

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.
February 13, 2019 6:00 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 6:00 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.

Meeting date changed to today February 13, 2019 due to the ice and snow storm on February 12, 2019

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Robert Giordano, Bonnie Kelsey, Mike Pennington, Tim Norton and Debi Hrebenak. Also present were Attorney Leslie Parikh and Engineer Michael Finelli.
Absent: Deputy Mayor Cogle

Budget 2019

Highland Initial Assessment – Mr. Feula spoke regarding this assessment. Hold until March 12, 2019 meeting

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution 19-23

Title or Subject: Raffle Tricky Tray

WHEREAS, Thomas R. Kitchen Jr. Memorial Fund is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (181-5-41307) and,

WHEREAS, they have submitted an application for a Raffle to be held on June 2, 2019, and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 459 is issued to Thomas R Kitchen Jr. Memorial Fund.

Resolution 19-24

Title: 50/50

WHEREAS, PTO GMRSD is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (224-5-39333) and,

WHEREAS, they have submitted an application for a 50/50 Raffle to be held on April 12, 2019 and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 460 be issued to PTO GMRSD.

Resolution 19-25

Title: Tricky Tray

WHEREAS, PTO GMRSD is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (224-5-39333) and,

WHEREAS, they have submitted an application for a Tricky Tray Raffle to be held on April 12, 2019 and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 461 be issued to PTO GMRSD.

Resolution 19-21 will be reviewed at next meeting on March 12, 2019.

Mrs. Kelsey made a motion to approve Resolutions 19-23 thru 19-25 as written. Mr. Norton seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Norton, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Tax Collector - Posted

Construction/Zoning – Reports were submitted.

Environmental – Collecting plastic bags. Spring Clean and shredding event in April

Treasurer – Posted

Recreation/Green Acres – John Cummins gave a report. Spoke on lining of the fields.

The township will line the field for Colonial Baseball this year. Increase cost of field usage for next year for lining the field for equipment and hours

Police – Report has been submitted.

Emergency Services – Fire Department Ryan Snyder gave the fire department report.

DPW – Report was submitted.

Municipal Clerk: Dog licenses are being issued. Closed Feb 18. Thank you letter from the GMRSD on the holiday boutique. Mayor spoke on behalf of the Dorcas family for the all help and support during the recent house fire.

Land Use Board – Mr. Feula spoke on the cell tower.

Seniors – 7-8 seniors attending on Thursday.

Board of Education – Courtney Wenthen spoke on the school. Joint meeting with Liberty Township on March 5, 2019 at the Independence Twp. Fire House to discuss on voting on the school budget.

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:

Attorney Parikh: Discussion on the Joint Meeting with Liberty Township.

Engineer Finelli: Discussion on the Wireless Edge Cell Tower. DEP Grant on Mt. Rascal Road. Senior Center Grant update. Woodmont update

Mrs. Kelsey made a motion to approve Eclectic Architecture LLC. Mayor Giordano seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Norton, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes

OLD BUSINESS:

Second Reading/Public Hearing of Ordinance 2019-01

ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET
APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK
(N.J.S.A.. 40A:4-45.14)

Mr. Pennington made a motion to open up discussion on this ordinance to the Public.
Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Norton, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, and Mayor Giordano
Nays: None recorded
Abstain: None recorded
Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes.

As there were no comments, a motion was made by Mrs. Kelsey to close the public hearing. Mr. Pennington seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Norton, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, and Mayor Giordano
Nays: None recorded
Abstain: None recorded
Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes.

A motion was made by Mr. Pennington to adopt Ordinance 2019-01 as written. Mr. Norton seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Norton, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, and Mayor Giordano
Nays: None recorded
Abstain: None recorded
Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes.

NEW BUSINESS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

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

Ayes: Mr. Norton, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, and Mayor Giordano
Nays: None recorded
Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 8:35 pm – 9:30 pm

The following Resolution was approved at 8:35 p.m. to enter Executive Session with a motion by Mr. Norton, seconded by Mrs. Kelsey and followed by a unanimous roll call.

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:

Litigation/Personnel

It is anticipated at this time that the above matter will be made public upon completion of the matter discussed.

A motion was made by Mr. Norton at 9:30 p.m. to exit the executive session, seconded by Mrs. Kelsey followed by a roll call of all ayes.

Resolution 2019-22

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE AUTHORIZING PLACEMENT OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN OFFICER IN CHARGE

WHEREAS, New Jersey Attorney General's Policy and Procedures (the "Attorney General Guidelines") states that any complaint against a law enforcement executive must be referred to the County Prosecutor's Office; and

WHEREAS, the Warren County Prosecutor's Office is conducting an investigation involving the Chief of Police, Keith Aiello; and

WHEREAS, in order to allow the investigation to proceed efficiently and in its due course, the Township of Independence ("Independence") has made a decision to place the Chief on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation; and

WHEREAS, the Township's Appointing Authority has appointed Provisional Lieutenant Prell as temporary Acting Officer in Charge ("AOIC").

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Chief Aiello's employment status is hereby modified to administrative leave with pay, effective immediately and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Provisional Lieutenant Prell will act Officer in Charge until further notice is given.

Mr. Pennington made a motion to approve Resolutions 19-22 as written. Mr. Norton seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Norton, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes

A motion was made by Mr. Norton to give Deborah Hrebenak Stipend for IMUA work in the amount of \$4,000.00. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Norton, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Mr. Norton to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Norton, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with four (4) affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah M. Hrebenak, RMC/CMR
Municipal Clerk