

MINUTES OF THE HARDYSTON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JULY 22, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Miller at approximately 7:00 P.M. with the opening statement that the meeting had been duly advertised and met all the requirements of the Sunshine Law. Also present were: Deputy Mayor Cicerale via phone conference, Councilwoman Hamilton, Councilman Verrilli, Councilman Kula, Manager Marianne Smith, Clerk Jane Bakalarczyk and Township Attorney Fred Semrau of Dorsey & Semrau.

SALUTE THE FLAG

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Consultant Report Presentation – Emergency Medical Services in Hardyston Township – Chief Paul M. Cell - The Rehberg Konin Group

Following some opening statements, Mayor Miller introduced Chief Paul M. Cell, Chief of Police, Montclair State University and Associate with The Rehberg Konin Group. Following the December 2014 disbandment of the Hardyston Township First Aid Squad, the Hardyston Township Council commissioned a study to determine the best options for providing a long-term Emergency Medical Services solution. The Council retained the services of the Rehberg Konin Group to conduct a review of existing conditions and recommendations for options. Chief Cell presented their findings.

Franklin resident Mike Rathbun thanked the Council for holding this meeting. He asked why Franklin Borough administration or their first aid squad was not approached for help or included in the discussions regarding coming up with a solution to the Hardyston emergency medical services issue. He stated that Franklin Borough calls their squad the Wallkill Valley First Aid Squad and suggested combining Hardyston and Franklin, and even reaching out to other towns within the Wallkill Valley Region to form one large squad, and to also have a volunteer drive. Township Manager stated that two meetings were held and Wallkill, Ogdensburg, Hamburg, and Sparta were invited. She stated that at that time, Wallkill was struggling as well and their leadership of the squad had indicated that at that time they would not be interested in a regional approach that would include all of those departments. She stated that if there is renewed interest in that concept, Hardyston would be more than happy to include them.

Hardyston resident Bill Lohrfink stated that he heard a comment a while back that no one wanted to volunteer for the first aid squad. He stated that he attended a Council meeting and expressed interest in volunteering. He stated that he was given contact information for the first aid squad. He stated that he contacted that individual and left a message that he was interested in volunteering and never received a call back. Mayor Miller stated that unfortunately he does not know the circumstances of why he did not receive a call back, but that the Council would be more than happy to listen to anyone who is willing to volunteer.

Hardyston resident Meg Demsak stated that two weeks ago, she and her husband addressed the Council regarding slow emergency responses that have occurred over the past few years. She stated that she wanted to thank Police Chief Bret Alemy for looking into the incidents and continuing to look into these incidents and for taking the time to meet with her and her family to address their concerns. She stated that her concern now is to address the steps moving forward and asked if the Council can guarantee public involvement in this process.

Hardyston resident Debbie Caggianese asked who oversees the volunteer EMS. She stated that because of past problems within the squad, she feels that this is the reason no one is interested in volunteering. She asked who the first aid squad is accountable to. Mayor Miller stated that in the past the Hardyston Township First Aid Squad has been an autonomous agency. Mayor Miller stated that in the future there will be Council involvement and Council oversight.

Franklin resident Nick Giordano thanked the Council for shining a spotlight on what seems to be a regional problem and asked the Council to consider working with Franklin Borough to resolve the emergency medical services issues.

MINUTES OF THE HARDYSTON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JULY 22, 2015

Hardyston resident Stephanie Reinbott stated that she was one of the Hardyston Township First Aid Squad members that was suspended after coming to the Council with the problems the squad was having in 2012. She stated that at that time, the Council did nothing to help. Mayor Miller stated that unfortunately at that time, the Hardyston Township First Aid Squad was an autonomous agency and that the Council did not have the authority to intervene.

Hardyston resident Linda Behr stated that she and her husband moved to Hardyston 15 years ago, and since then, he has developed some cardiac issues. She stated that they received remarkable service from the Hardyston Township First Aid Squad and the Police Department over the years. She stated that her concerns remain that they get timely response and asked the Council to keep that in mind when they make their decision regarding emergency medical services for the residents of Hardyston Township.

Hardyston resident Charles Markarian thanked the Council for holding this meeting so that the public can voice their concerns and opinions. He also wanted to thank all of the past and present volunteers and the Police Department and Fire Department for their service to the community. Mr. Markarian read a newspaper article from 2014 regarding the theft within the Hardyston Township First Aid Squad. Mr. Markarian stated that he feels it is important for everyone to know what happened in the past so we can all move forward.

Hardyston resident Roger O'Brien thanked the Mayor and Council and Township Manager for inviting him to the meeting as a community leader since he is the President of the Indian Fields Homeowners Association. He also thanked the Hardyston Township Volunteer Fire Department and the Police Department for their service to the community. Mr. O'Brien stated that he is a resident of the Wallkill Valley Region, which he stated that he considers to be Hardyston, Hamburg, Franklin and Ogdensburg, and was disappointed after reading the report prepared by the consultant that a Wallkill Valley regional emergency medical service was not considered in the report. He stated that he hopes the Council considers all of the communities that make up Wallkill Valley. Mayor Miller asked Chief Cell to respond to Mr. O'Brien's comment about regionalization. Chief Cell responded that Franklin was not included in the study, but that regionalization would be a viable option.

Hardyston resident Jane Caiazzo stated that she was disappointed when she received the consultant's report in the mail because she did not know that this study was in the works. She stated that she read the report but did not see back up information for some of the conclusions that were made in the report, but stated that she has since discovered that it has been made available to the Council and is available for review. She asked the Council if they have considered the possibility of hiring part-time personnel for emergency medical service. She stated that Sparta is not right around the corner and it would take them longer to respond to a call than it would for a more local squad. Township Manager stated that there is a rig stationed at the Littell Community Center in Franklin for Sparta to run calls during the day for Hardyston and Franklin so response time is good because the rig is not necessarily coming from Sparta. Ms. Caiazzo stated that Hardyston has the best volunteers and every effort should be made to get people from the town to provide these services before looking elsewhere.

Hardyston resident and volunteer with the Hardyston Township Fire Department Bill Hickerson thanked the Council, Township Manager and the residents of the township for their support. He praised the members of the fire department for their service and commitment to the community. He stated that they are always looking for more volunteers. He also thanked the emergency medical services departments that have helped out following the disbandment of the Hardyston Township First Aid Squad in December 2014.

Hardyston resident Nick Demsak thanked the Council for providing the arena for the public to voice their concerns. He also wanted to thank Chief Cell and the volunteers and the citizens that were present. He stated that he was concerned that the consultant's report had a "scope and limitations" attached to it. He asked that the public be involved in coming up with a solution because they want to help. Mayor Miller stated that he wants everyone to understand that the consultant's report is not the conclusion. He stated that this is the start of the process of coming up with a solution.

MINUTES OF THE HARDYSTON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JULY 22, 2015

Skip Danielson, resident of Byram Township and former Sussex County EMS Coordinator, commended the Hardyston Township Police Department and the Hardyston Township Fire Department for their service. He suggested combining the fire department and emergency medical services.

Mayor Miller asked the Township Manager to summarize the status of the agreements going forward for emergency medical services. Township Manager stated that the township has agreements with Hamburg and Milton for one year until the close of this year, but that it may be something that we may want to seek an extension on. She stated that we had a one year contract with Sparta which was until the end of 2014 but they have been gracious enough to continue to help until the township comes up with a longer term solution.

Following comments from the public, a motion was made by Hamilton to appoint a Committee to develop a final community recommendation, which will be made to the Township Council for their consideration and action, seconded by Verrilli. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Hamilton to authorize moving into the Phase 2 of the Township's contract with Rehberg & Konin Group, which provides for hourly service and transitions their role to one of support, rather than leadership, seconded by Verrilli. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Verrilli to authorize the Rehberg & Konin Group to draft a proposal for the review of Sparta Ambulance Squad and the Wallkill Valley First Aid Squad to at least begin an organized dialogue within their agencies around the concept of developing a long-term regional partnership to see whether or not there is interest in moving forward, seconded by Hamilton. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Hamilton to direct the Committee to schedule a meeting for potential volunteers who may be interested in serving on a future first aid squad, regardless of the configuration, seconded by Verrilli. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Hamilton to authorize the Township Manager to reach out to our three contracted emergency medical service partners to request a 6-month extension to our existing contracts currently set to expire on December 31, 2015, in order to give the Township and the Committee a full 12 months within which to implement a permanent solution, seconded by Verrilli. All in favor. Motion carried.

Allison McHose, Franklin Borough Administrator and Assemblywoman, stated that she has been Franklin Borough Administrator since January 1, 2015 and has not been contacted once about this whole process. Mayor Miller stated that the meetings were held before she took over as the Franklin Borough Administrator. Ms. McHose stated that as Franklin Borough Administrator, she volunteers that they would be willing to participate in upcoming discussions regarding the emergency medical services matter.

CONSENT AGENDA: ALL MATTERS LISTED BELOW ARE CONSIDERED TO BE ROUTINE IN NATURE AND WILL BE ENACTED BY ONE MOTION. THERE WILL BE NO SEPARATE DISCUSSION OF THE ITEMS. IF ANY DISCUSSION IS DESIRED, THAT PARTICULAR ITEM WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA AND WILL BE CONSIDERED SEPARATELY.

Agreements/Applications/Licenses:

1. Raffle License – NRA Foundation NJ State Fund Committee
2. Amusement License – Anthony Pignataro Corp. (Tony's)

A motion was made by Kula to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Verrilli. All in favor. Motion carried.

ORDINANCES

1st READING:

None

MINUTES OF THE HARDYSTON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JULY 22, 2015

ORDINANCES

2nd READING:

2015-14

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING THE TOTAL SUM OF \$509,228.00 FROM GENERAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR FUNDING VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS OR PURPOSES BY THE TOWNSHIP OF HARDYSTON, IN THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX, NEW JERSEY

BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Hardyston, County of Sussex, New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1: The sum of Five hundred nine thousand two hundred twenty-eight dollars (\$509,228.00) to be utilized out of the General Capital Improvement Fund, is hereby appropriated for the following purpose:

For Various Capital Improvements or Purposes for the Township of Hardyston.

Section 2: In connection with the amount authorized in Section 1 hereof, the Township makes the following determination:

(a) The purpose described in Section 1 hereof is not a Current Expense and is an improvement, which the Township of Hardyston may lawfully make as general improvement.

(b) The period of usefulness of the purpose described in section 1 hereof is not in the limitations of the said Local Bond Law and according to the aggregate reasonable life thereof is five (5) years.

Section 3: All ordinances or parts of ordinances, which are inconsistent with the terms of this ordinance, be and the same is hereby-repealed on to the extent of their inconsistency:

Section 4: This ordinance becomes effective immediately upon final passage, approval, and publication as provided by law.

A motion was made and seconded to open the meeting to the public. All in favor. Motion carried. Resident Frank Lacatena commented that the ordinance should have been more specific. A motion was made and seconded to close the meeting to the public. All in favor. Motion carried. A motion was made by Hamilton to approve Ordinance 2015-14 on second reading, seconded by Kula. All in favor. Motion carried.

BILLS TO BE PAID: A motion was made by Verrilli to approve the bill list as presented, seconded by Hamilton. All in favor. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PORTION: A motion was made and seconded to open the meeting to the public. All in favor. Motion carried. No public comment. A motion was made and seconded to close the meeting to the public. All in favor. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Hamilton to adjourn at approximately 9:40 p.m., seconded by Verrilli. All in favor. Motion carried.

Jane Bakalarczyk, RMC/CMC
Municipal Clerk