

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.
April 13, 2021 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 Herald Times 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.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on in-person public gatherings by executive orders of the Governor of New Jersey, meetings of the Independence Township Committee will be held remotely via Zoom. The Zoom platform allows for members of the public to participate via computer, mobile device, or telephone. Both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting have been provided by publishing a revised annual notice in the two official newspapers designated by the Township, posting such notice on the door of the municipal building, and posting such notice on the municipal website. Such notice specifies the time of this meeting and provided instructions on how to access the meeting remotely.

Comments can also be emailed by 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting to dhrebenak@independencenj.com. Written comments may also be submitted via mail or dropped off at the municipal building. Written comments must be no more than 450 words and must include your name and address. Such comments will be read into the record at the appropriate time.

Live comments will also be accepted during the appropriate times of the meeting via Zoom. If you wish to make a comment during the meeting, please use the "raise hand" button on your screen if you are signed in via Zoom. If you are accessing the meeting via telephone, please hit *9 and the meeting moderator will call on you and identify you by the last few digits of your phone number. You can press *6 to unmute yourself. Please state your name and address before beginning your comment. The Township reserves the right to mute or remove disruptive meeting participants after an initial warning. Disruptive conduct includes sustained inappropriate behaviors such as, but not necessarily limited to, shouting, interruption, and use of profanity.

Please be advised that this meeting is being recorded.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mr. Cogle, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, Mrs. Gesumaria, Mayor Giordano, and Debi Hrebenak. Also present were Attorney Leslie Parikh and Engineer Mike Finelli via zoom

Absent: None

Minutes Approval: 2.09.21, 3.09.21

A motion was made by Mrs. Kelsey to approve minutes 2.09.21 and 3.09.21 as written. Mr. Cogle seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Resolution 21-33 2021 Municipal Budget Adoption

Reso 21-33

SECTION 2 - UPON ADOPTION FOR YEAR 2021

Be it Resolved by the COMMITTEEPERSONS RESOLUTION of the WARREN TOWNSHIP of INDEPENDENCE, County of WARREN that the budget hereinbefore set forth is hereby adopted and shall constitute an appropriation for the purposes stated of the sums therein set forth as appropriations, and authorization of the amount of:

(a) \$ 2,943,163.00 (Item 2 below) for municipal purposes, and
 (b) \$ - (Item 3 below) for school purposes in Type I School Districts only (N.J.S.A. 18A:9-2) to be raised by taxation and,
 (c) \$ - (Item 4 below) to be added to the certificate of amount to be raised by taxation for local school purposes in Type II School Districts only (N.J.S.A. 18A:9-3) and certification to the County Board of Taxation of the following summary of general revenues and appropriations.
 (d) \$ - (Sheet 43) Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund Levy
 (e) \$ - (Sheet 44) Arts and Culture Trust Fund Levy
 (f) \$ - (Item 5 Below) Minimum Library Tax

RECORDED VOTE
 (Insert last name)
 Gesumaria
 Kelsey
 Cogle
 Pennington
 Giordano

Ayes	Nays	Abstained	
		Absent	

1. General Revenues			
Surplus Anticipated			
Miscellaneous Revenues Anticipated	08-100	\$	918,200.00
Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	13-099	\$	717,539.78
2. AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXATION FOR MUNICIPAL PURPOSED (Item 6(a), Sheet 11)	16-499	\$	208,500.00
3. AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXATION FOR SCHOOLS IN TYPE I SCHOOL DISTRICTS ONLY	07-199	\$	2,943,163.00
Item 6, Sheet 42			
Item 6(b), Sheet 11 (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-14)	07-195	\$	-
TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXATION FOR SCHOOLS IN TYPE I SCHOOL DISTRICTS ONLY	07-191	\$	-
4. To Be Added TO THE CERTIFICATE FOR THE AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXATION FOR SCHOOLS IN TYPE II SCHOOL DISTRICTS ONLY:			
Item 6(b), Sheet 11 (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-14)	07-191	\$	-
5. AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXATION MINIMUM LIBRARY TAX	07-192	\$	-
Total Revenues	13-299	\$	4,787,402.78

Sheet 41

SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS

Within "CAPS"	XXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
(a & b) Operations Including Contingent	XXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
(e) Deferred Charges and Statutory Expenditures - Municipal	34-201	\$ 2,885,525.00
(g) Cash Deficit	34-209	\$ 415,019.00
	49-685	\$ -
Excluded from "CAPS"	XXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
(a) Operations - Total Operations Excluded from "CAPS"	34-305	\$ 29,157.08
(c) Capital Improvements	44-999	\$ 432,000.00
(d) Municipal Debt Service	45-999	\$ 185,700.00
(e) Deferred Charges - Municipal	46-999	\$ -
(f) Judgments	37-480	\$ -
(n) Transferred to Board of Education for Use of Local Schools (N.J.S.A. 40:48-17.1 & 17.3)	29-405	\$ -
(g) Cash Deficit	46-885	\$ -
(k) For Local District School Purposes	29-410	\$ -
(m) Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	50-899	\$ 840,001.70
6. SCHOOL APPROPRIATIONS - TYPE I SCHOOL DISTRICT ONLY (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-13)	07-195	
Total Appropriations	34-499	\$ 4,787,402.78

It is hereby certified that the within budget is a true copy of the budget finally adopted by resolution of the Governing Body on the 13th day of April, 2021. It is further certified that each item of revenue and appropriation is set forth in the same amount and by the same title as appeared in the 2021 approved budget and all amendments thereto, if any, which have been previously approved by the Director of Local Government Services.

Certified by me this 13th day of April, 2021, Anthony M. DeLeon Clerk

Sheet 42

Mr. Cogle made a motion to open up discussion on this Resolution 21-33 to the Public. Mrs. Gesumaria seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

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

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

A motion was made by Mrs. Kelsey to adopt Resolution 21-33 as written. Mrs. Gesumaria seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Consent Agenda:

Resolution 21-30

Title or Subject: Salaries 2021

Be It Resolved by the Independence Township Committee that the following salaries shall be paid to Township employees, effective January 1, 2021 unless otherwise noted.

Administration	
Mayor	\$ 7,713
Deputy Mayor	\$ 3,941
Township Committee Member	\$ 3,293
Municipal Clerk/Registrar	\$ 91,183
Administrator	\$ 11,334
Tax and Finance	
Chief Financial Officer	\$ 38,735
Tax Collector	\$ 26,520
Tax Assessor	\$ 27,593
Payroll Clerk	\$ 3,192
P/T Clerical(1)	\$ 26.00/hr.
Municipal Court	
Judge	\$ 18,322
Prosecutor	\$ 8,952
Court Administrator	\$ 15,128
Violation Clerk	\$ 15.30/hr.
Filing Clerk	\$ 15.30/hr.
Public Works	
Supervisor	\$ 85,080
Truck Driver 1	\$ 29.97/hr.
Truck Driver 2	\$ 23.29/hr.
Truck Driver 3	\$ 22.85/hr.
Construction/Zoning	
Construction Official/ Bldg. Sub Code Official Building Inspector	\$ 24,869
TACO	\$ 20.50/hr.
Fire Sub Code Official	\$ 3,731
Electrical Inspector	\$ 6,491
Plumbing Sub Code Official	\$ 7,458
Zoning Official	\$ 15,548
Vacant and Abandoned Property Stipend	\$ 6,898
Land Use Board Administrator	\$ 9,328
Recreation/Seniors	
Recreation Director	\$ 20,400
Public Safety	
Chief of Police	\$ 106,120
Clerk-Typist	\$ 46,820
Police Matron Call Out	\$ 55.21/2 hr
Matron Hrs, After Call Out	\$ 22.09/hr.
Emergency Management Coordinator Stipend	\$ 2,838
911 Coordinator	\$ 1,595
Police	
Lieutenant	\$ 102,068
Sergeant 1 st . Class	\$ 99,432
Patrolman 1 st . Class	\$ 93,908

Patrolman 2 nd . Class	\$ 88,864
Patrolman 3 rd . Class	\$ 80,716
Patrolman 4 th . Class	\$ 75,356
Patrolman 5 th . Class	\$ 70,000
Patrolman 6 th . Class	\$ 56,136
Probationary / Recruit	\$ 45,948

Resolution 21-31

EXEMPT PROPERTIES

WHEREAS, certain residents who are a disabled vet or serviceperson are entitled to Exempt Status and the taxes are now Exempt.

WHEREAS, the exempt status of these properties made it necessary to cancel all or a portion of taxes and refund any payments made

WHEREAS, 2021 taxes to be refunded due to the State of New Jersey paying the Homestead Rebate to Independence Township in error.

WHEREAS, the total 2021 taxes to be refunded is as follows:

ASSESSED TO	PROPERTY LOCATION	BLOCK/LOT	AMOUNT
Stephen & Mary Johnston	10 Catswamp Road	19/3.01	\$ 780.28

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Independence, that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to refund 2021 Taxes Receivable for the amount of \$780.28

Resolution 21-32

RESOLUTION APPROVING PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN BOARD

WHEREAS, The Township of Independence has been desirous of providing an effective and efficient means by which to transmit pertinent information to its residents; and

WHEREAS, conveying important municipal, county and state specific information to residents has become especially difficult yet vital during the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, especially given the municipal complex has been closed to residents for more than one (1) year; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Independence are of the opinion that an electronic informational bulletin board will provide an effective means by which to transmit information to Township residents pertaining to elections, vaccination sites and availability of vaccinations, governmental closures, emergency information, online information for municipal services and the like; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that messages transmitted to the public via an electronic bulletin are intended to be solely informational, non-commercial in nature, and will provide a beneficial and at times, vital service to the public; and

WHEREAS, the Township has received the specifications and pricing information for a Double-Sided Sign with Electronic Message Center with LED illumination, the specifics of which are contained on the attached quote from KC Sign and Awnings in the amount of \$ 20,940.00; and

WHEREAS, the Township will take all necessary steps and consult with its engineer and zoning officer to mitigate any potential excess ambient lighting by ensuring appropriate placement and buffering in connection with any adjacent property; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Independence also will forward a copy of the instant resolution to the Independence Township Land Use Board for comment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that upon review by Land Use Board, the Mayor and Clerk are authorized to enter into the Agreement with KC Sign and Awning for the purchase of a Double-Sided Electronic Message Center, and shall erect same on the northwest frontage of the municipal property situated along Route 46.

CERTIFICATION

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the above is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence at a meeting of said Township Committee conducted on April 13, 2021.

Resolution 21-34

Title: Raffle

WHEREAS, Independence Township Volunteer Fire Dept. is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (224-9-21561) and,

WHEREAS, they have submitted an application for a Raffle to be held on October 21, 2021 and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of Township of

Mr. Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 21-30 thru 21-32 as written. Mrs. Gesumaria seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Mr. Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 21-34 as written. Mrs. Gesumaria seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

- Tax Collector – Report submitted via email
- Construction/Zoning – Reports submitted via email.
- Environmental – Spring Cleanup May 8 from 8-4 Shredding May 8 from 9-12
- Treasurer – Budget adopted.
- Recreation/Green Acres – Softball season has started. The field usage schedule is full.
- Police – Report submitted via email.
- Emergency Services – Chief Snyder gave a report. Captain Vasquez gave a report.
- DPW – Report submitted via email
- Municipal Clerk: Building still closed. Working with the public outside. May Meeting moved to May 4 and June meeting moved to June 1
- Land Use Board – Meeting in April
- Board of Education – Doug Smith reported on the current status of the budget

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:

- Attorney Parikh: Report submitted via email.
- Engineer Finelli: Report submitted. Woodmont going forward. Senior Center grant was discussed. Mike to contact Corey Tierney about a second extension on the grant. Asbury Road Section 2 was discussed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ordinance 2021-03 *Second Reading/Public Comment*

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED SALARIES AND COMPENSATION

Mr. 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: Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Cogle, Mrs. Gesumaria and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

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

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

A motion was made by Mrs. Gesumaria to adopt Ordinance 2021-03 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

NEW BUSINESS:

**SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT FOR SHARING ROAD
DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL BETWEEN LIBERTY
AND INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIPS, WARREN COUNTY, NJ**

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to adopt the Shared Service Agreement as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

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

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah M. Hrebenak, RMC/CMR
Municipal Clerk