

## Penndel Borough Council Workshop Minutes

June 19, 2023

Council President John Stratz called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. There was a moment of silence for Hugh Cooperman of the Penndel-Middletown Emergency Squad.

Present at the Meeting

Council President John Stratz  
Council Vice President Barbara Heffelfinger – arrived at 8:06 pm  
Councilman Joe Dudash - absent  
Councilman Bud Murphy  
Councilman Alan Dashoff  
Councilman Gary Nickerson - absent  
Councilman Bob Winkler  
Mayor Tom Sodano

Also present at the meeting

Ben Hauser, Solicitor, Hill Wallack  
Marie Serota, Secretary/Treasurer

Council or Borough Announcements

Alan Dashoff said the new website is up and running. It looks like the old one but some of the things are in different positions and it looks a little cleaner. If anyone has feedback, let them know. John Stratz said he can't access it from his android. He has to get on his desktop. Alan said he will take a look at it.

Consent Items

MOTION BY BUD MURPHY TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 5, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING. SECONDED BY ALAN DASHOFF. All ayes, motion carried.

Unfinished Business

MOTION BY ALAN DASHOFF TO RATIFY APPROVING ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE #2023-1 AMENDING NUMEROUS PROVISIONS CHAPTER 345 – "STORM WATER MANAGEMENT," OF THE PENNDEL BOROUGH CODE OF ORDINANCES TO COMPLY WITH AND IMPLEMENT UPDATED PROVISIONS OF THE NESHAMINY CREEK WATERSHED ACT 167 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN. SECONDED BY BOB WINKLER. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BUD MURPHY TO RATIFY APPROVING ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2023-6 REQUESTING THAT THE STATE LEGISLATURE APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE STERLING ACT. SECONDED BY ALAN DASHOFF. All ayes, motion carried.

President's Report

John Stratz explained the committee assignments. They went back to the committee assignments of 2016 – 2017. People complained that they had no idea what they were doing. This way everyone has a hand in local government. Committees are basically the middleman. If a citizen has complaints or needs something done, they can go on the website, find the name



of the person in charge of that committee, and go to them. The committees then bring the report back to full council. Alan said they're not putting the names of the committee people on the website anymore. They should call the office and get directed where to go because nobody was maintaining those pages. This way they don't have to worry about switching around when things change. John said as long as the specific committee is on the website, people can call the office. Ben Hauser said since it sounds like there is going to be more committees than the borough had at the beginning of the year, he would advise that once the committees are finalized and the meeting schedules are set between the members, they should be advertised just as kind of a pro forma sort of thing. Mayor Sodano said the Safety Committee sometimes meets for the preliminary meeting and evaluation of candidates for the police department and it's often on short notice because it's contingent on the applicant and his availability and time is of the essence. He asked if they have to advertise that they're interviewing. Ben said it sounds almost like an Executive Session on the subject of personnel. So, he would just say when they do have their formal meeting, they can announce that they had an Executive Session on the topic of personnel on X date.

#### New Business

MOTION BY ALAN DASHOFF TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM GENERAL PIPE CLEANING AND FLAGGER FORCE FOR CLEANING STORM SEWERS NOT TO EXCEED \$22,000.00 AS RECOMMENDED BY BOROUGH ENGINEER. SECONDED BY BUD MURPHY. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY ALAN DASHOFF TO APPROVE PAYMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$132,520.82 TO PREMIER BUILDERS, INC. FOR WORK COMPLETED TO DATE ON MEMORIAL PARK ADA BLEACHERS AS RECOMMENDED BY BOROUGH ENGINEER. SECONDED BY BUD MURPHY.

**Mike Smith**, asked when they were finished. John said evidently, in the last few days. Mike said and they're paying them already. He said it's 30 days in any construction contract. Most townships or cities will string you out to probably 60 or 90 days. This borough just keeps paying and paying back. He doesn't care if it's grant money or not.

All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BUD MURPHY TO APPROVE PAYMENT #2 (AND FINAL) TO MJF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING, INC. FOR WORK COMPLETED ON MEMORIAL PARK LIGHTING PHASE 2 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$57,500 AS RECOMMENDED BY BOROUGH ENGINEER. SECONDED BY BOB WINKLER. John said the project will be under maintenance bonds for defects, materials, and workmanship, which are identified within one year of issuance of this certificate of project completion.

All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY ALAN DASHOFF TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF PATROLMAN MATTHEW RINK EFFECTIVE JUNE 9, 2023. SECONDED BY BUD MURPHY.

Mayor Sodano read his statement which is attached.

John said he and Barbara Heffelfinger sat down for a meeting and Bob Winkler joined them

later. They have figures to present to the manager. They can talk it over with him and he can show in the budget where they can pull this money from, and they will loop him in later in the week. They have proposals for upping the pay for the part-timers and they have a full proposal with figures for hiring another full-time officer. Mayor Sodano asked if they looked at the proposed PBA contract that was negotiated by the Safety Committee. That spells out what will be required and with all due respect, to make any move on the hourly before the contract ends this year and the new one would go in on January 1, would be premature but it's very specific what the numbers are. Councilman Dashoff and Councilwoman Heffelfinger on that committee did an outstanding job in their work with the PBA and came up with what would be a fair and equitable contract that they will be able to live with and they understood when pencils needed to be sharpened. Councilman Dashoff very much to his credit, is as knowledgeable as anyone he's spoken to around here on the nuances of how EMS services, police departments and municipal services work and it was an invaluable aid in their discussions with them. Councilwoman Heffelfinger has all that information that she can share.

**Hugh Campbell**, said they've been kicking this can down the road for quite a long time and the can has lost its luster and it kind of disappeared off the agenda. They just had another resignation of another trained and insured employee. It was just as simple as to make the advertisement as per the police PBA agreement. He doesn't understand why they held back. You can start an apprentice program in any of your five major unions and three of the railroads around here making more than what the police are making and all you have to do is provide one clean urine. These guys are getting trained and carrying a gun.

**Terry McIntyre**, said it's not just the hourly wage that someone looks at. There's a lot of other things that come into play like working environment and conditions and things of that nature. So, they don't want to get too fixed on just the hourly wage. They need to look at the overall picture and see what else attracts officers. A lot of young guys come here for experience as well but there's a lot of other factors that bring an officer to town.

All eyes, motion carried.

#### Public Comment

**Hugh Campbell**, said there are signs appearing all over Penndel on telephone poles. They don't belong here as much as the people coming by. He asked who he could talk to about them and if he was allowed to remove them himself because they end up falling down. Mayor Sodano said if they're on telephone poles, they're not our jurisdiction. The poles belong either to Verizon or PECO and it's illegal for someone to put those on there. That would supposedly be who it should be reported. And he doesn't know whether they are acting on them right now or not. And his point about the door knockers that he was talking about, the guy made the mistake of knocking on his door Sunday, and if you want a laugh, go ask his neighbor what he said because he can't repeat it here. Hugh said the other thing is with all the construction that is going on around here, the bridge over I95 on Trenton Road, the finishing touches on Route 1 and the 95 debacle, there are people flying down Fairview Ave. There must not be any stop signs in Philly. These people are getting all spun around and they're losing it. It's out of control right now and it would be nice if they saw a police car once in a while.

Council Members to be Heard

Alan asked Terry to hang out after the meeting so he could look at his phone for the website. It might be the new look that is throwing people off.

Mayor Sodano said to Hugh Campbell, that he asks the guys to drive every street at least once on every shift and he does intermittently check but not all the time. If he's not seeing a guy often enough, he'll start checking more often. As far as the speeds on the streets are concerned, Woodland is just as bad. They don't stop at the stop signs. They do a California roll. They're looking at two problems in enforcement. They can enforce the stop signs and when they see them, they do get them. For the speed problem, they're limited to vascar, which is basically you have to have it marked out and it's a stopwatch type of program and it's really hard to do on a block because they have to be set up and they have to be stationary. It's really tough to do it moving and it usually loses in court. That's the only reason he is in favor of radar for municipalities like them because they could stop a lot of cars that are racing on their streets as cut throughs right now. Keep that in mind if it comes up on a referendum. He doesn't see it as a moneymaker, he sees it as a safety measure to prevent kids from getting hurt.

MOTION BY ALAN DASHOFF TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:07 P.M. SECONDED BY BUD MURPHY. All ayes, motion carried.

Submitted by:   
Marie Serota, Secretary/Treasurer

