

**OCTOBER 13, 2021
BUSINESS MEETING**

The Work Meeting of the Hope Township Committee convened at 7:00 P.M. at the Hope Township Municipal Building with the following members present: Mayor Timothy McDonough, Deputy Mayor Christopher John Kruk and Committeeman Terry Urfer. Also present were Municipal Clerk, Robin Keggan, RMC; Deputy Clerk, Zondra Belstra; Don Whitmore, DPW Foreman and Ted Rodman, Township Engineer.

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 the Express Times NJ 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

Payment of Bills: Receipts received for September 2021 \$15,536.97

Bills totaling \$364,342.90 for the month of October. On a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and roll called as follows: Mr. Kruk – yes; Mr. Urfer – yes; Mayor McDonough, bills were authorized to be paid.

Reports:

Tax Collector: \$101,128.47 September 2021 collections \$4,812,548.37 Y-T-D collections.

NW Municipal Court: August 2021 financial report was provided by the Court Administrator. On file in the clerk's office.

Committeeman Urfer: Discussed weight limits on certain municipal roads (i.e., Shiloh Road). Mr. Rodman will look into the criteria that needs to be met in order to impose these.

Deputy Mayor John Kruk: Discussed the two residents (Christin Rusin and Brian Kathenes) being inducted into the Warren County Hall of Fame. A note of appreciation is to be written by the Township Committee to the residents being honored. Also noted that he helped in searching for a missing resident from Belvidere in the area of Jenny Jump/Far View Roads.

Township Engineer Report: Paving on Ridgeway Avenue is set to being paving on 10/26/21. The drainage issue in the vicinity of the paving has been repaired. 25 MPH will be painted on the roads in two places – to be determined by the Township Committee in conjunction with DPW foreman. The cost of painting these is \$430 through Denville Striping. Hissim Road DOT grant was submitted for Section 1 and 2 in order to pave the entire road in 2022. Heller Hill stop bar was painted. Mr. Rodman will deduct the cost of repainting the stop bars and yellow lines from the Tilcon bill for the paving of Heller Hill. 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 approval was given to pay the Tilcon bill that has been outstanding with reference to Heller Hill now that adequate repairs have been made. Mr. Rodman also noted that the DEP has been updating their Cat 1 Streams. Buckaloo Swamp and Beaver Brook now fall into these updates. Mr. Rodman will get a price quote for maps to be made notating this. Mr. Rodman will also obtain a quote for painting the Hope portion (5/10 of a mile) of Union Brick and Old Union Brick as Union Brick is slated to be paved by Blairstown in 2022. This way, the entire road's paving can be accomplished at once. This expense will not be paid for by a DOT grant. The Township will be using the ARP funds secured by the Federal government to re-pave our portion of Union Brick and Old Union Brick.

DPW/Road Dept: Mr. Whitmore read his monthly activity report to the Committee. Items such as Ridgeway Avenue drainage; installation of new fuel pumps; roadside mowing continuation; repair of backhoe and phone calls/paperwork related to purchasing the new DPW pick-up truck and backhoe were all listed as some of the items of activity for the past month.

Ordinances – Introduction/First Reading by Title Only:

2021-09

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-09

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HOPE, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING SECTION 4-1 ENTITLED “PEDDLERS, SOLICITORS AND TRANSIENT MERCHANTS” OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HOPE TO AUTHORIZE THE SOLICITATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS BY CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS ON ROADWAYS

WHEREAS, the Township of Hope wishes to authorize the solicitation of contributions by charitable organizations on Township roadways, as permitted by N.J.S.A. 39:4-60; and

WHEREAS, the Township shall not be liable in any civil action for damages for property damage or personal injury resulting from a motor vehicle accident arising out of or in the course of roadway solicitation by charitable organizations, as provided by N.J.S.A. 59:20-1.1; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee believes such authorization to be in the Township’s best interest;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Hope, in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey, that Section 4-1 is hereby amended and supplemented to include Section 4-1-13 entitled “Solicitations by Charitable Organizations” allowing the solicitation of contributions by charitable donations on Township roadways as follows:

1. The solicitation of contributions by charitable organizations on Township roadways is permitted.
2. Any article, section, paragraph, subsection, clause, or other provision of the Code of the Township of Hope inconsistent with the provisions of this ordinance is hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.
3. If any section, paragraph, subsection, clause, or provision of this ordinance shall be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such adjudication shall apply only to the section, paragraph, subsection, clause, or provision so adjudged, and the remainder of this ordinance shall be deemed valid and effective.
4. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and publication and filing with the Warren County Planning Board, and as otherwise provided for by law.

NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced and passed by the Township Committee on the first reading at a meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Hope, held

October 13, 2021, and will be considered for a second reading and final passage at a regular meeting of the Township Committee to be held on November 10, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., at the Municipal Building, located at 407 Hope-Great Meadows Road, Hope, New Jersey, at which time and place any persons desiring to be heard upon the same will be given the opportunity to be so heard.

On a motion by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and all in favor, this Ordinance was approved for introduction.

2021-10

ORDINANCE # 2021-10

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HOPE, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING THE HOPE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL CODE, CHAPTER 7 SECTION 14 ENTITLED “PARKING PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES ON CERTAIN STREETS” TO INCLUDE THE PROHIBITION ON PARKING ON BOTH SIDES OF COUNTY ROUTE 521, STARTING AT ROUTE 80 NORTH UNTIL TO THE END OF TOWNSHIP PROPERTY

WHEREAS, The Township Committee for the Township of Hope, County of Warren, in the State of New Jersey has determined that parking should be prohibited on both sides of County Route 521, starting at Route 80 North to the end of the Township property; and

WHEREAS, the Hope Township Committee believes that it is in the best interest of the Township to amend its Township Code to ensure that no parking occurs on both sides of the specified County Route.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Hope, Warren County, New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1

Chapter 7 Section 14 of the Hope Township Municipal Code entitled “Parking Prohibited at All Times on Certain Streets” shall be amended to include the prohibition on parking on both sides of County Route 521, also known as Hope Blairstown Road, beginning at Route 80 North and ending at the municipal boundary line with Blairstown Township.

Section 2

This ordinance shall take effect immediately after passage.

Section 3

All ordinances or parts of ordinances of the Township of Hope inconsistent herewith are repealed to the extent of such inconsistency

Section 4

The various parts, sections and clauses of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph, section or clause is adjudged to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced to pass on first reading at a regular meeting of the Committee of the Township of Hope held on October 13, 2021 and ordered published in accordance with the law. Said Ordinance will be considered for final reading and adoption at a regular meeting of the Township Committee to be held on November 10, at 7:00 PM, or as soon thereafter as the Township Committee may hear this Ordinance at the Municipal Building, County Route 611, Hope, New Jersey, at which time all persons interested may appear for or against the passage of said Ordinance.

On a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and all in favor, this Ordinance was approved for introduction.

RESOLUTIONS

HOPE TOWNSHIP, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

#2021-52

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING HOPE TOWNSHIP'S ANNUAL APPLICATION RENEWAL TO THE STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE'S MUNICIPAL PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Hope Township Committee has developed a comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan for the Township, which identifies land meeting the criteria for farmland preservation in accordance with the requirements of the State and County's farmland preservation programs; and

WHEREAS, the pressures from development continue to pose a threat of imminent change of land use from productive agriculture to nonagricultural uses; and

WHEREAS, the State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC) has funding available to assist the Township in acquiring farmland preservation easements, in partnership with the County of Warren via the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant program (Muni-PIG); and

WHEREAS, farmland preservation encourages the survivability of agricultural production, the rural character of the Township and the Township's agrarian history; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee has determined that it is in the best interests of Hope Township to maintain a robust farmland preservation program, to continue to access funds from the SADC's Muni-PIG program, and any other programs that offer funding for farmland preservation, and to acquire as many farmland preservation easements from eligible farms, in partnership with the SADC and the County of Warren, as possible; and

WHEREAS, Hope Township’s Agriculture Advisory Board recommends that the Township continue to participate in the SADC’s Muni-PIG program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hope, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that it hereby authorizes ongoing participation in the SADC’s Municipal Planning Incentive Grant program, as follows:

- 1) The Township approves the Muni-PIG renewal letter with attachments and authorizes the Agricultural Advisory Board and its consultant to submit the renewal application to SADC in advance of the December 15, 2021 deadline and to continue to work with farmland owners in the Township to develop applications to the program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hope that it hereby authorizes the Municipal Clerk, the Agriculture Advisory Board and The Land Conservancy of New Jersey to sign documents and take all actions necessary and appropriate to effectuate the intent and purpose of this Resolution.

Motion: Mr. Urfer

Second: Mr. Kruk

All in Favor

Old Business:

Traffic Study – Ad hoc committee attended the meeting to discuss their upcoming Public Hearing at the Community Center on October 20, 2021 to inform the public of ideas that can be done to help deter the truck traffic coming through the center of Hope. Flyers will be posted on Township bulletin boards to encourage Hope Township residents to attend. This committee also noted that they will be present at the October 27, 2021 WC Commissioner’s meeting to request that trucks be banned from coming through the center of Hope.

New Business:

Old Union Brick Road – two quotes were received for infrastructure work (drainage) that needs to be repaired on Old Union Brick Road. These quotes were received from Drake’s Excavating and All Terrain Excavating. The award was made to the latter business for a cost of \$12,600 on a motion made by Mr. Kruk; seconded by Mr. Urfer and roll called; Mr. Kruk – yes; Mr. Urfer – yes; Mayor McDonough - yes. To be paid out of American Rescue Plan funding (infrastructure repair).

Lake Just-it Road – Don will be organizing a skidsteer and operator to assist him in filling in stone along the road where it is washing out. On a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and roll called: Mr. Kruk – yes; Mr. Urfer – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes it was approved to hire a skidsteer with operator to assist with this. To be paid with American Rescue Plan funds (infrastructure repair).

PB/ZB combining to form LUB – this matter is being taken into consideration due the workloads and cost effectiveness of combining the Boards. Mayor McDonough noted that both Chairmen are on board with combining these two boards.

Social Media – the Municipal Clerk noted that the municipality is looking into forming their own social media page on Facebook in order to re-direct the Hope Township residents and other interested public to an official town page for their information gathering purposes.

Eagle Scout Project – Ryan Marotta was present to discuss with the Township Committee his Eagle Scout project to be started at Swayze Mill. He will be constructing a 16’ long dock anchored by a concrete ramp to make it handicapped accessible. The dock will be taken out of the water during the winter months. There will be access to fishing and kayak launching from the dock. The approximate cost is \$8100 which will be fundraised by Ryan. He hopes to commence work in the spring of 2021 and be finished by fall of 2021. Ryan will contact the Environmental Commission Chairperson for comments and input on this dock. A flotation device will be looked into being added to the dock. The Township Committee fully supports this project. It was noted that any checks for donations should be made payable to Troop 140.

Emergency Management Coordinator – Mayor McDonough’s current three-year term expires 12/31/2021. In order to avoid any gap in term of this position, Mr. Urfer motioned and Mr. Kruk seconded; all in favor – that Mayor McDonough be re-appointed as Hope Township’s Emergency Management Coordinator for another three year term commencing on 01/01/2022 and running through 12/31/2024. Mayor McDonough will write a letter of appointment to Warren County OEM for the Deputy EMCs. These are expected to remain Donald Whitmore and Lori Koonz.

Backhoe – The municipality is in desperate need of a new backhoe. Mr. Whitmore has worked to repair the current one for many days of late. The parts are getting harder and harder to come by as this machine is out-of-date. Options for purchase are being looked into and an Ordinance should be on the next agenda for authorization to purchase. However, the clerk was directed to write a letter of commitment to PowerCo in order to secure the backhoe that Mr. Whitmore was able to secure at \$114,600. The Township Committee is awaiting further guidance regarding ARP funds and hopeful that we may use monies from those funds to help purchase this equipment.

Members of Public:

Ryan Marotta – Eagle Scout Project (see new business).

One Blair Street – resident approached the Committee regarding a septic project that has been ongoing on her property. The Committee advised her that this was an improper venue for her to be before. This project is under the sole jurisdiction of the Warren County Health Department. She was advised to seek an attorney for the work she is undertaking.

525 Blirstown Road- several residents of Hope Township were present to receive an update from the Committee as well as inquire of the Committee what the next steps will be in dealing with this situation. The Committee advised several outside agencies (WCHD, DEP, etc.) are involved, as well as our Zoning Official. There is an upcoming court date for a summons issued by the Zoning Official. Mayor McDonough noted that he has an upcoming call with DEP regarding this issue.

Monica Sobon – noted that the path around Swayze Mill Lake is being washed out and asked what can be done to help abate that issue. It was noted that DEP has certain criteria for what can be put there (proximity to water). Mr. Whitmore will look into this further.

Approval of Minutes: The September 8, 2021 and September 22, 2021 meeting minutes were approved on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk. All in favor.

A motion was made by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Mr. Kruk and carried to adopt the Resolution to go into Closed Session at 9:03 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. Potential Litigation
 - B. Personnel

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: 9:03 PM

Present: Committeeman Kruk, Committeeman Urfer, Mayor McDonough, Zondra Belstra, Deputy Clerk.

Also Present: Robin Keggan, Municipal Clerk

Time Out: 9:16 PM

A motion made by Committeeman Urfer, seconded by Committeeman Kruk and carried to return to regular session. No Official Action was taken.

Motion was made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and all in favor to re-open the meeting to the public at 9:17 p.m.

Seeing there was no other business for tonight, this meeting of the Hope Township Committee was adjourned at 9:17 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Keggan, RMC
Municipal Clerk