

**TOWNSHIP OF HARDWICK
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 18, 2024**

OPENING ROLL CALL:

Mayor Jacksic called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Deputy Mayor Meuse and Committeeman Lovell were present. Also present were DPW Supervisor Campbell, Township Attorney Igor Bykov, and Municipal Clerk Shipps.

FLAG SALUTE: Mayor Jacksic led the 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 to go Into Executive Session at 6:04 pm.

2024-73- 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. Land Acquisition
 - B. 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.

Motion made by Meuse, second by Lovell, and carried to come out of Executive Session at 7:13 p.m.

Township Attorney Bykov stated that the Hardwick Township Committee emerged from their Executive Session at 7:13 pm where three matters were discussed. One about land acquisition, one pertaining to contract negotiations, and the final matter regarding affordable housing. No

action was taken at this time. Minutes of any action will be available at such times as the committee determines there is no harm to the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tara Mezzanotte reported that the I-80 rockfall Mitigation project has been delayed until 2026 and thanked the committee for their efforts in delaying the project.

DEPARTMENT REPORT:

DPW Supervisor Campbell reported that the roof and shed have been completed.

Bob Wolff reported that the fire tower was up and running every month with the exception of January. Mr. Wolff reported that the Stillwater Fire Company delivered 13 dinners to Hardwick residents on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving.

MINUTES:

October 16, 2024, Executive Session Meeting Minutes.

October 16, 2024, Public Session Meeting Minutes.

November 13, 2024, Executive Session Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2024, Public Session Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse, and carried to approve the above minutes.

ORDINANCE:

Public Hearing, Adoption:

2024-07 Ordinance of the Township of Hardwick County of Warren, State of New Jersey Amending and Supplementing the Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual of the Township of Hardwick Amending the Employee Evaluation Policy and the Employee Evaluation Form.

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse, and carried to open the public hearing.

Denise Hendershot asked where the form was. Mayor Jacksic reported that it is in the employee manual.

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Hardwick, County of Warren, State of New Jersey believes that the Employee Evaluation Policy and the Employee Evaluation Form, provided in Appendix A of the Township's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, require modifications; and

WHEREAS, the modifications made to the Employee Evaluation Policy and the Employee Evaluation Form will allow Township employees to be properly compensated for the performance of their assigned responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the amended Employee Evaluation Policy and the Employee Evaluation Form will allow for a more comprehensive evaluation of municipal personnel and will reward extraordinary performance of one's duties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hardwick, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that the Employee Evaluation Policy of the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual of the Township of Hardwick be amended and supplemented and that the Employee Evaluation Form be removed and replaced in its entirety as follows:

SECTION I:

Additions to this Section shall be delineated by underlined text thusly.

EMPLOYEE EVALUATION POLICY (SEE APPENDIX A FOR COPY OF ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW STANDARDS)

The Employee Evaluation Form, provided by Appendix A of Section Four of the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual of the Township of Hardwick be amended and supplemented to include the following language under the Employee Evaluation Policy, as well as including the Employee Evaluation Form as follows:

The Director of the Department of Public Works shall complete a written evaluation annually for each employee of the department. The Township Committee shall complete a written evaluation of the Director. The completed evaluation form shall be reviewed with the impacted employee by the supervisor. The employee shall acknowledge receipt thereof and may provide his/her written commentary to be attached to the evaluation. The completed form(s) shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. The authorized evaluation for use shall be attached to the manual.

The Township and its personnel understand that annual evaluations shall be used to determine eligibility for annual salary adjustments.

The Township and its personnel further understand that an employee may be subject to quarterly or semi-annual reviews to chart and/or catalogue performance improvements if/when an annual performance evaluation does not meet the necessary expectations. All parties further understand that continued employment with the Township is contingent upon meeting the necessary performance-based expectations.

[. . .]

SECTION II:

The Employee Evaluation Form: Appendix A is hereby removed in its entirety and is replaced with the following:

<u>I. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION</u>		
<u>Employee Name</u>		<u>Job Title</u>
<u>Supervisor/Reviewer</u>		<u>Review Period</u> From: / / To: / /
<u>II. CORE VALUES AND OBJECTIVES</u>		
<u>PERFORMANCE CATEGORY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>COMMENTS AND EXAMPLES</u>
<u>Quality of Work:</u> <u>Work is completed accurately (few or no errors), efficiently and within deadlines with minimal supervision</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Care for, Maintenance, Upkeep of Tools and/or Equipment</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u>	

<u>Demonstrates care for the tools and/or equipment and takes necessary steps to preserve the life of the tool and/or equipment</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Attendance & Punctuality:</u> <u>Reports for work on time, provides advance notice of need for absence</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Reliability / Dependability:</u> <u>Consistently performs at a high level; manages time and workload effectively to meet responsibilities</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Communication Skills:</u> <u>Written and oral communications are clear, organized and effective; listens and comprehends well</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Judgment & Decision-Making:</u> <u>Makes thoughtful, well-reasoned decisions; exercises good judgment, resourcefulness and creativity in problem-solving</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Initiative & Flexibility:</u> <u>Demonstrates initiative, often seeking out additional responsibility; identifies problems and solutions; thrives on new challenges and adjusts to unexpected changes</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Cooperation & Teamwork:</u> <u>Respectful of colleagues when working with others and makes valuable contributions to help the group achieve its goals</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>III. JOB-SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE CRITERIA</u>		
<u>PERFORMANCE CATEGORY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>COMMENTS AND EXAMPLES</u>
<u>Knowledge of Position:</u> <u>Possesses required skills, knowledge, and ability to competently perform the job</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
<u>Training & Development:</u> <u>Continually seeks ways to strengthen performance and</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u>	

<u>regularly monitors new developments in field of work</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
IV. <u>PERFORMANCE GOALS</u>		
<u>Set objectives and outline steps to improve in problem areas or further employee development.</u>		
V. <u>OVERALL RATING</u>		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <u>Employee consistently performs at a high level that exceeds expectations.</u> <u>Eligible for a bonus in excess of standard annual salary adjustment</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</u> <u>Employee satisfies all essential job requirements; may exceed expectations periodically; demonstrates likelihood of eventually exceeding expectations</u> <u>Eligible for standard annual salary adjustment</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Needs Improvement</u> <u>Employee consistently performs below required standards/expectations for the position; training or other action is necessary to correct performance</u> <u>Annual salary adjustment to be determined</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u> <u>Employee is unable or unwilling to perform required duties according to company standards; immediate improvement must be demonstrated</u> <u>Subject to possible termination of employment</u>		
<u>Comment on the Employee's overall performance.</u>		
VI. <u>EMPLOYEE COMMENTS (OPTIONAL)</u>		
<u>Set objectives and outline steps to improve in problem areas or further employee development.</u>		

VII. <u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</u>	
<u>I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to discuss this performance evaluation with my manager / supervisor and I have received a copy of this evaluation.</u>	
<u>Employee Signature:</u>	<u>Date:</u>

SECTION III: Severability:

Each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase of this Ordinance is declared to be an independent section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase, and finding or holding of any such portion of this Ordinance to be unconstitutional, void, or ineffective for any cause or reason shall not affect any other portion of this Ordinance.

SECTION IV: Repealer.

Any ordinances or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION V: Effective Date:

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and any publication as may be required by law.

Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse and carried to close the public hearing.
Motion made by Lovell, second by Meuse and approved by roll call vote: Lovell-yes,
Meuse—yes, Jacksic—yes for adoption of Ordinance 2024-07.

Consent Agenda:

1. 2024-74 Approval of the Execution of a Shared Services Agreement with the Town of Newton to Provide Animal Control Services for Calendar Year 2025.
WHEREAS the Township of Hardwick wishes to obtain animal control services from the Town of Newton and;

WHEREAS the Town of Newton is willing to enter into a Shared Services Agreement with Hardwick to provide the requested animal control services to Hardwick: and

WHEREAS the parties desire to enter into a Shared Services Agreement, a copy of which is attached, which sets forth the terms and conditions of the shared animal control services for the period commencing January 1, 2025, through and including December 21, 2025.

WHEREAS these types of shared services are just what the State of New Jersey envisions when it seeks to encourage the same through the uniform Shared Services and Consolidation Act N.J.S.A 40A:65-1 et seq;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Hardwick, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, do hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute a Shared Services Agreement with the Town of Newton for Animal Control services.

2. 2024-75 Resolution to Appoint Seasonal Part-Time DPW Workers.

WHEREAS, the Hardwick Department of Public Works is in need of seasonal part-time Department of Public Works (DPW) worker for the winter of 2024/2025 at the rate of \$26 per hour; and

WHEREAS, Ed Rosenbersh meets the qualifications to fill the positions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hardwick, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that Ed Rosenbersh be appointed as a part-time emergency driver.

3. 2024-76 Resolution Supporting the Foodshed Alliance's Paulins Kill National Wild and Scenic River Study Reconnaissance.

WHEREAS, the Paulins Kill flows for approximately 4.5 miles through Hardwick Township in Warren County, beginning at Stillwater Township in Sussex County (river mile 16.68) and extending to Blairstown Township in Warren County (river mile 11.42). It largely serves as the eastern municipal border to Frelinghuysen Township in Warren County and features one notable tributary with a confluence at river mile 13.64: the 1.3-mile Unnamed White Lake Tributary; and

WHEREAS, there are three notable segments of tributaries in Hardwick Township that flow into Blairstown, where their confluences with the Paulins Kill are located: 3.5 miles of Hardwick's Jacksonburg Creek, 5.6 miles of Hardwick's Blair Creek, and 0.84 miles of Hardwick's Unnamed Hardwick Meadows Creek; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Expansion Project Team (the "Project Team") in partnership with the Foodshed Alliance and their Paulins Kill Watershed Community, began evaluating potential Wild and Scenic River eligibility and suitability for the Paulins Kill, the second largest tributary to the Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River, to be potentially included in the existing Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Designation; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton Township, Blairstown Township, and Hardwick Township supported the inclusion of the portions of the Paulins Kill and associated tributaries running through their municipalities in such designation and adopted the following resolutions in support:

- Knowlton Township Resolution No. 2023-74, adopted on September 11, 2023
- Blairstown Township Resolution No. 2023-101, adopted on November 22, 2023
- Hardwick Township Resolution No. 2023-63, adopted on October 18, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Project Team researched Warren County’s Paulins Kill resources and identified the following potential Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) (as defined in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act) in the Knowlton, Blairstown and Hardwick Paulins Kill Segment:

- Trout production waters, which are afforded a C1 designation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:9B-1.4.
- Paulins Kill Valley Trail, which is historic and recreational value and is managed by NJDEP as part of the Kittatinny Valley State Park
- Habitat for, and known presence of, multiple state and federal threatened and endangered plants and animals
- Unique geological features, such as White Lake’s marl deposits
- Multiple National Register of Historic Places Listed & Eligible Districts and Properties, such as the Blairstown Historic District and Footbridge; and

WHEREAS, in January 2024, with the support of the Project Team, the Foodshed Alliance (a 501(c)(3) organization) announced its intention to instead initiate the reconnaissance process to pursue full independent National Wild and Scenic River designation for the entire Paulins Kill and its associated tributaries; and

WHEREAS, the Foodshed Alliance felt compelled to champion this project as part of its ongoing commitment to fostering a healthy, resilient foodshed that supports farmers, nourishes people, respects the land, and strengthens communities; and

WHEREAS, this effort aims to protect and enhance the unique values of the Paulins Kill and associated tributaries, as well as to provide local communities with the many benefits that such national recognition and designation can offer; and

WHEREAS, the National Park Service (NPS) publication: “Partnership Wild and Scenic River – A Primer”, (a copy of which is on file with the Township Clerk) explains that a designated Wild and Scenic River (“WSR”) must meet the following requirements:

1. Be “free-flowing,” which means it must exist or flow “in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway.” However, “the existence of low dams, diversion works, or other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion ... shall not automatically bar its consideration”.
2. Have at least one ORV: outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values (ORVs) that are located in the river or on its shorelands, contribute to the functioning of the river ecosystem, and / or owe their location or existence to the presence of the river.
3. Local support to create a local Management Council usually comprised of local municipal, county and state partner representatives with a national partner representatives liaison responsible to create a Memorandum of Understanding, and to develop and implement the Comprehensive Management Plan Local support for the

designation, as expressed by a municipal resolution of the municipal governing body, A501(c)(3) organization, such as the Foodshed Alliance, that can establish a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service to pass through funds appropriated annually for the Partnership Wild and Scenic River Program; and

WHEREAS, Partnership WSR designation does not allow for federal land acquisition, cannot change local zoning ordinances and state laws, and cannot extinguish existing landowner rights; and

WHEREAS, the reconnaissance team used NJDEP's GeoWeb and Northeast Regional Habitat Conservation Priorities GIS mapping to review over twenty three miles of Hardwick Township's Paulins Kill and associated tributaries, identifying numerous notable potential ORVs at the nation, regional or state level including

- Extremely high ecological values associated with climate resilience, biodiversity, habitats for or known presence of multiple threatened and endangered plants and animals some globally rare and state threatened
- Geologically unique features including a large karst lake with remarkable marl deposits and adjacent forested limestone ridges with sinkhole ponds
- The historically significant National Register of Historic Places listed Vass Homestead and several additional culturally significant locations
- Recreationally notable resources such as the Paulins Kill Valley Trail (which is co-aligned with the September 11th National Memorial Trail); locations for hunting, fishing, hiking, boating and others; and

WHEREAS, the Project Team also determined Hardwick Township demonstrates its commitment to protecting and enhancing its rural and country character and natural resources and other values associated with the Paulins Kill, which are factors that help determine the river's suitability and eligibility for WSR designation, as evidenced by points presented on Hardwick Township's website such as:

- Since colonial times, Hardwick has remained primarily a rural agricultural area
- Forward looking Master and Open Space Planning have allowed the Township to retain its essential rural character while preserving its unique environmental systems, abundant wildlife and historical sites.
- In the most densely populated state, Hardwick has been able to maintain its unique rural character and avoid the overdevelopment that has occurred in other parts of New Jersey.
- Overall, 75% of Hardwick is in some form of preservation, which has allowed the town to retain its essential rural character
- Because of the natural beauty and scenic vistas, there are numerous opportunities year-round to enjoy nature and outdoor recreation activities, such as hiking, boating, fishing, birding, photography, cross country skiing and cycling.
- many sites of historical interest, including Millbrook Village, the historic Vass property, White Lake, the Pahaquarry Copper Mines, Spring Valley Christian Church and Cemetery, Old Mine Road and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area that serves as its western border on the Delaware River; and

WHEREAS Hardwick Township has demonstrated an appreciation for the high value of protecting camps, open space, farmland, and historic properties, all dependent on a healthy watershed by supporting the preservation of over 3000 acres secured through initiatives with Warren County, the Ridge and Valley Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy-NJ, the Natural Land Trust, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, with an extensive trail system with over nine trailheads, lakes streams and creeks, and a township managed historic site; and

WHEREAS much of this preserved land is part of The Nature Conservancy's Bobcat Alley, an ambitious initiative to build a protected wildlife corridor that provides state-endangered bobcats and other wildlife space to move between the Kittatinny and Highlands ridges within New Jersey's Appalachian Mountains

WHEREAS, it is understood, as explained by the Project Team, that this is a multi-year educational community partnership process, that at this time includes the follow plans:

- 1) The results of the municipal resolution reconnaissance support outreach effort phase will be shared with each municipality to consider a second resolution, one that demonstrates support for seeking a Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Study Bill.
- 2) The complete results of the municipal resolution outreach efforts, which will include the reconnaissance and bill support resolutions, shall be presented to each county and their state representatives seeking support for a Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Study Bill.
- 3) A final package that combines the support resolutions and legislator letters shall be provided to our Congressional Representatives for next steps.
- 4) If the Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Study Bill is signed into law, it would appropriate federal funds to establish a Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Task Force/Management Council to develop a Paulins Kill Management Plan, review and finalize eligibility and suitability requirements, and develop a formal NPS Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Study Report that must be completed within three years.
- 5) The NPS Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Study Report is required for congressional representatives to seek an amendment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, that would establish the Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic Rivers Act designating the eligible and suitable segments of the Paulins Kill and associated tributaries as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Township of Hardwick, supports the reconnaissance phase of the Paulins Kill National Wild and Scenic River Project as described herein with the goal of seeking a full Congressional Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic Study Bill.

4. 2024-77 Authorizing the Transfer of Funds.

WHEREAS, NJSA 40A:4-58 permits transfers between current year budget appropriations during the last two months of the municipal fiscal year; and;

WHEREAS, there are certain Budget Year 2024 appropriations that require transfers to meet the charges and obligations that will be incurred by the end of this fiscal year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the transfer below is hereby authorized by a 2/3 vote of the full Governing Body

Transfer From:

Streets and Roads – Other Expenses	<u>\$18,840.00</u>
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Transfer To:

Audit Services	\$ 3,000.00
Planning Board O/E	\$ 840.00
Utilities – Electric	\$ 2,000.00
Streets and Roads S/W	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
	<u>\$10,840.00</u>

5. 2024-78 Transfer of 2023 Budget Appropriations.

WHEREAS, NJSA 40A:4-59 permits appropriation transfers during the first 3 months of the succeeding year; and;

WHEREAS, there are certain appropriations requiring transfers of 2023 appropriation reserves:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, confirmation 2/3 of the full

Transfer From:

Streets and Roads O/E	\$ 13,375.37
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Transfer To:

Administration O/E	\$ 2,800.00
Building and Grounds	\$ 22.87
Legal	\$ 3,902.50
Aid to Volunteer Fire Companies	<u>\$ 6,650.00</u>
	<u>\$13,375.37</u>

6. 2024-79 Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation NJSA 40A:4-87.

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

WHEREAS, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for equal amount,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Hardwick in the County of Warren, New Jersey, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget of the year 2024 in the sum of \$11,435.96 which is now available from the Solid Waste Administration – Clean Communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the like sum of \$11,435.96 is hereby Appropriated under the caption Clean Communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above is the result of funds from the Solid Waste Administration – Clean Communities in the amount of \$11,435.96.

7. 2024-80 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, and approved by roll call vote: Lovell—yes, Meuse—yes, Jacksic—yes for the December 18, 2024, Consent Agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Spring Valley Road update.

Mayor Jacksic stated that construction materials have been ordered by the county. There is a discrepancy with the detour route and the mayor is waiting for a response.

Website Update.

Deputy Mayor Meuse reported that the website should be up and running by the end of January 2025.

Affordable Housing.

Discussed during executive session.

Sample Ordinance for Storage Containers.

No update at this time.

Municipal Roof.

Discussed during department reports.

Land Use Board Sample Tree Ordinance.

Committeeman Lovell stated that he had reviewed the Land Use Board ordinance and would like to put an ordinance together that incorporates both the township and Land Use Board ordinance.

Township Fee Schedule.

No update at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reorganization Meeting Date and Time.

January 1, 2025, at 3 pm.

2025 Meeting dates.

Meeting dates will remain on the third Wednesday of each month except the November meeting which will be held on November 12, 2025.

Lew Environmental Services Proposal.

Discussion took place of the lead state law. The committee requested the owner of Lew Environmental Services to attend a meeting.

Rullo & Julliet Associates Inc Proposal -Right to Know Survey.

Motion was made by Lovell, seconded by Meuse, and approved by roll call vote: Lovell—yes, Meuse—yes, Jacksic—yes for the Rullo & Julliet proposal.

CORRESPONDENCE:

November 24, 2024, Jim Burd President of Citizens Improving Affordable Housing.

NJ Affordable Housing Amendment December 4, 2024, Upper Delaware Soil Conservation District.

Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Permits.

December 6, 2024 -Department of Consumer Affairs.

Michael F. Rogers Joins DCA, Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

December 9, 2024, Michael Geraghty, State of New Jersey Chief Information Security Officer PAIC Cyber Grant Opportunity.

December 12, 2024, Department of Consumer Affairs.

Fair Housing Act Monitoring Update and Webinars.

December 12, 2024, Stefanie Williams, French & Parrello
Hardwick Community Assistance.

TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY:

Nothing to report.

TOWNSHIP CLERK:

Clerk Shipps reported that she is working on a Firewise Grant with Mr. Wolff.

DPW Supervisor Campbell asked Township Attorney Bykov for an update on the road damage on Birch Ridge Road. Attorney Bykov has been having back-and-forth conversations with Camp Mason Insurance company. Committeeman Lovell said to reach out to Camp Mason, request a 1000-dollar check, and the township will fix the road.

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE:

Committeeman Lovell stated that he and Attorney Bykov had a meeting with NJDEP regarding Vass Farmstead. Committeeman Lovell invited the representative of NJDEP to visit the farmstead which is planned for some time at the end of January. It was further discussed at the meeting to have the Hardwick Historic Society become an agent on behalf of Hardwick, instead of Hardwick Township subleasing the property to Hardwick Historic Society. Discussion will continue with NJDEP regarding this matter.

Deputy Mayor Meuse read the callouts for November from Blairstown Hose Company and Blairstown Ambulance Corp.

Mayor Jacksic reported a meeting with the governor regarding drone activity. The governor did not show up for this meeting. Mayor Jacksic also had a meeting with the White House,

Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Affairs, FFA, and other government entities where it was acknowledged that some drone activities are registered and there have been a little under 6000 complaints in New Jersey. It was further stated that they could be either manned or unmanned drones, helicopters, planes, or stars. There was no other communication since that meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT:

Lovell made a motion, seconded by Meuse, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kristin Shipps, RMC