

Penndel Borough Council Meeting Minutes

August 7, 2023

Council President John Stratz called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at the Meeting

Council President John Stratz
Council Vice President Barbara Heffelfinger
Councilman Alan Dashoff - absent
Councilman Joe Dudash - absent
Councilman Gary Nickerson - absent
Councilman Bud Murphy
Councilman Bob Winkler
Mayor Tom Sodano

Also present at the meeting

Barbara Kirk, Solicitor, Hill Wallack
Geoff Thompson, Borough Manager
Sean Perry, Chief of Police
Carol Schuehler, Value Engineering
Marie Serota, Secretary/Treasurer

Barbara Kirk reported that council met in an Executive Session from 7:00pm until about 7:28pm to discuss two litigation matters and one potential litigation matter.

Presentation

Chief Sean Perry, Fire Marshal Jim Bampfield, State Representative Joe Hogan, and Senator Frank Farry all presented citations to Jason Steere for his heroic efforts saving the lives of the residents and business owner from a fire in the 100 block of Durham Rd. on July 6, 2023. Senator Farry spoke about how people pick up their phones and they just start filming instead of using that phone to call 911. Mr. Steere stopped and called 911 and helped the occupants out of the building, which is what everyone should do.

Council or Borough Announcements

Mayor Sodano said they're all familiar with the trials and tribulations of the police department over the course of the past month or so. He wanted to thank the active members of the Penndel Police Department for the outstanding job they did. There was talk about how many open shifts there were during the month of July. A lot of them took time from their own families and covered about a third of those open shifts and he wanted to publicly say thank you to Chief Perry and his group.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Terry McIntyre asked if General Sewer Service gave them any kind of report on the condition of the storm drains, they had cleaned out. John said they were impressed that they can actually now see the pipes and they are ok.

Consent Items

MOTION BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 17, 2023 WORKSHOP MEETING AND APPROVE THE FOLLOWING BILLS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 2023:

General Fund	\$19,927.58
Fire Tax Fund	\$ 2,745.60
Refuse Fund	\$ 29.08
Sewer Fund	\$32,033.05
Capital Reserve Fund	\$31,253.22
Liquid Fuel Fund	\$ 173.04
Escrow Fund	\$ 949.50
Payroll Fund	\$ 505.14

Payroll

General Fund	\$19,727.12
Sewer Fund	\$ 3,203.87
Total	\$22,930.99

Escrow Fund Bills

Schoolhouse Court:

Value Engineering \$563.50

Cattani Subdivision:

Hill Wallack. LLP \$360.00

Value Engineering \$ 26.00

SECONDED BY BOB WINKLER. All ayes, motion carried.

Reports

President's Report

John reported that next week he and Barbara will be attending Senator Farry's State Grant and Funding Workshop for Municipal Leaders. He's hoping they can get the ball rolling and get some more grants.

Borough Manager's Report

Geoff Thompson read his report which is on file in the secretary's office.

Mayor Sodano reported that on July 23rd there was an accident on the Langhorne Manor side of the Hulmeville Ave. bridge and then the July 24th edition of Levittownnow had a story on it. He read the following quote from a Pennsylvania State Police spokesman. "This intersection is inherently dangerous. My recommendation is for PennDOT to reevaluate the flow of traffic and make the desirous changes to ensure the safety of the traveling motorists." Mayor Sodano said he said from the start this bridge had safety issues. That's the third major crash that he's aware of since the bridge opened, all on the same side, not in Penndel. He asked if they could place signage to recommend non-pedestrian use or non-bicycle use, since it's a state road. He asked if not, what steps can they take because that bridge is just accidents waiting to happen and

someone will get hurt. Geoff said they would have to talk to PennDOT about it. He doesn't think they can put anything up without their approval. Mayor Sodano said they must not like pedestrians either because that bridge is a disgrace. The old bridge was safe compared to this one. It was dilapidated but it had a sidewalk and over the years, as a kid he rode over it many times. He won't let his granddaughter near this bridge. He thinks that they should look into at least some sort of signage for their side even if PennDOT doesn't particularly like it to warn people if for no other reason than to try to limit their liability because if somebody gets hurt, they'll get sued just as much as anybody else does.

Barbara said they had not seen any plans until the plans were all done. They told them there are people going across that bridge and bikes, etcetera and they said they can move one line, maybe a foot or something and that's all they would do. Carol said part of their response was that there were no pedestrian connections on either side, so they were not prepared to encourage pedestrians on the bridge when there was no place to go for them when they got to either side of the bridge. So, it's not just a bridge problem, it's a connectivity problem on either side that needs to be solved and it's a challenge because there are three different municipalities involved in the bridge itself. It is actually in Middletown Township and either end of the bridge is in Penndel and Langhorne Manor, so they have a real challenge politically to coordinate all the entities in their conversations with PennDOT and in evaluating things that the municipalities might be able to do to connect all that together. Mayor Sodano said with all due respect, they are not in the middle of a project to turn Route 1 southbound into a single lane right now because somebody had the intestinal fortitude, and he will pat himself on the back for this one. They need to throw a hissy fit and stomp their feet and that's the only way they're going to get PennDOT's attention on things of this nature. While they may have already had it done, it's not impossible to get them to put on the brakes if you're going to make them look bad in the press. He thinks if they have to, they should make them look bad in the press and make a big stink about the fact that the state police consider that a problem and make them do something about it as far as pedestrians. It's wide enough so they can move everything to one side or the other and put a 5-foot-wide area on one side with bollards and then people could cross the bridge. As it is now, they are not going to get a wheelchair across. If they don't make a stink, they'll do what they want. They proved it on that bridge and every day on all of their projects. They have to be willing to bark back at them. That's the only way PennDOT listens. Barbara said she was at that meeting, and they barked, and they looked at us like they had two heads. John said all three municipalities have to work together and Langhorne Manor made it very clear they do not want to put the money out to put in sidewalks where there were never any. It isn't just yelling at PennDOT. They would have to have some dialogue with Langhorne Manor to get them to see the light and now considering the accidents are on their side and not Penndel's, maybe they can get them to see the light.

Mayor's Report

No report.

Police Chief's Report

Chief Perry read his report which is on file in the secretary's office.

Engineer's Report

Carol read her report which is attached.

Mayor Sodano asked if they are going to reassess left hand turn arrows. Carol said they don't have them included at this point, so the department official said that they made sure that the mast arm was sufficient that if there was a need at a later date to install left turn arrows, it was

possible to do so. He said today it doesn't meet warrants to do so but there is the ability to do that at a later date. That's why they left that long so that if it's necessary, it's on point or deemed at least safer and they could add it. Chief Perry said he was talking with Carol about the police department paying attention to crashes at the intersection and if it becomes an issue, they'll reach out to Carol's office as well to see if they can get them justified.

John said they have received a Flagger Force LLC invoice for the total of \$4,112.72.

MOTION BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER TO AWARD THE ACCESSIBLE CURB RAMP PROJECT TO NJS CONCRETE LLC WITH A TOTAL BID OF \$149,270.00 AS RECOMMENDED BY BOROUGH ENGINEER. SECONDED BY BUD MURPHY. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER TO PAY GENERAL SEWER SERVICE, INC. INVOICE #144841 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,448.90 FOR CLEANING STORM SEWERS AND DISPOSING OF DEBRIS AS RECOMMENDED BY BOROUGH ENGINEER. SECONDED BY BOB WINKLER. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER TO APPROVE QUOTE NUMBER 00608680 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,120.44 FROM EAST JORDAN IRON WORKS, MIDDLETOWN, DE FOR THE PURCHASE OF MANHOLE RISERS FOR THE RUMPF AVENUE SURFACE SEAL AS RECOMMENDED BY BOROUGH ENGINEER. SECONDED BY BUD MURPHY. John said he was out with the engineer and the company looking at the manholes and a couple of them were actually broken so this is not only a convenience for the streets but a necessity for the manholes. Carol said the contractor will actually place it as they're going down the road with the seal coat. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BOB WINKLER TO APPROVE FINAL PAYMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$36,469.18 TO PREMIER BUILDERS, INC. FOR THE MEMORIAL PARK ADA BLEACHERS PROJECT. SECONDED BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER. All ayes, motion carried.

Solicitor's Report

Pending zoning application – 114 Monroe Ave.

Barbara Kirk reported that an application for zoning relief was filed by the owner of the property located at 114 Monroe Ave. He is seeking a variance to convert the TV repair shop use at the property to a single-family residential dwelling. That matter is scheduled for a hearing on August 16th, which is next Wednesday at 7:30p.m. She wanted to bring it to council's attention in case they want to have someone from her office attend to either oppose or participate in the hearing or else simply defer to the Zoning Hearing Board for a decision.

MOTION BY BOB WINKLER TO HAVE THE SOLICITOR ATTEND THIS MEETING. SECONDED BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER. Geoff Thompson said they don't have to send the solicitor. They can do nothing and leave it in the hands of Zoning Hearing Board. They don't have to consider anything. John said he withdraws the motion. Barbara Kirk said she was just bringing it to council's attention so there's some sort of continuity of somebody reviewing the applications and council is aware of what's going on in case something comes forward that they wish to oppose. This way they are aware of it and things are being circulated in a timely fashion. Council was in agreement to let the Zoning Hearing Board do their job.

New Business

MOTION BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER TO RATIFY APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING MID-CYCLE INVOICES:

Langhorne Postmaster invoice dated 7/5/23 in the amount of \$197.46 for quarterly sewer/refuse billing less credit

Comcast invoice dated 6/26/23 in the amount of \$192.32 for internet & voice services at 300 Bellevue Avenue

Comcast invoice dated 6/26/23 in the amount of \$213.51 for internet & voice services at 37 W. Woodland Avenue

Office of Labor & Industry dated 6/30/23 in the amount of \$1,555.00 for fire dept. workers' compensation insurance installment

The Hartford Invoice #357529810459 in the amount of \$614.35 for life insurance installment

Gettysburg Benefits Administrators, Inc. invoice dated 6/30/23 in the amount of \$\$169.59 for dental insurance installment

Waste Management Invoice #5480-2448-8 in the amount of \$17,976.25 for June service

Verizon Wireless Invoice #9938581192 in the amount of \$25.02 for M2M Account Share 1GB

Comcast invoice dated 7/2/23 in the amount of \$244.89 for internet at 790 Neshaminy St.

Comcast invoice dated 7/1/23 in the amount of \$373.69 for business voice edge service

Dennis & Sons' Contracting Inc., Invoice #2021-252 in the amount of \$6,457.50 for the balance of the PD roof repair

Ready Refresh Invoice #13F0431953892 in the amount of \$41.08 for water cooler rent

Independence Blue Cross Invoice #230707164759 in the amount of \$5,958.90 for medical insurance installment

Selective Insurance Co. of America invoice dated 7/12/23 in the amount of \$4,099.00 for workers' compensation and commercial insurance installment

Classic Pistol Invoice #1157 in the amount of \$1,420.00 for firearms' qualifications

PECO invoice dated 7/13/223 in the amount to \$1,403.57 for streetlights' electric

SECONDED BY BOB WINKLER. Mayor Sodano asked if the PECO bill was quarterly or monthly. Marie said it is monthly. John said he needs to submit one piece of paperwork that states he is allowed to put in the paperwork on behalf of Penndel for the \$6,000.00 in unclaimed money. All ayes, motion carried.

Refuse & Recycling Collection Contract Update

Geoff reported that he's been working on the bid specifications for the contract, which expires at the end of this year. Based upon the contracts he's been seeing in Montgomery County and Bucks County, everybody's looking at significant increases in trash and recycling collection. Labor and fuel equipment costs have gone up as well as landfill charges. He was looking for ways they could save money on the new contract so he reached out to a few of the companies that most likely will bid on the contract. They mentioned a couple of things. The bigger companies are pushing everybody towards the roll carts to save them on labor charges because they just take a truck through town with the arm that dumps the roll carts. They are pushing them that way. That's what they mentioned was their big item. They mentioned bonding requirements, which he ran by the solicitor and she's very comfortable with reducing the bonding requirements that they had in the current contract. Everything is pretty much the same as what they currently have. They did some work on the bonding requirements and the solicitor added some language to clear up if they could add households during the term of the contract. They could save some money as the bulk item pick up in this current contract, they're allowed one item per week. They said if they make that basically pay as you go which means if

someone has a sofa that needs to be picked up, they will have to contact the contractor and pay for that item to be picked up. They would give them a list of charges for each individual item like refrigerator, sofa, rugs, etc. and they pay over the phone with a credit card, and they would come out and pick it up. That would be one way to where they could possibly save money. He doesn't think the roll carts would do them a lot of good with how close the houses are and how close the parking is and what people would do with the roll carts when they're out along the street. He thinks that would be problematic for a borough like Pennel but that is his opinion. That's not in the specs unless council wants it in there. He'll finish up the bid's specifications this month and hopefully get it out maybe the end of September early October.

MOTION BY BUD MURPHY TO AWARD THE 2023-2034 FUEL BID FOR #2 HEATING OIL TO WILSON OIL AND PROPANE AT \$.38 OVER MARKET RATE AND OFF-ROAD DIESEL TO RIGGINS, INC. AT \$.57 OVER MARKET RATE CONTRACTED THROUGH THE BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM. SECONDED BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BUD MURPHY TO REHIRE FORMER OFFICER JEREMIAH RUSNOV AS PART-TIME PATROLMAN CONTINGENT UPON MEETING WITH MPOETC AND BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION REQUIREMENTS. SECONDED BY BOB WINKLER. Barbara said he is quite impressive, and they are happy to have him back if council agrees. Chief Perry said the time frame wise they're looking at depends on training time for the new officers and there is another motion for another part time officer. With the one they just hired at the last meeting and these two, they're looking at hopefully in the next month maybe month and 1/2 to be back to some normalcy. Last month's hire is starting to pick everything up really quickly because he has prior law enforcement experience. Bringing another officer back with law enforcement experience they can really focus a lot on the training for the third one who doesn't have police training. They'll have significantly more coverage once they release the first one from field training and then bringing the other guy back it'll be a quick train just to get him familiarized with any of the upgrades they've had, and he can start covering shifts pretty quickly. Chief Perry said he's been coming in and working 10 to 12-hour days and staying late. He thinks this is the first week he worked 39 hours rather than over 40 every week as well as the other officers who work full time jobs that are working 40 hours here. They have really been stepping up to cover shifts, staying late you know working late hours, coming in at times where they should be spending it with their families just to make sure they have coverage. Again, with this being a one horse town, if you call 911 and the officer is tied up on a priority incident, they could have state police coverage or if they don't have an officer working then they could have state police coverage as well and until they can get back to a more routine 24 hour coverage. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BOB WINKLER TO HIRE LIAM KRIMMEL AS PART-TIME PATROLMAN CONTINGENT UPON MEETING WITH MPOETC AND BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION REQUIREMENTS. SECONDED BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER. All ayes, motion carried.

Public Comment

Mike Smith, asked council to bring in an electrician to stop the lights from flickering because it's been going on for almost a year and before they burn the place down.

Terry McIntyre, said he has taken the Hulmeville Ave. bridge every day for 30 years and he thinks it's worse. He's not blaming Amtrak, as it has to come down on such an angle but when you come down that hill, it's even more of a grade. There's been several accidents. He was

there the day of that accident. He was behind it but didn't see it happen. As far as sidewalks, they talked about this even when he was on council. You put sidewalks in and then people put sidewalks in and the next thing, all these sidewalks connect to one another. If he lived over in the Manor and wanted to come over to Pennel business district to get pizza or whatever, it would be nice to have the sidewalks to do that. He's had at least two close calls coming over the bridge. It's just the angle and they can't see, and they hit the gas but if there was a sign that said high accident intersection or something, people might slow down. Maybe even a four-way blinking light.

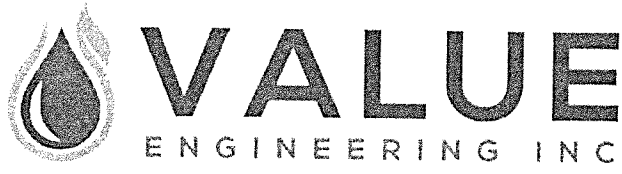
Terry asked if the homeowner's association was formed at Schoolhouse Court. They need to take care of their storm drain cleanouts, their hundred-year storm pits, their lighting. They are supposed to furnish the borough with a copy of that. Barbara Kirk said that occurred before her tenure and she will need to check. They have recorded all the other requirements so she's pretty sure it's done, but she'll check. Terry said if their storm pits aren't cleaned out, their basements are going to be swimming pools because they're sitting over top of basically one big bathtub. Mayor Sodano said they did the formal homeowners association, and they did elect one of the homeowners as the head.

Terry said he loves the left-hand turn lanes. He got rear-ended many years ago so if he has to come in that direction, he doesn't feel like he's going to get rear-ended. He asked Carol if a "No Turn on Red" is going to be put there. Carol said they're evaluating whether to include a "No Turn on Red." Terry asked Chief Perry if he's seen many accidents there because everything's been pulled back so far. It's good visibility there now.

Terry said for trash pickup, if what Geoff spoke about saves them a significant amount of money, that would be great to do something like that. Usually if somebody is doing construction at their house, they either have a dumpster or they're going to take it away. They're probably in for a pretty big hike. He noticed some of the residents sometimes put 10 or 12 cans out. That's probably not helping anybody either. Some people just put way too much out as far as trash, and it hurts everybody.

MOTION BY BOB WINKLER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:25 P.M. SECONDED BY BARBARA HEFFELFINGER. All ayes, motion carried.

Submitted by: Marie Serota
Marie Serota, Secretary/Treasurer



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August 7, 2023 Engineers Report Pennel Borough, Bucks County

CDBG Grant for ADA Ramps on local streets

Five bids were received for installation of accessible ramps on local streets. We recommend award of the Base bid, Option A and Option B to NJS Concrete LLC as lowest responsible bidder in the amount of \$149,240.00

Storm Sewer cleaning

General Sewer was in the Borough for three days cleaning storm sewers. The work opened sewer pipes that were more than half filled with debris. Some before and after images of inlets are attached for Council to appreciate the benefit of this investment.

General Sewer extracted 21 tons of material to restore available capacity in the storm sewer system. An invoice for their services in the amount of \$9,448.90 has been provided and we recommend consideration of payment.

We have not yet received the invoice from Flagger Force for related traffic control work.

Rumpf Avenue Seal

The Ultra-Thin Wearing Course Seal is on the AMS schedule for early October. The seal coat will be up to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. There are seven sanitary sewer manholes in the Rumpf Avenue cartway, and we recommend adjusting the lid elevation by installing a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch riser when the seal is placed.

We have obtained a quote from EJ Ironworks for solid steel $\frac{3}{4}$ inch risers at \$302.92 each, delivered. We recommend Council authorize purchase of seven risers at a total cost of \$2,120.44.

Memorial Park Bleachers

New bleacher installation is complete, and we recommend consideration of full and final payment to Premier Builders in the amount of \$36,469.18.

Cattani Brothers Tiffany Plaza Subdivision

A review letter for this project was issued on May 30, 2023. No resubmission has been received by our office.

