

**BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE
COUNTY OF SALEM, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – 6:30 P.M.
VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE (VTC)
MAY 18, 2021**

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 May 18, 2021 Meeting was held via “Zoom” online meeting platform.

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

Invocation by Sharon Williams, Municipal Clerk.

Roll Call: Carter-absent, Giordano-present@ 7:13 p.m, Martin-present, Mincey-present, Rambo-absent., Scarpaci-present.

MINUTES: Motion to adopt April 20, 2021 Regular Session minutes by Scarpaci; second Mincey. Roll Call. Carter – yes, Martin – yes, Mincey – yes, Scarpaci – yes.

PAYMENT OF BILLS & APPROVAL OF BILL OF BILL LIST:

Scarpaci questioned a bill that included sales. Labb stated he will remove payment of sales tax.

Motion to approve payment of bills and approval of amended bill list by Scarpaci; second Mincey. Roll call. Carter – yes, Martin – yes, Mincey – yes, Scarpaci – yes.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CONSENT:

2021-5-73 – REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT TO CORELOGIC – 2 TORTON STREET

2021-5-74 – RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RETENTION OF A CONFLICT MUNICIPAL PROSECUTOR

2021-5-75 – EMERGENCY TEMPORARY RESOLUTION N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20

Motion to adopt by consent by Scarpaci; second Carter. Roll Call. Carter – yes, Martin – yes, Mincey – yes, Scarpaci – yes.

SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE(S):

2021-9 – CALENDAR YEAR 2021 ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATIO LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK

Motion to adopt by Martin; second Carter. Roll call. Carter – yes, Martin – yes, Mincey – yes, Scarpaci – yes.

2021-11 – AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE 2020-17, AMENDING CHAPTER 206 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE.

Motion to adopt by Mincey; second Martin. Roll call. Carter – yes, Martin – yes, Mincey – yes, Scarpaci – yes.

2021-12 – AN ORDINANCE CREATING THE PENNS GROVE YOUTH ATHLETIC LEAGUE FOR THE BOROUGH OF PENNS GROVE

Mayor Thomas rescinded Ordinance stating that the program cannot be sponsored by the Borough. Mayor Thomas stated that she will be researching private means.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Buildings & Grounds (Martin, Giordano, Rambo): Councilwoman Martin stated/addressed the following: Park open with the exception of the playground area. Electrical work has been completed. Grass cutting

has commenced. Business Administrator is interviewing on May 19, 2021 for a Code Enforcement Officer. Borough will open soon.

General Government/Clean Communities (Scarpaci, Martin, Giordano): Councilwoman Scarpaci stated/addressed the following: Expressed appreciation Penn's Grove Middle School – I Am Girls, Holy Temple Church, Lafayette Pershing School and Antigo Nuevo for their participation in the Clean Community Program held on May 8, 2021, totaling 45 volunteers collecting 44 bags of trash. Expressed appreciation to Shooting Stars, Shiloh Baptist Church, Penns Grove High School Football, Penns Grove High School Boosters and Holy Temple for their participation of the May 15, 2021 Clean Community Program, totaling 45 volunteers collecting 46 bags of trash. Five groups have registered for the May 22, 2021 clean up. Sixty percent of the municipal streets have been completed. Will move toward the County streets while partnering with the Salem County Improvement Authority. Expressed appreciation to Councilwoman Martin, Council President Carol Mincey, Police Director Richard Rivera, Business Administrator Sean Brown and husband, John Scarpaci for their participation. Tax collection rate has increased by 2.46 percent.

Mayor Thomas expressed appreciation to everyone who participated in the Clean Communities Program.

Housing/Zoning & Planning/Shade Tree (Giordano, Martin, Rambo): Councilman Giordano stated/addressed the following: Council President advised Councilwoman Martin that she just received a telephone call that someone is voluntarily cutting the lot at Broad and Harmony Street. Shade Tree has begun cleanup of the wells around trees, which will be mulched from the riverfront to Virginia Avenue, and Walnut Street to Harmony Street, and the Memorial Park. Researching the possible purchase of additional trash cans.

Business Administrator, Sean Brown read Code Enforcement Officer's monthly report: 8 summonses – 3 no shows, 37 Ten-Day Notices issued, with 21 being resolved. Brown stressed the importance of property maintenance.

Recreation/Board of Health (Carter, Mincey, Martin): Carter stated/addressed the following: Expressed appreciation to Business Administrator for reading Code Enforcement report. "Car Cruz" to be held on June 2, 2021. Spoke with Business Administrator regarding quotes for millings needed at the riverfront. Will be held on the street in the event the potholes cannot be remedied. Carter expressed concern that participation on June 8th will be low if the potholes are not remedied at the riverfront. In the process of trying to begin a Flag Football and Basketball program. Spoke with Business Administrator regarding the meeting of the Recreation Committee meeting that will be on June 4, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Meeting will be held at the Borough Hall, and via Zoom. Volunteers are encouraged to attend.

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

Public Safety (Mincey, Martin, Giordano): Council President stated/addressed the following: Salem Community College offering COVID-19 vaccinations weekly.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Finance Officer Report: Stephen Labb stated/addressed the following: Explained the purpose of the COLA Ordinance stating that it permits the municipality to increase the budget appropriations from 1 percent to 3.5 percent, and it authorizes the Banking of Balances not utilized in the 2021 Municipal Budget for the use, if needed, in the next 2 budget years.

Emergency Budget Resolution, which adds budget appropriations to Inter Local Service Agreements for Dispatching, Buildings and Grounds and other expenses.

Completed calculations for estimated tax bills.

The tax collection rate on May 12, 2020 was 72.38 percent. As of May 12, 2021, the collection rate increased by 2.46 percent for a total of 74.84 percent.

Municipal Clerk: Sharon Williams stated/addressed the following: Polling place for Primary Election – District 1 and 3 will be held at the Fire Hall, East Harmony Street; District 2 will be held at the River Church, South Broad Street.

Police Director Report: Richard Rivera stated/addressed the following: Past two week has been focused on community relations and engagement. Monitored music at DiPaolo's Bar shut down at 10:40 p.m. Residents became very engaged in the cleanup of Tyrone Avenue. Police Department will relaunch the use of social media to show the Department's effort. State Police are handling the case of the deceased gentleman found on the pier. Resident report of a suspicious individual about 6-foot tall and carrying

garden tools. Rivera indicated that the individual was himself, who had been cutting back weeds and branches to clean up the area. Mr. Rivera encouraged others to volunteer to clean up the Borough.

Fire Chief Report: Adam Hartsough stated/addressed the following: No report.

Ambulance/EMS Captain Report: On behalf of Captain Ashcraft, Council President reported the following: 81 calls during the month of April, 331 calls as of this date. Some members of the department volunteer as "standby" at the vaccine clinic.

2006 ambulance issues with overheating and clutch fan have been resolved.

Expressed appreciation for the support received.

Attorney Report: Robert Tarver stated/addressed the following: Held Ethics training with the governing body, which is a series of trainings they will receive. Executive Session to be held at the next meeting to address litigation matters. Update of the Policy Manual is almost complete. Retention Schedule is complete and ready for review and approval.

Mayoral Comment: Mayor Thomas stated/addressed the following: Expressed appreciation to all who supported Clean Community cleanup days.

The need to create non-profit organization in order to conduct a youth league. Will announce the when registration will commence one date next week. The need for basketball and football volunteer coaches. Councilman Carter and Jeanette Jackson working together regarding the basketball league.

Addressed the appointments needed for the Economic and Redevelopment Board and the required mandates such as, Improve the process for selling and leasing Borough owned properties, review PILOT Agreements, consider Tax Abatements, give guidance to Council and Planning Board applicants on the vision for the Borough. Borough owned property listed is posted on the Borough website.

Mayor stated she and Mr. Brown met with the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority, who is committed to providing financial assistance to bring a grocery store that will provide healthy foods at affordable prices.

Custodian and Code Enforcement Officer to be hired within the next two weeks. Working to reopen Borough Hall by second Monday in June.

APPOINTMENT(S):

Mayor Thomas appointed Jeannette Jackson, as Alternate, to the Planning Board.

Mayor Thomas appointed Monica Lind Morris, as Alternate, to the Planning Board.

Motion to appoint Mayor LaDaena Thomas, Andrew Plaggee, III, Michael Bercute, and Councilman John Rambo as Economic and Redevelopment Board Member; Sean Brown as Economic and Redevelopment Ex Officio by Mincey; second Carter. Roll Call. Carter – yes, Giordano – yes, Martin – yes, Mincey – yes, Scarpaci – yes.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Jeremiah Carter, North Broad Street, questioned the status of hiring grass cutters.

Councilwoman Martin stated that contractors have been hired and have begun cutting the properties.

Mr. Carter expressed concern regarding the lot located at Broad and Harmony Street.

Council President stated that a volunteer is presently cutting the property.

Greg Martin, Spruce Street, addressed concern regarding property with very high grass on Park Avenue; questioned if Borough owns the property.

Council President advised that she would need to research ownership.

Mr. Rivera expressed appreciation to Greg Martin for his assistance with disposal of metal retrieved during clean up.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn by Mincey; second Martin. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon R. Williams, RMC
Municipal Clerk

MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM