

**TOWNSHIP OF HARDWICK  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2024**

**OPENING ROLL CALL:**

Mayor Jacksic called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Deputy Mayor Meuse (via phone conference) and Committeeman Lovell were present. Also present were CFO Rolef, DPW Supervisor Campbell, Township Attorney Igor Bykov, Zoning Officer Boesze 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 Jacksic, second by Lovell, and carried to go into Executive Session at 6:03 pm.**

**2024-70- 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 Negotiation

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 Lovell, second by Jacksic, and carried to close Executive Session at 6:55 pm.**

Township Attorney Bykov stated that the Hardwick Township Committee emerged from their Executive Session at 6:55 pm where two matters were discussed, one about land acquisition and the other about contract negotiation. At this time, the committee authorized the mayor and clerk to execute the animal control contract. Motion made by Lovel, second by Jacksic, and approved by roll call Lovell—yes, Meuse—yes, Jacksic—yes. Copies of the minutes for the other matters discussed in executive session will be available at such times as the committee determines there is no harm to the public.

**Beth Styler Barry -Paulina Dam Removal Project update.**

Paulina Dam had been removed and completed in September. Sediment was left at the site and will be used to reinforce the banks. July 1, 2025, will be the next construction season. Planting of seeds and trees will begin and may take up to 10 weeks to complete.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**DPW-**

DPW Supervisor Campbell reported that the material for the roof will be delivered on Thursday and the crew will begin replacing the roof on Friday.

The DPW continues to clean debris from town roads.

Two plow drivers were hired for snowplow. They are both part-time and on an as call basis.

**Fire Tower -**

Bob Wolff reported there are over five hundred wildfires in NJ this fall. Downed trees and powerlines are one of the main causes.

Mr. Wolff read the callouts for the month of October for Stillwater Fire Company along with announcing upcoming events.

**ORDINANCE:**

**Introduction:**

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.

**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:

<b>I. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION</b>		
<u>Employee Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	
<u>Supervisor/Reviewer</u>	<u>Review Period</u> From: / / To: / /	
<b>II. CORE VALUES AND OBJECTIVES</b>		
<b>PERFORMANCE CATEGORY</b>	<b>RATING</b>	<b>COMMENTS AND EXAMPLES</b>
<b><u>Quality of Work:</u></b> Work is completed accurately (few or no errors), efficiently and within deadlines with minimal supervision	<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>	
<b><u>Care for, Maintenance, Upkeep of Tools and/or Equipment</u></b> Demonstrates care for the tools and/or equipment and takes necessary steps to preserve the life of the tool and/or equipment	<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>	
<b><u>Attendance &amp; Punctuality:</u></b> Reports for work on time, provides advance notice of need for absence	<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>	
<b><u>Reliability / Dependability:</u></b> Consistently performs at a high level; manages time and workload effectively to meet responsibilities	<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>	
<b><u>Communication Skills:</u></b> Written and oral communications are clear, organized and effective; listens and comprehends well	<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>	
<b><u>Judgment &amp; Decision-Making:</u></b> Makes thoughtful, well-reasoned decisions; exercises good judgment, resourcefulness and creativity in problem-solving	<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>	
<b><u>Initiative &amp; Flexibility:</u></b> Demonstrates initiative, often seeking out additional responsibility; identifies problems and solutions; thrives on new challenges and adjusts to unexpected changes	<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>	
<b><u>Cooperation &amp; Teamwork:</u></b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Exceeds Expectations</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meets Expectations</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>Needs Improvement</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unacceptable</u>	
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### **III. JOB-SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

<b><u>PERFORMANCE CATEGORY</u></b>	<b><u>RATING</u></b>	<b><u>COMMENTS AND EXAMPLES</u></b>
<u>Knowledge of Position:</u> Possesses required skills, knowledge, and ability to competently perform the job	<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 &amp; Development:</u> Continually seeks ways to strengthen performance and regularly monitors new developments in field of work	<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>	

### **IV. PERFORMANCE GOALS**

<u>Set objectives and outline steps to improve in problem areas or further employee development.</u>
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### **V. OVERALL RATING**

<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>	<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>
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<u>Eligible for standard annual salary adjustment</u>	<u>Subject to possible termination of employment</u>
<u>Comment on the Employee's overall performance.</u>	
<b><u>VI. EMPLOYEE COMMENTS (OPTIONAL)</u></b>	
<u>Set objectives and outline steps to improve in problem areas or further employee development.</u>	
<b><u>VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</u></b>	
<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 Jacksic and carried to introduce Ordinance 2024-07 as amended to add under the quality of work Use, maintenance, and care of equipment.**

**Consent Agenda:**

1. 2024-71 Resolution Authorizing Change of Tax Collection Software from Municipal Software Inc. to BRT Technologies, LLC for Tax Billing and Collection Software System.

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Hardwick currently uses Municipal Software Inc for tax billing and collection; and

**WHEREAS**, due to key employees pending retirement, the MSI tax software will no longer be updated and current tax utility customers will have to transition to another tax collection software product; and

**WHEREAS**, BRT Technologies, LLC has submitted a proposal for the implementation, hosting and support from MSI to BRT Technologies, LLC and has agreed to waive the \$4,000.00 conversion fee.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Hardwick, County of Warren, and State of New Jersey, hereby authorize the amount of \$4,800.00 for annual fees.

2. 2024-72 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 Jacksic and approved by roll call vote: Lovell—yes, Meuse—yes, Jacksic—yes.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Spring Valley Road update.**

Mayor Jacksic met with the Warren County Department of Public Works director and a contract was awarded. Once a timeline is determined information will go out to the public.

**Website Update.**

Deputy Mayor Meuse reported some minor details that need to be updated, and that the system should be activated by the end of the year.

**Affordable Housing.**

Mayor Jacksic stated that the Department of Consumer Affairs presented the state with an affordable housing number. Hardwick is listed for twenty-nine units, which is not binding. Mayor Jacksic stated that by January 31<sup>st</sup> the township will need to adopt a binding resolution committing to a lower number than the Department of Consumer Affairs has provided.

Discussion arose on Warren County Housing's lack of communication on contacting two residents who applied. Attorney Bykov will follow up.

**Sample Ordinance for Storage Containers.**

Zoning Officer George Boesze took part in this conversation. Discussion took place on the wording for the storage containers and potentially having applicants go in front of the land use board or even prohibit storage containers. Clerk Shipps will get the Blairstown Township Ordinance that prohibits shipping containers.

**Municipal Roof.**

Discussed during department reports.

**Land Use Board Sample Tree Ordinance.**

Tabled to a later meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:****Best Practice Inventory.**

CFO Rolef told the committee that the township received thirty-three points from the Best Practice Inventory and will receive state aid next year.

**Proposed Changes to Zoning Permit Fee Schedule**

Discussion took place on changing not only zoning permit fees but all fees in 2025.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

November 1, 2024, Local Recreation Improvement Grant.

**TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY:**

Attorney Bykov is waiting for an update on the cell tower lease payment.

An email was sent to the committee regarding the damage on Birch Ridge by a bus going to Camp Mason. The committee advised Attorney Bykov to reach out to Camp Mason to inform them that the responsibility is on them to get the funds from the bus company.

**TOWNSHIP CLERK:**

Clerk Shipps stated that the rabies clinic will be held on December 7, 2024, from 8:30- 10:30 at the DPW building in Blairstown.

**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS:****Committeeman Lovell**

The insurance company will be refunding the township for the past year's return of surplus. CFO Rolef will sign the voucher to receive the check.

**Deputy Mayor Meuse**

Thanked all the firefighters for all their hard work.

**Mayor Jacksic**

Read the Blairstown Hose Company callouts for October.

Mayor Jacksic stated that Planet Network is still installing fiber optics in Hardwick township.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion made by Lovell, second by Jacksic, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 pm.**

**Respectfully submitted by:**

**Kristin Shipps, RMC**