

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday
September 18th, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ed Kisselback, Council President
Joseph Pilieri, Council Vice President
Michelle Benitez, Council Member
Stacey Champion, Council Member

SUPPORTING PERSONNEL:

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo
Debora McBreen, Council Clerk/Recording Secretary
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor
Phil Wursta, Township Engineer

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:

Council President Kisselback opened the meeting with a moment of silence and/or prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS, STAFF AND MAYOR:

Council President Kisselback introduced Supporting Staff, Council Members and Mayor.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Council President Kisselback indicated the Public Comment will be heard at the time the agenda item is heard. Seeing no one come forward the first of two Public Comments was closed.

4. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Councilwoman Benitez motioned to approve the Minutes from the August 28th Council meeting as presented. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

5. **PRESENTATION OF THE 2024 PENSION FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT AND MINIMUM MUNICIPAL OBLIGATION BY THE FINANCE MANAGER, JOHN CHAYKOWSKI:**

Every year at this time it is required that Mr. Chaykowski read into the Township record information in compliance with Pennsylvania Act 205. This requires no action by Council.

The 2024 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) financial requirements for the Police Defined Benefit, Non-Uniform Defined Benefit and Non-Uniform Defined Contribution Pension Funds have been prepared. They are as follows:

Police Defined Benefit Pension	\$5,484,450
Non-Uniformed Defined Benefit Pension	\$ 427,240
Non-Uniformed Defined Contribution Pension	\$ 275,000

6. **COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF MAYOR’S RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:**

The Mayor recommended Ron Davis, Tommy Tomlinson, Patrick Duffy and Ryan Caputo to the Economic Development Corporation. These recommendations are due to the resignation of two members and two are deceased.

Council Vice President Pilieri motioned to approve the Mayor’s recommendations as presented. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 3-0-1.

7. **CONSIDERATION OF A PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT FOR:**

Applicant:	Michael Cianelli Olympus Pines Management Company, LLC
Location:	2224 Lincoln Highway
Proposed Use:	Roosevelt Tommy’s Car Wash
Zoning Classification:	H-C1 Highway Commercial District
Tax Parcel:	02-001-002-007

Mike Meginniss from Begley Carlin, on behalf of the applicant, Chesapeake Pines, the owner of 224 Lincoln Highway. The site is zoned in the HC-1 District, the property is approximately 2.73 acres. There is more of a rectangular shape to the frontage where the applicant is suggesting their improvements.

The proposal is to construct a Tommy's Car Wash. Tommy's is one of the highest grossing American Franchises across any platform that is not specifically related to car washes. Tommy's is the largest Car Wash Franchise in the country. Their business model unlike most car washes, is to provide an actual career path for employees in the Township who would be employed at this site. Employees would receive equity ownership stakes, revenue shares and benefits.

With a lot of car washes, in addition to questions about traffic queuing and stacking, what is the car wash actually delivering to the people who will be employed here? This is a true viable career, there are people here that will make in excess of \$100,000 dollars at this site with this operation. Tommy's invests millions into their site construction, when you consider the acquisition, and then their site design; Tommy's operation and the beautification that goes into the process shows this is a Class A operation.

Tommy's has a fully automated process. Licenses are scanned, and many customers end up procuring memberships, which allows a more efficient processing from time of entrance to the tunnel, and time of exit from the tunnel. They have a quicker means of mechanism to reduce the que from what you would be used to seeing from other car washes.

Tommy's makes a heavy investment into Green Energy and sustainability at their sites. There is an emphasis on water reclamation tanks and tempered glass with the building design. Because of the width of the tunnels, EMS will actually be able to get inside the tunnel in a more efficient and rapid manner than other car wash operations.

Mr. Meginniss discussed a video of another Tommy's Car Wash location on a particularly busy day that showed that over 3,000 vehicles could be, and were in fact, processed in a day without a car ever queuing onto the road. That particular site only had 3 pay lanes. The plan presented today will be the only Tommy's in the country that has 4 lanes to make sure they have maximized their queuing and stacking operation.

From a design standpoint, the applicant is relatively, significantly reducing the impervious surface percentage. There is no stormwater management that was there to control the Andy's Diner operation. They are adding greenspace and the stormwater runoff is drastically reduced in its post development condition, as compared to pre-development flow.

Trevor Sperry, Co-owner and founder of Olympus Pines, had an older brother who had a disability and the only job he could ever work in was retail. Mr. Sperry's brother was the hardest working person and could not get promoted; wouldn't get benefits and coincidentally, would always work 2 hours less than the Federal minimum to get benefits and other things. Mr. Sperry went back to school to find a better way to create better jobs.

Mr. Sperry, along with Mike Cianelli, Co-owner and founder of Olympus Pines, looked at a number of different industries; with the intention to find the best, and to create the best jobs for the people that they would want to come. Car washes have changed a lot over the years. This job is really a retail, sales and a customer service and hospitality job.

The employees will be safely tucked into the tower displayed on the plan which is air conditioned in the summer and heated in the winter. They will work the windows and with the customers to make sure the customer is having the best experience.

Full benefits for the employees consisting of revenue share, medical, dental, vision, retirement, long term disability, paid maternity and paternity leave.

Ed Gilmore will construct Tommy's Car Wash and talked about the layout of the Plan. Pay lanes 2, 3, and 4 will have tag readers. The average time to go through the pay style then through the car wash is 2 minutes and 10 seconds. The first pay lane is for guests who don't have memberships or have questions and/or would like to sign up. There is an area called the bail-out lane which is utilized for emergency vehicles, or if there are any other vehicles that need to get out of line.

Customers stay in their vehicles. An average of 5 vehicles can fit at the turn stack which helps process the vehicles at a fast pace. There is a plexi-glass roof, tempered glass on the sides, very open and a safe feeling as you go through the car wash. Studies have shown 1 out of every 4 customers will turn and get their vehicles vacuumed. They recycle 70% of their water.

Stephen Michalczyk, Pennoni Associates, is reviewing the existing and proposed conditions for the site. The project is located at the western intersection at Lincoln Highway and Northgate Road. It currently contains a 7,000 sq. ft. restaurant building in the front of the site, and in the rear, there is a parking lot. All washing chemicals are contained in the tunnel and are routed to a sedimentation tank.

There are 4 lanes in the rear with each lane having the capacity for 7 cars. There are parking and vacuum packs within the site. The majority of the parking in the rear will remain. There are proposed street trees and vegetation to provide screening. For the proposed access this is an existing right-in and a right-out on Lincoln Highway, which will remain. There is an existing full access to Northgate Road which will also remain. It has been modified slightly to reconfigure the existing curb island to better reconfigure flow for Wawa.

The only change is the egress and ingress from Northgate Road into the car wash, where no customers will exit the Interplex property.

The stormwater management being proposed is a 3,200 sq. ft. underground basin below the vacuum packs.

Mr. Meginniss highlighted the waiver requests. The TPD review letters both from a traffic and land development standpoint are very clean. The Traffic Letter from TPD dated August 23rd, 2023 everything is a will comply. The TPD Land Development Review Letter dated August 23rd, 2023 everything is a will comply, with an exception of the following waivers that the applicant is requesting and are noted below:

1. Sec. 201-41.(d)(9). – Show utilities/manmade features within 100 feet
The applicant has provided a site aerial.

2. Sec. 201-41.(d)10. – Contours
Pennonni will provide additional information, if required.
3. Sec. 201-42.(a) – Submitting Preliminary/Final Plans
4. Sec. 201-106.(a)(2)6. – Grading within 3 feet of property line
The applicant will not be accessing the neighbor's property.
5. Sec. 201-137. – Installation of metal pole streetlights
The applicant will pay a fee in lieu of.

Councilwoman Benitez inquired about the street lights.

Mr. Meginniss indicated they are installing lighting to the interior of the site. The applicant is requesting no modifications within the right-of-way. The applicant is willing to pay a fee in lieu of the street lights.

Councilwoman Champion asked what would be the normal hours of operation.

Mr. Sperry indicated the hours of operation are 7:00am to 8:00pm. The free vacuums will be turned off at that time and a bollard will be placed in front of them.

Councilwoman Benitez asked what were the car washes peak hours.

Mr. Sperry indicated around noon on the weekends. During the weekdays typically around 4:00pm to 6:00pm.

Council President Kisselback asked if the car wash was closed during inclement weather.

Mr. Sperry indicated that they do not shut down for inclement weather. For instance, when it rains there will be no car washing so the employees will do other various jobs indoors around the facility. They want their employees to come in so they can get paid.

Mr. Meginniss indicated he would coordinate with Mr. Wursta's office regarding the Impact Fee.

Council President Kisselback asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to speak for or against this project. Seeing no one come forward the Public Comment portion was closed.

Council Vice President Pilieri motioned to approve the applicant Michael Cianelli – Olympus Pines Management Company, LLC, 2224 Lincoln Highway. TMP 02-001-002-007, as presented with 5 requests for waivers, Impact Fee to be paid.

Mr. Meginniss indicated if TPD calculates a fee in lieu of the trees, the applicant will comply.

Council Vice President Pilieri amended his motion to include a fee in lieu of regarding the trees. **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated the Township was provided with the copies of the notices to the adjacent property owners, and those notices appear to be in order.

8. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR ACT NO. 537, PA SEWAGE FACILITIES ACT, PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT OF A PARCEL OF LAND IDENTIFIED AS TIC ASSOCIATES, LLC:**

Solicitor Pizzo indicated Agenda Items 8 and 9 in both cases are Township Resolutions for Act 537 Plan revisions for new land development. After Council approves a new land development in the Township, one of the many requirements that befall the developer is an amendment to the Townships Sewage Facility Plan; in order for that to be effectuated to reflect any new flows or changes to the Townships Sanitary Sewage System, the approval of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is required.

In this case, for Agenda Item # 8, this Resolution would be for TIC Associates which was in front of Council at their last meeting where Council made an amendment to the Land Development Plan for the proposed Manufacturing Facility on Somerton Avenue in the Trevoise section of the Township.

Councilwoman Champion motioned to approve the Resolution for Act 537 PA Sewage Facilities for the parcel of land identified as 1311 Bristol Pike. **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

9. **CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION FOR ACT NO. 537, PA SEWAGE FACILITIES ACT, PLAN REVISION FOR A PARCEL OF LAND IDENTIFIED AS 1311 BRISTOL PIKE, ALLIANCE CANCER:**

Councilwoman Champion motioned to approve the Resolution for Act 537 PA Sewage Facilities for the parcel of land identified as TIC Associates. **Councilwoman Benitez** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

10. **REQUEST FOR A WAIVER OF CURBS AND SIDEWALK INSTALLATION SUBJECT TO A FEE IN LIEU OF:**

Applicant: Jeffrey Guevara
Site information: Clovernook Avenue
Tax Parcel: 02-061-179

Engineer Wursta indicated there are currently no curbs or sidewalks located in that area and requests a waiver be granted for a fee in lieu of in the amount of \$3,400.00. The application is for Building and Planning permits, rather than engineering or land developments.

Councilwoman Benitez motioned to approve the applicant Jeffrey Guevara, Clovernook Avenue, TMP 02-061-179 to accept a fee in lieu of in the amount of \$3,400.00. **Councilwoman Champion** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

11. **REQUEST FOR A WAIVER OF CURBS AND SIDEWALK INSTALLATION
SUBJECT TO A FEE IN LIEU OF:**

Applicant: Darshan Patel
Site information: 465 Wicker Avenue
Tax Parcel: 02-065-012

Engineer Wursta indicated there are currently no curbs or sidewalks located in that area just behind Imperial Court and State Road, and requests a waiver be granted for a fee in lieu of for \$5,100.00.

Councilwoman Benitez motioned to approve Agenda Item number 11 as presented for applicant Darshan Patel, 465 Wicker Avenue, TMP 02-065-012, with a fee in lieu of, in the amount of \$5,100.00. **Council Vice President Pilieri** seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Council President Kisselback asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to come forward.

Frank Schilling, 6202 Hulmeville Road, thanked Council and staff for what they do for the Township and appreciated the get well wishes. Mr. Schilling inquired about Pickle Ball Courts.

Seeing no one else come forward, the second Public Comment portion was closed.

13. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Solicitor Pizzo wished a Happy New Year to our friends who celebrated Rosh Hashanah this past weekend and an easy and thoughtful fast for those observing Yom Kippur next week.

Mayor indicated there is a lot going on in Bensalem before the next Council meeting date of October 16th. They are as follows:

Friday	September 22 nd	Ramblers Pep Rally	6:30pm – Community Park
Saturday	September 23 rd	BHS 100 th Anniversary	11:00 – 2:00 High School
Saturday	October 7 th	Fall Festival	2:30 Municipal Grounds
Saturday	October 14 th	Growden Days	10-2 Growden Mansion

The **Mayor** echoed the Solicitor's sentiments regarding the celebration of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Councilwoman Benitez wished everyone Happy Holidays. Check out the social sites because a lot is going on in Bensalem.

Councilwoman Champion echoed Mr. Pizzo's words regarding our friends celebrating Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Get to as many events as you can before winter sets in.

GO PHILLIES!!!

Council Vice President Pilieri, ditto to everything everyone said and added the Flyers start up on September 25th against the New Jersey Devils.

Council President Kisselback said hello to his Jewish friends who just celebrated the New year and will be celebrating Yom Kippur.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

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

The Bensalem Township Council Meeting of September 18th, 2023 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalempa.gov

or

www.youtube.com

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra F. McBreen
Recording Secretary/Clerk of Council