

**BOROUGH OF PITMAN
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 13, 2014
8:00 P.M.**

Call to Order

Time: 8:03 p.m.

Salute to the Flag/Moment of Silence

Councilman Blass

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 2014, which was posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board, sent to the "South Jersey Times" and filed with the Municipal Clerk on January 5, 2014.

Roll Call

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

Councilman Blass: Present
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Present
Borough Solicitor Duffield: Present

At this time, Mayor Johnson announced that Resolution No. 36, 2014 and Resolution No. 37, 2014 will be added to the agenda for adoption by Council.

Presentation of the Patrolman of the Year Award

Patrolman Nick Barbetta

Approval of Minutes

Work Session Minutes and Formal Meeting Minutes of December 23, 2013.

Motion: Blass

Second: Pierpont

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Abstain
Councilwoman Higbee: Abstain
Councilman Pierpont: Yes
Mayor Johnson: Abstain

Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Motion failed, Council will vote again at the January 27, 2014 regular meeting.

Reorganization Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2014

Motion: Higbee

Second: Blass

Roll Call:

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

Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Committee Reports
Councilman Austin

No report

Councilman Blass, 2013 Year End Report

Recreation Department:

Our park employees continued to maintain all of our athletic fields. They also entirely refurbished the Dell Field.

Recreation programs that occurred throughout the year:

- Micro-mini soccer
- Basketball – traveling and in-house
- T-Ball
- Tennis
- Summer Playground
- Summer Basketball
- Summer Theater
- H.S. Boys Summer Soccer League
- Crispin Basketball Camp
- New this year – Summer Field Hockey Camp
- Summer Band Program
- Field Hockey at the elementary and middle school levels

- Youth Week – Fireman’s Night
 - Movie Night @ Broadway Theatre
 - Middle School Art Show, Talent Show, and Dance
 - Elementary School Track and Field

- Hobo Band Concerts during the summer
- Pitman Freedom Four Mile Race
- George Haegele Pitman Golf Outing

The Recreation Department worked in conjunction with the Pitman Soccer Association, Pitman Little League, and the Pitman High School sports teams.

Regarding the basketball courts at Shertel Park: Council approved a Shared Service Agreement with Gloucester County. The courts will be repaved in the spring of 2014.

The Recreation Department changed hands in December. Roy Harmon retired after thirty-eight years of employment with the Borough. Andy Fox replaced him as the new Director.

Memorabilia Committee:

The Pitman Historic Museum was entirely remodeled this year. There are more items on display, and they are easier to see. Student docents from Walls School helped give tours to visitors during the Chamber of Commerce’s Fourth Friday Events.

Council President Razzo - 2013 Year End Report

Council President Razzo read the following report:

Combined Planning and Zoning Board

Among the items discussed this year were a subdivision of the windmill property on Grant

Avenue, the proposed changes at Venice Restaurant regarding the Pitman Room, an alleged dog kennel at a residence on Circle Avenue, the wall erected at the Habitat for Humanity sponsored house in the Grove, approval of the clothing collection bin ordinance, the Chapman property on Woodbury Road (formerly the Mitchell Property), and the Fazio Property behind TD Bank, which is an open and ongoing item for the Board. Thank you to Chairman Nick Aspras and the entire Board, along with Zoning Officer Clark Pierpont, for their hard work throughout 2013.

Within the Construction Office, our Code Enforcement Officer, Bruce Scott, had a busy year keeping up with the vacant properties around the borough. Construction Official Jeff Kier and his staff saw some welcome activity with new construction in the borough in addition to the usual renovations, additions, and other issues addressed by that office.

Miss Pitman Pageant

On Wednesday, July 3, Marissa Sanders was crowned Miss Pitman 2013 by Mayor Johnson at the 58th Annual Miss Pitman Pageant. Marissa sang and played the violin and did an outstanding job as did all the participants. Kathryn Pepe was 1st Runner-up and Nicole Lindner was 2nd Runner-up. Emily Mitten was selected as Miss Congeniality by the other participants. Thank you to our emcee for the evening, Kevin Casey, and to our committee of Beryl Kane, Sue Crispin, Sandy Razze, Stephanie Tartaglia and Walt Madison for their hard work in putting together a great pageant.

Pitman Parade Committee

The Pitman Parade Committee began meeting in January 2013 to wrap up the 2012 Christmas Parade, and to start planning for the 2013 Fourth of July Parade. Contracts for Independence Day went out within the next month. The theme of the parade was "Remembering the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg." Adherence to the deadline that had been established many years ago improved slightly, with only one issue to address.

Nominations for Grand Marshal were requested, and the committee selected Judy and Wats Lohmann out of all the nominations received.

The parade started a few minutes past the traditional 9:55 a.m. start time on July 4th and was one of the best parades yet. Hopefully everyone took notice of the minimal delays and gaps. Thank you to all those who came out and helped the morning of the parade...Dawn, Bill and Katherine Ritzler, Bette and Ron Stanwood, Jim Fortney, Barry Owen, Chuck Heinle, Gerry Howey, Carol DeLucas, Patty Pierce, Patti Kelley, Paul Blass, Debbie Higbee, and Jim Pierpont. Thank you also to our banner carriers, Nicholas and Anthony Razze, Katie and Meghan Foody, Grace Martin and Nora Stanwood. Thank you to Steve Alexander and the entire Public Works Department and to Chief Zimmerman, Sgt. Owens, and the entire Pitman Police Department for their help in the prep work and actual procession of the parade. Once again, judges were secretly placed along the route, and the parade awards were given out during the following Hobo Band Concert at Sunset Auditorium, including a special award given to Tony Gresko for his many years of service to the Parade Committee.

Of course, I will personally never forget the 2013 fireworks. Just in case anyone was under a rock and missed it, we received a call from the fireworks contractor on the afternoon of the 4th stating that circumstances beyond their control would prevent them from coming out that evening. After many hours of calls back and forth, and some negotiation with the contractor, we held what some have said was the best display they have seen in years on Friday the 5th.

Held the Saturday after Thanksgiving, the Christmas Parade of 2013 was dedicated in memory of

Tony Gresko and was a great success. Through the efforts of our Traffic Safety Officer, Sgt. Owens, and the other members of the Pitman Police Department, Broadway was clear of parked vehicles at the start of the parade. Thank you to our volunteers who came out that night...members of Highland Chemical Engine Company, Len and Griffin Clark, Barry and Merrie Owen, Marge and Jim Fortney, Stephanie Kensil and her crew of Pitman High School National Honor Society members, Patti and LeeAnn Kelley, Patty Pierce, Bette Stanwood and my right hand for the evening, Dawn Ritzler. Also, thank you to Jeff Sanders for annually transporting Santa to the event.

Movie in the Park

Our Movie in the Park was once again a relative success with approximately 60-70 in attendance. Held Friday, August 30th, at dusk, it was again held this year at Sunset Auditorium. With the aging Nicholas and Anthony Razze moving on to bigger and better things this year, I had to call in my new and improved movie critics, Carly and Lucas Razze for a great selection this year, "Hotel Transylvania". The location worked out great again this year and in true Pitman tradition, chairs were set up early.

Joint Insurance Fund

As a Fund Commissioner on the Gloucester, Cumberland, Salem County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund (TriCo JIF), I continue to have the opportunity to use my professional experience in the insurance industry to guide the Borough with its insurance coverage. In 2013, I had the opportunity to also serve on the fund's Safety Committee and the Joint Coverage Committee, encompassing all of the Southern New Jersey JIF's. I am grateful to Mayor and Council for allowing me to have this opportunity again in 2014, and I am excited to announce that I have been appointed to the Executive Board for this year giving Pitman an even greater voice within the fund. We here in Pitman have a dedicated team of department supervisors and employees who work individually and through our Borough Safety Committee to keep our expenses down and our losses at a minimum – ultimately leading to lower premiums and greater rewards. A handful of losses from previous years continue to affect our current program. Unfortunately, even the best safety measures cannot prevent all losses, but when used as a tool to prevent future losses we can take something positive from them. Even in lieu of these spikes in our loss history, we have been an excellent risk for the JIF over our tenure. As a result, over \$7,000.00 was awarded to the borough in 2013 to give us the necessary funds to continue our safety programs. I am happy to report that we used every dollar afforded to us by the JIF for 2013 – including to help fund our first ever Employee Wellness Fair.

We were also awarded a dividend of over \$30,000.00 in 2013, for a total of over \$180,000.00 in dividends for the last six years...a testament to the hard work of all those involved in our risk and safety management. Thank you to our RCM Len Eckman, our Safety Coordinator Judy O'Donnell, our Claims Coordinator Nancy Yurick, and to our entire Safety Committee.

One of my personal highlights from this past year was the opportunity to represent the Borough at Cub Scout Pack 218's Blue and Gold Breakfast on the morning of Saturday, March 9th. Although many awards and accolades were presented to the cub scouts at all levels that morning, the focus of the ceremony was the crossing over of the Webelos Cub Scouts to Boy Scout Troop 55 in the Arrow of Light ceremony...a transition I remember from my time as a scout. Thank you Mayor Johnson and to Pack Leader Hank Tapken for giving me this opportunity.

Councilman Pierpont - 2013 Year End Report

Councilman Pierpont read the following report:

The Pitman Police Department “kicked-off” the year 2013 with the Department’s “Trading Card Program.” Through donations, each employee of the department received sponsorship to purchase their own trading card. Like baseball cards, the cards include a photograph of the officer and his/her biographical information. Community members and mainly school age kids have enjoyed collecting and trading the cards. This program has brought the kids (both young and old) “closer” to our officers, and has been a great success! We plan on continuing the trading card program for many years to come.

We said goodbye to three Officers in 2013:

Sergeant Joseph Kelly retired on February 1st with 25 years of dedicated service to the Pitman Police Department.

Sergeant Steven Ward retired on June 1st with 25 years of combined law enforcement experience between the New Jersey State Police Marine Bureau and the Pitman Police Department.

E.J. Parker was hired as a full-time Patrolman on February 1 to replace Sergeant Kelly, and Marshall Pierson was hired as a full-time Patrolman on September 1 to replace Sergeant Ward.

Ken Decker was hired as a full-time Patrolman on December 1 to replace Officer Mitten who resigned from our department to pursue a career as a paid firefighter.

Through strong leadership and commitment from its members, our department has maintained staffing levels while saving tax dollars in salaries through the attrition process.

There were two promotions within the department in 2013.

On November 12, Detective Hunter Moore was promoted to the rank of Detective/Sergeant, and Patrolman Jon Streater was promoted to rank of Corporal.

Our Community events are unparalleled.

The Pitman Police Department held its annual Community Appreciation Day at Alcyon Lake Park on Wednesday, June 12th from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The 2013 event was a tremendous success. We had a couple thousand people in attendance on a beautiful spring night. There was free food, t-shirts, games and prizes for everyone in attendance. The Philly Phanatic, Eagles Mascot “Swoop,” Phillies Ball Girls, Eagles Cheerleaders and a Hawaiian band and dancers were some of the crowd favorites. Pitman Police and many volunteers from police, fire and emergency services were on-hand with various displays and demonstrations. It was a fun night for everyone, and this event helps to strengthen and enhance the police-community relationship.

As an enhancement to our department and upon the recommendation of Chief Zimmerman.

On October 15, Mayor and Council authorized the Pitman Police Department to begin fundraising for the implementation of the Borough’s “very first” K-9 Unit. The program is being funded solely through donations, and at no cost to the taxpayer. In less than two months time, the Police Department has raised almost \$30,000.00. They expect to have a dog by June 2014. The Handler, Patrolman E.J. Parker and his new K-9 dog should be trained and patrolling the streets by early next year (2015).

It’s always the best part of our job when we get a chance to recognize outstanding achievement, and in 2013 members of our Police Department received well deserved recognition.

The Gloucester County Police Awards Committee recognized two members of the Pitman Police Department for their outstanding work performances. Patrolman Matt Perry received an

“Exceptional Duty” Award for his hard work as the Pitman Police Department’s Community Appreciation Day Coordinator and Chief Robert Zimmerman received the “Chief’s Achievement” Award for his pro-active leadership efforts as Police Chief in the Borough.

In addition, Patrolman Nick Barbetta was nominated by his peers and selected by Chief Zimmerman as the Pitman Police Department’s “2013 Officer of the Year”. Patrolman Barbetta has led the department in arrests the past two years, with over 250 arrests during the two year time period. Patrolman Barbetta was honored tonight for his accomplishment.

Finally, let’s talk budget.

The Pitman Police Department has maintained an average budget of about \$100,000.00 for its overall annual “Operating Expenses.” For example: In 2005, the Pitman Police Department had an O&E Budget totaling \$105,690.00. Nine years later in 2013, the O&E budget was \$104,850.00. This can be attributed to sensible leadership within the department and a proactive approach in line by line accountability.

In closing, I want to thank Chief Zimmerman, Capt. McAteer, Mrs. Wilson and the entire Police Department staff for their dedicated service to the residents of Pitman. It was truly my pleasure and honor to work with you in 2013 and I wish every member of the department good health, much happiness and continued success as we move forward.

Councilwoman Higbee – 2013 Year End Report

Councilwoman Higbee read the following report:

The Pitman Municipal Alliance

The Pitman Municipal Alliance is a grant program that provides funding for programs that expand the prevention and education of drug abuse and bullying. Pitman’s grant amount this year was \$11,893.00. Monies were to be used on activities that support drug awareness and anti-bullying. Supported projects were Community Appreciation Day, Youth Week activities, the DARE program, Red Ribbon Week in our elementary schools, Summer Playground activities, the Fall Senior Luncheon and the Santa Parade. In 2014, our grant amount is expected to increase and the calendar year will change from January 1 - December 31 to July 1 - June 30. Administrator O’Donnell chairs the Alliance, doing a fantastic job. Finance Office employee Nancy Yurick assists, doing a terrific job also.

Clean Communities

Clean Communities is a statewide litter and graffiti abatement program. It is a three-fold program, Clean-up, Enforce, and Educate. Pitman’s grant amount for 2013 was \$16,840.91. Monies were spent on Clean Ups done, or to be done, by Kindle School, Memorial School, and Walls School. Also participating are local Girl and Boy Scout troops, Pitman United Methodist Church Men’s Group, Pitman High School Band, Pitman High School Boys Soccer Team, the Pitman All Sports Committee, Friends of the Grove, and Pitman VFW Memorial Post 6469. Each of these non-profit groups earned \$500.00. Assemblies were sponsored at each elementary school and at the middle school, and funding is in place for a newsletter. Supplies were purchased – gloves, bags, rakes, shovels, recycling cans and shirts.

On April 20, Pitman was the site of the Gloucester County Clean Community Clean-up Day. Twenty-one groups, some from Pitman and others from surrounding Gloucester County towns, swept, raked, bagged and picked up trash, recycling, and brush throughout town. Thanks to Jeff Hamilton from Gloucester County Clean Communities for his help with this event, and to Councilman Razzo who helped get goodie bags for the participants.

On January 23, at 9:30 in the morning, I will be attending the annual meeting for the Clean Communities Program.

Historic Commission

The Historic Commission members for 2013 were Walt Madison, Alice Polocz, Robin Mollenhauer, Pat Runner, Ginny Radcliffe, Michelle LaPlante and Lance Eisenhart. Each month they reviewed applications concerning requested changes to property and the exterior of buildings located in Pitman's Historic District. This year over forty applications were reviewed with most being approved. Commission members have been revising and updating the historic guidelines that the commission follows. Those updated guidelines are almost complete and will be sent to Mayor and Council for approval in the near future.

Borough Budget

In 2013, Mayor and Council began budget meetings in January and the budget was complete in late March. We hope to do the same this year. Our first budget meeting was tonight during Work Session at 6:30 p.m., and the next budget meeting will be January 22, at seven in the evening, here in Borough Hall. Thanks to our Chief Financial Officer, Steve Considine, who guides us through this process. I would like to recognize the people who work in our Finance Office here in Borough Hall, Clerk/Administrator O'Donnell, Tax Collector Beth Walls, Water and Sewer Clerk Jessica Vernacchio and Accounts Payable, Payroll Clerk Nancy Yurick. The four people I just mentioned do an outstanding job keeping our town running efficiently. The number of phone calls they handle and people they help at the front counter is remarkable, in addition to managing the individual duties related to their respective jobs. We are fortunate to have such hard working individuals working for Pitman.

New Business

Resolution No. 30, 2014 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Refund of Real Estate Taxes and Other Miscellaneous Refunds

Motion: Higbee

Second: Blass

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Councilwoman Kelley: Absent

Councilman Pierpont: Yes

Council President Razzo: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Resolution No. 31, 2014 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Submission of a Strategic Plan for the Pitman Municipal Alliance Grant for the Fiscal Year 2014

Motion: Higbee

Second: Blass

Roll Call:

Councilman Austin: Yes

Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes

Councilwoman Kelley: Absent

Councilman Pierpont: Yes

Council President Razzo: Yes

Mayor Johnson _____

Resolution No. 32, 2014 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Authorizing Federici & Akin, P.A. to Provide Engineering Services Relating to Ongoing Projects Within the Borough of Pitman as Designated

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

Second: Higbee
Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Resolution No. 34, 2014 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Cancellation of a Municipal Lien

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

Second: Blass
Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Resolution No. 35, 2014 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, Authorizing 2013 Reserve Budget Transfers

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

Second: Blass
Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Resolution No. 36, 2014 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, to Settle Pending Litigation Between Timothy G. Behr and the Borough of Pitman, and Authorizing the Mayor to Sign Settlement Documents

Motion: Higbee
Roll Call:
Councilman Austin: Yes
Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Pierpont: No
Mayor Johnson _____

Second: Blass
Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Resolution No. 37, 2014 - Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Pitman, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey Appointing Donna Domico as Temporary Licensed Water Treatment Plant Operator

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

Second: Higbee
Councilman Blass: Yes
Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Payment of Bills

Motion: Higbee
Roll Call:
Councilman Austin: Yes

Second: Blass
Councilman Blass: Yes

Councilwoman Higbee: Yes
Councilman Pierpont: Yes
Mayor Johnson _____

Councilwoman Kelley: Absent
Council President Razze: Yes

Public Portion

Motion to Open to the Public: Razze
Time: 8:45 p.m.

Second: Blass

Jim Canna, 307 Grandview Avenue - Mr. Canna asked the reason that would require the Borough to approve a resolution such as Resolution No. 30, 2014; the refund of real estate taxes. Councilwoman Higbee replied that an example would be if a resident paid the tax bill and his mortgage company paid the same tax bill, the second payment would be refunded to the payee.

Mr. Canna also asked for details of the settlement referred to in Resolution No. 36, 2014. Councilwoman Higbee explained that the claim was from a former Borough employee who was seeking payment for services performed on behalf of the Borough. It is the Borough's position that he had been paid already for the performance of these services.

Barry Owen, 508 Pitman Avenue – Mr. Owen thanked the members of the Pitman Police Department for their response to an incident that occurred recently at the high school.

Motion to Close the Public Portion: Razze
Time: 8:47 p.m.

Second: Blass

Adjournment

Motion: Razze
Time: 8:47 p.m.

Second: Blass

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith O'Donnell
Borough Clerk/Administrator