

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ
May 12, 2015 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: Mayor Robert Giordano, Carmen Feula, Mrs. Kelsey, Deputy Mayor Glenn Williams, Glenn Cogle, and Debi Hrebenak. Also present were Attorney Leslie Parikh and Engineer Michael Finelli

Absent: None recorded

2015 Older Americans Month Proclamation: Mayor Giordano read the proclamation into the record. The document will be framed and then presented to Mr. and Mrs. Walter.

Public Comment:

Michele Galli stated that Great Meadows is her home town and she has just purchased a home here to raise her family. She was part of the sports program as a child and feels disbanding the Rec Commission would be a mistake. Cara Snover is speaking for Stephanie Harris who wrote a letter and it was read into the record. Christy Doyle stated that her husband coaches with Kate and Frank and compliments them. Megan Doyle (daughter) wrote a letter complimenting Coach Kate. Karen Sazbo of Liberty Township noted volunteer problems in Liberty but not here. Mayor Giordano explained the process of voting and no action will be taken tonight. All comments will be taken under advisory. Tony Russick noted a problem with taking questions from each side of the room. Attorney Parikh stated why it was decided to do it this way by dividing the room. Deb Woodruff asked why are you trying to fix what is not broken. Glenn Sullivan stated that he feels as if he is an outcast with playing soccer – he does not feel that soccer is given the same attention. Frank Eberhart noted that he sponsors teams and the spots on the teams are earned. Tony Wood stated that he works for Hackettstown and gets paid to do what Kate does in Independence for free. John Albright has coached for 15 years and noted the great field conditions and excellent coaches. Mike Kovacs supports the Rec Commission and noted Frank's dedication to the program. Trisha Swider complimented the work done by Frank and Kate. Gina Sorazano requested that Frank and Kate stay where they are. Sharon Townsend noted the fantastic group of volunteers. Joan Source dropped off a letter. Mayor Giordano acknowledged all emails and letters and said they will be taken into consideration. The Committee is behind the kids 100%.

Independence Men's Recreational Basketball: Mike Kovacs was present to discuss use of Central School's gymnasium on allocated Friday nights. Sharon Cooper was present and was questioned as to why basketball was cancelled. Frank Bender said that it was cancelled because of insurance. Ms. Cooper explained what happened. There is no connection for the basketball team with the Township. The team is not structured and the Township does not own it. This is not a decision that the Township Committee can make – the team has to purchase their own certificate of insurance. It is the team's responsibility to provide the school with a certificate of insurance. The Fund that provides the Township will not honor the current certificate because it is invalid. The team would have to be owned and controlled by the Township and Ms Cooper would have to review with the Fund if they would even insure adults. Mr. Williams suggested that this be explored further. Chief Riley noted his concerns and mentioned Governor Christie's mandate.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution 15-43: Resolution appointing Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator Ryan Aiello.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence the following appointment is hereby made:

WHEREAS, the Township Committee recognizes the importance and the need for additional staffing in the Township of Independence Office of Emergency Management to assist during times of disasters, that *Ryan Aiello* be appointed to the position of Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator for a three (3) year Term of Office, commencing on May 1, 2015, and terminating on April 31, 2017.

Resolution 15-44: Lienholder Refund Block 2/Lot 28

WHEREAS, The Tax Collector recommends to the Township Committee that the necessary administrative action be taken to authorize a refund to the following lienholder.

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

B/L	Lien #	Name/Address	Lien Amount / Interest	Premium	Total Refund
2/8	2012-01	FWDSL & Associates LP 5 Cold Hill Rd S Suite 11 Mendham, NJ 07945	\$ 29,232.75/\$8,016.95	\$ -0-	\$ 37,249.70
Total amount to be refunded					\$ 37, 249.70

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Williams to adopt Resolutions 15-43 and 15-44 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Tax Collector - Posted

Construction/Zoning – report submitted

Environmental – Ms Hrebenak gave a report.

Treasurer – Budget has been passed.

Recreation/Green Acres – Mrs. Kelsey and Frank Bender made comments.

Police – Report has been submitted. Chief Riley gave an update on the Russling Road issue. Mayor Giordano asked if the bill for \$2000 for the cleanup for this property could be covered by insurance. Chief Riley said that he will submit that bill with the court papers. Engineer Finelli answered questions concerning the school gas line.

Emergency Services – No report.

DPW – Al Shimshook gave an update on the dump truck. Mr. Cogle asked about buying salt at different times of the year.

Municipal Clerk: Nothing to Report.

Land Use Board – Roes Island application is taking the bulk of the time.

Seniors – Mr. Walter gave a report.

Board of Education – Mr. Williams noted that it is hot in the schools – no fans because they are fire hazards.

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:

Attorney Parikh: Items for executive session. Ms Parikh emailed the proposed ordinance on the defense and indemnification changes if everyone would look it over the next couple of weeks

Engineer Smith: Engineer Finelli has submitted a report and gave an update on the Wastewater Management Plan. New contacts to work with at the DEP and he feels very good about them going into this process. Russling Road – the Township has received \$165,000 and you have to evaluate the project and when you would like to start. A motion was made by Mayor Giordano to authorize Finelli to start the Russling Road project. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

Whistle Blower Act: This has to be signed and given to Debi upon completion.

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

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

Muriel Walter wanted to thank whomever cleaned up Russling Road – it was a super job.

NOTE: A five (5) minute break was taken at this time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 8:25 – 11:15

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:

1. 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:

- a) personnel
2. It is anticipated at this time that the above matter will be made public upon completion of the litigation, including any appeals.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

A motion was made by Mr. Feula to approve this Resolution at 8:25 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Kelsey and followed by a roll call of all ayes.

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Williams at 11:15 p.m. to exit the executive session, seconded by Mrs. Kelsey followed by a roll call of all ayes.

Mayor Giordano stated that a personnel matter was discussed and no action will be taken at this time.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Williams to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 p.m. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Feula, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Cogle, Deputy Mayor 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