

**PILESGROVE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2007
MINUTES**

Mayor Ernie Bickford called the regular meeting of the Pilesgrove Township Committee to order at 7:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk read the annual notice statement:

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings law. This meeting of September 11, 2007 was included in a list of meetings notice sent to the Today's Sunbeam and the Elmer Times on January 3, 2007, posted on the bulletin board at the Municipal Building on January 3, 2007 and has remained continuously posted as the required notices under the Statute. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

Mayor Bickford advised that proper notice having been given; the Clerk is directed to include this statement in the minutes of this meeting.

Attendance: Ernest Bickford
Edward Kille
William Miller
William L. Horner, Esq.
Ruth Moynihan
David Rollison, RMA

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve the minutes of the August 7, 10, 14 (AM), 14 (PM), 21 and 28, 2007 meetings. Ayes all.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve the bill list in the amount of \$593,891.19 as presented by the Treasurer. Ayes all.

Motion made by Miller, 2nd by Kille to approve the Tax Collectors report for August 2007. Ayes all.

Motion made by Miller, 2nd by Kille to approve the cost of the September Township newsletter in an amount not to exceed \$500.00. Ayes all.

Motion made by Miller, 2nd by Kille to approve the cost of a "shredding event" in the Township on October 27, 2007 in an amount not to exceed \$1,500.00. Ayes all.

Discussion on the proposal of Blauer Associates for grant writing/administrative services for an ADA grant for the Reliance Fire Company building and 2008 Home Rehabilitation program. Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve the services, pending confirmation that the Borough of Woodstown agrees to split the costs equally. Ayes all.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve Resolution 07-088, appointing certain employees of the Township of Pilesgrove. Ayes all.

Motion made by Miller, 2nd by Kille to approve Resolution 07-089, establishing a change fund for the Township Construction/Zoning office. Ayes all.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve Resolution 07-090, (replacing Resolution 07-060), Authorizing the execution of an Agreement Providing for Payments in Lieu of Taxes. Ayes all.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve Resolution 07-091, authorizing Land Engineering, LLC to prepare a survey of Block 12, lot 7.04 at a cost of \$3,900.00. Certification of availability of funds attached. Ayes all.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve the Request and Authorization for records disposal as submitted by the Clerk. Ayes all.

David Rollison, RMA, reviewed the Township's 2006 report of audit. The tax collection rate for the Township remains close to 98%, which is a very good rate and has a significant impact on the Township budget. In addition, there are no recommendations in the report, which means that the Township staff has done an excellent job in following regulations and procedures.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve Resolution 07-092, Acceptance of the 2006 Report of Audit. Ayes all.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to approve the execution of the Group Affidavit Form of audit review. Ayes all.

Motion made by Bickford, 2nd by Kille to open the public comment portion of the meeting. Ayes all.

Mayor Bickford recognized Freeholder Julie Acton and Alloway Mayor Joe Fedora in the audience. Ms. Acton stated that she is attending local meetings to convey the County Freeholders commitment to keeping the lines of communication open with the municipalities.

Resident Cheryl Reardon questioned Ms. Acton on her position on the current Smart Growth plan and environmental issues in the County.

Ms. Reardon then expressed her concern with the recent resignation of Township Planning Board Chairman John Ober, stated that she believes politics have entered into this issue, and she feels that Mr. Ober must be reinstated as Chairman of the Planning Board, to continue the progress on issues such as farmland preservation and affordable housing. Ms. Reardon questioned Mayor Bickford on his statements to her regarding Mr. Ober resigning from the Board entirely. Mayor Bickford relayed his conversation with Mr. Ober on that subject and why he made the statement that Mr. Ober should resign from the Board. Ms. Reardon advised that Mr. Ober wants to discuss this matter to work it out. Mr. Reardon inquired on how Vice Chair Milton Eachus could be chair. Mayor Bickford and Mr. Horner explained that since Mr. Ober resigned, Mr. Eachus is the chair until such time as the Planning Board elects another member chair.

Resident Gary Curry stated he believes that Mr. Ober is doing what is best for the Township and is concerned that this will encourage development in the Township. Mr. Curry stated that if Mr. Ober has not submitted a letter of resignation, then the resignation is not legal. Mr. Horner and Mayor Bickford advised that given the resignation was submitted on record at a meeting, it does not require a letter.

Resident Phyllis Sauler reiterated the previous comments, and stated that she wants John Ober reinstated as Chair.

Resident Joe Hiles stated that the Township Committee has no say in who will be the Planning Board Chair. He feels that there is some over bearing factor in this issue, based on the Mayor's conversation with Ms. Reardon and the transcription of Mr. Ober's resignation. He feels everyone should set aside personal and political issues and do what is best for the Township.

Ms. Reardon asked for a commitment from the Township Committee that she can sit down with residents and the Committee to work toward a solution of this problem. Mr. Horner advised that Mr. Ober has submitted his resignation, and this is a Planning Board issue. Ms. Reardon stated that Mr. Ober has indicated he wants a meeting. Mayor Bickford suggested a Tuesday morning work session meeting for further discussion.

Resident Alex Alampi expressed his concern, advised he has attended some Planning Board meetings and sees that Mr. Ober enjoys his job. Mr. Alampi would like to see this resolved.

Resident Jerry Anton stated that at a recent political meeting, a statement was made that indicates this is a political issue.

Resident Sam Carmen asked if the resignation is legal and binding. Mr. Horner indicated he believes it is. It was submitted on the record.

Mr. Carmen then inquired on the status of the red light at the intersection of Routes 40/45. Mayor Bickford explained the situation. Mr. Carmen asked if the bond posted by the developer was in the amount of \$800,000., Mayor Bickford indicated it was much less. Mr. Carmen stated that Mr. Ober recommended a higher amount for the bond – Township cannot let someone with that amount of experience go.

Resident Gary Curry again questioned the legality of the resignation. Mayor Bickford read aloud the transcription of the portion of the Planning Board meeting that includes Mr. Ober's resignation.

Mr. Alampi asked why Mr. Ober resigned. Mr. Horner advised that the Planning Board is separate from the Township Committee, and this is a Planning Board issue.

Resident Albert Goforth stated that all this discussion does not follow Roberts Rules of Order of Parliamentary Procedure – this should be handled at the Planning Board meeting.

There being no further public comment, Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Ayes all.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to go into closed session to discuss matters in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, specifically litigation in the matter of Pacilli v. Pilesgrove and Cotler/Pierson v. Pilesgrove.

Motion made by Kille, 2nd by Miller to adjourn at 8:50 PM. Ayes all.

Maureen R. Abdill, Clerk