

**BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE
COUNTY OF SALEM, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – 6:30 P.M.
VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE (VTC)
February 16, 2021
MINUTES**

Mayor LaDaena D. Thomas led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor LaDaena D. Thomas made the open public meeting statement – STATEMENT: In accordance with section V of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 P.L 1975, Notice of this meeting was posted on the Borough of Penns Grove Municipal Bulletin Board designed for that purpose. Notice was also posted on the Borough of Penns Grove website: www.pennsgrove-nj.org and was emailed to the official newspaper as provided by Resolution. Additionally, stating that in response to the state of emergency in New Jersey regarding COVID-19 (“Coronavirus”), this February 16, 2021 Meeting will be held via “Zoom” online meeting platform.

Roll Call: Carter-present, Giordano-present @ 6:45 p.m., Martin-present, Mincey-present, Rambo-absent, Scarpaci-present.

Invocation by Sharon Williams, Municipal Clerk.

PAYMENT OF BILLS & APPROVAL OF BILL OF BILL LIST:

Scarpaci addressed the miscoding of Kyocera for \$65.75 under miscellaneous, stating it should be copier leasing instead of miscellaneous.

Motion to approve payment of bills and approval of bill list with amendment from “miscellaneous” to copier leasing by Mincey; second Martin.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to adopt December 8, 2020 (Regular session) by Carter; second Mincey. Roll call. All ayes.

Motion to adopt December 8, 2020 (Executive session) by Scarpaci; second Mincey. Roll call. All ayes.

Motion to adopt January 5, 2021 (Regular and Reorganization) by Mincey; second Carter. Roll call. All ayes.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CONSENT:

2021-2-21 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZIN RFQ FOR LEGAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

2021-2-22 – REFUND 2020 OVERPAYMENT OF TAX

2021-2-23 – TRANSFER OVERPAID TAX FROM 2020 TO 2021

2021-2-24 – RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE APPROVING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY FACILITY GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING TO THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT (USDA-RD)

2021-2-25 – APPROVAL TO ISSUE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, UNDER STATE COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING GUIDELINES, FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES PURSUANT TO A FY2020 SMALL CITIES AWARD TO THE BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AT DELAWARE AVENUE AND MILL STREET PUMP STATIONS

2021-2-26 – POWERS OF THE BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE PLANNING BOARD

2021-2-27 – EMERGENCY TEMPORARY RESOLUTION

Motion to adopt, by consent, by Mincey; second Martin. Roll call. All ayes.

SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING FOR ORDINANCE(S):

2021-2 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 116, POLICE DEPARTMENT, OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE

Mayor solicited public comment.

With no one from the public coming forth, motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-2, by Scarpaci; second Mincey. Roll call. All ayes.

2021-5 – AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR SALARY

Mayor Thomas solicited public comment.

Greg Martin, Spruce Street, Penns Grove, questioned how the salary was derived.

Mayor Thomas stated that the state monitor suggested the salary comparable to other Business Administrators throughout the county.

Attorney Robert Tarver stated that the salary is comparable to that of municipalities across the state of New Jersey.

Mr. Martin questioned training for the new hire.

Mayor stated that the individual appointed will be qualified and experienced in the role of Business Administrator.

Carter questioned if the size of the municipality is used in determining the salary.

Tarver stated that it is commensurate with other similarly sized municipalities.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-5 by Martin; second Giordano. Roll call. All ayes.

2021-6 – AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING POLICE DIRECTOR SALARY

Mayor Thomas solicited public comment.

Greg Martin, Spruce Street, Penns Grove, questioned the salary, over-time and required hours.

Attorney Tarver stated that it is a non-policing, salaried position and may be part-time or full time as the need may be.

Mr. Martin questioned who would conduct the day-to-day operation of the department.

Attorney Tarver stated that the day-to-day operation will be conducted by the officer in charge.

Mr. Martin also questioned the duties of the Police Director.

Attorney Tarver stated that executive duties, discipline, logistics and supplies would be some of the responsibilities, however, the Police Director does not participate in the day-to-day policing.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-6 by Mincey; second Carter. Roll call. All ayes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Buildings & Grounds (Martin, Giordano, Rambo): Councilwoman Martin stated/addressed the following: Window repairs to 186 South Broad Street. Barber Avenue Park gate has been locked.

Housing/Zoning & Planning/Shade Tree (Giordano, Martin, Rambo): Councilman Giordano stated/addressed the following: Planning Board appointed an Attorney, Engineer and newspaper of record. Auto Zone and Zhawah not yet ready for construction.

Recreation/Board of Health (Carter, Mincey, Martin): Councilman Carter stated/addressed the following: Expressed concern regarding type of lock used at Barber Avenue Park is not adequate to secure the gate. Carter stated that it allows the gate to open enough so that a small child could gain access. Carter suggested installing a bell u-lock. Carter also advised that he and Councilman Rambo met with the car club of Pennsville, with the desire of hosting car events on the first Wednesday of each month.

Public Works/Streets & Roads (Rambo, Mincey, Carter): No report.

Public Safety (Mincey, Martin, Giordano): Council President Mincey stated/addressed the following: Code Enforcement report for the prior two weeks – 7 court summonses, 23 Ten-day notices with 11 resolved. Code Enforcement Officer and the Prosecutor to meet with Dollar General regarding board of health issues.

Penn Village and Silver Run have cameras in place and are complying, Penn Gardens does not have enough in place, Mallard Park has none. Will forward information to Housing Official for enforcement of those not in compliance.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Finance Officer Report: Assistant Treasurer, Ericka Walker addressed/stated the following: Emergency Temporary Resolution.

Mr. Tarver stated relates to former Police Chief settlement as previously discussed.

Walker stated the postage machine is now in place.

Officer in Charge: Lieutenant Spera addressed/stated the following: 432 calls for service. Officer Nero has resigned. In need of Booking Clerk and SLE 2 Officers. Working on missing person case of Randy (Pop) Haywood and solicited public for any information if person is seen. An Officer will be sent to 'healer

training' through the Police Commission which will provide training for abused animal cases. Displaced family after a house fire on East Pitman Street.

Fire Chief Report: Adam Hartsough addressed/stated the following: Delivery of new fire truck, which should be in service in approximately two weeks.

Ambulance/EMS Captain Report: Council President Mincey addressed/stated the following: 82 calls for service for the month of January, and 37 calls for service from February 1st to date.

Mayoral Comment: Mayor Thomas addressed/stated the following: Invited to 'Read Across America' event hosted by the Lafayette Pershing where she will read Dr. Suess book to the children.

Addressed the need of the Business Administrator, asking Attorney Tarver to enlighten the public on the responsibility of a Business Administrator.

Attorney Tarver stated Mayor and Council are responsible for legislation, and not the day-to-day operations of the municipality. The Business Administrator will conduct the day-to-day operations of the Borough, its' employees, therefore providing seamless services to the public.

Mayor addressed the important need for an Administrator.

Attorney Report: Robert Tarver, Attorney addressed/stated the following: No new litigation since his tenure. Received and reviewing all outstanding litigation. Resolution authorizing Request for Proposals for Litigation, Labor, and Redevelopment attorneys in the event such services are necessary.

APPOINTMENTS:

Motion to appoint Arturo Hernandez-Cruz to the Penns Grove Ambulance by Giordano; second Mincey. Roll call. All ayes.

Motion to appoint John Rambo to the Salem County Solid Waste Advisory Board by Carter; second Mincey. All ayes.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion to bring on and adopt by title only, Ordinance No. 2021-7 - AN ORDINANCE EXEMPTING RESIDENCY by Carter; second Scarpaci.

Councilwoman Scarpaci questioned the need to adopt as residency requirement was rescinded.

Attorney Tarver stated that the Code required certain officers to reside within the state, however, this Ordinance will exempt them from said requirement.

Roll call. All ayes.

Motion to bring on and adopt Resolution No. 2021-2-28 - ACCEPTANCE OF THE MASTER PLAN GENERAL REEXAMINATION PROPOSAL OF RVE by Scarpaci; second Carter. Roll call. All ayes.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Jeremiah Carter, North Broad Street, Penns Grove, questioned what services are provided by Carney's Point Township, and if they are listed on the website.

Mayor Thomas stated Carneys Point Township Interlocal Agreements provides for Public Works and Tax.

Council President stated that pothole repair, street sweeping, clearing the sidewalks of Borough Hall and Police Department, and branch and leaf pickup is supposed to be completed under Public Works contract.

Mr. Carter requested the point of contact for Public Works.

Council President advised that Councilman Rambo is the Committee Chair.

Mr. Carter requested who will ensure that the contract is adhered to.

Mayor Thomas explained that the contract had been extended for one year to insure there was no interruption to services; however, it will be thoroughly negotiated for services. Mayor also advised that the Business Administrator would follow-up to ensure that the services are provided.

Greg Martin, Spruce Street, Penns Grove, questioned the Ordinance exempting residency requirement.

Attorney Tarver advised that individuals who are employed by the Borough must reside within New Jersey, however, the Ordinance exempts those positions named in the Ordinance to be exempt from that residency requirement.

Mr. Martin questioned the process by which the Police Department doing to alert the public.

Lieutenant Spera stated the following: Comprehensive investigation underway - Post on Facebook, which has 25,000 views and hundreds of shares, flyers circulated to businesses and hotels, 3 drone units spanning roof tops and 2 miles of riverbank, searches of abandoned buildings and daily communication with the family.

Mr. Martin suggested not relying solely on social media as many people do not use said platform but creating a way to reach the public that would bridge the gap between the community and the police.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn by Mincey; second Carter. All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Williams
Municipal Clerk

Minutes Are Not Verbatim