

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.
July 12, 2016 7:00 p.m.

This is a regular meeting of the Township Committee of Independence Township, Warren County, New Jersey. This meeting was called to order by Mayor Robert Giordano at 7:01 p.m. with the following announcement: "Adequate notice of this meeting was given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by providing a schedule of regular meetings to the Star Gazette and The Express Times, posting a copy thereof on the Township bulletin board and filing a copy thereof in the office of the Municipal Clerk." The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was led by Mayor Giordano.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Glenn Cogle, Carmen Feula, Bonnie Kelsey (7:05 pm), Deputy Mayor Glenn Williams, Mayor Robert Giordano and Debi Hrebenak. Also present was Attorney Leslie Parikh and Engineer Michael Finelli.

Absent: None recorded

Concord Energy Services: Wendy Molner, VP Government Affairs of Concord Energy Services explained that her agency manages government energy programs. Prior information was sent electronically. They manage the program and customize a plan to save residents on their energy bills. Thirty-three municipalities are participating in this program. It is consumer protected. They go to auction for the best price. The only cost to the Township will be to pass the ordinance. Mayor Giordano stated that the Committee will look into this. Mr. Feula stated that he will not support this as he does not feel it is up to this Committee to tell the residents of Independence what energy program they should use.

GXP System: Carmen Feula was going to comment on the Police GXP system (Geospatial Exploration System) however, noting that Chief Riley knows more about the subject; he passed it on to the Chief. Chief Riley explained that this is a security mapping program. A snapshot of the community is taken from a satellite. The app can be downloaded to your phone. In case of flooding this program will show you where you need to evacuate. The prosecutor is going to finance this from forfeiture funds and each township would need to contribute between \$1500 and \$2000 to pay the difference. Mr. Feula noted that this program showed his old high school in West Orange. If there is an armed suspect, this program can measure the trajectory of a shot. It can show an officer at night the landscape around a building. White and Allamuchy have already signed on. Chief Riley will get a list of the townships that have signed on and report back to this Committee.

Ms. Carlson, Ridge Road bend: Ms. Carlson ran off the road (before it was paved) and blew a tire. She also damaged a rim after hitting a pothole. She is looking for reimbursement of \$212.26. This will be discussed in executive session

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution 16-57: Rescind Liquor License 2112-32-002-006 of Resolution 16-56

Title or Subject: 2016-2017 Renewal Liquor License

RESCIND RENEWAL OF 2016-2017 LIQUOR LICENSE OF VASYL OSADTSIA-2112-32-002-006 WHICH WAS APPROVED ON 6.21.2016, RESOLUTION 16-56

Resolution 16-58: Tax Refund – Blk 4, Lot 29

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector recommends to the Township Committee that the necessary administrative action be taken to authorize a refund of the following:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Independence Township Committee, that the following refunds be made:

Block	Lot	Name/Address	Reason	Total
4	29	Independence Land Holding c/o Kaplan Companies 433 River Road Highland Park, NJ 08904	Overpayment	\$ 74.21
Total to be refunded				\$ 74.21

Resolution 16-59: Tricky Tray - NJ Civic Youth Ballet

WHEREAS, New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (181-5-35863) and,

WHEREAS, they have submitted an application for a Tricky Tray Raffle to be held on September 25, 2016 and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 432 be issued to New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet.

A motion was made by Mr. Feula to approve Resolutions 16-57 through and including 16-59 as written. Mayor Giordano seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Cogle, Mr. Williams, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

Mayor Giordano announced that the 24th district is having a meeting on July 27th between 6 pm & 8 pm at the Lafayette House. Increase in the gas tax will be discussed.

Patti Solimene, daughter of a former employee, will be going to Rio to participate in the Olympics.

Area off of Alphano Road: The DEP has conceded to Mayor Giordano and Mr. Feula on putting in the vernal pools, fencing, cut back to 20', and downsized it to 50 acres. They will maintain the drainage ditch. They will be before the Land Use Board in September.

Transportation Trust Fund: Mr. Williams asked about the source of the funding process. Engineer Finelli explained it as per his knowledge.

List was distributed of Properties available for sale. There are 21 for sale and Ms Hrebenak asked that the members please look it over.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Tax Collector - Posted

Construction/Zoning – Reports were submitted by email.

Environmental – Mr. Ulmer was not present.

Treasurer – Report is posted.

Recreation/Green Acres – John Cummins stated that all programs are going well. Mr. Cummins explained the need to reposition the batting cage for baseball season and to improve the area with railroad ties.

A motion was made by Mr. Feula to approve the retro fit for the baseball batting cage which would include \$600 worth of railroad ties. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Cogle, Mr. Williams, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

Police – Report has been submitted. Chief Riley received a letter on July 9th from a resident. It was about a routine first-aid squad call. The letter compliments the police department for their help and a check for \$25 was enclosed for the Dallas Police Department. Chief Riley forwarded the check to the appropriate agency. The ID program for the employees is set for the cards to be issued. Once the employee leaves/retires, the department will collect the card. George and Sandy Ulmer will no longer be affiliated with the food bank at the end of this month. A letter of appreciation will be sent.

Emergency Services – Nothing to report.

DPW – Report was submitted. Mr. Feula thanked Allen Shimchook for the job that was done on Ridge Road. Several complaints have been received concerning Roosevelt Ave. Mr. Shimchook stated that it needs to be blacktopped. Mayor Giordano noted that they do not have the money for it this year.

Municipal Clerk: Ms Hrebenak stated that she has been contacted by Verizon to place a cell tower on the municipal property. They will come to do a presentation at the next meeting. The income for the township would be approximately \$12,000 a year.

Land Use Board – Mr. Feula stated that everything is running smoothly.

Seniors – Nothing to report.

Board of Education – Mayor Giordano noted that he signed on to the “equal funding for the schools” which is being introduced by Senator Doherty. Mr. Williams noted that he has heard that there is discussion to introduce a pre-school program for special education on a tuition basis.

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:

Attorney Parikh: Nothing to discuss at this time. There are three items for executive session.

Engineer Finelli: Transportation Trust Fund was discussed earlier. Wastewater Management Plan: Gene Webber from Finelli’s office called the State to get updated information to report to you. The new regs are going through the process. There is curiosity as to the Township’s position on our plan as they say it has been in limbo. An email has been requested by the State noting that the Township still intends, once the new regs are adopted, to proceed with the adoption of the partial WMP process.

A motion made by Mr. Williams to authorize Finelli’s office to send a quick email stating the intention of the Township to proceed once the new regs are adopted. Mr. Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Cogle, Mr. Williams, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Cindy Neumann stated that Roosevelt Avenue is in bad shape and she would like to see it repaired. She is not in agreement with the Concord Energy Services proposal. The soccer fields were beautiful for the soccer tournament. The school is now using an outside agency for substitute teachers. Mrs. Neumann received a letter stating that she has been terminated as of June 2016 and she would be hearing from the outsourcing agency. She has not been contacted and she tried to contact them without success. She stated that she does not feel that this will save the district money in the end.

BILLS: A motion was made by Mr. Feula to pay the bills as presented. Mr. Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mr. Cogle, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Williams, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

WHEREAS: N.J.S. 2:4-12, Open Public Meetings Act, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

the public shall be excluded from discussion of the hereinafter specified subject matters;

The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:

Legal issues

It is anticipated at this time that the above matter will be made public upon completion of the matter discussed. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

A motion was made by Mr. Williams to approve this Resolution at 8:30 p.m., seconded by Mr. Cogle and followed by a roll call of all ayes.

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle at 9:50 p.m. to exit the executive session, Mrs. Kelsey seconded by followed by a roll call of all ayes.

Mayor Giordano stated that the request from Ms. Carlson for reimbursement of her damaged tire will be denied. Attorney Parikh stated that the facts at this point do not support findings that there are dangerous conditions on Ridge Road. Mrs. Filus lives on a road that is privately owned and requested that this road be repaired. This is also denied as the Township does not go on private property.

Mr. Feula made a motion to accept Chief Riley back as per the terms discussed with him and under the same guidelines as his past tenure until December 31, 2017. Mr. Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Cogle, Mr. Williams, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

Position of Interim Chief: Mr. Feula made a motion to rescind resolution authorizing the position for the interim police chief. Chief Riley is not leaving therefore this is not needed. Mr. Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Cogle, Mr. Williams, and Mayor Giordano
Nays: None recorded
Abstain: None recorded
Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Mr. Feula to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. Mr. Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mr. Cogle, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Williams, and Mayor Giordano
Nays: None recorded
Abstain: None recorded
Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah M. Hrebenak, RMC/CMR
Municipal Clerk