

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.
April 9, 2019 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 7:00 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.

ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: none

Introduction of Samir Elbassiouny, Executive Assistant Advancement WCCC

Resolution 19-45 RECOGNIZING APRIL 2019 AS WARREN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH

Reso 19-45

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING APRIL 2019 AS
WARREN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH**

WHEREAS, the more than thirteen hundred community and technical colleges, public and private, in the United States have contributed enormously to the richness and accessibility of American higher education, nearly half of all undergraduate college students in the Nation today are enrolled in community colleges; and

WHEREAS, by providing educational opportunities at costs and locations accessible to all who are qualified, community and technical colleges have greatly enhanced the opportunity for every ambitious student, young or old, to enter a postsecondary school program. As community-based institutions, our schools provide varied programs and offer specialized training for more than one thousand occupations; and

WHEREAS, this community is served well by Warren County Community College, and as Warren County Community College has been recognized by Middle States for its exceptional report and process during the March 2018 Self-Study; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College because of its successful reform agenda, by implementing meaningful educational change, it has reached a 45% graduation rate, highest in New Jersey as well as record retention rates, while simultaneously continuing to reduce remediation; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College was the only community college deemed uniquely qualified in Northwest New Jersey, to provide free tuition to all households earning under \$45,000 per year, Through the Governor's Community College Opportunity Grants (CCOG); and

WHEREAS, in Spring 2019, Warren County Community College is the only college in the Northeastern United States to implement Cengage Unlimited where all online learning materials are at a flat rate of \$140 annually; and, the option to receive each print book at a flat rate of \$7.99. This is estimated to save students at least \$1,200 annually in book expenses; and

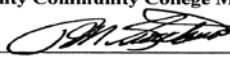
WHEREAS, in 2017-2018, a robust dual enrollment program with all six Warren County high schools participating, 1,947 high school students (equivalent to 51% of the entire Warren County public high school population) successfully completed at least one dual enrollment course, saving the Warren County taxpayers an equivalent of \$1.8 million in tuition and fee expenses; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College is a leader in public service relationships. It currently administers Continuing Education programs, at our Phillipsburg satellite location, with a strong history of collaborating with our county human services offices, even facilitating and authoring a strategic plan for all countywide human services; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College trustees and staff serve the global higher education community on statewide, national, and international boards including, but not limited to: NJCCC Trustee State Chair, AACC Board of Directors, AACC structured pathways Commission Chair, the AAUA Board of Directors, the Chair Academy International Advisory Board, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Board; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the important contribution of community and technical colleges to our total educational system, in 1985 the Congress authorized and requested then President Ronald Reagan to issue Proclamation 5418 establishing a National Community College Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that, the Independence Township Mayor and Committee recognize April 2019 as **Warren County Community College Month**.



Honorable Robert Giordano, Mayor

Deputy Mayor Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 19-45 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes

Resolution 19-41 2019 Budget Adoption

Reso 19-41

**2019 Municipal Budget
of the Township of Independence, County of Warren, for the fiscal year 2019**

Revenue and Appropriation Summaries

Summary of Revenues	Anticipated	
	2019	2018
1. Surplus	775,000	750,000
2. Total Miscellaneous Revenues	861,551	727,442
3. Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	210,000	205,000
4. a) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes	2,885,140	2,828,422
b) Addition to Local District School Tax		
Total Amount to be Raised by Taxes	2,885,140	2,828,422
Total General Revenues	4,731,691	4,510,864

Summary of Appropriations	2019 Budget	Final 2018 Budget
1. Operating Expenses: Salaries & Wages	1,550,178	1,441,430
1. Operating Expenses: Other Expenses	1,115,129	1,153,678
2. Deferred Charges & Other Appropriations	600,709	437,737
3. Capital Improvements	255,700	272,500
4. Debt Service (Include for School Purposes)	369,975	365,519
5. Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	840,000	840,000
Total General Appropriations	4,731,691	4,510,864
Total Number of Employees	30	30

Balance of Outstanding Debt				
	General	Water Utility	Sewer Utility	Utility-Other
Interest	49,975			
Principal	320,000			
Outstanding Balance	1,510,000			

Notice is hereby given that the budget and tax resolution was approved by the Governing Body of the Township of Independence, County of Warren, on March 12, 2019

A hearing on the budget and tax resolution will be held at the Independence Township Municipal Building , on April 9, 2019 at 7:00 pm at which time and place objections to the Budget and Tax Resolution may be presented by taxpayers or other interested persons.

Copies of the entire budget are available in the office of Deborah Hrebenak, Township Clerk, the Municipal Building, 286-B, Route 46, Great Meadows New Jersey, or by calling (908) 637-4133 during the hours of 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Deputy Mayor Cogle made a motion to open up discussion on this resolution to the Public. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

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

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

A motion was made by Mr. Norton to adopt Resolution 19-41 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution 19-44

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF HEARING OFFICER

WHEREAS, there exists a need for the performance of services of a Hearing Officer for the Township of Independence (“Township”) in connection with a personnel matter; and

WHEREAS, funds are or will be made available for this purpose to be certified by the Treasurer; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1, *et seq.*, authorizes engaging a Hearing Officer without competitive bidding providing that the Resolution authorizing the award of contracts for “Professional Services” without competitive bidding and the contracts be available for public inspection;

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

1. **THOMAS PORELLI, ESQ.**, is hereby appointed to act as a Hearing Officer for the Township in connection with a personnel matter for the Township at a rate of \$ 160.00 per hour, plus expenses.
2. The Mayor and Clerk are authorized to execute a mutually agreeable written agreement with said Special Counsel consistent with the terms of the Proposal within thirty (30) days of the date of this Resolution, subject to the Chief Financial Officer certifying there are adequate funds in the Township’s budget to fund the agreement.
3. This agreement is awarded without competitive bidding as a “Professional Service” under the provision of the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5

Deputy Mayor Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 19-44 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes

Resolution 19-46

FORM 1A

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FUNDING MUNICIPAL ALLIANCES

Grant Year: FY 2020

APPLICANT MUNICIPALITY/IES: Independence Twp. and Liberty Twp.	COUNTY: Warren
ALLIANCE NAME: Great Meadows Regional Municipal Alliance	ALLIANCE WEBSITE: None
ALLIANCE STREET ADDRESS: Great Meadows Middle School 243 Rt. 46	
TOWN: Great Meadows STATE: NJ ZIP: 07838	
TELEPHONE: (908) 637-4349 Ext.	FAX: (908) 637-4492
ALLIANCE CHAIRPERSON: Israel Marmolejos	ALLIANCE COORDINATOR: Rosemary Kumma
STREET ADDRESS: Great Meadows Middle School 243 Rt. 46	STREET ADDRESS: Great Meadows Middle School 243 Rt. 46
TOWN: Great Meadows STATE: NJ ZIP: 07838	TOWN: Great Meadows STATE: NJ ZIP: 07838
EMAIL:	EMAIL:
DATE OF RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE STRATEGIC PLAN (MM/DD/YYYY): 04 /09 /2019	
Independence Township	

A) Alliance DEDR Allocation	\$ 9,662.00
B) Cash Match (must be 30% of DEDR Allocation)	\$ 2,887.00
C) In-Kind Match (must be 75% of the DEDR Allocation)	\$ 7,217.00
TOTAL ALLIANCE BUDGET (add A+ B+C)	\$ 19,766.00

Mr. Norton made a motion to approve Resolutions 19-46 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes

Resolution 19-47

Title or Subject: Salaries 2019

Be It Resolved by the Independence Township Committee that the following salaries shall be paid to Township employees, effective January 1, 2019 unless otherwise noted.

Administration	
Mayor	\$ 7,410
Deputy Mayor	\$ 3,788
Township Committee Member	\$ 3,163
Municipal Clerk/Registrar	\$ 87,641
Administrator	\$ 10,233
Tax and Finance	
Chief Financial Officer	\$ 37,230
Tax Collector	\$ 25,500
Tax Assessor	\$ 26,520
Payroll Clerk	\$ 3,068
P/T Clerical(1)	\$ 21.79/hr.

Municipal Court	
Judge	\$ 17,962
Prosecutor	\$ 8,604
Court Administrator	\$ 14,540
Court Clerk	\$ 661
Public Works	
Supervisor	\$ 33.15/hr.
Truck Driver	\$ 28.40/hr.
Truck Driver 1	\$ 21.85/hr.
Laborer	\$ 26.70/hr.
Construction/Zoning	
Construction Official/ Bldg. Sub Code Official Building Inspector	\$ 23,901
TACO	\$ 16.30/hr.
Fire Sub Code Official	\$ 3,585
Electrical Inspector	\$ 6,235
Plumbing Sub Code Official	\$ 7,169
Zoning Official	\$ 14,940
Vacant and Abandoned Property Stipend	\$ 6,630
Land Use Board Administrator	\$ 8,964
Recreation/Seniors	
Recreation Director	\$ 26.53/hr.
P/T Laborer	\$ 15.93/hr.
Recycling	
Recycling Coordinator	\$ 1,104
Public Safety	
Chief of Police	\$ 104,040
Clerk-Typist	\$ 49,884
Police Matron Call Out	\$ 53.06/2 hr
Matron Hrs, After Call Out	\$ 21.23/hr.
Emergency Management Coordinator Stipend	\$ 2,727
911 Coordinator	\$ 1,533
Police	
Lieutenant	\$ 98,100
Sergeant 1 st . Class	\$ 95,568
Patrolman 1 st . Class	\$ 90,264
Patrolman 2 nd . Class	\$ 85,412
Patrolman 3 rd . Class	\$ 77,580
Patrolman 4 th . Class	\$ 72,428
Patrolman 5 th . Class	\$ 67,280
Patrolman 6 th . Class	\$ 53,958
Probationary / Recruit	\$ 44,164

Deputy Mayor Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 19-47 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes

Resolution 19-48

Title or Subject: APPOINTMENTS/ADJUSTMENTS

***BE IT RESOLVED* by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence the following appointments/adjustments are hereby made:**

Christopher Prell-Officer In Charge, with a\$ 300.00 per month stipend until such time the Officer In Charge sits for the Police Chief's exam and the list is certified, effective date is February 11, 2019.

Deputy Mayor Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 19-48 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Tax Collector - Posted

Construction/Zoning – Reports were submitted.

Environmental – Spring Clean and shredding event in April 27 & 28

Treasurer – Posted

Recreation/Green Acres –Report were submitted

Police – Report has been submitted.

Emergency Services – Fire Department Chief Clyde Snyder gave the fire department report. Kevin Finnegan gave the First Aid Squad report.

DPW – Report was submitted.

Municipal Clerk: Financial Disclosure Statement are being sent out.

Land Use Board – nothing was reported.

Seniors – 7-8 seniors attending on Thursday.

Board of Education – report was submitted

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:

Attorney Parikh: Report submitted.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

Second Reading/Public Hearing of Ordinance 2019-02

ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE CREATING THE POSITION OF MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT HEAD FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Deputy Mayor Cogle 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, Mr. Cogle and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

As there were no comments, a motion was made by Mr. Norton to close the public hearing. Deputy Mayor Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Motion carries with five (5) affirmative votes.

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cogle to adopt Ordinance 2019-02 as written. Mayor Giordano seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Second Reading/Public Hearing of Ordinance 2019-03

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED SALARIES AND
COMPENSATION**

Deputy Mayor Cogle made a motion to open up discussion on this ordinance to the Public. Mr. Norton seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

As there were no comments, a motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cogle to close the public hearing. Mr. Norton seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cogle to adopt Ordinance 2019-03 as written. Mr. Norton seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Spring Clean-up April 27 & 28 from 8am – 4pm
Shredding April 27 from 2 pm – 5 pm

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval of NJ DOT Grant 2019 Municipal Aid Program/Johnson Road Improvements Project in the amount of \$ 156,000.00

Eagle Scout Project Max Crowder/Little Free Library at the Field of Dreams

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mr. Cullen spoke about the Robotic Team. Mr. Barabas spoke about the budget and running of the police department.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 7:55 pm – 8:32 pm

The following Resolution was approved at 7:55 p.m. to enter Executive Session with a motion by Mr. Norton, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cogle 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 Deputy Mayor Cogle at 8:32 p.m. to exit the executive session, seconded by Mr. Norton followed by a roll call of all ayes.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Mr. Norton to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. Deputy Mayor Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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