

**TOWNSHIP OF HARDWICK
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

OPENING ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jacksic at 6:00 pm. Present was Deputy Mayor Meuse and Committeeman Lovell. Also, present were DPW Supervisor Campbell, Township Attorney Igor Bykov, and Municipal Clerk Shippis.

FLAG SALUTE:

SUNSHINE STATEMENT:

“Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, P.L. 1975, Ch. 231 setting forth the time, date, place, and purpose of this Public Meeting through a legal notice published in New Jersey Herald and The Express times following the Township’s Annual Reorganization Meeting at which time the 2024 meeting schedule was adopted.”.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse and carried to go into Executive session at 6:01 pm. 2024-23 Resolution Authorizing Executive Session.

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 Hardwick, 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

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.

Motion made by Meuse, second by Jacksic and carried to close Executive Session at 7:03 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment

DEPARTMENT REPORT:

DPW Supervisor Campbell reported that the municipal building has been painted and the bankers window has been installed.

Fire Tower Bob Wolff reported that the fire tower was staffed for the recent storm. The Stillwater Fire Department was present and read the call outs. Knowlton Township Fire Department was present and read the call outs.

MINUTES:

January 2, 2024, Reorganization Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse and carried to approve the January 2, 2024, reorganization minutes.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. 2024-24 – Refund of 2024 Tax Overpayment (Block 503 Lot 6.01).

WHEREAS, the assessment of the following property was reduced to zero in 2024 by the Tax Assessor thereby creating an overpayment of taxes paid for 2024,

	2024 Taxes	2024 Total Paid	Overpayment
Block 503 Lot 6.01 Q0336	\$0.00	\$8.59	\$8.59
Millbrook-Stillwater Road			
Tharaud, Barry c/o Louise Brasher			

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of Hardwick Township that the Municipal Finance Officer is hereby authorized to issue a refund check to:

Block	503 Lot 6.01 Q0336
Name	Tharaud, Barry c/o Louise Brasher
Address	1261 Greensboro Road
Address	Birmingham, AL 35208
Amount	\$8.59

2. 2024-25-Redemption of Certification of Sale No. 2023-002 (Block 502, Lot 3.02).

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector of Hardwick Township has been paid the amount necessary to redeem with interest calculated in accordance with the New Jersey Statues and said payment has been deposited in the current account of Hardwick Township on lands known on the Tax Maps and in the Tax Duplicate as the following:

Block 502, Lot 3.02
Certificate Number 2023-002
Assessed to: Tabor, Joel & Joan
11 Millbrook-Stillwater Road
Hardwick, NJ 07825

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of Hardwick Township that the Municipal Finance Officer is hereby authorized to issue checks for \$10,906.28 (lien) and \$15,000.00 (premium) payable to lien holder:

PRO CAP 8 FBO FIRSTRUST BANK
PO Box 774
Fort Washington, PA 19034-0774

and that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to cancel said lien from records and forward cancelled Tax Sale Certificate to redeeming party.

Information for Finance Officer

Tax Cert. Amount		2432.05
Subsequent Payment		8030.33
*Redemption Fee		48.64
*interest on certificate	0.00	
*interest on subsequent		333.26
Other fees		62.00
Premium		15000.00
Total to lien holder		25906.28
*to be reported on 1099	381.90	

3. 2024-26 Approving Payment of Vouchers.

WHEREAS all claims as reviewed and listed on the attached bill list are approved as reasonable and proper claims against the Township of Hardwick to be paid from its current fund; and

WHEREAS, the CFO has certified that funds are available to pay such claims.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Hardwick, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that the bills on the attached bill listed are authorized to be paid.

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse, approved by roll call vote: Lovell—yes, Meuse—yes, Jacksic—yes, to approve the February 21, 2024, consent agenda.
UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Veda Farm cannabis cultivation.

Veda Farms were present and request an amendment to the LD Zone to permit cannabis cultivation and manufacturing - Limited to one awardee per license type.

Attorney Bykov provided the committee with a memo which addressed several questions and concerns that they had from the last month's meeting about cannabis cultivation and manufacturing and encouraged the committee to review the memo. Attorney Bykov said that he also encouraged the committee to obtain input from the township planner and township engineer.

Committeeman Lovell spoke about his concerns which included lighting, water consumption, and future owners of this property.

Deputy Mayor Meuse expressed that it is the committee's duty to protect the residents and to listen to the township legal professionals on the steps that need to be done if the committee were to move forward.

Mayor Jacksic also expressed concern about the aquifer, power grid, odor, and security.

Attorney Bykov provided the committee with the steps that would need to be made if Veda Farms did continue with the purchase of the property.

Spring Valley Rd update.

County DPW Director Hammer reported to Mayor Jacksic that the county is working on tree clearing which will be completed in April.

RAVE text update.

No update currently.

Township Signs.

Stencils have been ordered.

Cell Tower Lease.

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse and carried to have Attorney Bykov send a letter to Senator O'Scanlon, FSD Enterprises LLC, Gaelic Communications LLC with respect to the cell tower lease that was provided to the committee.

Tree Removal Sample Ordinance.

Attorney Bykov was able to speak to a representative of the New Jersey Department of Environment Protection and the tree removal ordinance does not have to be word for word and can be modified if the state's provisions are included.

Budget Workshop Meeting Date

Committeeman Lovell will work with the auditors to get a date together.

NEW BUSINESS:

Zone Change Request Policy

Committeeman Lovell explained that he would like to see a formal request policy for a zone change which may never be used but would be on record if the need arose. Attorney Bykov agreed to work on an ordinance for an upcoming meeting.

Box Container Prohibition.

Committeeman Lovell would like to have restrictions placed on box containers ex: painting the container.

Clean Communities.

Committeeman Lovell had a resident that would like to be on the clean communities committee. Discussion took place on bringing back clean communities' day.

Newsletter.

Discussion took place regarding the feasibility of sending out postcards for upcoming events.

Calendar Events.

A discussion took place on making some events the same day every year ex. Hardwick Day. Clerk Shipp stated that the Shredding Event will be May 11, 2024, from noon- 3 pm.

Stormwater Ordinance.

This ordinance was provided to the committee from Township Engineer Williams for review and will be discussed at the next meeting.

Draft Resolution Citing Safety Issues within the I-80/611 Delaware Water Gap Corridor, Requestion Agencies Make Immediate Short Term I-80 S- Curve Area Safety Improvements and Immediately initiate the Problem Statement/Study Requested in 2020.

The committee reviewed the resolution prior to the meeting and agreed to pass it. Resolution 2024-27 Resolution Citing Safety Issues within the I-80/611 Delaware Water Gap Corridor, Requestion Agencies Make Immediate Short Term I-80 S- Curve Area Safety Improvements and Immediately initiate the Problem Statement/Study Requested in 2020.

Motion made by Lovell, second by Jacksic and carried to approve resolution 2024-27. Open Space and Recreational Plan.

The Open Space and Recreational Plan were presented with the plan. The committee agreed to have the Land Use Board move forward on adoption of the plan.

CORRESPONDENCE:

No Correspondence

TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY:

Attorney Bykov provided an update on the Anderson Cul-de-sac matter.

TOWNSHIP CLERK:

Clerk Shipp stated that she will post a flyer on the township website for the shredding event as the time gets closer.

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Committeeman Lovell – No report

Deputy Mayor Lovell – No report

Mayor Jacksic-No report

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Smrita Choubey from Veda Farms thanked the committee for addressing their concerns and is interested in moving forward in the purchasing of the property. Ms. Choubey stated that some of the concerns are addressed in her report and is willing to discuss them with the committee further.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kristin Shipps, RMC