

**INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.**  
**March 5, 2019                      5:30 p.m.**

This is a special meeting of the Township Committee of Independence Township, Warren County, New Jersey. This meeting was called to order by Mayor Robert Giordano at 5:30 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, Deputy Mayor Cogle, Bonnie Kelsey, Mike Pennington, Tim Norton and Debi Hrebenak. Also present were Attorney Leslie Parikh

**Absent:** None recorded

Disciplinary Action concerning Chief Keith Aiello

Reference to the March 1, 2019 Independence Township – Executive Session "Rice" Notice On March 1, 2019 Chief Aiello signed the Rice Notice with no, I wish all the discussions held in executive session. His attorney Mr. Prol asked for a public hearing rather than having discussion held in executive session. Mr. Prol spoke on the Chief's behalf as to why an immediate suspension without pay would be improper. Chief Aiello was also given the opportunity to comment on his own behalf as to why he should not be subject to a Preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action imposing an immediate suspension without pay pending a disciplinary hearing on the merits of any charges brought. The Township Attorney and Mayor Giordano asked questions of Mr. Prol in the regard.

The Mayor and Township Committee made no decision regarding disciplinary action, Chief Aiello will remain on administrative leave with pay until a decision is made. The meeting was cut short because another meeting had been scheduled with Liberty Township concerning changing school elections which started at 7:00 PM.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:17 pm – 6:50 pm**

The following Resolution was approved at 6:17 p.m. to enter Executive Session with a motion by Deputy Mayor Cogle, 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, Attorney client privileged matters

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 Deputy Mayor Cogle at 6:50 p.m. to exit the executive session, seconded by Mrs. Kelsey followed by a roll call of all ayes.

Mayor Giordano stated that the executive session was to discuss litigation and no action will be taken at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cogle to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Cogle, Mr. Norton, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, 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