

**INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.**  
**November 14, 2023 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 NJ Herald 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:* Mr. Stuber, Mrs. Gesumaria, Mrs. Kelsey, Mayor Giordano, and Dena Hrebenak.

*Absent:* Mr. Pennington

**Minute Approval:** 10.10. 2023

A motion was made by Mrs. Gesumaria to approve minutes 10.10.23 as written. Mr. Stuber seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Stuber, Mrs. Gesumaria, and Mrs. Kelsey

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: Mayor Giordano

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

Tax Collector – Report submitted

Construction/Zoning – Reports submitted

Environmental – No meeting

Recreation/Green Acres – Senior Buss Trip was successful Planning additional trips

Police – Report submitted.

Emergency Services –Fire Department raffles December 10 raffle Ranger SP 570

Premium. Breakfast – December 10

DPW – All is going well. Working on catch basin, salt shed and field of dreams

Land Use Board – No meeting.

**PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:**

Attorney Parikh: report submitted

Engineer Finelli: report submitted.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Resolution 23-62**

**Title: Tricky Tray Raffle**

**WHEREAS, Hackettstown Moose Lodge 816** is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (181-6-28727) and,

**WHEREAS,** they have submitted applications for a Tricky Tray Raffle to be held on 4.20.2024 and all fees have been paid,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 2023-12 be issued to Hackettstown Moose Lodge 816.

**Resolution 23-63**

**Title: 50/50 Raffle**

**WHEREAS, Hackettstown Moose Lodge 816** is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (181-6-28727) and,

**WHEREAS,** they have submitted applications for a Tricky Tray Raffle to be held on 4.20.2024 and all fees have been paid,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 2023-13 be issued to Hackettstown Moose Lodge 816.

**Resolution 23-64**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TAX COLLECTOR TO TAKE  
THE NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION TO CANCEL  
PROPERTY TAXES ON BLOCK 17, LOT 62, 129 KETCHAM ROAD,  
A 100 PERCENT TOTALLY AND PERMANENTLY DISABLED  
UNITED STATES VETERAN**

**WHEREAS,** NJSA 54:4-3.30 provides, in pertinent part, that the dwelling house and the lot whereas the same is erected of any citizen or resident of this State, now or hereafter honorable discharged from active service in time of war

from any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States who has been or shall be declared by the United States Veterans Administration to be 100 percent permanently disabled may make claim for exemption from real estate taxation of such person's real and personal property; and

**WHEREAS**, Richard Giordano, of 129 Ketcham Road in the Township of Independence has submitted an application for real estate tax exemption as a 100 percent permanently and totally disabled veteran and has submitted documentation from the Department of Veterans Affairs office in Washington, DC confirming said 100 percent permanent and total disability as of August 23, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, Richard Giordano aforementioned real estate has been deemed totally exempt as of August 23, 2023, the date of purchase of his residence in the Township of Independence, as a result of the foregoing by the Township of Independence Tax Assessor; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector, Toni Theesfeld, has requested that the necessary administrative action be taken to cancel the taxes on this property from August 23, 2023 through December 31, 2023 in the amount of \$3,298.81 to the Township of Independence from August 23, 2023 through the calendar year 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the request was duly considered by the Township Committee as its regular meeting held on November 14, 2023 at which time the Township Committee deemed the recommendation to be proper and justified;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2023 that the request of the Tax Collector, Toni Theesfeld, has been

granted to make the necessary administrative action to cancel the taxes on this property from August 23, 2023 through December 31, 2023 in the amount of \$3,298.81 to the Township of Independence for calendar year 2023, for Richard Giordano, a 100 percent totally and permanently disabled veteran; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Township Tax Collector is hereby authorized to process the cancellation in said amount following receipt of a true copy of this resolution.

#### **Resolution 23-65**

#### **RESOLUTION TO APPROVE APPLICATION TO NJDCA FOR THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FIREFIGHTER GRANT 2023**

Whereas, the Township of Independence desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for approximately \$ 75,000 to carry out a project to \$75,000 (dollar amount of request) to provide necessary equipment for safety of the fireman while protecting the Township residents within the Township to the Independence Township Fire Department.

Be it therefore RESOLVED, 1) that the Township of Independence does hereby authorize the application for such a grant; and, 2) recognizes and accepts that the Department may offer a lesser or greater amount and therefore, upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of any such grant agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of funds pursuant to the terms of the agreement between Independence Township and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

Be it further RESOLVED, that the persons whose names, titles, and signatures appear below are authorized to sign the application, and that they or their successors in said titles are authorized to sign the agreement, and any other documents necessary in connection therewith:

Mrs. Gesumaria made a motion to approve Resolutions 23-62 thru 23-66 as written. Mr. Stuber seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Stuber, Mrs. Gesumaria, Mrs. Kelsey, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

**OLD BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mr. John Snyder asked about the Veteran breakfast at the school. Mr. Tony Russack asked about the road paving in Shakespeare.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: 7:23 pm – 7:38 pm**

The following Resolution was approved at 7:23 p.m. to enter Executive Session with a motion by Mrs. Gesumaria, seconded by Mr. Stuber 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:

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 Mrs. Gesumaria at 7:38 p.m. to return to regular session, seconded by Mrs. Kelsey.

Ayes: Mr. Stuber, Mrs. Gesumaria, Mrs. Kelsey and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None

Abstain: None

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

Ayes: Mr. Stuber, Mrs. Gesumaria, Mrs. Kelsey and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Mrs. Gesumaria to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Stuber, Mrs. Gesumaria, Mrs. Kelsey, and Mayor Giordano

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None

Respectfully submitted,

Dena M. Hrebenak, RMC  
Municipal Clerk/Administrator