

**TOWNSHIP OF PEMBERTON
REGULAR MEETING**

**April 2, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

FLAG SALUTE

Council President Ward led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, announced that notice of the meeting was given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, and followed with roll call.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Daniel Dewey
Harry Harper
Matthew Bianchini
Perry Doyle Jr. (Zoom)
Joshua Ward

ABSENT

Also, present: Solicitor Jerry Dasti, and Township Clerk Amy P. Cosnoski.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Ward called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

121-2025 Authorizes Council to go into Closed Session – Not Adopted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Ward opened this portion of the meeting for public comments.

Joe Fallon, Browns Mills – 1. Provided his opinion on the settlement regarding the lawsuit involving the Mayor. Felt that the settlement should be approved. Commented on changing the form of government. 2. Commented on the yellow bank building being up for sale and explained the issues with traffic there. 3. Commented on a property he owns being classified as a rental property and stated that his son lives in it.

Debbie Skipper, Browns Mills – 1. Commented on getting the same letter and noted she was told it was sent out in error. 2. Commented on the Mayor needing to resign and the numerous lawsuits.

Alex Costa, Browns Mills – 1. Thanked Councilman Bianchini for getting the information out regarding YouTube. 2. Commented about OPRA's he would be requesting. 3. Asked about the refunds and who they were going to. Advised the Council on how he felt they should vote on the items on the agenda. 4. Asked if there was an update on the Tom Boyd investigation.

Marie Reynolds, Browns Mills – 1. Asked for confirmation that the Mayor is not required to attend the council meetings. Mr. Dasti confirmed he did not. Asked how Council was supposed to get their questions answered for the meetings if he was not here and he would not allow them to be here. Commented on the Mayor being away for a month. Asked who would be acting on the Mayors behalf in his absence. Councilman Bianchini noted it was the Director of Public Works, but that he had no power. Councilman Doyle agreed with Councilman Bianchini's comments about the lack of power that Mr. McNaughton had while the Mayor was away.

Marty Graf Wanger, President of BMIA, Mt. Laurel – 1. Gave information regarding events coming up at the BMIA and projects they are working on. Spoke about the BMIA advocating for their members. Discussed doing a community garden.

Tracey Ricadelli, Pemberton – 1. Thanked Council for putting the meetings up on YouTube. 2. Asked for an update on the warehouses on Birmingham. Mr. Dasti explained what was going on with the current warehouse and stated that the proposed warehouses are in litigation. 3. Asked about putting a committee together to change the rules of the Faulkner Act. Council President Ward explained council voting to put it on an election as a referendum vote.

Lionel Lee, Pemberton – 1. Commented on respecting the position Council was in. Asked how the town was conducting business. Commented on something needing to be figured out.

Michelle Forman, Browns Mills – 1. Stated she thought that the Council was able to subpoena the Department Heads. 2. Commented on the \$50,000 and whether the taxpayers or the Mayor should pay. Stated he must pay and asked why the taxpayers had to pay for his bad behavior. Asked about the insurance increasing because of all the lawsuits. 3. Commented on the 5 warehouses going back to the planning board and if so who would make the final decision on that, and asked what the towns options were on that. 4. Commented on the UEZ and asked about the time restraints on voting on that. 5. Commented on going to the Nesbit Center with her son and grandbaby and noted that it was beautiful. Stated that it was a great place for people to go and that there were no dogs this time. Councilman Bianchini explained the UEZ issue. Councilman Harper commented on the 5 warehouses. Mr. Dasti explained in more detail the issue with the 5 warehouses. Council President Ward commented on the subpoenaing of Department Heads. Councilman Doyle commented on being able to speak with the Department Heads. Councilman Bianchini commented on the Council still being able to modify the plan.

Patricia Guthrie, Birmingham – 1. Noted she got a rental letter in the mail also. Asked about the Public Works guy being appointed acting Mayor and if he should be here at the meeting. 2. Commented on the lawsuits and what she thought should be done to prevent it. Commented on changing the laws. Mr. Dasti commented that the acting Mayor was not required to be at the meetings. Commented on the indemnification ordinance. Explained the settlement case and why the township had to pay for this case. Councilman Doyle noted that this was an elected position. Stated that the people voted for him and put him there and the only thing we can do is hope he does what he is supposed to do. Noted that they can only do what they are allowed to. Councilman Harper noted he took an oath a little over two years ago and he had not taken that seriously.

Robert B., Browns Mills – 1. Noted he brought up once before regarding title 9 regarding child abuse and neglect. Commented on the institutional abuse unit and what they did. Commented on an employee under the age of 17 that would raise this to a criminal charge. Asked if that had been followed up on that and if anyone here had reported this to the proper agency. Mr. Dasti explained the allegation in the complaint about the underage girl being brought to the attention of the police department. Stated that the police sat down with the Mom and the Mom said she did not want it to go any further. Councilman Doyle commented on the ability to interview a minor. Councilman Dewey commented on who had been given the information regarding the issue. Councilman Harper noted he had reached out to the State Attorney General's office and he received the same answer that it was an active and ongoing investigation. Discussion ensued on the bureaucracy.

America Phillips, Browns Mills – 1. Commented on not looking good and paying the price. Commented on people representing the township and the public having questions. Commented on working for the state and people getting in trouble. 2. Commented on the gates remaining and that they could have spent the money on no litter signs. 3. Commented on Sycamore Hall and her hope that the township could get it back. 4. Commented on the laundromat issue. 5. Commented on Lowes and Home Depot and having to bring the ratables into the town. Questioned why we did not spend the money in town. 6. Commented on the empty houses around the town. 7. Questioned what the deadline was on the leaf pickup.

Valerie Rohor, Southampton – 1. Asked what was going on with Mr. Elly and what was going on with his situation. Council President Ward noted that Council extended his vacate date to June 1st.

Seeing no other resident wishing to be heard, this portion of the meeting was closed to the public.

***Consent Agenda: All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine by the Township Council and will be enacted by one motion. Should a Council member wish to discuss a consent agenda item separately, that item can be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.**

Councilman Harper asked to pull Resolutions 123-2025 and 127-2025.

***CONSENT AGENDA**

***MEETING MINUTES**

Regular Meeting Minutes of February 19, 2025.

***RESOLUTIONS**

- 122-2025 Authorizes Various Routine Refunds in the amount of \$1,100.00.
- 123-2025 *Pulled from the Consent Agenda and considered later in the meeting.*
- 124-2025 Authorizes the Application for and Accepting of the funds from the NJ Department of Transportation in the amount of \$7,000.00 for 2025 Distracted Driving Crackdown, U Drive. U Text. U Pay.
- 125-2025 Approves and Adopts the Home Improvement Program Operating Manual.
- 126-2025 Adopts Request for Proposal Methodology for Emergency Contractor Work and the 2025 Affordable Housing Program.
- 127-2025 *Pulled from the Consent Agenda and considered later in the meeting.*

Motion by Bianchini and Dewey to approve the consent agenda as amended. Bianchini, yes; Dewey, yes; Harper, yes; Doyle, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS

- 123-2025 Approves a Professional Services contract with Phoenix Advisors for Sewer Rate Cost Analysis in an amount not to exceed \$8,500.00. *Pulled from the Consent Agenda.*

Councilman Harper commented on not having a budget and did not think this resolution should be passed until they received a budget. Asked the departments to look into all of the other commercial properties to make sure everything is up to date. Councilman Bianchini agreed with Councilman Harper, until such time that they see a budget. Councilman Dewey commented on doing a wage and benefits analysis to make sure they are competitive. Asked why someone in the sewer department could not do this.

Motion by Harper and Bianchini to deny Resolution 123-2025. Harper, yes; Bianchini, yes; Doyle, yes; Dewey, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

- 127-2025 Appoints Members to the Economic and Business Development Committee. *Pulled from the Consent Agenda.*

Council President Ward advised on the members that were being appointed. Provided some information on each of the members. Asked for a recommendation to appoint a member from Council.

Councilman Harper suggested Councilman Bianchini.

Motion by Harper and Doyle to approve Resolution 127-2025 with Councilman Bianchini as the Council Member Appointee. Harper, yes; Doyle, yes; Dewey, yes; Bianchini, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

Council President Ward explained the Ordinance and why it had taken so long to come to fruition.

RESOLUTIONS ADDED AT MEETING

Motion by Harper and Bianchini to add Resolution 128-2025 to the agenda. Harper, yes; Bianchini, yes; Doyle, yes; Dewey, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Harper and Doyle to add Resolution 129-2025 to the agenda. Harper, yes; Doyle, yes; Dewey, yes; Bianchini, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

- 128-2025 Authorizing Approval of a Proposed Settlement of Litigation Entitled “Pittman v. Pemberton, Tompkins, and Hornickel”

Councilman Bianchini read the resolution into the record and then explained his reason for reluctantly authorizing this. Stated that this case had been described as indefensible.

Councilman Harper agreed. Councilman Dewey provided his thoughts and noted the difference between this case and the others. Councilman Bianchini noted that another employee had filed a lawsuit against the Mayor. Councilman Doyle commented that their affirmative votes were in no way condoning his actions.

Motion by Harper and Bianchini to approve Resolution 128-2025. Harper, yes; Bianchini, yes; Dewey, yes; Doyle, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

129-2025 Expressing its Disapproval of Mayor Jack K. Tompkins and Demanding His Resignation.

Councilman Bianchini commented on having common sense and then read the resolution into the record. Councilman Harper noted this is not the end of things. Councilman Dewey noted that the Mayor was an embarrassment to the community. Councilman Bianchini commented on this issue being known across the state. Council President Ward commented on not supporting any of this and that this was the second time they had asked for his resignation. Commented on the legacy that the Mayor was leaving on this township. Councilman Doyle noted he could not really add much.

Motion by Harper and Dewey to approve Resolution 129-2025. Harper, yes; Dewey, yes; Bianchini, yes; Doyle, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION

Motion by Harper and Bianchini to add Ordinance 6-2025 to the agenda. Harper, yes; Bianchini, yes; Doyle, yes; Dewey, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE NO. 6-2025
AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING SALARIES, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF PEMBERTON *Added at Meeting*

Motion by Harper and Doyle to introduce Ordinance 6-2025 with a public hearing at the April 16, 2025 meeting. Harper, yes; Doyle, yes; Bianchini, yes; Dewey, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Annual Renewals
 - 1. Used Cars
 - Skippers Mobile Home Park
 - Garden Homes Management (Lakeview)
 - Hilltop Mobile Home Park

Motion by Bianchini and Harper to approve New Business item a1. Bianchini, yes; Harper, yes; Dewey, yes; Doyle, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

- b. Special Use Permit
 - Authorizes outdoor flower sale by BSA Troop 22G for the sale of Easter Flowers at K&B Bagels and Browns Mills Shopping Center Parking Lot on April 12th, 13th and 19th of 2025.

Motion by Dewey and Bianchini to approve New Business item b. Dewey, yes; Bianchini, yes; Harper, yes; Doyle, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

BILL LIST
Approval by Council required for payment of vouchers on Bill List dated 3/27/2025

Councilman Dewey asked for the ARH bills to be removed due to the lack of answers to questions they had.

Motion by Bianchini and Dewey to approve the bill list with the removal of the bills for ARH. Bianchini, yes; Dewey, yes; Harper, yes; Doyle, yes; Ward, yes. Motion carried.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Dasti reported: Advised he had a meeting earlier in the day with K. Hovnanian and Pemberton Borough regarding water. Noted it was a good meeting and that there were some things to work out.

MAYOR'S AND/OR BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Tompkins not present to report.

COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Councilman Doyle – Noted he was looking forward to the appointments made tonight to the Economic Development Committee. Stated they are stellar and the only regret was that it did not happen sooner. Thanked Ms. Reynold and Ms. Skipper for stepping up. Thanked everyone who attended.

Councilman Dewey – Thanked everyone for coming and stated they were trying to right the ship.

Councilman Harper – Thanked all the volunteers that were approved tonight. Stated that they were not going to let the town stop running and were going to do everything they could to keep the town running. Stated they were not going to approve things that were not needed until they saw a budget. Appreciated everyone for hanging in there.

Councilman Bianchini – Thanked everyone for coming out. Stated to the township employees that they have their backs. Stated that hopefully this would resolve itself. Advised that the Veteran's Advisory Committee was working diligently on the Memorial Day parade with various local organizations. Provided some details on the parade. Shared some information about the meetings and asked for help.

Councilman President Ward – Addressed Mr. Lee and noted that he was right and that Council was doing everything that they could. Commented on the street lights being out. Noted that Second Avenue was not getting paved for another 2-3 years. Commented on the paving schedule. Councilman Harper explained what he was told about the street paving schedule. Council President Ward commented on the Human Relations Committee. Commented on the Community Garden and the Green Teams program and how the community gardens help with that program. Thanked everyone for coming out.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Amy P. Cosnoski, RMC, Township Clerk