

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday
January 3rd, 2022**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joseph Knowles
Ed Kisselback
Joseph Pilieri
Michelle Benitez
Stacey Champion

ALSO, PRESENT:

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo
Debora McBreen
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor
Phil Wursta
Judge Joe Falcone

PLEASE NOTE:

The minutes are not verbatim but rather a synopsis of what transpired during the meeting, and while I do my best to attribute remarks and questions to the correct individual, there may be mistakes or omissions because of the “back and forth” dialogue and the lack of the use of the microphone.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING:

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo introduced Judge Falcone and noted the Judge was on hand to swear in the newly elected and/or re-elected local officials.

Judge Falcone swore in the following officials:

**Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo
Councilman Joseph Pilieri
Councilwoman Michelle Benitez
Councilwoman Stacey Champion
Auditor Nolan Wild
Treasurer Mike Brill**

The **Mayor** called the meeting to order with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

The **Mayor** invited Public Comment on Agenda items, but no one came forward and the first of two public portions was closed.

3. **ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT:**

The **Mayor** called for nominations for **Council President**, **Councilman Kisselback** nominated **Joe Knowles**, **Councilman Pilieri** seconded. The Mayor asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 5-0.

4. **ELECTION OF COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT:**

Council President Knowles called for nominations for **Council Vice President**, **Councilman Pilieri** nominated **Councilman Kisselback**, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded. **Council President Knowles** asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 5-0.

5. **ELECTION OF TOWNSHIP SECRETARY:**

Council President Knowles called for nominations for **Township Secretary**. **Council Vice President Kisselback** nominated **Joe Pilieri**, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded. **Council President Knowles** asked if there were any other nominations, hearing none, the vote carried 5-0.

6. **ELECTION OF THE ASSISTANT TOWNSHIP SECRETARY:**

Council President Knowles recommended **Debbie McBreen** for the **Assistant Township Secretary**, **Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Pilieri** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF MUNICIPAL CLERK:**

Council President Knowles recommended **Debbie McBreen** for **Municipal Clerk** pursuant to Section 2-26 of the Code. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Pilieri** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

8. **APPOINTMENT OF TOWNSHIP ENGINEERING FIRM:**

The **Mayor** recommended **Traffic, Planning and Design** as the firm and **Phil Wursta, Regional V.P.** as the Township Engineer. **Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve as presented, **Council Secretary Pilieri** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

9. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS:**

The **Mayor** recommended *William McVey*, as the Director of Public Safety, **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve, Councilwoman Benitez seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in Mr. McVey.

The **Mayor** recommended *Tim Shultz* as the Director of Public Works, **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in Mr. Shultz.

Per the **Mayor**, all current Directors are to continue in their current positions.

10. **DESIGNATION OF BENSALEM TOWNSHIP'S NEWS MEDIA FOR LEGAL ADVERTISING DURING 2022:**

The **Mayor** recommended the *Bucks County Courier Times*. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve and **Councilwoman Champion** seconded, the vote carried 5-0.

11. **DESIGNATION OF MONTHLY MEETING DATES DURING 2022:**

Council President Knowles discussed the meeting dates. **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated the September meeting date of the 26th was a Jewish Holiday. The date of the second meeting in September was moved to the 27th. **Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve the meeting dates for 2022, **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

Council President Knowles asked **Council Secretary Pilieri** if there were any changes to the agenda. **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned for agenda item 24, the Veteran Advisory Board, to be moved to agenda item 11A. **Council Vice President Kisselback** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.,

11A. **VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Raymond Bates, Richard Clift, Patrick Jones, Jim Pinto, Bruce Siemers, Joe Slemmer and Joe Trucks* to serve a 1-year term. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, Council Vice President Kisselback seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 7 members.

12. **CODE OF APPEALS BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Bruce Jones* for a 3-year term. **Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve and **Council Secretary Pilieri** seconded, the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

13. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Steve Aldrich, Ernesto Veneziale* and *Marc Winokur* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve and **Council Vice President Kisselback** seconded, the vote carried 5-0. No members were in attendance.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated some of the board members notified Debbie McBreen, from the Mayor's office, due to either the weather or COVID, some members were going to take a pass on coming out and being sworn in. They will be sworn in privately at a later time.

14. **DISABLED ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Loreen Cimino, Matt Neiman, Joelle Pilieri, Phyllis Pisch, Nick Quattrone and James Wright* for a 1-year term. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve and **Councilwoman Champion** seconded, the vote carried 5-0. No members were in attendance.

15. **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Rosemarie Angle, Francis Curran, Lisa Diasio, Rita D'Angelo Nicholas Diasio, Julianna Johnson, Emmanuel Jones, Wayne Lewis, Jean Pawlowski, Frank Schilling and George Seymour* for a 1-year term. **Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Pilieri** seconded, and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 4 members.

16. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:**

The Mayor recommended *Brian Cummings, Bob Braubitz, Sam Madulla, John Kerner and Jack Meyers* for a 3-year term. **Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve and **Council Secretary Pilieri** seconded, the vote carried 5-0. No members were in attendance.

17. **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Don Anderson, Ron Harris, Bill McVey, Lance Morell, Joseph Pilieri, Robert Race, Robert Sponheimer, John Chaykowski, Ken Farrall, Kurt Stolzenberger and Tom Topley* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the vote carried 5-0.

18. **ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Alan Windsor, Heidrun Malone, Mike Cimino, Nina Fedorrov and Zael Fedorrov* for a 3-year term. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

19. **GAMING ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Walter Arch, Sandra Rogers, Mary Ann Griffin, Nandish Patel, Sunny Patel, Donna Patti, and Mike Gallagher* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 3 members.

20. **IMPACT FEE ADVISORY BOARD:**

The Mayor recommended *Wayne Lewis, Mary Ellen Cook, Deepak Dhawan, Tom Nevrotski, Frank Paine and Ramesh Patel* for a 1-year term. **Councilwoman Benitez** motioned to approve, **Council Vice President Kisselback** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

21. **PLANNING COMMISSION:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Mike Gabriele and Pete Krieger* for a 4-year term. **Councilwoman Champion** motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Pilieri** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

22. **SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Buzz Ebner, Robert Gale, Alice Gresko and Barbara Carter* for a 1-year term. **Council Vice President Kisselback** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. No members were in attendance.

23. **VACANT PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *William Cmorey, Jeffrey Darwak and Al Gougler* for a 1-year term. **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 1 member.

24. **VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD:**

Moved to agenda item 11A.

25. **ZONING HEARING BOARD:**

The **Mayor** recommended *Joann Redding for a 5-year term and Joanne Fields to finish out Mr. Brill's term which is 3-years*. **Council Secretary Pilieri** motioned to approve, **Council Vice President Kisselback** seconded and the vote carried 5-0. **Judge Falcone** swore in 2 members.

26. **SUPPORT PERSONNEL:**

Solicitor Pizzo: In regards to the other Directors who have been previously appointed by the Mayor, they are continuing on in their positions and need not be in attendance for this evening's reorganization. Wished everyone a Happy New Year and congratulated the newly seated council members and all of the boards and commissions.

Councilwoman Benitez: Thanked everyone for being here this evening and their continued support. Thanked all the volunteers on the boards for their continued support and appreciated their time and effort. Wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Councilwoman Champion: Thanked everyone for coming out this evening and is looking forward to working with everyone on council. Thanked the volunteers on the boards and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Council Secretary Pilieri: Congratulated and welcomed Councilwoman Champion and Councilwoman Benitez. Thanked all of the board members for stepping up and volunteering. Congratulated the Mayor on another 4-year term. Wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Council Vice President Kisselback: Congratulated the Mayor on another 4-year term. Congratulated Councilwoman Champion and Councilwoman Benitez. Thanked all the volunteers on the Mayor's boards for stepping up.

Councilwoman Benitez: Congratulated Director McVey on his position as the new Public Safety Director. Thanked Fred Harran for his years of service. Thanked Director Shultz on his new position and commented on his department and the challenges they faced this past year.

Mayor DiGirolamo: The Mayor indicated his thoughts and prayers were with Mike Gallagher and his family. Thanked Fred Harran for the 15 years of service to Bensalem. Has all the confidence in Director McVey to continue to do all the things for the police department and to make it better. Thanked Director Shultz on his newly appointed position as Director of Public Works and congratulated him on the past year. Thanked all of the volunteers and Judge Falcone for being here this evening. Thanked his wife Mary for allowing him to do what he does best for Bensalem. Wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Council President Knowles: His prayers go out to Mike Gallagher and the Gallagher family and the DiGirolamo family. Congratulated Councilwoman Champion and Councilwoman Benitez on their newly elected positions. Congratulated Council Secretary Pilieri on another 4-year term. Congratulated the Mayor who developed this team and who has inspired all of the volunteers in the community. Thanked Director McVey and appreciated Fred Harran's service and wished Mr. Harran success in his newly appointed position as Sheriff of Bucks County. Congratulated Director Shultz on his newly appointed position as Director of Public Works. Congratulated Mike Brill on his newly elected position as Tax Collector and congratulated Nolan Wild on his position as Auditor.

27. **PUBLIC COMMENT;**

Council President Knowles asked if there was anyone in the audience. The following people came forward:

Jim Jones, congratulated the Mayor for 28 years of honorable service. Mr. Jones indicated some of the plans he would like to see come across Pennsylvania in 2022 to see more and more people with leadership skills. There are a lot of problems which we have seen take place not only in Harrisburg but in Washington, D.C. Bad decisions have been made and as a constituent in the Commonwealth we need to look at how we can fully use the constitution once again. Thank you, Bensalem.

Seeing no one else come forward, the second of two Public Comments was closed.

28. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned.

The Bensalem Township Reorganization Council Meeting of January 3rd, 2022 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalempa.gov

or

www.youtube.com

Respectfully submitted,

Debora F. McBreen
Recording Secretary