

**JUNE 24, 2020
WORK MEETING**

The Work Meeting of the Hope Township Committee convened at 3:00 P.M. at the Hope Township Municipal Building with the following members present: Mayor Timothy McDonough, Committeeman Christopher John Kruk and Deputy Mayor Terry Urfer. Also present were Ted Rodman, Township Engineer; Municipal Clerk, Robin Keggan, RMC; Deputy Clerk, Zondra Belstra and George Boesze, Zoning Official.

Under the provisions of the “Open Public Meetings Act”, adequate notice of the meeting had been provided by publishing notice in The Star Gazette and The New Jersey Herald and by posting notices in the Hope Post Office and on the Township bulletin boards.

Roll call: Mr. Urfer- present

Mr. Kruk – present

Mayor McDonough- present

PUBLIC SESSION:

Eric Novak was in attendance to discuss the possibility of running a fitness program for high school children (from Belvidere High School) and possibly 7th and 8th grade Hope Elementary School students at Swayze Mill Park beginning in July. The Committee discussed the information that was obtained from the Clerk and Deputy Clerk from the Township’s insurance provider. The Township’s insurance provider recommended highly against proceeding with this program due to all the CDC requirements that the COVID-19 virus has placed on individuals and programs. A 5-page waiver was given to the Township for review as part of the requirement that would be needed for any activities to be held on Township properties. The Committee recommended that Mr. Novak look into using Silver Lake Property Owner’s Association or Camp Hope to hold his fitness program as their insurance requirements/guidelines may not be as strict as the Township’s. They advised Mr. Novak to keep everyone in the loop and stated that they would help him in whatever way they could. The Clerk also stated that if Mr. Novak forwarded information to her office, she would help the program be promoted through Township channels.

RESOLUTIONS:

**HOPE TOWNSHIP, WARREN COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE 2020
WARREN COUNTY MUNICIPAL AND CHARITABLE CONSERVANCY TRUST FUND FOR
THE REHABILITATION OF THE HOPE COMMUNITY CENTER**

RESOLUTION 2020-48

WHEREAS, the Township of Hope, New Jersey is centered around a core of strong cultural and architectural history that greatly contributes to community spirit and economic health; and

WHEREAS, the Hope Historic District is a significant cultural resource listed on both the New Jersey State Register of Historic Places (SR: 6/13/1973) and the National Register of Historic Places (NR: 7/20/1973 Ref #73001138); and

WHEREAS, the Hope Community Center, originally a stone Christian Church build to replace a log building circa 1840, is a contributing resource to the Hope Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Hope owns and acts as the steward of said property; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Hope is planning a capital campaign, under the direction of Eclectic Architecture, LLC, that will include an exterior building envelope restoration and the restoration of interior finishes; and

WHEREAS, the capital campaign is considered eligible for partial funding through the Warren County, New Jersey, Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund, a matching funds grant program directed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders,

WHEREAS, the budget for the capital campaign is set at \$150,000.00 and the Township of Hope has committed \$37,500.00 in potential matching funds for the capital project,

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Hope that an application be submitted to the 2020 Warren County Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund round for a \$112,500 funding request which, added to the Township's committed match of \$37,500.00, would make possible the \$150,000.00 project.

On a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and Roll Call vote of Mr. Urfer – yes; Mr. Kruk – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes this was carried for approval.

**HOPE TOWNSHIP, WARREN COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION APPROVING SUBMITTAL FOR A GRANT APPLICATION
AND EXECUTION OF GRANT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FOR THE OVERLAY OF RIDGEWAY AVENUE, SECTIONS 1 AND 3, PROJECT**

RESOLUTION 2020-49

WHEREAS, the Township of Hope has applied for a grant through the Department of Transportation for the overlay of Ridgeway Avenue, Sections 1 and 3; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Township Committee of the Township of Hope hereby formally approves the grant application for the above-stated project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and the Clerk are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application identified as MA-2021 Overlay of Ridgeway Avenue – Sections 1 and 3-00475, to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of Hope Township.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of Hope Township and that their signatures constitute acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

On a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and Roll Call vote of Mr. Urfer – yes; Mr. Kruk – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes this was carried for approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

The agreement with Space Farms for removal of deer carcasses on municipal roads was approved to be signed on a motion from Mr. Urfer, seconded by Mr. Kruk. Roll Call: Mr. Urfer – yes; Mr. Kruk – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes. The cost is \$31.00 per deer and this Agreement is good until December 31, 2021. The Clerk will send the signed Agreement back to Space Farms and request a fully-executed document in return from them.

Maria McDonough was appointed to the Historic Preservation Commission as a regular member (moving from Alternate #1), replacing Frank Pavese whose term expired 12/2022. She is filling his unexpired term. Frank DiSalvo was appointed to the Hope Historic Preservation Commission as Alternate #1, filling Maria McDonough's unexpired term (term expired 12/2021). On a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk, abstained by Mayor McDonough, this motion was passed.

George Boesze spoke to the Township Committee about the residences located at 4 and 6 Walnut Street across the Community Center. In his duties as the Zoning Official, he has noted that both of these properties fall under the vacant and abandoned properties ordinance the Township adopted last year. One property is owned by the Township (6 Walnut Street) and the other is owned by a resident (4 Walnut Street). He stated that both of these properties need to have a plan put in place with some estimated timelines for work to be done in order to avoid the fees that will be associated with the ordinance coming into play. Mayor McDonough made mention of the possibility of the demolition of 6 Walnut (Township owned) and told Mr. Boesze that they will keep him informed on the Township's plan. If demolished it is possible that it will become a parking area or a small park. Mayor McDonough also suggested that a letter be put in the files of both residences and that the same procedure should be followed for both addresses. A Township-owned property does not warrant any different treatment than that of a private citizen. Mr. Boesze explained the manner in which he addresses vacant and abandoned properties and his procedures for correspondence and ultimately registering these properties if it becomes necessary.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion took place regarding the demolition of 6 Walnut Street. 3 quotes were received for the demolition of the house, one quote contained backfill and grass growing at end of demolition. The Township will need to find out about permits needed to be obtained, etc. Mr. Urfer motioned; Mr. Kruk seconded to accept the quote from Alan DeCarolis for \$20,000 and authorizing the Mayor to make such award unless it is determined to try to rehabilitate the house. Roll call: Mr. Urfer – yes; Mr. Kruk – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes.

TOWNSHIP ENGINEER REPORT:

Mr. Rodman discussed the Ridgeway Avenue and Hope Center overlay projects. The Hope Center project has already received approval from SHPO and has been sent on to the Department of Transportation for their approval. The Ridgeway Avenue grant was submitted (\$208,000) for the 2 ends of Ridgeway. There was a notation made on the grant submission by Sarah (Ted's assistant) that eventually the center of Ridgeway will be paved as well. Mr. Rodman suggested that the Township Committee speak to the County about how they will meet the old pavement with the new pavement when the Hope Center project begins. Mr. Urfer and Mr. Rodman will speak to the County to discuss this issue in further detail.

Mr. Urfer asked that Mr. Rodman inspect Cemetery Road once per year to make sure that the pavement is holding up after issues were reported with the inferior work (obtained from core sampling) that was done last year.

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEEMEN REPORTS:

Mayor McDonough: Mayor McDonough touched upon the possible demolition of the house at 6 Walnut Street and the three quotes received and stated that a member of the HPC may be interested in renovating it. This discussion will go into further detail later in the meeting. Mayor McDonough also made note that the Department of Transportation conducted a traffic study about a week ago (study was held for 24 hours) and the results are expected within the next 2 weeks. The Township is hopeful that this will help with alleviating truck traffic travelling through Hope Center.

Mr. Kruk: Made note that the Department of Transportation needs to be made aware that when they close the Exit 12 ramp (Hope Township/Blairstown exit), they need to alert the municipality that it is being closed so we may alert our residents. He also noted that the Land of Make Believe is opening on July 2 and that Hope Day will probably be occurring at a date to be determined later in the season, not the usual July 4th date.

Mr. Urfer: Made mention that the HVFD is undergoing some renovations to a lot for their new fire truck purchase. He asked that the Township engineer take a look at the plans a member of the HVFD in the audience had and seal them for the HVFD. The Township engineer agreed to look at them after the meeting and determine whether he could do same. Mr. Urfer also noted that the Township Assessor will need to put stipulations on a piece of property owned by the Township off of Oakland Avenue that is being considered for offering to adjacent homeowners that “no principle structures may be building on this property”. Mr. Urfer made a motion that this piece of property may be offered with that caveat and Mr. Kruk seconded the motion. All in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor McDonough entertained a motion to accept and approve the May 13, 2020 business meeting minutes as well as the June 10, 2020 business meeting minutes. Mr. Urfer motioned; Mr. Kruk seconded. All in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Mr. Kruk and carried to adopt the Resolution to go into Closed Session at 4:00 PM.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, P. L 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting under 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 Hope, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from that portion of this meeting
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
 - A. Personnel – Functions of Committee/Commission Secretaries

As nearly as can be ascertained, the matter or matters to be discussed at this time will be disclosed to the public when such matters are resolved. No official action taken.

Time In: 4:00 PM

Present: Committeeman Kruk, Committeeman Urfer and Committeeman McDonough

Also Present: Robin Keggan, Municipal Clerk

Time Out: 4:02 PM

A motion made by Committeeman Urfer, seconded by Committeeman Kruk and carried to return to regular session.

No official action was taken by the Committee at this time. Copies of the minutes will be made available at such time as the Committee determines that there is no harm to the public interest

Seeing there was no other business for tonight, this meeting of the Hope Township Committee was adjourned at 4:03 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Mr. Kruk. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Keggan, RMC
Municipal Clerk