

**Pennington Borough Council
Work Session Meeting – January 29, 2024**

Mayor Davy called the Work Session Meeting of the Borough Council to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held via Zoom. Borough Clerk Betty Sterling called the roll with Council Members Angarone, Chandler, Gnatt, Marciante, Stern and Valenza in attendance.

Also present were Borough Clerk Betty Sterling, Borough Attorney Walter Bliss, Borough Administrator Donato Nieman, Administrative Coordinator Mona Habiby, Chief Financial Officer Sandra Webb, Public Works Superintendent Rick Smith and Police Chief Doug Pinelli.

Mayor Davy announced that notice of this meeting has been given to the Hopewell Valley News, Trenton Times and was posted on the door at Borough Hall and on the Borough web-site according to the regulations of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Open to the Public

Mayor Davy read the following statement.

The meeting is now open to the public for comments. In an effort to provide everyone interested an opportunity to address his or her comments to the Governing Body, a public comment time limit has been instituted for each speaker. **Please raise your hand and when the Borough Administrator acknowledges you state your name and address for the record. Please limit comments to the Governing Body to a maximum of 2 minutes.**

There were no comments from the public.

MAYOR'S BUSINESS

Mayor Davy announced the resignation of Reba Holley from Economic Development and the resignation of Michael Rheinhardt from Shade Tree.

Mayor Davy announced that the Borough submitted a grant application to the NJEDA for a New Jersey Asset Activation Planning Grant and that application was denied.

Work Session Discussion Items

Mike Pisauro of the Stony Brook Watershed gave a presentation on a regional approach to reduce flooding and meet the requirements of the MS4 permit. Ms. Stern stated that Public Works has heard a presentation on this and though they are not asking for any action from Council at this time however they are looking for Council to consider the approach that will be presented to develop a regional solution to the stormwater requirements. Mr. Pisauro stated that the Watershed has been working with professionals to develop a plan to reduce water pollution and reduce flooding. Mr. Pisauro stated that they are in the early stages of formulating the idea and the plan will be formulated over the next five years. Mr. Pisauro stated that as the process moves along, they will be working with the municipalities in the watershed to fund the plan to remediate pollution and flooding problems and they have begun that process already by meeting with municipalities to bring them on board and to share the costs.

Ms. Debbie Gwazda of the Friends of the Pennington Library spoke about two proposals that the Friends of the Library are interested in doing. Ms. Gwazda stated that neither of these ideas will cost the Borough. Ms. Gwazda stated that the first idea is to replace the eyesore sandwich board in front of Borough Hall with a more permanent sign between the flagpoles in front of Borough Hall. Ms. Gwazda stated that she has done some research on signs and she has spoken to the Zoning Officer and she is here tonight to seek Council approval on the placement of the sign. Mr. Marciante stated that he would like to see something that indicates exactly where the sign will be placed. Ms. Gwazda stated that it would be to the left of the front door of the building in front of Borough Hall. Ms. Gwazda stated that the next step will be to get zoning approval but that will be after Council approves the idea and the location. Mayor Davy asked for a drawing showing the proposed sign and the proposed location. Ms. Gwazda stated that she has that and will drop it off to Betty in the office.

Ms. Gwazda stated that the second idea is a book donation bin that they would like to place somewhere in the Borough. Ms. Gwazda stated that they approached the Fire Department but they were not interested in having the book bin at their location. Ms. Gwazda stated that the book drop is regulated and checked so that there would not be books or bags around the box looking unsightly and the library would make some money off of the donations. Ms. Gwazda stated that this is a non-profit venture that would produce some income for the Library. Ms. Gwazda stated that the books are resold or recycled if not in good quality. Ms. Gwazda stated that currently books are dropped off and a library employees sorts them and boxes them for donation. Ms. Gnatt stated that she thought that this idea was tabled because there is already a bin at St. James Church. Ms. Gwazda stated that St. James is an in house program only, the bin they are proposing would be advertised and promoted to help the library. Mayor Davy asked where the bin would be placed. Ms. Gwazda stated that they would like it to be prominently displayed so that residents will see

it and come back to donate their books. Mr. Bliss had some legal concerns and Ms. Gwazda was asked to provide an agreement from NJ Legacy for review. Mayor Davy stated that he would meet with the Borough Administrator and Ms. Gwazda to figure out a solution.

Ms. Stern stated that the Public Works Committee has been discussing the idea of a more permanent rubber mulch for Kunkel and Sked Street Parks. Ms. Stern stated that this idea has been discussed before and some investigation has been done and a document was provided to Council in the packages showing the pros and cons of rubber mulching and they are now looking for Council input to see if they should continue to look into this. Ms. Stern stated that it is very costly and they would like support before they start looking into proceeding with the process of seeking quotes. Mrs. Chandler asked what the savings would be each year if Council agrees to go with a more permanent solution. Ms. Stern stated that it is not just about the cost it is also about safety. Ms. Angarone asked what happens when it reaches end of life and how do you get rid of it. Mr. Smith stated that there are several options that can be considered. There was some discussion of ADA compliance. Ms. Stern stated that this would be an improved playground surface and in comparing to other communities of Pennington's caliber this new product is consistent with what other towns are using. After some discussion most of Council members agreed that they would like more information and some pictures of other parks that have this product. Ms. Stern stated that they would work on getting more information and some photos for Council to review. Mr. Valenza stated that he would be in favor of improving the parks because we have open space funds that we are having trouble utilizing to purchase open space property.

Mrs. Chandler stated that the Economic Development Committee has discussed the idea of charging a fee for registering for the Yard Sale which would get you on the list/map of yard sale locations and also a sign placed in your yard. Mrs. Chandler stated that this would be an optional fee and you could still participate in the yard sale without registering. Mrs. Chandler stated that as part of the budget process some other fees were discussed. Mrs. Chandler stated that the other two are a fee for use of the message board and a security fee for Kunkel Park. Mrs. Chandler stated that this is on for discussion to see if Council would like to introduce an amendment to the fee ordinance. Mayor Davy stated that he has concerns about using the message board for outside entities because it would be difficult to regulate. Council felt that the message board should be used only to advertise Borough events. Mr. Bliss stated that once we start selling sign usage, we cannot limit who uses the sign and it adds an oversight issue. Council decided that the fee for yard sale registration would be \$25.00. Some discussion took place regarding the security fee. Council felt that the fee should be \$500 and would be refundable provided that no damage takes place. Mayor Davy stated that with regard to the display sign, it will be used only for Borough events. Mr. Smith stated that Council should also take a look at the banners that are dropped off and displayed and given the direction of the conversation regarding the message board and not being able to restrict what gets displayed then Council should take a look at the banners process as well. Mrs. Chandler stated that the fees collected will be minimal so it sounds like it would be more trouble than it would be worth.

Review of Tentative Council Regular Agenda

Mayor Davy asked if there was any discussion on the following items which will be on the Agenda for the Regular Meeting on February 5, 2024.

Mayor Davy stated that the Environmental Commission is working on a grant application to the Board of Public Utilities for a Clean Energy Grant and they will need a resolution authorizing the submission of the grant that is due to be submitted by February 21st.

Presentation - Historic Preservation (Eric Holtermann)

Resolution - 2024-2.1 - Resolution Authorizing Refunds

Resolution 2024-2.2 - Resolution Authorizing Payment of Bills

Resolution 2024-2.3 - Authorizing Amendments to the 2024 Temporary Budget

Resolution 2024-2.4 - Amending Resolution for Janitorial Services

Resolution 2024-2.5 - Shared Services - Senior Center Maintenance

Resolution 2024-2.6 - Shared Service Agreement - Senior Coordinat

Resolution 2024-2.7 - Shared Services Agreement - Paper Shredding

Resolution 2024-2.8 - Penn Medicine (CDL Testing/Employment Exams/Fitness for Duty)

Resolution - Authorizing Lease of Police Vehicle

Resolution - McCloskey – HVAC

Resolution - Promoting Officer D'Ascoli to Detective

Resolution - Emergency Repair - Well 6

Resolution - Trenton Cyrus - Casino Night

Public Comment

Mayor Davy asked that anyone wishing to speak, please raise your hand so the Borough Clerk can acknowledge you, please state your name and address for the record and limit comments to the Governing Body to a maximum of 3 minutes.

There were no comments from the public.

At:8:10PM, Council Member Gnatt made a motion to convene in Closed Session, second by Council Member Valenza with all members present voting in favor.

Attorney/Client - Update Personnel Matter (Steve Trimboli)

Negotiations - PILOT Agreement (Jim Kyle)

Negotiations - Area In Need of Redevelopment (Jim Kyle)

Negotiations - Pennington First Aid Building Update

- Use and Occupancy Agreement

Negotiations - Shared Service - EMS

Attorney/Client - Boundary Survey - Sked St Park

Personnel - Borough Administrator Update

Attorney/Client - PILOT Litigation Update

Negotiations - Beigene

Council Member Angarone made a motion to adjourn the Work Session Meeting, second by Council Member Gnatt with all members present voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Sterling
Borough Clerk