

**INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting held at the Municipal Building, Great Meadows, NJ.**  
**May 10, 2022                      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. Pennington, Mrs. Kelsey, Mayor Giordano, Mr. Cogle, Mrs. Gesumaria and Dena Hrebenak. Also present were Attorney Leslie Parikh and Mike Finelli.

**Absent:** none

**Minute Approval:** 4.12.22

A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to approve minutes 4.12.22 as written. Mrs. Gesumaria seconded the motion with roll call as follows:

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

Nays: None recorded

Abstain: None recorded

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Resolution 22-38**

GOVERNING BODY CERTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made an annual audit of its books, accounts and financial transactions, and

**WHEREAS**, the Annual Report of Audit for the year 2015 has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the Municipal Clerk pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body; and,

**WHEREAS**, R.S. 52:27BB-34 authorizes the Local Financial Board of the State of New Jersey to prescribe reports pertaining to the local fiscal affairs; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Local Finance Board has promulgated N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5, a regulation requiring that the governing body of each municipality shall by resolution certify to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that all members of the governing body have reviewed, as a minimum, the sections of the annual audit entitled "Comments and Recommendations, and,

**WHEREAS**, the members of the governing body has personally reviewed as a minimum the Annual Report of Audit, and specifically the sections of the Annual Audit entitled "comments and Recommendations, as evidenced by the group affidavit form of the governing body attached hereto; and,

**WHEREAS**, such resolution of certification shall be adopted by the Governing Body no later than forty-five days after the receipt of the annual audit, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5; and,

**WHEREAS**, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with, at least, the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated aforesaid and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board, and

**WHEREAS**, failure to comply with the regulations of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey may subject the members of the local governing body to the penalty provisions of R.S. 52:27BB-52, to wit:

R.S. 52:27BB-52: A local officer or member of a local governing body who, after a date fixed for compliance, fails or refuses to obey an order of the director (Director of Local Government Services), under the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, in addition shall forfeit his office.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Township Committee of Independence Township, hereby states that it has complied with N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5 and does hereby submit a certified copy of this resolution and the required affidavit to said Board to show evidence of said compliance.

**Resolution 22-39**

**Title or Subject: CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN 2021 AUDIT**

*WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made an annual audit of its books, accounts, and financial transactions, and*

*WHEREAS, The Annual Report of the Audit for the year 2021 has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the Municipal Clerk, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body, and*

*WHEREAS, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with, at least, the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated in Resolution 22-38 adopted May 10, 2022 and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board, and*

*WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has prepared the attached Corrective Action Plan for the 2021 Annual Audit, responding to the Schedule of Findings and Recommendations.*

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Township Committee of Independence Township, that the attached Corrective Action Plan for the 2021 Audit is hereby approved for submission to the Division of Local Government Services, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

**Resolution 22-40**

**Title or Subject: Salaries 2022**

*Be It Resolved by the Independence Township Committee that the following salaries shall be paid to Township employees, effective May 1, 2022 unless otherwise noted.*

<b>Construction/Zoning</b>	
Construction Official	\$ 12,000
Bldg. Sub Code Official	\$ 11,000
Fire Sub Code Official	\$ 6,500
Plumbing Sub Code Official	\$ 6,000

Mr. Cogle made a motion to approve Resolutions 22-38 thru 22-40 as written. Mr. Pennington 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

**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

**Ordinance:**

**2022-07 *Second Reading/Public Comment***

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

Mr. Pennington made a motion to open up discussion on this ordinance to the Public. Mr. Cogle 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. Mr. Pennington 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 2022-07 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

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

Tax Collector – Report submitted via email  
Construction/Zoning – Reports submitted via email.  
Environmental – Clean up went well  
Treasurer – Report posted  
Recreation/Green Acres – Softball running. Working on snack stand and pavilion  
Police – Report submitted via email  
Emergency Services – Chief Vasquez spoke on number of calls. Movie in the Park - June 11. Fire Department breakfast in June.  
DPW – Report submitted.  
Municipal Clerk: everything going well.  
Land Use Board – 1 new application being reviewed – not completed.

**PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:**

Attorney Parikh: Nothing to report.

Engineer Finelli: Spoke on Stormwater Management plan, Russling Road DOT grant, and 2022 DOT Grant application.

**OLD BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mrs. Cullen thanked DPW for repairing the catch basin.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: 7:39 pm – 8:00 pm**

The following Resolution was approved at 7:39 p.m. to enter Executive Session with a motion by Mr. Cogle, seconded by Mrs. Gesumaria 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

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 8:00 p.m. to return to regular session, seconded by Mrs. Kelsey followed by a roll call of all ayes

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Mr. Cogle to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 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,

Dena M. Hrebenak, RMC  
Municipal Clerk/Administrator