

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING August 21, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor DeGiralamo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **"Sunshine Law" Announcement** - Adequate notice of this public meeting has been published in the Hunterdon Democrat and Courier News, posted on the municipal bulletin board and the Township website in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975. This notice has also been filed in the Municipal Clerk's office.

3. FLAG SALUTE

4. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Mrs. Cherney	x	
Mr. Wunder	x	
Mr. Stiger	x	
Mr. Lordi	x	
Dr. DeGiralamo	x	

Also present was Susan Sharpe, Esq., Robert Clerico, Engineer, Grace Brennan, CFO and Ella M. Ruta, Municipal Clerk.

5. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

a. Regular and Executive Session Meeting Minutes of April 17, 2024

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney			x			
Mr. Wunder			x			
Mr. Stiger	x		x			
Mr. Lordi			x			
Dr. DeGiralamo		x	x			

Motion Carried

b. Special Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2024

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney			x			
Mr. Wunder			x			
Mr. Stiger	x		x			
Mr. Lordi			x			
Dr. DeGiralamo		x	x			

Motion Carried

c. Regular Meeting Minutes of July 17, 2024

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney			x			
Mr. Wunder			x			

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Mr. Stiger	x		x			
Mr. Lordi			x			
Dr. DeGiralamo		x	x			

Motion Carried

6. VISITORS

- a. Affordable Housing Presentation – Beth McManus, Affordable Housing Planner

Planner McManus provided a summary of the Township obligation in the Third Round Housing Plan. She informed the Committee of the Township’s obligation in the upcoming Fourth Round. Ms. McManus answered questions posed by Committee members and the public in attendance.

7. REPORTS RECEIVED

- a. State Police, Trooper Caemmerer – presented his monthly report including the number of vehicle accidents and other various incidences in the Township. He again asked that everyone be vigilant, always locking homes and vehicles. Trooper Caemmerer addressed speeding vehicles on various Township roads. He suggested conducting a speeding study to determine the extent of the problem. He also answered questions from the public and Committee members.
- b. Road Dept.- Week Ending; 7/12/24; 7/19/24; 7/26/24; 8/02/24; 8/09/24
- c. Animal Control Officer – July 2024
- d. Municipal Court – not submitted
- e. Zoning Officer – not submitted
- f. Pattenburg Volunteer Fire Company – July Report

Fire Chief Sadusky asked that PVFC receive timely communications about road closures in the Township. The Mayor recommended that he contact the Township’s Emergency Management Coordinator regarding the issue. The Mayor also asked that the OEM Coordinator provide a plan to communicate future emergencies to PVFC. Mr. Lordi will be contacting OEM Coordinator Papenfuhs.

- g. Engineer’s Report

- Provided an update on the MS-4 Permit Grant Application to NJ Highlands.
- Perryville Road Section 4A and 4B Project – State Aid Application will be filed this week.
- Received an Application for a Road Opening Permit from Elizabethtown Gas to extend gas line on Perryville Road.
- The storm drainage swale on Henderson Road has been completed.
- Gravel Hill Road – prepared and submitted a memorandum to the Committee outlining the conditions of the road based on the previously conducted survey; suggested improvements and provided a cost estimate.
- Had items for Executive Session.

Mr. Stiger apprised the Committee with regard to issues on Baptist Church Road. He said that Traffic Engineer Lublanecki inspected the road and suggested the following: installing a flashing height restriction sign close to Main Street and discouraged a three way stop sign. Briefly discussed.

Gravel Hill Road - Mr. Stiger said that a volume and speed study has to be conducted in order to address the problem. He said that goHunterdon, the non-profit local organization, has the necessary equipment to conduct such a study. Mr. Stiger is hoping that the equipment will be available in September.

Mr. Clerico spoke in regard to suggestions of grading the road and a 90-degree curve. He provided a detailed overview of the memorandum that he sent to the Committee with his recommendations and cost estimate. Discussion ensued. Engineer Clerico suggested submitting an application to NJ DOT for traffic safety improvements on the road. The Committee agreed.

Mr. Lordi asked Engineer Clerico when the Township would be accepting the road in Perryville Ridge Development. He also asked who is responsible until the roads are accepted, but the details depend on what is stipulated in the Developer's Agreement.

8. CORRESPONDENCE/WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS –

Mayor DeGiralamo mentioned continuing to receive concerns about Glacier Way maintenance. JCP&L power outages – the Mayor said that the Township Committee does not have a remedy for power outages. The JCP&L representative suggested adopting a resolution supporting infrastructure improvements. Mayor DeGiralamo said that he would be exploring that suggestion.

Mr. Stiger said that, on behalf of a resident, he contacted JCP&L about a hanging electric wire. In conversation with JCP&L he found out that it was a fiberoptic line owned by Astound Broadband. Responded to a taxpayer inquiry from Main Street, Pattenburg, who requested posting speed limit and children at play signs.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mark Pollador, a resident, read a letter expressing concerns about speeding vehicles and the danger they pose to pedestrians, children playing, and riding bicycles on Main Street in Pattenburg.

Kathryn Douglas, a resident, provided handouts about speed control and traffic calming measures on Main Street, Pattenburg. She also mentioned heavy trailer truck traffic on the road. She asked that humps be installed on the road. Discussed at length.

John Ross, a resident, commented on a speeding study suggested by State Trooper Caemmerer. He proposed a different way the study should be conducted to have an accurate number of vehicles speeding.

Jay Santamaria, a resident, commented on the earlier Affordable Housing Presentation as well as signage for speeding vehicles.

Jim Ellis, a resident, made additional remarks about speeding and large trailer trucks traveling on Baptist Church Road.

Following the above Public Comments, the Committee addressed residents' concerns.

Frank Taibi, a resident, agreed with previous speakers. He commented on Affordable Housing Presentation, inquired about warehouses in the Township, activities at the former Foster Wheeler building, asked why signage for egress and ingress at QuickChek has not been addressed, asked the timeline for improvement to Main Street in Jutland, questioned responsibility of removing dead trees hanging on electrical wires and asked the status of rehabilitating the swale on Henderson Road (Arc of Hunterdon property). Mayor DeGiralamo and Committee members answered Mr. Taibi's inquiries. Mr. Taibi also thanked Atty. Sharpe for answering his email with

questions regarding the foreclosure of a property. He asked for clarification. Atty. Sharpe advised Mr. Taibi to seek counsel from his personal attorney.

10. PUBLIC HEARING

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12. NEW ORDINANCE – 1ST Reading

Attorney Sharpe said that since there are questions from Committee members regarding legal language in the following Ordinance her advice would be to withdraw the introduction of the Ordinance, have a discussion and introduce it at a later time.

ORDINANCE # 2024-14

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF UNION, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMEND CHAPTER 14 (RESERVED) OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE TO ESTABLISH A FALSE ALARM ORDINANCE

Mayor DeGiralamo asked for a motion to withdraw the above ordinance and schedule a discussion for the next meeting. The following is the recorded vote:

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney		x	x			
Mr. Wunder			x			
Mr. Stiger			x			
Mr. Lordi	x		x			
Dr. DeGiralamo			x			

Motion Carried

13. NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA: All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Township Committee and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the consent Agenda and will be considered separate.

Mr. Lordi asked that the resolution for Tree Removal in Finn Park be removed from the Consent Agenda.

- a. **RESOLUTION #2024-89:** Chapter 159 – Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council Plan Conformance Grant

RESOLUTION 2024 - 89

**CHAPTER 159 RESOLUTION
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING COUNCIL
PLAN CONFORMANCE GRANT**

WHEREAS, NJS 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 of 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 Union in the County of Hunterdon, New Jersey, hereby request 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 \$20,000, which is now available from NJ Highlands Protection and Planning Council Plan Conformance Grant in the amount of \$20,000.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the like sum of \$20,000 is hereby appropriated under the caption NJ Highlands Plan Conformance Grant Other Expenses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above is the result of funds from the State of New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council in the amount of \$20,000.

Resolution Number: 2024 - 89
Offered by: Mr. Stiger
Seconded by: Dr. DeGiralamo
Adopted on: August 21, 2024
Municipal Clerk: Ella M. Ruta

- b. **RESOLUTION #2024-90:** Authorizing the Employment of Joseph Ertle, III – Part Time Seasonal Employment DR&F

RESOLUTION #2024 – 90

**Authorizing the Employment of Joseph Ertle, III
Part Time – Seasonal Employment
For the Department of Roads and Facilities**

WHEREAS, the Township of Union is in need of a part-time seasonal employee for the Department of Roads and Facilities; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Ertle, is qualified and has been offered said position, and good cause appearing;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Union, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey that Joseph Ertle shall be hired as a part time seasonal employee for the Department of Roads and Facilities, effective May 22, 2024 to serve at the pleasure of the Township Committee, at \$20.00 per hour.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Joseph Ertle will need to pass a physical and drug screening prior to commencing employment with the Township.

Grace M. Brennan, Personnel Administrator

David DeGiralamo, Mayor

c. **Payment of Bills**

End of Consent Agenda

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney			x			

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Mr. Wunder			X			
Mr. Stiger	X		X			
Mr. Lordi			X			
Dr. DeGiralamo		X	X			

Motion Carried

Mr. Lordi asked if tree removal will be funded with money specifically earmarked for tree removal in the park. CFO answered “yes”

- d. **RESOLUTION #2024-91:** Authorization for Tree Removal in Finn Park

RESOLUTION 2024 – 91

**2024 AUTHORIZATION FOR TREE REMOVAL
TREE KING, INC.
12 Lenel Road
Landing, New Jersey 07850**

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Union along with the Foreman of the Department of Roads and Facilities, have determined that there is the need to remove trees and stumps in Finn Park, and

WHEREAS, this item will be purchased through the Morris County Cooperative Pricing Counsel, Contract #18, so no bidding is required; and

WHEREAS, there is available in the Union Township Open Space Trust sufficient funds for this purchase; and

WHEREAS, this contract shall not exceed \$50,000.00

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Committee of the Township of Union hereby authorizes the CFO to issue the purchase order for the removal of trees by Tree King, Inc

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney		X	X			
Mr. Wunder	X		X			
Mr. Stiger			X			
Mr. Lordi			X			
Dr. DeGiralamo			X			

Motion Carried

- h. **Discussion** – Office Staffing

Personnel Administrator Brennan said that there are a few vacancies in Municipal Offices. To fill those vacancies, she suggested hiring a 15-hour Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer and a full-time Planning Board/Board of Adjustment Secretary/Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant. Different options were considered. Following a brief discussion Mrs. Brennan will be posting ads for both positions on the Township website as soon as they are approved by Personnel Liaisons Cherney and Wunder.

Mr. Lordi asked if the Township Engineer’s Office will be acting as an interim Zoning Officer. Mrs. Brennan answered in the positive.

14. REPORTS

a. **Attorney's Report** – has matters for Executive Session

b. **Mayor's Report**

– Hunterdon Games will be held this Saturday, August 24th at the Heritage Park in Bethlehem Township.

c. **Committee Reports**

Mr. Wunder reported the following:

– “Neighborhood Watch” program – it took a long time to come to fruition, but the program will be finalized soon.

Mr. Lordi reported the following:

– QuickChek – a solution for the left-hand turn into the parking lot has to be addressed.
– Perryville Ridge Development – school buses will be making two stops in the development. Buses picking up High School students will be stopping at the end of the road.
– JCP&L – spoke to representative Amy Oberman regarding information that could be posted on our website about power outages due to fallen trees. She will be providing a document.

Mrs. Cherny reported the following:

– Regionalization Study – will be contacting schools about tonight's Affordable Housing presentation, so they can plan accordingly.

Mr. Stiger reported the following:

– Waiting to hear from the County about grant for a Generator.
– Have not heard from NJDEP with regard to the 95 acres property adjacent to Pattenburg Quarry.
– Completed and reviewed with DR&F Forman Fleming the 2025 Capital Budget for maintenance and repairs of roads.

d. **Finance Officer** – discussed earlier under “Office Staffing”

e. **Recreation Committee** – Mr. Wunder presented a verbal report.

14. PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Frank Taibi, a resident, asked if a tree removal permit has to be submitted for trees planted by a homeowner. The answer was “yes”.

Mike Sadusky, a resident, asked about the status of replacing the roof over the municipal garage. Engineer Clerico explained, stating that the project has not yet been finalized. Mr. Sadusky also inquired about the Fire Alarm Ordinance. Atty. Sharpe said that she will be reviewing and addressing Committees' concerns. He also stated that

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PVFC will no longer be asking for a title to the fire truck owned by the Township. He said the truck needs refurbishment or replacement and would like to talk to the Committee about each option.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION –

Resolution #2024-92

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, provides that an Executive Session, not open to the public, may be held for certain specified purposes when authorized by resolution;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Union will convene in an Executive Session that will be limited only to consideration of items with respect to which the public may be excluded pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b. The general nature of the subject or subjects to be discussed in this session is as follows:

- 1. Litigation – Stormwater Reclassification
- 2. Matters Relating to Litigation, Negotiation and the Attorney -Client Privilege – Road Improvement Contract Negotiations

The matters discussed in this session will be disclosed to the public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

Formal action may be taken following the conclusion of the Executive Session.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Union assembled in public session on August 21, 2024 at 11:08 p.m. in the Union Township Municipal Building, 140 Perryville Road, Hampton, New Jersey, for the discussion of matters relating to the specific items designated above.

Action may be taken.

Motion to go into executive session at 11:08 pm

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney			x			
Mr. Wunder	x		x			
Mr. Stiger					x	
Mr. Lordi			x			
Dr. DeGiralamo		x	x			

Motion Carried

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 11:23 pm

Roll Call Vote	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Mrs. Cherney			x			
Mr. Wunder	x		x			
Mr. Stiger			x			
Mr. Lordi			x			
Dr. DeGiralamo		x	x			

Motion Carried

16. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Township Committee at this time Mr. Stiger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:23 p.m. Mr. Wunder seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote.

Transcribed by: Ella M. Ruta, Municipal Clerk

David DeGiralamo, Mayor