

MINUTES

HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

April 11, 2024

Start Time: 6:32 p.m.

The **Sunshine Statement** was read into the record by Mayor Robin Freitag
The **Flag Salute** was led by Mayor Robin Freitag

Roll Call: Mayor Robin Freitag, Tom Tedesco, David Miller, Kelsey Bayzick, Jeff Shimp
Also Present: John Hitchner, Admin; Jeannette Pace, Acting Clerk; Neil Young, CFO; and Michael Garcia, Auditor
Absent: Solicitor Matt Ritter

- **Approval of Minutes**
A Motion to Approve the minutes from the March 14, 2024 Regular Meeting and the March 14, 2024 Executive Session was made by Miller; Seconded by Shimp. Voice Vote: All in favor.
- **Department and Committee Reports**
Discussion: Bayzick advised the Committee of a walking program instituted at the Senior Center on off-days.
Motion to Approve by Bayzick; Seconded by Shimp. Voice Vote: All in favor.
- **Treasurer’s Report and Approval of Bills**
Motion to Approve by Shimp; Seconded by Miller. Voice Vote: All in favor.
- **Budget**
Auditor Mike Garcia appeared and reviewed the current budget paperwork.

Ordinance No. 2024-01: ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14) was read into the record. A Motion was made by Bayzick to Open to the Public; Seconded by Miller. Voice Vote: All in favor. Receiving no public comments on this Ordinance, a Motion was made by Tedesco to Close the Public Portion; Seconded by Shimp. Voice Vote: All in favor.

A Motion was made by Tedesco to Adopt this Ordinance; Seconded by Bayzick. Roll Call Vote:

	MOVED	SECOND	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSE	ABSENT
Kelsey Bayzick		X	X				
David Miller			X				
Jeff Shimp			X				
Tom Tedesco	X		X				
Robin Freitag			X				

Resolution No. 2024-52 (RESOLUTION FOR SELF-EXAMINATION OF THE BUDGET) CFO Neil Young reviewed the Resolution and provided a Certification. A Motion was made by Shimp to Open to the Public; Seconded by Tedesco. Voice Vote: All in favor. Young indicated that the current budget will result in a 1 cent tax increase. Garcia indicated that the budget was introduced last month and confirmed that the increase for the cost of the affordable housing consultant had no bearing on the tax increase. The tax increase would equal \$10.00 per \$100,00.00. Gary Van Meter questioned the cost of operations of the Township. Garcia responded. Hearing no further public comment, Bayzick made a Motion to Close the Public Portion; Seconded by Miller. Voice Vote: All in favor.

A Motion to Approve the Resolution was made by Bayzick; Seconded by Miller. Voice Vote: All in favor.

#2024-53: RESOLUTION AMENDING THE BUDGET

Discussion: Garcia indicated there is a new line item for an Affordable Housing Consultant. A Motion was made by Bayzick to Adopt this Resolution; Seconded by Shimp. Roll Call Vote:

	MOVED	SECOND	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSE	ABSENT
Kelsey Bayzick	X		X				
David Miller			X				
Jeff Shimp		X	X				
Tom Tedesco			X				
Robin Freitag			X				

#2024-43: INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF 2024 BUDGET

Discussion: Tedesco pointed out that the Resolution the packet did not include the words "and Adoption." Pace indicated that she was aware of the error and further that the original Resolution in the folder to be signed by the Mayor did in fact include the proper wording.

CFO Young talked about interest on investments and various options to earn more. He also talked about options and/or bonds available for the purchase of the new fire truck. He recommended a review of the capital plan. Tedesco reminded the Committee that Stow Creek is responsible for 25% of this debt and indicated that they should be made aware of this pending purchase. Hitchner questioned the interest now versus when it's paid for; Garcia explained the process.

With the title change mentioned above, a Motion to approve was made by Bayzick; Seconded by Miller. Roll Call Vote:

	MOVED	SECOND	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	RECUSE	ABSENT
Kelsey Bayzick	X		X				
David Miller		X	X				
Jeff Shimp			X				
Tom Tedesco			X				
Robin Freitag			X				

- **Safety Presentation**

Joe Henry of the Hardenbergh Insurance Group appeared and made a Safety Presentation on behalf of JIF to the Committee.

RESOLUTIONS:

#2024-50: RESOLUTION APPROVING HARVEY MINING PERMIT RENEWAL - RE: BLOCK 82, LOT 3.01

Motion to Approve by Tedesco; Seconded by Shimp. Voice Vote: All in favor.

#2024-51: RESOLUTION DECLARING CERTAIN LANDS NOT NEEDED FOR PUBLIC USE, AND AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF SAME PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13

Discussion: Input is needed from the Township's Solicitor so a Motion to Table this resolution was made by Bayzick; Seconded by Tedesco. Voice Vote: All in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Motion to Open to the Public by Miller; Seconded by Shimp. Voice Vote: All in favor.

Lisa Knerr appeared and talked about an emaciated dog that had been dumped. She provided photos of the dog. She called our animal control officer who advised that he wouldn't trap the dog but would ride around and see if he could find it. That Saturday Chasing Tails Rescue came out and set a trap and put up cameras. She received a call that an elderly couple on Dutch Neck Road had trapped it. The gentleman called the ACO but didn't receive a return call. Chasing Tails went to the couple's home. The State Police were called and said they will no longer transport animals because of the issues they have had with our ACO. They also call the ACO on a regular basis and do not get a return call. Knerr advised that she posted the story on Facebook letting others know that the dog had been found. The ACO's wife apparently made attacking comments to her and has printouts of those comments. She cautioned the Committee that a plan needs to be put in place for when the ACO doesn't return calls or is otherwise unavailable.

Christine Morgan appeared and indicated that she has also had numerous problems with our ACO. Said he doesn't return calls. Said she's trapped 10 cats and he refuses to pick them up and tells her to take them to the shelter herself.

Pam Jesse appeared. She is a member of Chasing Tails Rescue and also of Shore Animal Control. She said the dog in question was very emaciated and almost got hit numerous times. Trooper Brown of the State Police called her about the dog stating that they tried getting ahold of our ACO without success. Pam also handed out a handout of "Municipal Requirements" regarding animal control.

Gary Van Meter mentioned that he was aware of the above and the postings on Facebook and just wanted to make note that the State Police were actively involved in another matter and were shorthanded at the time of the above occurrence. Pam Jesse indicated that the State Police are under no requirement to assist and do not want the liability.

Kenny Mayhew appeared and gave a report that the Fire Department had approximately 70 calls during the first 3 months of the year. The Committee commended Chief Mayhew and his firefighters on a job well done.

Tom Tedesco commended Engineer Steve Nardelli on an inspection he recently performed.

Seeing no one else, a Motion to Close the Public Portion was made by Bayzick; Seconded by Miller. Voice Vote: All in favor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Hopewell Day: Pace gave an update advising that the initial planning stages had started and the next planning meeting is May 9th. Additional updates will follow.
- Environmental Commission Park/Road: Mayor Freitag advised that the HTEC wants to put the gate at the base of the road to keep vehicles out of the park after dark.
- Roselawn/Stave Mill Road – Cats/Speeding: Bayzick advised that a resident had made a complaint regarding speeding in residential areas and cats being hit. The Sheriff's Department has been contacted requesting more patrols in the neighborhoods to increase their presence and hopefully deter the speeders. Public Works will also be reviewing the signage. Miller also spoke to the Sheriff who indicated that they would like to make additional stops at the school area as time permits. The Sheriff wants to be more involved around the school. Freitag spoke to the school officials who are all for the positive reinforcement and law enforcement presence. Hitchner mentioned getting the electric signs that clock the speeds so the information can be provide to the police and they will have an idea what time of day the speeding is occurring. Tedesco suggested contacting the sheriff's department to see if they have these signs and if we can borrow them for this purpose. Our zoning officer will address the property owner with the cat colony.
- Convenience Center: Talked about the balance of the grant and what it can be used for. Talked about hauler options and oil recycling. Tedesco believes the oil recycling to be a benefit to the residents and does not want to take that away. Miller agrees but feels this process should be policed better.
- Verizon Phone conversion to MaxComm update: New system to be installed during the week of April 22nd.
- Youth Week Update: Youths to come into the municipal offices on April 18th to learn the process then come back on April 25th to "run" the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Resolution #2024-54 Authorizing Executive Session (Potential Litigation; Personnel)

A Motion to enter into Executive Session was made by Bayzick at 7:56 pm; Seconded by Tedesco. Voice Vote: All in favor.

A Motion to close the Executive Session and enter back into public session was made by Bayzick at 8:35 pm; Seconded by Miller. Voice Vote: All in favor.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Mayor Freitag placed on the record that she will reluctantly accept the Resignation of Acting Clerk Jeannette Pace submitted to the Committee on April 4th.

MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Shimp; Seconded by Miller. Voice Vote: All in favor.

End Time: 8:36 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: April 25, 2024 (Youth Week) @ 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannette Pace, Acting Clerk
cc: Township Administrator, Committee and Counsel