

**SEPTEMBER 13, 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; Patti Whitmore, Events Coordinator and Donald Whitmore, DPW Foreman. Guests present were Michael Selvaggi, Esq., Township Attorney; Stefanie Williams, Township Engineer; Denis Keenan, Township Engineer and Kaitlin Eamigh, BEC Administrator.

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. Kruk- present

Mr. Urfer – present

Mayor McDonough- present

PUBLIC COMMENT (ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA)

Kaleidoscope Productions: Tina Ritchie was present to give the Committee an update on the productions and other activities that she has been involved in since moving into the Thomas Planer Hall (Grange) building. She presented a power point showcasing some of the plays that she has produced. Many members of the Kaleidoscope Production family were in the audience as well. She requested some improvements/repairs to the building and the Committee was on board with making same (i.e., replacing doors and installing wi-fi). Mrs. Ritchie will be installing the wi-fi on her own, and the Township will be making the repair/replacement to the doors. Mr. Urfer noted that she should get him a “wish list” of items she’d like to see done and he will try to help obtain a grant for same.

Payment of Bills: Bills in the amount of \$441,051.17 were approved, on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and roll called: Mr. Kruk yes; Mr. Urfer yes; Mayor McDonough - yes.

TOWNSHIP PROFESSIONALS:

Michael Selvaggi, Esq.: Mr. Selvaggi spoke about the noise ordinance that the Township is in the process of updating with his input (see “Ordinances” below). He also spoke about the Sunshine Law so that the public and the Township Committee were aware of the “dos” and “dents” of what it means. The Sunshine Law prohibits the majority of a government from holding meetings and discussions whereby Official Action or decisions are being made. However, this does not mean that the Township Committee is barred from being at a location together as long as no official actions/decisions are made.

A quick update on 525 Blairstown road and pending litigation was given.

Discussion regarding a problematic home on Ridgeway Avenue who has been sent multiple letters by the Zoning Official to clean up their property was had. It was determined that the Zoning Official should now follow through with a summons given that the property owners have been sent multiple letters and were given ample time to follow through with the cleanup that needs to be done.

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 6:42 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:

PENDING LITIGATION

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: 6:42 PM

Present: Committeeman Kruk, Deputy Mayor Urfer, Mayor McDonough, Michael Selvaggi, Esq.

Also Present: Robin Keggan, Municipal Clerk

Discussion took place regarding Pending Litigation.

Time Out: 6:45 PM

A motion made by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Committeeman Kruk and carried to return to regular session. No Official Actions were taken.

Township Engineers: Stefanie Williams and Denis Keenan were in attendance to discuss the stormwater ordinance work that will need to be put in place per DEP mandates that are in place. A proposal was presented to the Committee on the overall cost of all of this work to the Township (in the neighborhood of \$202,000 initially, with an approximate \$79,000 per year afterwards). The Committee authorized Mr. Keenan to set up a meeting with the Highlands to discuss grants that are available to help defray the costs to the municipality. There is also a \$75,000 grant offered by the State, of which we have already received \$25,000 to begin this work. The other \$50,000 is available to be disbursed to the Township once certain benchmarks are met. Mr. Whitmore will be very closely involved in all of this work as well.

Reports:

DPW - No report, Mr. Whitmore was attending a County OEM meeting. However, Mr. Urfer asked that it be noted in the minutes that Mr. Whitmore and Mr. Miller did an outstanding job with the paving work that was recently completed on Ridgeway Avenue.

Tax Collector: \$1,720,003.76 collected for month ending 8/31/2023. \$5,072,527.98 Y-T-D.

Environmental Commission: Gave an update on the garden being put in at Swayze Mill Park; the rain garden was dedicated on September 6, 2023; reported on the Environmental Commission's Hope Township Picnic involvement; vacancy on the Environmental Commission.

Mayor Tim McDonough: Gave an update on the truck traffic issue that the Committee has been working on. Noted that the County Commissioners put together a Resolution and sent it to the DOT for their review and comments. The DOT made their revisions and sent it back to the County Commissioners, who have forwarded it to their legal counsel for review. They are hopeful it will be on the October 2023 agenda for approval.

Deputy Mayor Terry Urfer: Requested that the clerk write up a Standard Operating Procedure regarding employees taking vacation time.

Committeeman John Kruk: Noted that the fire permit the Township obtained is good through October, so if there is any more brush that needs to be burned, should schedule another date to do so. Also noted that Camp Hope Lane needs to be swept since it was oil and stoned to get rid of any loose stone that is accruing on the roadside.

Events Coordinator: Mrs. Whitmore updated the Committee on several items. The picnic had total donations of \$4,100 from various businesses. Even though it was moved to the school this year, it still was a great event. Ms. Whitmore noted that Halloween is well underway and that she has booked a trip to Longwood Gardens on November 20, 2023 that includes the 55 Plus Club.

Zoning Officer: Mr. Boesze spoke to the Committee about an email received for placement of power supply boxes in the utility right-of-ways in the municipality (3 locations proposed – not known at this time however). The Committee requested that once Mr. Boesze knows where these three locations will be, he let the clerk know so that she can get the information to Mr. Kruk and Mr. Whitmore for approvals on the locations chosen.

RESOLUTIONS:

TOWNSHIP OF HOPE COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION AWARDING CONTRACT TO CHARLES MANN GENERAL CONTRACTING FOR WORK ON THE HOPE TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER RESOLUTION NO. 2023-45

WHEREAS, Hope Township has secured grant funding in the amount of \$112,500.00 (County Cost Sharing), awarded from the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund by the Warren County Commissioners on November 24, 2020, with the municipality's portion being \$37,500.00 for a total amount of \$150,000.00; and,

WHEREAS, Hope Township has secured additional grant funding in the amount of \$99,750.00 (County Cost Sharing) from the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund by the Warren County Commissioners on November 23, 2022, with \$33,250.00 being the municipality's portion for a total amount of \$133,000.00.

WHEREAS, a request for bidders' proposals was advertised in the New Jersey Herald with an advertised bid opening date of May 5, 2022. No bidders were successful in being awarded the contract as all the bids came in over budget. A re-bid was advertised in the New Jersey Herald with an advertised bid opening date of May 4, 2023. One bid was secured from Charles Mann General Contracting, Inc. and after some re-work with subcontractors and window vendors, the award was made to Charles Mann General Contracting, Inc. at the Township Committee meeting held on August 9, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hope that the contract for the Hope Township Community Center windows project which was secured with two separate grants as stated above, **BE** and is hereby **AWARDED** to **CHARLES MANN GENERAL CONTRACTING, INC.** in the amount of **\$254,750.00**.

Motion: Mr. Urfer Second: Mr. Kruk
Roll Call: Mr. Urfer – yes Mr. Kruk – yes Mayor McDonough - yes

**TOWNSHIP OF HOPE
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION 2023-46
RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE INSERTION OF SPECIAL ITEMS OF REVENUE IN
THE 2023 BUDGET PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87
(CHAPTER 159, P.L. 1948)**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item(s) of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount, thereof, was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and,

WHEREAS, the director may also approve the insertion of any item of appropriation for equal amount.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township Hope, County of Warren, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of items of revenue in the budget of the year as follows:

CHPP 2023 Round 2 Grant – Historic Preservation Commission \$ 1,803.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that like sum of \$1,803.00 is hereby appropriated under the caption “FY2023 CHPP Round 2 Grant- HPC”.

Motion: Mr. Urfer
Second: Mr. Kruk
Roll Call: Mr. Kruk – yes Mr. Urfer – yes Mayor McDonough - yes

**HOPE TOWNSHIP, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
SPECIAL EMERGENCY RESOLUTION – NJS 4A:4-53, 54, 55.1 AND 55.13
RESOLUTION 2023-47
(3- year Special Emergencies)**

WHEREAS, it has been found necessary to make an Emergency Appropriation to meet certain extraordinary expenses incurred, or to be incurred, by storm damage to municipal roads resulting from flooding on July 14th and July 15th; and,

WHEREAS, NJS40A:55.13 provides that it shall be lawful to make such appropriation, which appropriation and/or the “special emergency notes” issued to finance the same shall be provided for in succeeding annual budgets by the inclusion of an appropriation of at least one-third of the amount authorized pursuant to this act.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, (by not less than two- thirds of all governing body members affirmatively concurring) that in accordance with the provisions of NJS 40A:4-55:

1. An emergency appropriation is hereby made for “Streets and Roads O/E” “Storm Damage – Flood” in the total amount of \$250,000.00.
2. That the emergency appropriation shall be provided for in the budgets of the next succeeding years by inclusion of not less than \$83,334.00 (must be at least one-third of the total amount.

3. That an “emergency note”, not in excess of the amount authorized pursuant to law, be provided.
4. That such note shall be executed by Kathleen Reinalda, Chief Financial Officer and Timothy McDonough, Mayor.
5. That said note shall be dated September 2023, may be renewed from time to time provided that such note and any renewals shall mature and be paid in the amount of not less than one-third of the total amount appropriated by this resolution in each year after the authorization.
6. That the statement required by the Local Finance Board has been filed with the Clerk and a copy will be transmitted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.
7. The two (2) certified copies of this resolution will be filed the Director of the Division of Local Government Services; however; no approval is required from the Division.

Motion: Mr. Urfer

Second: Mr. Kruk

ROLL CALL: Mr. Kruk: Yes

Mr. Urfer: Yes

Mayor McDonough: Yes

ORDINANCES:

Updates to the Township’s noise ordinance were discussed with Michael Selvaggi, Esq. He again noted the difficulty in policing the ordinance without our own police force and it is hard to enforce due to subjective standards. He stated the ultimate enforcement comes down to the public who needs to file a complaint with the NW Municipal Court. The hope that once the ordinance is updated with clear and concise language, people will do the right thing.

Unfinished Business:

Salt Shed - No discussion.

New Business:

Approval for work at the Hope Township Elementary School ballfield – the Committee approved paying half of the tilling work that was done by Drake’s Landscaping on the ballfields at the school. The school will be paying the other half. Motioned by Mr. Ufer, seconded by Mr. Kruk – roll called: Mr. Kruk – yes; Mr. Urfer – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes.

Kaitlin Eamigh – discussed her abilities as a grant writer to the Township Committee. Explained the processes/timelines of the work involved. Will be sending a proposal to the clerk for review and further discussion.

HVFD – Raffle Nos. 2023-08 and 2023-09 were approved on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mr. Kruk and roll called: Mr. Kruk – yes; Mr. Urfer – yes; Mayor McDonough – yes.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the August 9, 2023 Business meeting were approved on a motion made by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Mr. Kruk. All in favor.

Mr. Kruk left the meeting at 8:10.

Public Participation:

Ann Rhinesmith – updated the Township Committee on the White Township Planning Board meeting re: the warehouses that she was in attendance at.

Sherry Shaw – questioned the work being done around her house by the County on the roadways. The clerk's office will look into it and get back to the Committee for a response to her.

Seeing there was no other business for tonight, this meeting of the Hope Township Committee was adjourned at 8:19 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Urfer; seconded by Mayor McDonough. Motion carried.

Robin L. Keggan, RMC
Municipal Clerk