

Penndel Borough Council Meeting
Via Zoom Communications

August 3, 2020

Council President Beverly Wolfe called the meeting via Zoom Communications to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Beverly Wolfe said there is a change to the agenda. The second item on the agenda where it says consideration of a motion should be struck. She asked Marie Serota to read a letter. Marie read the resignation letter from Beverly Wolfe which is attached. Beverly turned the meeting over to Vice President Barbara Heffelfinger.

MOTION BY BEVERLY WOLFE TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF BEVERLY WOLFE AS COUNCIL PRESIDENT. SECONDED BY JOHN STRATZ. Joe Dudash read a letter to Beverly which is attached. Gary Nickerson said the process of revitalization requires consistent leadership. Beverly has been their leader throughout their entire revitalization efforts. Your resignation can see change that could derail all that council has worked so hard to achieve. Fellow members of council, he means no disrespect to whoever the next borough president, as he or she would do a fine job but he feels the time we are in demands consistency and knowledge of all they have worked towards. He hopes that Beverly would reconsider. Barbara Heffelfinger said she echoes his sentiments. Mark Moffa said he would like to echo the sentiments of Councilmen Joe Dudash and Gary Nickerson and will join them in voting no in accepting Beverly's resignation and he hopes that she would reconsider. Ben Hauser said Beverly informed him that she is having a little difficulty forming words and should give her a minute or two. Ben said generally when someone comes to this point, it really becomes a pro forma situation and it is Mrs. Wolfe's intent to take a step back or a half step down and she has the right to decide what she wants to do. This is just for purposes of the borough record showing the public and showing entities down the line if this plays out the way it may play out, the transfer of the office. If she would still like to proceed with the resignation, it is his office's recommendation that it be accepted. Beverly said she was trying to gather herself together. She didn't expect to hear what she heard and sincerely thanks everyone. Being the president of council in Penndel Borough is a full-time job, especially to affect change. Real change. That's the way they've always done it. With compassion. And everybody here knows that and in order to do that you need somebody who doesn't already have a full-time job to actually devote some time. She said she can't work two full time jobs anymore. As much as it is regrettable, she cannot do it. She hopes everyone will understand that. You've seen what they've accomplished over the past three years and change. It was a lot of work and a lot of effort she gave, and it was willingly and lovingly given. She just can't do it anymore and she's sorry. A roll call vote was taken. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Gary Nickerson, no, Mark Moffa, no, Joe Dudash, no, John Stratz, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. Ben Hauser said the vote is deadlocked at three apiece. The tie breaking vote under borough code goes to the mayor. Bob Winkler took a minute to decide. He said he hated to see her step down but if that is what she wants, then his vote is yes. Vote was 4 yes, 3 no, motion carried.

Nominations were taken for Council President.

John Stratz nominated Barbara Heffelfinger as Council President. Joe Dudash nominated Mark Moffa as Council President. Barbara asked if there were any other nominations.

MOTION BY BEVERLY WOLFE TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS. SECONDED BY JOHN STRATZ. Barbara asked if any of council had comments. John Stratz said just for continuity

with all of our professionals and all of the departments we have worked with is vital and we need a president sitting in that chair who will be there every minute to talk to professionals, to help with committees. Right now, Barb is the only one he sees who has that time available and is willing to make that commitment. Joe Dudash said he knows Beverly has already made her decision, but he would love to give her more time. A roll call vote was taken. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Mark Moffa, yes, Gary Nickerson, yes, John Stratz, yes, Joe Dudash, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. All ayes, motion carried.

Nominations were taken for Vice President.

MOTION BY JOHN STRATZ TO NOMINATE BEVERLY WOLFE AT VICE PRESIDENT. SECONDED BY BEVERLY WOLFE. MOTION BY JOE DUDASH TO NOMINATE MARK MOFFA AS VICE PRESIDENT. Barbara Heffelfinger asked for comments. Beverly Wolfe said on the comment of continuity, at least she would be able to serve the borough and serve the council in a way that won't require it to be a full time job but she will be able to serve and do some of the programs in not such a predominant role. She would love to have the chance to serve you council and the residents for a little bit longer. A roll call vote was taken for Beverly Wolfe for Vice President. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Mark Moffa, yes, Gary Nickerson, yes, John Stratz, yes, Joe Dudash, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. All ayes, motion carried. Barbara said there is a new Council President and Vice President. She said she will need everyone's help and she knows Beverly will be right there. She said she would appreciate all of everyone's input and support. Things will not be changing. They will be the same except Beverly runs a better meeting.

MOTION BY BEVERLY WOLFE TO APPOINT KAREN KONDRK AS THE ASSISTANT COUNCIL SECRETARY IN THE EVENT MRS. SEROTA IS UNAVAILABLE TO ATTEND A MEETING. SECONDED BY GARY NICKERSON. Gary said he was surprised that they didn't already do this. Beverly said the assistant council secretary was Mrs. Heffelfinger and she can't serve as that now. Barbara said she was told today that it shouldn't have been a council person. A roll call vote was taken for Beverly Wolfe for Vice President. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Mark Moffa, yes, Gary Nickerson, yes, John Stratz, yes, Joe Dudash, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. All ayes, motion carried.

Present at the meeting via Zoom Communications

Mayor Robert Winkler
Council President Barbara Heffelfinger
Councilwoman Beverly Wolfe
Councilman John Stratz
Councilman Mark Moffa
Councilman Joe Dudash
Councilman Gary Nickerson
Councilwoman Laura Germain - absent

Also present via Zoom Communications

Ben Hauser, Solicitor, Hill Wallack
Chief Sean Perry
Carol Schuehler, Value Engineering
Nick Foufas, Fire Marshal/EMC
Rick Halbom, Barry Isett & Associates
Marie Serota, Secretary/Treasurer

Announcements

Beverly Wolfe said we are due to have some very bad weather over the next couple of days, starting tonight. Her weather alert radio is going crazy downstairs. There are some severe thunderstorms moving through and then we are going to get the tropical storm. Please everyone be careful and don't go through any standing water. We're supposed to get anywhere from 3 to 5 inches of rain. Turn around, don't drown.

Chief's Report

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

Correspondence

Two letters received from Ron Rudy regarding sewer and refuse billing waivers. Barbara Heffelfinger asked Gary about the requested waivers. Gary said he could only speak to the refuse. He and Joe Dudash are working on the refuse issue. The existing refuse contract is only for residential parcels and that parcel is the hair salon and while it looks like it's a freestanding single-family home, currently it is being operated as a commercial establishment. Back in May he originally approached them to come off of our refuse billing cycle. He and Joe had to look into this because our existing trash contract doesn't really say anything about changing the number of refuse units. He is happy to report that they've been working on a revised contract addendum and since this is actually a pretty straightforward issue because the contract is only for residential units and since this parcel is going from residential to commercial, it's pretty straightforward so he can come off that cycle. However, they haven't agreed to this addendum yet. It was provided to them from Advanced Disposal, our refuse contractor. Gary said he wanted to speak to Barbara about this. There is some language from existing municipal refuse contracts and it's pretty straightforward. It only deals with the issue of refuse units and it's going to allow for some flexibility in the future. Until we have that addendum signed you can't do anything to this one yet. Barbara asked Rick Halbom if he had anything to do with the request on the property and he said he did not. Ben Hauser said when he saw the agenda with that sewer issue, he wanted to know what that was about. He can have his colleague again reconnect with Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Dudash or the other members as council deems appropriate to perhaps move that issue along. Beverly asked Barb for a copy of that letter. Barbara said they can take care of this at the next meeting. Beverly said she can take a look at this sewer letter request and confer with John. Barbara said according to Mr. Rudy, the salon owner has expanded her business to encompass the upper level so he's requesting the residential fee be removed to reflect this change and just be charged the commercial rate. Beverly said she can take a look at that and she's filling in for Mrs. Germain on that committee temporarily. John Stratz if it is now becoming two separate businesses, removing a residential and leaving just one business hookup doesn't really make sense. He would think it's two business hookups. Beverly said they will take a look at that after they see the letter and they can see how they were being billed.

MOTION BY JOHN STRATZ TO PAY THE FOLLING BILLS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY, 2020.

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|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| General Fund | \$30,833.85 |
| Fire Tax Fund | \$ 1,648.92 |
| Refuse Fund | \$16,604.20 |
| Sewer Fund | \$28,525.24 |
| Capital Reserve Fund | \$12,041.12 |
| Sewer Capital Fund | \$ 399.00 |
| Liquid Fuel Fund | \$ 86.47 |

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|---------------------|--------------------|
| Escrow Fund | \$10,468.38 |
| Payroll Fund | \$ 717.23 |

Payroll

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| General Fund | \$24,685.87 |
| Sewer Fund | \$ 4,461.32 |
| Refuse Fund | <u>\$ 743.54</u> |
| Total | \$29,890.73 |

Escrow Fund Bills

Auto Zone:

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| Hill Wallack | \$1,180.00 |
| Value Engineering | \$5,414.50 |

Schoolhouse Court:

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| Value Engineering | \$2,238.75 |
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PECO Road Opening Escrow Release:

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| 145 Lincoln Avenue | \$1,635.13 |
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SECONDED BY BEVERLY WOLFE. Gary Nickerson says he knows they've been trying to improve this whole process. He asked what the status is on this. Beverly said the problem was that our independent auditing company being B. Bergvall had a problem with the resolutions that we did. The new president has to get in contact with the auditors and try to find out what problem they have with it because other municipalities do it. If the other municipalities do it in such a way that is different from the way we want to do it, they need to know that but for some reason they are very against it and the reason is for potential fraud and she doesn't blame them. It's a check and balance system but she doesn't understand how other municipalities can do it and they gave Penndel a hard time with it. Ben Hauser said he's a little confused as to why the auditors have taken the position that they have considering that it's his understanding that they've drafted the bills in question and would be appended to the minutes and made part of the record but apparently they still have concerns. Maybe it's just a miscommunication of some sort where they don't necessarily understand the process or something else. A roll call vote was taken for Beverly Wolfe for Vice President. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Mark Moffa, yes, Gary Nickerson, yes, John Stratz, yes, Joe Dudash, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 20, 2020 WORK SESSION.

SECONDED BY MARK MOFFA. Marie Serota said to Barbara she knows she's asking for public comment but a lot of the public she thinks are muted. Beverly said they can raise their hand on the on the bottom and they can unmute themselves as well. Marie said she couldn't see that. Mark said the ones on the phone show up as a phone and only John is on a phone. Somebody could be on their iPhone, but they are probably on the Zoom app. Mark said he's been doing a lot of zoom for work and other things the practice would be to either raise your hand and there's a raise hand feature in zoom, you can unmute yourself and just speak up or what he sees people do at other meetings is that they have their video on they literally wave. Mark said he's looking for the digital hands being raised; literal hands being raised and then of course also someone could just verbally speak up. Beverly said she is looking for that with him. She said maybe they could discuss this. She doesn't know if they determined if there is a policy on this. The chat feature is another option that could be available that allows the public to place a comment we have utilized that in the past.

A roll call was taken. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Mark Moffa, yes, Gary Nickerson, yes, John Stratz, yes, Joe Dudash, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. All ayes, motion carried.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Winkler read his report which is attached.

Fire Marshal/EMA Report

Nick Foufas read his report which is on file in the secretary's office.

Solicitor's Report

Ben Hauser reported that they are in the process of shepherding the ordinances along with the ordinance committee for consideration by council on the 17th of this month. The advertisement for the borough manager and the tax ordinances will be placed in the paper tomorrow and they will not go out no later than Friday of this week by the Courier Times deadlines. Those advertisements were previously authorized and directed by council. You may have already noticed that the notice is already starting to run. That's a separate notice running in the paper on Friday. This is the actual ordinance advertisement.

Engineer's Report

Carol Schuehler read her report which is attached.

Gary Nickerson thanked Carol for her report on the accomplishments of 2019. He said as a newcomer, it's beneficial to see all these things and they should do that every year. Beverly Wolfe asked Carol if Schoolhouse Court forwarded the Homeowners Association information or anything like that to her. She said from her recollection from the last meeting was that the office of the solicitor was looking into that and she has not been in communication with the solicitor's office regarding that matter. Ben said he is not currently the primary contact on this particular project, and he will talk to his colleague who has been dealing with Carol on this issue. Beverly said she is very interested to hear what the Homeowners Association rules are going to be. Carol said that theoretically should have been recorded prior to those first homes being sold in 2017 but she was not privy to that. Ben said neither was his office. Beverly said she doesn't believe there is anything on file in the borough office.

Zoning/Code Enforcement Report

Rick Halbom said he had no report because due to a malware attack on his company's computer servers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Buildings & Maintenance

Joe Dudash said all he has is what Carol was doing on the parking lot. The other thing is with Taddei Woods. He went out and spoke to the lady that filed a complaint, who is a Middletown resident.

John Stratz said they are in the process of starting bids for the driveway.

Open Space

There are two trees on the borough side that are hollow and the only thing that's keeping it up are the vines. There's one tree with vines on it that they could save which would save money. In front of Mr. Chester's driveway there's another tree and the only thing that's holding that up is the vines. He is going to get together with one of the tree people that we use and get an

estimate and can then present it. There are two trees that if they go, will go through a shed and the other one will go through the back of the house. The one by Mr. Chester would completely block him in and possibly hit his car. Joe said they try to do as much as they can, but the vines and the other stuff just takes over back there. Someone else asked about the flies and he explained to her about them and she wants something done. He told her it's past the period where the eggs have hatched and stuff so there's nothing you really can do about it. Joe said there's a total of three trees that definitely need to get done and then there's one big one they could save. The vines would choke it out so he's hoping like they did before where the guys went in and chopped the vines off that one tree last year and it survived and looks pretty healthy. Beverly asked if the Board of Health is sending out the people to spray in there anytime soon. Joe said they sprayed after they did the dunks. He thinks the last time they were in there was June so there should be a second spray coming up. Beverly said to ask Karen because she has a wonderful relationship with those people, and she's been able to get us multiple sprayings a year when normally we only get one. Joe said maybe he'll get Karen to do her magic again and get a second spray. Since they've been doing the dunks, there's no one complaining about the mosquitoes this year but who knows after the storm. Now they have the Spotted Lantern Fly. Bob Winkler told Joe that the date for the installation of the generators will be the 21st, 22nd and 23rd of September. Bob also said he saw collection units in Taddei Woods when he was there this morning. He told Gary if he goes in there it would be on his right-hand side right past the arch. Gary said they will probably be in tomorrow to pick up those traps because they just set them out overnight and they collect all the adults and then they sample for West Nile Virus.

Community Relations

Barbara said Laura is not here tonight, so she wanted to say that the rock painting contest was really neat. She doesn't know how many kids she got out but she and her granddaughter had a good time painting rocks and decorating them and putting them around borough Hall. She's going to suggest to Laura that if there are rocks still available that we do another round. She thinks it was fun for the kids to go out and look and walk around the borough. She said Laura really does a lot of great things for kids and for adults in the borough.

Finance

Mark Moffa said he wasn't sure exactly where they left things which they discussed at the last meeting about borrowing additional monies. He was in communications with both Dave and Ben and Marie about the proper procedure for the filings for the debt act. He doesn't know if there's been any progress on that and he thinks Marie was looking for some old documentation from 2012. Marie said she didn't find it yet. Mark said they're running out of time and they don't have to wait for those old documents to pursue this new one. They just wanted to use it as a guide. Barbara said they need to talk to Mr. Calhoun, get instructions from him and proceed from there. The rates are still going down. We need the money to get the sewer line done. She told Mark she could call Mr. Calhoun or he could do it. Mark said he would call.

Public safety

Bob Winkler said he backs up with what Nick said tonight about being careful out there because the reports are saying we're going to get some heavy rain and Bellevue Ave will flood because some of the manholes are above street level. Joe Dudash said Bob already mentioned the generators. Barbara said they are going to be a big asset for us. The way things are going, you never know when we're going to need that building and they can't have the police go down without that generator.

Ordinance

Mark said the two big things coming up at the next meeting are both the earned income tax and establishing the position of borough manager. Beverly said also bamboo. Rick Halborn said he hasn't gotten that to them yet but will do that.

Refuse

Gary Nickerson said he would be giving Barbara a call to fill her in on some other issues. Barbara said if everyone hasn't given in their committee nights to please do that because they have to advertise that. Beverly asked Joe if he picked the date and time for building and maintenance yet. He said he did not and Beverly asked him to do that so she can get the advertisement in.

Long Range Finance

Gary Nickerson said they didn't have a Long Range meeting this month and their next meeting is going to be on the 12th of August and he will get that link to Laura to put on the website as soon as possible.

Revitalization Task Force

Mark Moffa said they have not yet set the next meeting date. They filled the County in on the passage of the TOD ordinance and want to get the revitalization task force to start looking at marketing the downtown area. He's not sure timing wise whether they want to first move forward with the LERTA. He and Gary are working with the school board on how to get them to consider that for us which would be huge in the marketing of the downtown area. They should probably plan a revitalization task force meeting regardless of where the LERTA stands.

Joe Dudash asked about the capital improvement money that they're going to borrow for the sewers. Beverly Wolfe said Mark explained this at the last meeting and she didn't understand it either. To be considered for this to refinance our current debt, they needed a minimum amount of money and they were going to make us go in with another municipality that we weren't so happy about. If we were to borrow the funds to complete the sewer main upgrade that would put us at the threshold that we could do the loan on our own which would be refinancing our old debt and then getting the balance of the money to pay for the main upgrade. Mark Moffa said he reported at the last meeting that was the initial nature of the discussion but then they did eventually agree that they would be able to refinance the \$800,000 that we have outstanding. This advice is coming from the Finance Committee and also from the financial advisors to borrow the money now because there's typically a \$1,000,000 minimum for these types of loans and so we need what is considered a small amount of money as far as these types of packages go and they would never give us a loan for \$300,000 at these rates so it then becomes very advantageous for us to do this. We have one window of opportunity to borrow \$300,000 at this rate. He does believe there is some money available in the sewer fund now, but they would pretty much be draining that to a very low level to do this project, leaving them without much cushion in those funds, going into a year where we don't know what's going to happen as grants might dry up for a bit and things like that. The advice and information they're getting is that it would be the wiser move to borrow the additional funds now which puts us in a better financial position going forward. Barbara said the rates are less than 1% and she doesn't think you'll ever find that in a long, long time so she thinks it's very smart plus the other rates would be fixed on the balance that we have. Mark said the entire balance has now become a variable rate debt balance. Joe said so we have money built up for the capital improvement but we just want extra. Mark said they sat down and looked at the options and it just seemed like a bit of a no brainer to take the loan for this one and leave that money in there for a future rainy day because

after this sewer project there's another big sewer project that they will need to do and anticipate that grants are going to dry up. They are trying to think as far ahead as they can and this just seems like the wise move as they try to plan for the future. John Stratz asked if they are going to lock in at this fabulous rate. We're taking \$800,000.00, can they use that money that we've locked in on and then dispose of completely, the debt that we have right now that's variable. Beverly said that's what the plan is. Mark said right now we have approximately \$800,000.00 in debt. What they would be doing is bundling the additional \$300,000.00 with that so then they would have one loan package at about 1.1 million and when you look at the numbers and the breakdowns on the annual payments were getting that additional \$300,000.00 to fund this project at a cost of about an extra \$6,000.00 a year. That's a very small amount of money because that is all related to the fixing of the rate and just becoming one larger package as opposed to being broken up into the three different packages we have now at variable rates. Joe asked how much was in capital improvements. Beverly said in the original 2020 budget they were anticipating and are probably on target, to have an ending fund balance of close to \$420,000.00 at the end of this year. But if you minus \$300,000.00 from that it takes them down to under \$200,000.00 and she isn't comfortable with that. Mark said insert capital they are projecting a fund balance of about \$435,000.00 at the end of 2020 and those are the budgeted numbers. The actuals in the July budgets and balances the sewer cash concentration account is \$454,533.00 and the sewer capital is \$361,106.00. Beverly said that's probably because we haven't been reimbursed by some of the grants that we've already put the money out for and we still have to get the reimbursement.

New Business

MOTION BY BEVERLY WOLFE TO AUTHORIZE THE ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID ON THE BOROUGH PARKING LOT REPAVEMENT PROJECT AS OUTLINED IN THE ENGINEER'S REPORT. SECONDED BY JOE DUDASH. Barbara said Carol has sent out all that paperwork so that everyone can review it. She asked when it would go out. Carol said when this is authorized she will make it live on Pennbid hopefully tomorrow. Marie will submit the advertisement through the Bucks County Courier Times to start that piece of the process because the borough code requires public advertisement. But the reality is once it's up on Pennbid, the contractors should be able to see it and download it. The bids are due August 27th is how the advertisement is drafted right now. A roll call vote was taken. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Mark Moffa, yes, Gary Nickerson, yes, John Stratz, yes, Joe Dudash, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION BY BEVERLY WOLFE TO RATIFY THE FOLLOWING MID-CYCLE INVOICES:

COMCAST INVOICE DATED 7/2/2020 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$129.46 FOR INTERNET SERVICE AT 790 NESHAMINY ST. PAID ON 7/14/20.

INDEPENDENCE BLUE CROSS INVOICE DATED 7/8/20 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,232.35 FOR MEDICAL INSURANCE INSTALLMENT PAID ON 7/14/20.

LANGHORNE POSTMASTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$228.63 FOR NEWSLETTER POSTAGE 7/22/20.

LANGHORNE POSTMASTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$148.26 FOR EIT NOTICES TO THE APARTMENTS POSTAGE. SECONDED BY JOHN STRATZ. Barbara said they got everything out in a timely fashion. Everything went first class bulk mail and was sent to the people in the apartments. They got the names and their apartment numbers so everything went right into their boxes, not like the newsletter. With the newsletters, they put them in the apartment office and the people can then come over and pick it up. Everyone got a notice on the EIT in both the newsletter and in the apartment letters. A roll call vote was taken. Beverly Wolfe, yes, Mark Moffa, yes, Gary Nickerson, yes, John Stratz, yes, Joe Dudash, yes, Barbara Heffelfinger, yes. All ayes, motion carried.

Barbara said her shoulder was so sore from doing the letters. She said it is a bear of a job so any help that anyone would like to give them on any future newsletters and mailings would be appreciated.

Ben Hauser wanted to clarify an item he did not see on the agenda. He asked Marie if there was an additional item that was supposed to be on under new business relating to unemployment or if was being moved to a different meeting. Marie said she was unaware of that. Ben said he thought it was going to be listed for tonight and didn't know if there is a due date on that particular bill. Marie said she wasn't sure which one he was referring to. Ben said the matter she was discussing with his colleague from his office. Marie said they sent in an appeal. Ben said he wanted to make sure they didn't need to address that tonight and Marie said not as far as she is concerned.

Person to be heard

Tom Sodano, 126 W. Woodland Ave., thanked Barbara for the rapid response to his suggestion of adding the EIT information in the mailer. It was well received. His next item was for Carol Schuehler. He said they had much brouhaha about getting the curbs and sidewalks, etc., done in the borough. It comes time for paving and it would appear that some of the other townships maybe weren't aware or didn't care as much as Penndel did. He noticed that storm drain that is collapsed and broken at the corner of Bellevue Ave., Parkview Ave. and Birch Avenue was milled around and they didn't touch the broken curbs, sidewalks and the storm drain itself is collapsed. They milled right around it. He asked if we were wasting our time or are other townships not paying attention. Barbara said that is in Middletown. Tom said that we went through a lot of consternation and it would appear that we were wasting our time. Tom asked Ben Hauser about his statement that were advertising for a manager. Ben said he mentioned the borough manager ordinance which was brought up he believes, at the beginning of the meeting in July which was authorizing for advertisement. That will be going into the paper this week. Tom said it is advertising for the ordinance and is not an approved ordinance and Ben said correct. He said it's an approved draft to advertise and eventually be considered by council.

Mike Smith, 127 Dehaven Ave., we're all going through something now that is something none of us have ever seen. There are a lot of people in this town that are hurting. The school board raised their taxes. The County raised their taxes. How much more can the people of Penndel stand? The problem he has with this is that they are doing this via zoom which he knows is legal. He really thinks they need to hold this meeting to approve this at a time when people can come out. People that he spoke with that have no idea how to get onto this and it's going to make it really hard and something of this magnitude which is basically doubling the revenue from what he's read and from what he's heard needs to be in a real public meeting not on Zoom. He knows that this is the easy way out but from what he hears they have some money built up and the council's not living within their means like the residents have to and they need to consider that. And he knows there's some people on here that are listening waiting for the answers if there is any. He's asking again that they put this off so they can have an actual meeting. Barbara Heffelfinger said there was a motion to advertise for the meeting and they did put the ordinance in there. They can also have a second meeting. The last time they tried this they had more than one or two meetings and that is a possibility. Council will certainly look at that and see how we do. They have to have this meeting to get information out so that people know where they stand or where they do not stand. If people feel that they still don't have enough information or they can't go on Zoom, they will certainly consider that. She's not guaranteeing anything. They also need to see where they stand with the budget for next year. Mark and Beverly will be doing the budget this year and she'll have some comments on that too.

This is just information. It doesn't mean they're going to say yes on the 17th. Mike Smith said it says that they are advertising it for a vote. Barbara said that does not mean they will have one. Mike said he thinks there's a few that will bring it up for a vote. Barbara said they will see what happens. People deserve lots of information on this. Many people pay this in other municipalities and they could use that money. They need to see how many people are unemployed and how many people are on assistance. There are a lot of things to consider. They need the money because they have a lot to do in this town. But they have to get the information out for people to be able to decide. People need to be able to understand what the tax is, how it works and what it would cost the people who are not paying it now. Mike said there are so many people that have no clue what this is. It's amazing how many people say they already pay that \$52.00 a year. They have no idea. Barbara said that's why she wants it explained. If they have to explain it 10 times they will. She knows that a lot of people on council do not agree with her. She thinks it has to be explained and make sure that everyone in the borough understands. If they have no alternative, that's it but that has to be proven. She thinks the people deserve that. Ben Hauser said he seemed to recall at a point in 2019 they did have Keystone come in and give a presentation or two. Mark said they gave a presentation to the Long-Range Finance Committee first then they had them come back and give a presentation to the public and to borough council in, he believes, November. There was some thinking that they might move on it at that time but then there were some requests by certain borough council members that there be additional public hearings and the decision was made to not vote on it at that time at the end of last year and that they would have continuing discussions and another public event with another presentation. It's going to be the same presentation that they had in November, but it'll be another opportunity to talk to Keystone to ask additional questions. The process has been going on for over a year now with lots of public discussion. Ben Hauser asked Mark if he had anything else to say on the process and the borough's efforts to inform the public. They have been taking input from the public, including in public comments, as Mr. Sodano noted in his public comment. They've listened to requests to publicize this well above and beyond he thinks. Any kind of reasonable standard they've gone far above and beyond in notification. Someone had suggested putting a notice on the sewer and refuse bills because every homeowner gets that and so they did that. Then the suggestion was made about adding it to the newsletter and he would be remiss if he didn't thank Barb and the team that put all that together and sent all that out. Sending the newsletters out is a huge effort and he thanked Barbara and the team that does that. Then there was this concept that dwellers might not see that if they don't get a sewer and trash bill and the newsletters are sent to the apartments but not every individual abode so this additional mailing went out to the apartment dwellers. Barbara said they did not send out the meaning of the tax. It said there was a meeting and to come to the public meeting. They could do a mailing that explains exactly what the EIT is. Mike said the letter that was put in the newsletter said that they were recouping money from other municipalities. It didn't say they were enacting a new tax so a lot of people would look at that and say oh we're just getting money from other municipalities and it's not going to hurt them. He said he and Mark are going to disagree on this for a long time and to do it via this media and he knows it's legal but it isn't the right way. He said Barb was right. They did this years ago and they went round and round and they have survived all these years from the first time because members of council live within their means. He understands all the drying up of the grants. He gets that. Every community is going through it but this year of all years, how much more can the people take having it taken out of their pockets. Barbara said she understands that all she is saying is that she would like every single person in this borough to know exactly what it means and what it's going to mean particularly for them. She's not saying she's against the EIT. She thinks they are missing out on a lot of money that goes to other municipalities that we could really use and should use here but they've got to let people know exactly what they are doing. Mike is correct that what it said on that notice was recouping. She doesn't know whether

people will actually understand what the tax is and how it works and that kind of thing. If they send out and there's no reply, then OK, they've done everything they possibly can. She can't tell you when she's ever agreed with Mike. You have to go back like 12 years. She just wants people to know the ins and outs. This is a special time and people might not even come out to the meeting and seniors don't know what a zoom meeting is. There are very few that can maneuver this thing and it probably includes her. They still can have the meeting see how many people get on that and if they don't get enough, if you don't get a majority of people out, we're not saying we're not going to do it, we're just going to say we want to educate people on what it is.

Terry McIntyre, 335 Hulmeville Ave., congratulated Barbara and said he knows it's a difficult task because he spent four years on council and knows nothing is easy. He wanted to add to Mike Smith's comment that the advertisement that came out for the EIT to be on the agenda said it would recover taxes lost to other municipalities is misleading because it doesn't continue to say however if you're living or working in Pennel Borough and not currently paying it, it could cost you 1% of your paycheck. To a lot of people, that's a lot of money. It could be anywhere from \$750.00 to \$1,500.00 a year and that's a considerable amount of money. You want to make sure everybody understands what's coming because when it comes and they don't know it until it's over, they are going to be upset. Barbara said all she wants to do is educate people. She knows people don't look at everything they get. And she thinks after this meeting on the 17th if we don't get a good response, then they should send out a very concise educational letter on this. This is what they were talking about and they've tried to advertise. The people should be educated and know exactly where their money is going. Terry asked if the meeting on the 12th for the financial committee will be on zoom. Gary said it would be. Terry said he has some questions. Our millage is up there and he didn't know if they visited looking at maybe a millage reduction in conjunction with this or a lesser amount of percentage for the earned income tax. Barbara said there are a lot of things to be explored; they will have to see what comes out of it.

Mike Sodano, 324 W. Woodland Ave., congratulated Barbara on becoming president. He asked if all the newsletters went out because he never received one at his home. Barbara said she personally did them. She has the list that Karen gives her. Everyone got them plus she did all the apartments. She did them all and took them to the post office. She sent out 775 of them. Mike Sodano said he was on the Long Range Finance Committee at the time that the EIT was passed out of Long Range Finance and at that time we had agreed unanimously in committee that it would be half a percent and everything he's seen since then has been 1%. He was wondering what the genesis was of that being converted from a half percent to 1%. Mark said it came out of discussions that happened with borough council in that November meeting when Keystone made their presentation. They looked at the numbers and part of that is this recapture. The feeling of council members at the time was that if you are only recapturing half a percent but a lot of people are paying the full percent and there are very few towns that have 1/2%. Out of the 54 municipalities in Bucks County, 48 have the EIT and almost all of those have it at a full percent so the idea was to bring the money back home to Pennel so do it at the full percent. Mark said what Mike said is correct. The recommendation out of Long Range Finance last year was for a 1/2 percent but then when they looked at that further and of course that's a recommendation from an Advisory Board, and then when council looked at it, the indication was let's go for the full percent because we think we're just leaving too much money on the table that still would be going to other towns. Mike Sodano said there are some large municipalities in the lower half of the County who don't have the EIT and that would be Falls Township, which personally affects him. Getting back to what Mike Smith and Terry McIntyre said, their approach in the newsletter is kind of saying that you're taking things back. Do you

have a percentage of how many people you're taking money back from versus how many people don't pay anything and now will be paying a completely new tax and he would imagine it's got to be north of 40%. He said maybe he's wrong but that wasn't addressed at all in your mailings and is little bit deceiving. Mark said he thinks it's actually more confusing for people if you just say we are implementing a new tax without trying to get some of that nuance out there that it's not a new tax for the majority of the working people in Pennndel because they're paying it already. Keystone will be here August 17th to present all the information once again to both the council and the public and will certainly entertain any questions anyone has. Mike said there will probably be a certain amount of current residents that say I'm not paying this anywhere else so they're not reclaiming it anywhere from them so this doesn't pertain to them and may not be interested in showing up because of that. He agrees with Mike Smith that a Zoom meeting to discuss this is just an ill-conceived idea. He knows that people do zoom meetings every day for work and he also does them. For people who do not do them every day and when you have a borough full of people who are unfamiliar with a how things and zoom work and it being such a heavy subject that's affecting them so personally, he finds the zoom meeting quite impersonal. He would rather be across the office floor from somebody not long distance. He'd much rather see a meeting of this magnitude be held in public and whether you have to do it at the municipal field or wherever you have to do it, it would be a way to give the people an opportunity to express themselves in a medium that everyone is comfortable with.

Steve Lowe, 409 Cynthia Ave., said he agrees with Mike Smith, Mr. McIntyre and Mr. Sodano. He is against the EIT. He has lived here for 32 years. He works at Moldamatic in Pennndel so he doesn't pay the EIT. He's talked to people on the outside and they don't know what it is and they have no concept whatsoever so he agrees with everybody else. To put it in perspective for those people that he's talked to, he tells them openly his salary is \$55,000 so that's a \$550 paycheck that goes to the borough. For him that's over three months of utility payments for him. When you put it into perspective, a lot of people he talked to, their jaws dropped and they said they can't afford that. It needs to be conveyed with the emphasis if you're going to go for the 1% again which he personally is not in favor of but it needs to be explained in real open philosophy so that people can understand it. Steve asked that they relay to Keystone so they have it in their presentation to find out how many retirees there are in Pennndel Borough presently. He believes that this does not affect them. Steve asked if this is something that's going to stay in effect long range or if this is something that they are going to keep on the books for maybe three to five years until they have enough money in the accounts and that you're going to take it away. He wants to know the full scope.

Tom Sodano, 126 W. Woodland Ave., said he was surprised about the half percent versus 1% because when this idea was floated 15 years ago it was floated out at half a percent with also some relief for homeowners and then he was surprised to find out which Mark explained, that it happened at a different meeting. He was looking for information from the Long-Range Finance Committee for when they had decided to change it. He was surprised to find out there are no minutes for Long Range Finance Committee meetings. He was not aware that somehow they are exempt from that. He said maybe Mr. Hauser could shed some light on that. He knows that the Planning Commission which heads have minutes and most of the other committees that he's aware of also have them. To piggyback on what Steve Lowe said, if you take a family with children in this borough, and he's on Social Security so that's exempt, but a family with kids if the mom and dad are both working they're paying the third highest millage in lower Bucks County. He's sure everyone is aware that we are #3 behind Bristol, Morrisville and then there's us so you're going to take, if they are both making Steve's kind of money, you're going to take \$1,000.00 out of their budget for a family that has kids but they're not paying it now. You're instantly catapulting a family like that into one of the highest tax brackets in all of Bucks County

and possibly in the entire southeastern quadrant of the state. He doesn't think that's a fair thing to do because there are a lot of people who are exempt like himself. He's sure if Barbara is collecting Social Security and she's also going to be exempt. He just thinks it's a real slam to take that kind of money from families with kids. He understands they are looking for a way and they were even 15 years ago when they floated this idea, they are looking for a way to try to recoup some money from the apartments. But this is going to work out that homeowner is really the one who's going to get hurt. Homeowners with kids are going to get slammed on this. He doesn't think it's fair, especially since he couldn't even go look all this stuff up as it was unfolding. If you weren't at the meeting with Keystone in November, you had no idea what was happening and it's going to be a heck of a financial hit for a lot of people.

Barbara asked Beverly Wolfe to tell everyone about the differences in the millage. Beverly said she was going to wait until the meeting on the 17th but after what she just heard, she can't wait anymore with the third highest millage allegations. She said to break this down, yes, we are but let's put this into perspective. Bristol Borough is number one at 57.89 mills and their mill value and she wants everybody to pay attention to this, their mill value is \$71,000 for a mill. The next on the list would be Morrisville Borough with 46.85 mills and their mill value is \$59,559.00. Then we have Penndel Borough with 30.80 mills with a value of \$17,807.00 dollars. She also found out a couple of others that didn't make the top ten. Chalfont Borough with 18.25 mills and their mill value is \$52,242.00. Doylestown Borough with 15.175 mills and their mill value is \$113,099.00. Yardley Borough with 24.73 mills with a mill value of \$31,596.00. Penndel's mill value is probably among the lowest in the County. Mike Smith asked what does that attribute to. Beverly said demographics and median income. Mike said we also have the lowest property values in the county because we have no business district and it's been going downhill. Beverly said she's just reading the facts.

Terry McIntyre, 335 Hulmeville Ave., asked Gary if at their meeting next week will he have more concrete figures like how many people are currently paying EIT and how many this will be a new tax for along with things like the trash because you have to consider that trash is also a millage hit even though it's a separate bill and should really be in our taxes like it is in every other municipality. You have to have figures like that ready for your meeting. Gary said they are not discussing the EIT at the Long Range Finance meeting. That will be on the 17th. He said there's going to be an opportunity for everyone to ask questions. Terry said he's talked to Keystone and he'd rather talk to people in our town who live here and pay these bills and not people from outside that just pull these things out of the air.

Barbara said she would be happy to put something together if council approves that expense, to just send out information on the meat and potatoes of what the EIT is and then no one can say they don't understand it because they've gotten it in the mail. Beverly said maybe they should wait until after the Keystone presentation because they have presented before and see what comes out of that and what information that would be in addition to what we already know. Barbara said she would be happy to do it because she just wants everyone to fully understand what they are trying to do.

Mike Smith, 127 Dehaven Ave., said to Mark that this is his baby and to make sure you have all the information and make sure Keystone has it because this is the beginning of about 60 or 70 questions and they should all be answered that night. He told Barbara to stick to her guns and get this out to the people the right way. Barbara said she did not say she's against it. She wants all the information right smack in front of her.

Mike Sodano, 324 W. Woodland Ave., suggested that to keep expenses down they could utilize the PennDel Facebook page. Barbara said no way because she does not do Facebook. She wants to know they have it in their hot little hands. She doesn't want to put it on Facebook and then have somebody say they don't do Facebook, so no, she will not do that. Mike said it's another vehicle and it doesn't cost anything. Barbara said it depends how long it is. Mike said it can be as long as you want, and you can do it in a Word document and Laura could copy and paste. Barbara said she is confused. Mike said he's trying to help. Barbara said she is not a technological genius and she's still learning zoom. All she cares about is that people get educated. If Laura can put it on Facebook, that's fine. Mike Smith asked if they could walk the streets and put it out in every mailbox and save money. Barbara said you are not allowed to put any kind of flyer in mailboxes. Mike said he meant in doors. Barbara said no, it will end up in the street. She wants people to get it in their hot little hands. Beverly said they should do that after Keystone meeting.

MOTION BY BEVERLY WOLFE TO ADJOURN. SECONDED BY JOHN STRATZ. All ayes, motion carried.

Submitted by: _____
Marie Serota, Secretary/Treasurer