

The March 25, 2025 meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Pequannock, Morris County, New Jersey was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building Meeting Room located at 530 Newark-Pompton Turnpike; Mayor John Driesse presiding.

Township Clerk Carol Marsh read the following statement for inclusion in the meeting minutes:

"In accordance with the requirements of New Jersey's Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was included in the Annual Meeting Notice which was filed in the Office of the Township Clerk; posted on the Bulletin Board in the Municipal Building; published as legal notice in the Suburban Trends and Daily Record newspapers; and distributed to all persons requesting notice in accordance with Township policy."

Mayor Driesse led the Pledge of Allegiance, which was followed by a prayer and a moment of thanks for those individuals serving our nation.

Present:

Mayor John Driesse
Deputy Mayor Kyle Russell
Councilwoman Melissa Florance-Lynch
Councilman David Kohle
Councilman Vincent Siracusa

Absent: None

Also Attending:

Adam Brewer, Township Manager
Robert Oostdyk, Esq., Township Attorney
Carol J. Marsh, Township Clerk

There were 5 members of the public in attendance.

PRESENTATIONS. There were no presentations.

REPORTS FROM VOLUNTEERS. There were no reports from volunteers.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

- Ellen Brody Decker and Lia Czubachowski of Relay for Life of Greater Montville Township presented information on the organization's June 7th event at the Montville High School and requested the Council start a team to participate in the event and assist in the cause.
- Nick DeStefano questioned the methods used to assess houses in the flood zone, expressing the opinion that houses in the flood area are over assessed, and requested the tax assessment of houses in the flood zone take into consideration other costs such as flood insurance.
- Jim Van Dyke, Commander of American Legion Post 452 requested two members of the Council participate in selecting the 2025 Citizen of the Year. Councilman Siracusa and Councilwoman Florance-Lynch were selected by the Council.
- Mary Kay Schmermund reported the First Reformed Church is putting on the second installment of the documentary *The Price of Silence* on March 30th and encouraged people to support the First Reformed Church food pantry.

MANAGER'S REPORT. Township Manager Adam Brewer reviewed the Manager's report for the meeting, providing information on several of the evening's agenda items.

PUBLIC HEARINGS. There were no public hearings.

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS.

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION - Ordinance No. 2025-03, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY THE TOWNSHIP OF PEQUANNOCK (101 CHATFIELD DRIVE) NOT REQUIRED FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13, ET SEQ

On a motion by Mr. Kohle, seconded by Mrs. Russell, the ordinance was approved for introduction by the following vote:

For: Mrs. Florance-Lynch, Mr. Kohle, Mrs. Russell, Mr. Siracusa, Mayor Driesse
Against: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION - Ordinance No. 2025-04, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 152 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PEQUANNOCK AND REVISING FEES FOR CERTAIN PARKS AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

On a motion by Mrs. Florance-Lynch, seconded by Mr. Kohle and Mrs. Russell, the ordinance was approved for introduction by the following vote:

For: Mrs. Florance-Lynch, Mr. Kohle, Mrs. Russell, Mr. Siracusa, Mayor Driesse
Against: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

RESOLUTIONS.

- **R2025-87**, adopting Temporary Budget #2 for **2025**.
- **R2025-88**, authorizing an Interlocal Agreement between the Township of Pequannock and the Board of Health of the Borough of Florham Park for Public Health Services
- **R2025-89**, accepting a Release from Virginia Industries LLC and authorizing the remittance of a \$7,827.50 for privately completed sewer work that benefited the Rt. 23 Northbound and Southbound Sanitary Sewer Extension Project
- **R2025-90**, authorizing a Professional Services Agreement between the Township of Pequannock and Associated Appraisal Group (Route 23 Northbound and Southbound Sanitary Sewer Extension).
- **R2025-91**, authorizing release of deposits for construction in a Township Right of Way
- **R2025-92**, authorizing Tax Office refunds, overpayments or cancellations.
- **R2025-93**, approving payment of the itemized claims as set forth on the **March 20, 2025** Bill List and the March 21, 2025 2018 FEMA Elevation Escrow List.

On a motion by Mrs. Russell, seconded by Mr. Siracusa, **Resolutions R2025-87 through R2025-93** were adopted by the following vote:

For: Mrs. Florance-Lynch, Mr. Kohle, Mrs. Russell, Mr. Siracusa, Mayor Driesse
Against: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION. There were no discussion items.

REPORTS AND NOTICES.

- Pequannock Township Zoning Board of Adjustment 2024 Annual Report

COUNCIL REPORTS.

Mrs. Florance-Lynch:

- Economic Development Advisory Committee meets tomorrow at 7:00 p.m.
- Historic District Commission's next meeting is April 2nd at the Martin Berry House.
- Planning Board will meet April 14th at 7:00 p.m.
- Senior Citizens Advisory Committee meets Wednesday, April 16th at 10:00 a.m. There is a senior bus trip to the Hunterdon Playhouse on April 1st.
- Bishop Navagh Columbiettes are having a fish and chips event this Friday.
- Pequannock Valley Rotary is holding a comedy show this Saturday in Lincoln Park.
- May 8th is the New Bridge Gala at the Legacy Castle.

- PBA had a great beefsteak at the Legacy Castle.
- Fire Company 2's Women's Auxiliary held a pocketbook bingo this past Saturday.
- Participated at the Grains of Hope food packing event.

Mr. Kohle:

- Thanked all the football players and students who set up the tables for the Sunday Grains of Hope Event.
- Fire Co. No. 2 is having their 13th annual Fish and Chips Dinner Friday, April 11th.
- Congratulated the Police Department for their successful PBA Beefsteak Dinner.

Mrs. Russell

- First Aid and Rescue Squad is down to one ambulance again. A new ambulance is scheduled to come in September.
- Environment Commission will be working the River Cleanup on Saturday, April 12th. There will be a mini bio blitz on April 26th. May 3rd is their Rain Barrell workshop. Next meeting is April 9th.
- There is a clothing drive at the high school this Saturday.
- Library Fest is April 5th.
- Little League Opening Day is April 26th.
- Preservation Trust has one more meeting with the County to finalize the ballot initiate for November to allow the use of County Open Space funds for stewardship.
- A Shred Day has been scheduled for May 5th.

Mr. Siracusa

- Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee reports the Township is still hiring Life Guards and the Senior Olympics is scheduled for September 17th.

Mayor. Driesse

- Shade Tree expressed concern about excessive cutting of trees. Mr. Brewer reported that enforcement action was or will be taken in two cases. Mr. Driesse explained the rationale behind the Township's requirements regarding the removal of trees on private property.
- River Cleanup is in a few weeks.
- Congratulated the PBA for a successful and enjoyable Beefsteak Dinner.
- Expressed agreement with Ms. Schmermund that people should remember and focus on those in need.
- Grains of Hope was successful.
- Expressed approval for the use of Shared Services such as the agreement with Florham Park.
- Thanked the Police, Fire Department and First Aid Squad for what they do.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

- Karen Randolph reported on an ANJEC report on pending NJ legislation related to invasive species management and noted resources may become available.
- Megan Dempsey noted a family member will be performing at the NewBridge Gala, commented favorably on the tax rate in Pompton Plains and Morris County, noted many people are struggling and commented on many concerns that may outweigh a small difference in the tax rate. Ms. Dempsey expressed concern about making "reckless cuts to vital services" at the urged elected officials at all levels to "stand up to it".
- Sharon Taylor questioned if PV Park water is being tested, requested status on the opening of PV Park, and complimented the result of work done on Greenview Park.

- Mary Kay Schmermund expressed agreement with Megan Dempsey's comments, noted many protests are scheduled for April 5th highlighting one in Montclair and expressed appreciation for Senator Kim.
- Mr. Brewer provided information on the status of PV and Greenview Park.
- Mr. Oostdyk commented on issues with the standards for tax assessments.
- Members of the Council considered holding a discussion of the assessment process.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

On a motion by Mr. Kohle, seconded by Mrs. Florance-Lynch, minutes of the February 11, February 25, and March 11, 2025 regular meetings and the February 25th Budget Workshop meeting were unanimously approved with Mrs. Russell abstaining on the February 11, 2025 minutes.

EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION. There was no Closed Session discussion.

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Kohle, seconded by Mrs. Russell, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m. without objection.



Carol J. Marsh, Township Clerk

John Driesse, Mayor