

**MARCH 8, 2023
BUSINESS MEETING**

The Business Meeting of the Hope Township Committee convened at 6:00 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 Municipal Clerk, Robin Keggan, RMC; Donald Whitmore, DPW Foreman and Public Events Coordinator Patti Whitmore.

FLAG SALUTE AND SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Under the provisions of the “Open Public Meetings Act”, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by publishing notice in the New Jersey Herald and Express Times New Jersey Edition and by posting notices in the Hope Post Office and on the Township Web and Bulletin Boards.

Roll call: Mr. Urfer- present

Mr. Kruk – present

Mayor McDonough- present

Bills: Bills in the amount of \$40,987.75 plus \$343,589.00 for the Hope Township Elementary School for a total of \$384,576.75 were approved on a motion made by Mr. Kruk; seconded by Mr. Urfer and roll called: Mr. Kruk yes; Mr. Urfer yes; Mayor McDonough yes.

Reports:

Tax Collector: **January Report** - \$438,992.16; **February Report** - \$1,102,096.53 for a Y-T-D Total of \$1,541,088.69.

Environmental Commission: Mrs. Sobon distributed her monthly report to the committee. Discussions took place regarding the Appreciation Dinner give-away; rain garden placement in the municipality (she was advised to pursue the Elementary School as the location); Green Fair and a gift from Brian Kathenes. Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs was also discussed. The Committee opted not to participate in that activity at this time.

Mayor Tim McDonough: Reported that a lawsuit pertaining to Tier B municipalities moving to Tier A is being put together by the League. Also reported that the County has sent their Resolution to the NJDOT regarding 102s and that the NJDOT is working on how to implement that with the County. NJDOT and Senator Steinhardt will be in the area to look at concerns regarding the southern part of 519 in the coming weeks.

Committeeman Christopher John Kruk: Requested that the gutter on the municipal building on the court side be repaired to the best of ability for the remainder of the winter season until it can be replaced; asked that Mr. Whitmore get an estimate on fixing Foundry Road asap; informed everyone of a suicide prevention event taking place at NWRHS on May 11 at 6:30 PM (noted there will be one later in the month at either the Warren County Technical School or college with a date t/b/d); discussed taking the 250th signs down when the flags go up in the spring and perhaps auctioning them off and noted that it was International Women’s Day.

Deputy Mayor Urfer: Discussed the waste haulers continuing to drive through town and purchasing cameras so that they may be submitted to the WC Health Department for action to be taken by them. 31 Ridgeway needs to be dealt with before spring. The clerk was asked to email Mr. Selvaggi and ask him to write the homeowners a letter.

DPW Report: Mr. Whitmore updated the Committee on the projects he has been working on since the last meeting, which include road maintenance during snow events, being on premise for the cell tower work installation occurring as needed; meeting with the engineer on Monday, 3/13/23 regarding Hissim and Ridgeway; getting quotes for an enclosed trailer for the new lawnmower. The committee approved the purchase of a trailer in an amount not to exceed \$7,600 to be paid out of Capital on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and roll called as follows: Mr. Kruk – yes; Mr. Urfer – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes. It was noted that this purchase (as well as the zero-turn mower) will pay for themselves within a year’s time and will be no additional expense to the town.

RESOLUTIONS:

**HOPE TOWNSHIP, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A NON-FAIR
AND OPEN CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – SPECIAL COUNSEL
RESOLUTION 2023-21**

WHEREAS, the Township of Hope has a need to acquire special counsel as a non-fair and open contract pursuant to provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5; and,

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has determined and certified in writing that the value of the acquisition may exceed \$17,500; and,

WHEREAS, the anticipated term of this contract is one (1) year; and,

WHEREAS, Anthony Sposaro, Attorney at Law has submitted a proposal, indicating he will provide the special counsel services for the anticipated fee of \$135.00 per hour; and,

WHEREAS, Anthony Sposaro has completed and submitted a Business Entity Disclosure Certification which certified that Anthony Sposaro, Attorney at Law has not made any reportable contributions to a political or candidate committee in the Township of Hope in the previous one year, and that the contract will prohibit Anthony Sposaro, Attorney at Law from making any reportable contributions through the term of the contract; and,

WHEREAS, the required certificate for the availability of funds has been filed by the chief financial officer providing that legally appropriated balances are available to cover the amount of the contract as required by N.J.A.C. 5:30-14.5 and that fees for the aforementioned legal services shall be made available by appropriate inclusion in either an annual municipal budget which includes current, revenue sharing and utility provisions, by budget amendments for Federal program spending or by inclusion in an appropriate bond ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hope, the Mayor and Clerk are authorized to enter into a contract with Anthony Sposaro, Attorney at Law as described herein as special counsel on and in behalf of the Township of Hope for the year 2023; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Business Disclosure Entity Certification and Determination of Value be placed on file with this resolution; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a notice of this action shall be printed once in a legally designated publication.

Political Contribution Disclosure. This contract has been awarded to Anthony Sposaro, Attorney at Law based on the merits and abilities of Anthony Sposaro, Attorney at Law to provide the goods and services as described herein. This contract was not awarded through a “fair and open” process pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq. As such, the undersigned does hereby attest that Anthony Sposaro, Attorney at Law, its subsidiaries, assigns or principals controlling in excess of 10% of the company has neither made a contribution, that is reportable pursuant to the Election Law Enforcement Commission pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-8 or 19:44-16 in the one (1) year period preceding the award of the contract that would, pursuant to P.L. 2004, c. 19. Affect its eligibility to perform this contract, nor will it make a reportable contribution during the term of the contract to any political party committee in the municipality if a member of that political party is serving in an elective public office of that municipality when the contract

is awarded, or to any candidate committee of any person serving in an elective public office of the municipality when the contract is awarded.

Exhibit “A” (Mandatory Affirmative Action Language), Exhibit “B” (Employee Information Report), Exhibit “C”

(Business Registration Certificate), Exhibit “D” (Business Entity Disclosure Certification), Exhibit “E” (Political Contributions Disclosure Certification), and Exhibit “F” (Insurance) are attached to and made a part of this contract.

Motion: Mr. Urfer (subject to Michael Selvaggi’s approval of the contract)

Second: Mayor McDonough

Roll Call: Urfer – Yes McDonough – Yes Mr. Kruk was absent for this vote

Unfinished Business:

Truck Traffic – See Mayor McDonough’s report above.

New Business:

Use of Facilities- Permission was granted for the Rutgers Cooperative Extension using the Community Center on June 17, 2023 for a plant and sip which will be BYOB. The age group will be 21 and up due to this. The committee approved the repealing of the Ordinance that states no alcoholic beverages are permitted on Township property for the day. The fee is waived. Approved on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and all in favor.

Public Events Coordinator – It was divulged that a change in personnel occurred as a result of an Executive Session meeting on February 22, 2023 and the resignation of the current Public Events Coordinator shortly thereafter. Mr. Urfer asked that Patti Whitmore, who has taken over the Public Events Coordinator position again, come up with a job description so that there was one in place and everyone is on the same page with the responsibilities of the position. A discussion took place about an assistant to the Coordinator and it was decided to advertise on the website and bulletin boards for this position. A pay rate and cap will be determined if someone is hired. All interested persons should submit their letter of interest to the municipal clerk.

Lead Based Paint/Business Registration Ordinance – A short discussion took place regarding a sample ordinance received by the clerk from a couple of neighboring municipalities. The \$20 fee that is noted in that Ordinance may or may not be left in. The clerk was asked to forward the Ordinance on to the Township attorney for his review and comment.

April 12, 2023 Business Meeting – Due to conflicts in schedules of committeemen, this meeting may not occur. The clerk will keep the Committee apprised of any business coming in leading up to that meeting. If there is nothing urgent, it will be cancelled and the only meeting in April will be the already scheduled work meeting.

PB/ZB Secretary – Mr. Urfer made a motion to hire Rebecca Patton as the new Planning and Zoning Board Secretary. Her official start date will be determined at a later date. For the present time, she will be shadowing the interim secretary to learn a little more about the work involved before taking the position over on her own. Mayor McDonough seconded the motion. All in favor, exception of Mr. Kruk who abstained from voting.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the February 8, 2023 Business meeting and Executive session as well as the minutes of the February 22, 2023 budget/work meeting and Executive session were approved on a motion made by Mr. Urfer and seconded by Mr. Kruk. All in favor.

Public Participation:

Ms. Sobon questioned the committee on date-stamped photos taken of municipal waste haulers coming through town and where they should be sent. She was advised to send them to the clerk and Mr. Urfer will work with her in order to get them to the proper authority.

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 7:14 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:
 - Potential Litigation
 - Personnel Matters
 - Contract Negotiations

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.

Time In: 7:14 PM

Present: Committeeman Kruk, Deputy Mayor Urfer, Mayor McDonough.

Also Present: Robin Keggan, Municipal Clerk, Donald Whitmore and Patti Whitmore (for part of the session)

Time Out: 8:10 PM

A motion made by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Committeeman Kruk and carried to return to regular session. No Official Actions were taken but the public was apprised that potential litigation, contract negotiations and personnel matters were discussed.

Upon return to the public session of the meeting, the Committee announced that the request by Ms. Whitmore for a pay increase for the Public Events Coordinator position was approved. The request of \$10,500 will be put into the 2023 budget and the salary resolution updated at the appropriate time. Mr. Kruk made a motion to approve the salary, Mr. Urfer seconded. All in favor by roll call vote.

Also of note, an award for landscaping was made to Drake's Landscaping in the amount of approximately \$9,000 for his continuance of maintaining the Swayze Mill Ball field and the Westbrook Park ballfield. The DPW department will handle all other mowing for the buildings and grounds owned by the

municipality, resulting in a savings of approximately \$18,495.00. The clerk will prepare a Resolution of award. Mr. Urfer made a motion to make this award, seconded by Mr. Kruk. By roll call vote, all in favor.

The Sports Director positions are being re-branded. As of the 2023 salary resolution, soccer, baseball and softball will be under the title of Outdoors Sports Director. The salary will remain the same and these sports will be headed up by Christopher Beatty.

Mr. Kruk left the meeting at approximately 8:11 p.m. due to a fire call being received.

Seeing there was no other business for tonight, this meeting of the Hope Township Committee was adjourned at 8:13 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mayor McDonough. Motion carried.

Robin L. Keggan, RMC
Municipal Clerk