that the majority of Council has to agree to go forward with the question, and that he would not have brought it up for discussion if the Borough did not already have a brewery, with another scheduled to open this summer. His intention was to bring some tax relief for the residents, especially with the loss of approximately \$300,000.00 in tax revenue due to the closing and revaluation of the Sony property.

Council President Pierpont stated that it is Council's intention to maintain clarity and transparency on this issue. He said that initially he worked with Councilman Austin on the question of the liquor license, and will continue to do so if it is decided that the Borough will move forward on this.

Mayor Johnson again explained the process for obtaining approval to offer a liquor license for sale in the Borough, or to have the question placed on the ballot for public opinion. For either course of action, three affirmative votes from Council will be required to move forward.

Mrs. Asbury said that she and her husband are in business to make money, and they cannot do that with only offering sales through a wine outlet.

Peter Slack, 160 Cyrus Avenue – Mr. Slack asked if the question will go to a public vote, or will only Council vote? Mayor Johnson replied that it has not been decided as yet.

Anthony Asbury, 130 Glen Lake Avenue – Mr. Asbury said that on the weekdays his restaurant closes at 8:00 p.m., and at 9:00 p.m. on the weekends. With a liquor license, he feels that there would be the potential for later

