

Upper Pittsgrove Township

July 1, 2020

A regular meeting of the Upper Pittsgrove Township Committee was held by teleconference. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mayor Jack Cimprich reading the public announcement stating that adequate notice had been given provided under the “Open Public Meetings Act” with a flag salute and the following present:

Jack Cimprich	Committeeman
Edward Meschi	“
David Zeck	“
Michael J. Seery, Sr.	“
Susan DeFrancesco	CTC/CFO
Brian Duffield	Township Solicitor
Jennifer Pennell	Assistant Tax Collector

Township Solicitor, Brian Duffield questioned Jennifer Pennell as to the date of the last day she worked. Ms. Pennell responded March 11, 2020. Mr. Duffield continued his questioning; did she return to work at any time-response no, was she laid off or furloughed by an action of the Township Committee-response no, did she request a leave of absence-response no, did she elect to apply for unemployment on her own-response yes based on advice from her accountant, and finally was the office open during the time of her absence-response I guess. Ms. Pennell stated that she offered to perform her job from home. Mr. Duffield questioned the Tax Collector, Susan DeFrancesco regarding whether the office remained open during Ms. Pennell’s absence, the ability of Ms. Pennell to work from home, and how did her not showing for work impact the workings of the office. Ms. DeFrancesco stated the office has remained open the entire time, and that the tax program was not web-based and the liability was too great for Ms. Pennell to pick up payments, take them home, process and deposit them, and it was difficult at times to be down the additional employee. People called asking questions, and work still needed to be done. Meschi asked if Ms. Pennell’s children were placed in summer camp in the previous year. She replied for two days a week and one day her mother had watched the boys. This year her mother was dealing with some medical issues and unavailable. In closing Ms. Pennell stated that she was a single mother with custody of two children, she does not feel she abandoned her job, no one could anticipate how this Covid-19 would play out, and she was unable to return to her job at this time.

Meschi made a motion to terminate the employment of Jennifer Pennell based on her inability to perform her duties as Assistant Tax Collector, effective immediately. This motion was seconded by Zeck and adopted upon a call of the roll.

Bishop - Yes Meschi - Yes Seery – Yes Zeck – Yes Cimprich – Yes

Mr. Duffield stated to Ms. Pennell that any Township items she had in her possession must be returned to the Municipality within seven days. She stated she would return her keys and one bank bag.

Zeck made a motion authorizing the Tax Collector to advertise for an Assistant Tax Collector. This motion was seconded by Seery and adopted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda R. Stephens, Clerk