

**INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.**  
**July 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.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Mr. Cogle, Mr. Pennington, Mrs. Gesumaria, Mayor Giordano, Mrs. Kelsey and Debi Hrebenak.

**Absent:** none

**2021 Island Dragway Agreement - Melissa Milano – Track Operator**

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to approve the agreement with Island Dragway as written. Mrs. Kelsey seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

**Minutes Approval: 6.1.2021**

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to approve minutes 6.1.21 as written. Mrs. Gesumaria seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

**Consent Agenda:**

**Resolution 21-45**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

**BODY-WORN CAMERA GRANT PROGRAM  
RESOLUTION OF PARTICIPATION #21-45**

A RESOLUTION APPROVING PARTICIPATION WITH THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Independence wished to apply for funding of approximately \$22,418.00 with a match of \$0.00 for an approximate project total cost of \$22,418.00 for a project under the State of New Jersey Body-Worn Camera Grant Program, and

**WHEREAS**, the Independence Township Committee has reviewed the accompanying application and has approved said request, and

**WHEREAS**, the project is a joint effort between the Department of Law and Public Safety and the Township of Independence for the purpose described in the application;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Independence Township Committee that:

1. As a matter of public policy, the Township of Independence wished to participate to the fullest extent possible with the Department of Law and Public Safety and does accept grant number 21-BWC-209 for the period 1.01.21 to 12.31.25
2. The Office of the Attorney General shall be responsible for the receipt and review of the applications for said funds
3. The Office of Attorney General shall initiate allocations to each applicant as authorized.

#### **Resolution 21-46**

**Title or Subject: Extension of The Grace Period on the Third Quarter Taxes**

**WHEREAS**, the date of the mailing of the Independence Township tax bills cannot be determined at this time, and

**WHEREAS**, **NJSA 54:4-66.3** provides that no interest shall be charged for a minimum of 25 days after tax bills are mailed or otherwise delivered,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Independence Township Committee as follows:

No interest shall be charged on 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter taxes, due August 1, 2021, if payment of said taxes is received by Independence Township on or before the 25<sup>th</sup> day after the date of a mailing as certified by the Tax Collector to the Municipal Clerk and provided further, however, that if any such payment is not received on or before the 25<sup>th</sup> day, interest at the usual rate will be charged from August 1, 2021.

#### **Resolution 21-47**

**Title or Subject: Approval of Fire Department Member (Adam I Mysona)**

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for members on the Independence Volunteer Fire Department; and

**Whereas**, *Adam I Mysona* has made application for membership to the Fire Department and has been approved by the Membership Committee; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that *Adam I Mysona* is hereby approved as a member of the Independence Volunteer Fire Department.

#### **Resolution 21-48**

**Title: Tricky Tray**

**WHEREAS**, **Foundation for Hackettstown Medical Center** is registered by the State of New Jersey to operate legalized games of chance, (181-4-31694) and,

**WHEREAS**, they have submitted an application for a Tricky Tray Raffle to be held on 9.18.21 and all fees have been paid,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Independence, that RA# 477 be issued to Hackettstown Community Hospital Foundation.

Mr. Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 21-45, 21-46 and 21-48 as written. Mrs. Gesumaria seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Mr. Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 21-47 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. Tax rate received. Working on tax bills  
Construction/Zoning – Reports submitted via email.  
Environmental – nothing to report  
Treasurer – CFO spoke on the Fiscal Recovery Fund.  
Recreation/Green Acres – Everything going well. Softball season completed.  
Police – Report submitted via email.  
Emergency Services – First Aid Squad gave a report. Open house October 10. Fire Department starting breakfast in September  
DPW – Report submitted via email. New gas pump installed and running. Spoke about Mt. Bethel Road paving.  
Municipal Clerk: Everything is going well. No workshop in August or September  
Land Use Board – Mr. Cogle spoke on the 206 Route 46 property. Meeting open to public starting July meeting  
Board of Education – no report.

Consent on the grant on the Fiscal Recovery Fund.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to approve Mt. Bethel Road Paving in the amount of \$26,000.00. 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

**PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:**

Attorney Parikh: Report submitted.

Engineer Finelli: Mr. Finelli spoke on Woodmont construction. Scheduling a pre-con meeting next week. 2022 DOT grants submitted. Asbury Road Section 2 – awaiting DOT approval. Spoke on the Senior Center grant.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Ordinance 2021-04**

*Second Reading/Public Comment*

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP’S LAND USE REGULATIONS TO PROHIBIT ALL CLASSES OF CANNABIS BUSINESSES WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP TO ALLOW THE TOWNSHIP MORE TIME AND FLEXIBILITY IN DETERMING POTENTIAL PERMITTED USES**

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

Letter received from Mr. Gross and clarified by the Township Attorney.  
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 Mr. Cogle to adopt Ordinance 2021-04 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

**Ordinance 2021-05**                      *Second Reading/Public Comment*

**AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF  
CAPITAL PURCHASES BY THE TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE, IN THE  
COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING  
NOT IN EXCESS OF \$20,000 THEREFOR FROM THE CAPITAL  
IMPROVEMENT FUND OF THE TOWNSHIP.**

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 Mr. Cogle to adopt Ordinance 2021-05 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: None**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mrs. Newman regarding court issue and notification. Mr. Fuela spoke about Pastor Frank Fowler. Baseball field signage on the batting cage. Mr. Barabas asked about taser for the police department and asked about the property on Cemetery Road and Route 46. Mr. Smith thanked the DPW on fixing the potholes on Mt. Rascal Rd. Mr. Wiseman asked about spraying corner lot for the weeds and the speed sign.

**BILLS:** A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to pay the bills as presented. 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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: 8:21 pm – 9:19 pm**

The following Resolution was approved at 8:21p.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 Matter

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. Kelsey at 9:19 p.m. to exit the executive session, seconded by Mr. Cogle followed by a roll call of all ayes

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

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Mrs. Kelsey to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m. Mayor Giordano 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