

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.
March 10, 2020 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, Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Norton, Mr. Cogle and Debi Hrebenak. Also, present Leslie Parikh.

Absent: none

Appointment of Police Lieutenant Chris Prell

Resolution 20-30: 2020 Introduction of Township Budget

Mr. Norton made a motion to introduce Resolution 20-30 as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

Executive Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 7:15 pm – 7:30 pm

The following Resolution was approved at 7:15 p.m. to enter Executive Session with a motion by Mr. 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:

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. Cogle at 7:30 p.m. to exit the executive session, seconded by Mr. Norton followed by a roll call of all ayes

Mayor Giordano stated that Personnel issues were discussed and no action will be taken at this time.

Correspondence – Santini Family

Minute Approval: January 14, 2020, January 25, 2020 and February 4, 2020

A motion was made by Mr. Norton to approved 1.25.20 minutes as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: Mr. Cogle

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to approved 1.14.20 minutes as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: Mayor Giordano

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to approved 2.4.20 minutes 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

CONSENT AGENDA:

RESOLUTION 20-24

Title: Raffle Tricky Tray

WHEREAS, SS. Peter & Paul R. C. Church is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (253-1-2709) and,

WHEREAS, they have submitted an application for a Tricky Tray Raffle to be held on May 16, 2020 and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 472 be issued to SS. Peter & Paul R.C. Church.

RESOLUTION 20-25

Title: Raffle 50/50

WHEREAS, SS. Peter & Paul R. C. Church is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (253-1-2709) and,

WHEREAS, they have submitted an application for a 50/50 Raffle to be held on May 16, 2020 and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 473 be issued to SS. Peter & Paul R.C. Church.

RESOLUTION 20-26

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 7, 2020, and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 474 is issued to Thomas R Kitchen Jr. Memorial Fund

RESOLUTION 20-27

Title or Subject: APPOINTMENTS/ADJUSTMENTS

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

Chris Prell-Lieutenant, at a rate of \$ 100,064.00 per annum effective February 20, 2020.

RESOLUTION 20-28

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 15, 2020 and all fees have been paid,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 475 be issued to Independence Township Volunteer Fire Dept.

RESOLUTION 20-29

Title or Subject: APPOINTMENTS/ADJUSTMENTS

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

Lynda Stadtler-P/T Court Violation Clerk, at a rate of \$ 15.00 per hour effective February 11,

RESOLUTION 20-31

Title or Subject: APPOINTMENTS/ADJUSTMENTS

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

Maria Ortiz-P/T Court Filing Clerk, at a rate of \$ 15.00 per hour effective February 11, 2020.

RESOLUTION 20-32

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE HEARING OFFICER AND AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY TO ISSUE FINAL NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

WHEREAS Chief Aiello was issued a preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action on March 13, 2019 arising out of the Chief's conduct during a multi-jurisdictional pursuit which occurred on November 9, 2019; and

WHEREAS, an open hearing on the matter was held on April 26, 2019, May 22, 2019, September 27, 2019 and November 26, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Hearing Officer issued an opinion on February 20, 2020, which sustained the following charges initiated by the Authority: Incompetency, Inefficiency and Failure to Perform Duties, Conduct Unbecoming a Public Employee, Misuse of Public Property; Neglect of duty; other Sufficient Cause, as well as various charges brought pursuant to Sections II, III, VIII and IX of the Attorney General Vehicular Pursuit Policy and violations of the Independence Township Police Manual; and

WHEREAS, the designated Appropriate Authority is in agreement with the decision reached by the Hearing Officer and his recommendations regarding discipline.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Appropriate Authority is hereby authorized to issue a Final Notice of Disciplinary Action consistent with the decision rendered by the Hearing Officer on February 20, 2020.

RESOLUTION 20-33

**RESOLUTION TO APPOINT NICOLE N. LENAR, ESQ.
AS MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE
FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE**

WHEREAS, the Township of Independence requires the appointment of a Municipal Judge due to the unfortunate and untimely passing of Judge Dominick C. Santini, who dutifully performed those duties for the Township of Independence; and

WHEREAS, it has been recommended that Nicole N Lenar, Esq., now be appointed to act as Municipal Court Judge for the Township of Independence, effective March 10, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the appointment of a Municipal Court Judge is a professional service, and therefore exempt from the strict bidding requirements of the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq, and

WHEREAS, the Judge of the Municipal Court shall be compensated at the same rate specified for the Judge of the Municipal Court pursuant to the Township's salary ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Independence hereby appoints Nicole N Lenar, Esq., as Municipal Court Judge for the remainder of Judge Santini's term, effective March 10, 2020 and ending December 31, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of the within Resolution be forwarded to the following:

1. Administrative Office of the Courts, CN 986, Trenton, NJ 07625

2. Nicole N Lenar, Esq., Municipal Court Judge
3. Municipal Court Administrator

RESOLUTION 20-34

Redemption of Tax Lien Certificate # 2015-02

WHEREAS, on November 19, 2015, Tax Lien Certificate #2015-02 or property assessed to KRISTYN R. DAVIS and known as Block 13; Lot 2.05, Sold to FWDSL & ASSOCIATES.

WHEREAS, redemption of Certificate # 2015-02 was made by CTL TITLE INSURANCE AGENCY, INC

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that the Tax Collector, having received redemption monies from CTL Title Insurance Agency, Inc and having received Tax Lien Certificate #2015-02 from FWDSL & ASSOCIATES be authorized to forward said redemption monies to FWDSL & ASSOCIATES the amount being \$75,948.14.

ALSO, the Premium which was paid by FWDSL & ASSOCIATES be returned to FWDSL & ASSOCIATES in the amount of \$34,000.

RESOLUTION 20-35

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PRE-PAYMENT OF CERTAIN BILLS FOR 2020 INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, the Township of Independence has budgeted funds for payment of obligations including, utilities, payroll, debt service, governmental fees and other statutory payments, insurance, and for the advertising, printing and mailing costs of the Township; and,

WHEREAS, the payment of these items occasionally arrives out of time for placement on the next available list of bills and claims, thereby inadvertently placing these bills and mailings in arrears because of the schedule of meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Township's Chief Financial Officer and Township Attorney have advised that the governing body may provide for the pre-payment of these items, so that they may be paid in a timely manner without penalty.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Independence, Warren County, State of New Jersey that the Chief Financial Officer be and is hereby authorized and directed to make pre-payment of the following items prior to the same appearing on the next meeting's list of bills and claims:

1. Utilities (electric, gas, water, sewer and telephone, cellular telephone, gasoline, diesel fuel, internet providers, etc.).
2. Township payroll and payroll agencies.
3. Debt service as evidenced by pre-authorized bonds and/or notes.
4. Health, dental and other insurance premiums and/or claims.
5. Governmental fees and other statutory payments (school, county, sewage authority, state and county fees).
6. Bills pertaining to the advertising, printing and mailing costs of the Township.
7. Third party fees collected through pre-authorized credit/debit card processing.

8. Bills where vendor discounts are granted for timely payment. (Example 2% discount for payments made within 10 days.) Maximum dollar amount allowed is \$20,000.
9. Inter-fund Obligations
10. Purchase of Investments

RESOLUTION 20-36

2019 APPROPRIATION RESERVES TRANSFERS

WHEREAS, there appears to be insufficient funds in the below listed account(s) to meet the demands thereon for the balance of the current year, and

WHEREAS, there appears to be a surplus in the below listed account(s) over and above the amount deemed necessary for the balance of the current year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence that, in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-58, part of the surplus in the account(s) heretofore mentioned be and same are hereby authorized as transfers to the account(s) mentioned as being insufficient, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Finance Officer is hereby directed to make the following transfers:

FROM	AMOUNT	TO	AMOUNT
Police S&W	\$ 2,500.00	Vehicle Maintenance	\$ 2,500.00

Mr. Norton made a motion to approve Resolution 20-24 thru 20-36 as written. Mrs., Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

Ayes: Mrs. Kelsey, Mr. Pennington (Abstain 20-28 & 20-32), Mr. Cogle, Mr. Norton and Mayor Giordano (abstain 20-24 & 20-25)

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Tax Collector - Posted

Construction/Zoning – Reports were submitted.

Environmental – Spring Clean and shredding event in May

Treasurer – Introduction of budget

Recreation/Green Acres – basketball finished. Field map numbering of the fields

Police – Report has been submitted.

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

Captain Vasquez gave the squad report.

DPW – Report was submitted.

Municipal Clerk: working on the budget. Court is up and running.

Land Use Board – Meeting on March 16.

Seniors – 7-8 seniors attending on Thursday.

Board of Education – meeting tonight and next week

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:

Attorney Parikh: Report submitted.

Engineer Finelli: Report submitted

OLD BUSINESS: none

NEW BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-02 INTRODUCTION/FIRST READING

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

Take notice, the foregoing Ordinance was introduced and passed on first reading by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence on March 10, 2020 at the regular meeting of said Committee held at Independence Township Administrative Offices, 286B Route 46, Great Meadows, New Jersey; this was given further consideration and adopted at a regular meeting of the Independence Township Committee held April 14, 2020 at the Independence Township Administrative Offices, 286B Route 46, Great Meadows, New Jersey.

Be It Ordained by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, the following salary ranges, being established for Township employees for the year 2020.

Administration	
Mayor	\$ 3,000 - 8,000
Deputy Mayor	\$ 2,000 - 5,000
Township Committee Member	\$ 1,200 – 4,000
Municipal Clerk/Registrar	\$ 50,000 - 90,000
Administrator	\$ 8,000 - 15,000
Tax and Finance	
Chief Financial Officer	\$ 20,000 – 42,000
Tax Collector	\$ 20,000 – 40,000
Tax Assessor	\$ 20,000 – 40,000
Payroll Clerk	\$ 1,500 – 3,500
P/T Clerical	\$ 15.00 - 30.00/hr.
Municipal Court	
Judge	\$ 10,000 – 20,000
Prosecutor	\$ 6,000 - 12,000
Court Administrator	\$ 10,000 – 25,000
Violations Clerk / Filing Clerk	\$ 15/hr - \$18/hr
Public Works	
Supervisor	\$80,000 - \$90,000
Truck Driver	\$ 15.00 – 35.00/hr.
Building – Zoning	
Construction Official/Fire Sub-Code Inspector/Building Sub-Code Official	\$ 20,000 – 30,000
P/T TACO	\$ 13.00 - 25.00/hr.
Fire Sub-Code Official	\$ 3,000 - 4,000
Electrical Inspector	\$ 5,500 - 7,000
Plumbing Inspector	\$ 6,000 - 8,000
Zoning Officer	\$ 7,000 –18,000
Land Use Board Administrator	\$ 7,500 - 10,000
Recreation	
Recreation Director	\$ 20,000 - \$30,000
Public Safety	
Police Chief	\$ 85,000 –119,000
Municipal Department Head Police Director	\$ 60,000 –80,000
Clerk-Typist	\$ 25,000 – 50,000
Police Matron Call out	\$ 50.00-55.00
Matron Hrs. after call out	\$ 20.00-25.00
Emergency Management	\$ 1,000 – 3,000

Coordinator	
911 Coordinator	\$ 1,000 – 2,000
Police	
Lieutenant	\$ 98,100-102,068
Sergeant/1 st . Class	\$ 95,568-99,436
Patrolman	\$ 51,848-93,920
Probationary / Recruit	\$ 44,164-45,948

A motion was made by Mrs. Kelsey to adopt Ordinance 2020-02 for First Reading. Mr. Pennington seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: Erica and Koster and Charlie McGatha Members of the 4-H club did a presentation on the services of 4-H club. They would like to install a mini-library at the field of dreams. Mr. Wiseman like the idea of the mini-library at the field of dreams. Danny Koster observe the Township Meeting in order to obtain a merit badge.

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

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah M. Hrebenak, RMC/CMR
Municipal Clerk