

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING  
VIA ZOOM VIDEO COMMUNICATIONS**

---

**Monday, February 22, 2021 – 5:03 p.m.**

---

**PROPER STATEMENT OF NOTICE** – Mayor Blake called the meeting to order stating that notice of the meeting had been posted on the municipal bulletin board and forwarded to the Hopewell Valley News, The Times, the Trentonian and the Hopewell Express (the official newspapers) on January 5, 2021, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

**ROLL CALL:** Those answering the roll call of the Municipal Clerk:

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kevin Kuchinski, Kristin McLaughlin, Courtney Peters-Manning, Michael Ruger, Mayor Julie Blake

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Acting Administrator George Snyder, Municipal Clerk Laurie Gompf, CFO Julie Troutman, Police Director Robert Karmazin, Labor Attorney Mark Ruderman

---

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG** – Mayor Blake led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

---

**RESOLUTION #21-75.** Read into the record by Mayor Blake.  
Motion by Kuchinski, seconded by Ruger to adopt Resolution #21-75.  
**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**

Mayor Blake explained that Mercer County gave the Township two choices for the Mine Road Bridge, one was to make it a 40-ton, modern bridge which would allow vehicular traffic, or keep it as is and only allow bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Mr. Kataryniak explained that the options were presented at a public meeting on January 27, 2021 and the sentiment to preserve the bridge was held by the Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commission as well as the residents who attended the meeting, which is reflected in the Resolution.

Committee Members supported the option to preserve the bridge as a pedestrian and bicycle only structure and attributed the bridge as part of Hopewell Township's history

**R E S O L U T I O N #21-75**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PRESERVATION OF THE MINE ROAD  
BRIDGE OVER STONY BROOK (MC#230.3) AS A PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE  
ONLY STRUCTURE IN HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP**

**WHEREAS**, on January 27, 2021, the Township of Hopewell conducted a public meeting to review and discuss options for the Mine Road bridge over Stony Brook, Mercer County Bridge #230.3, located on Mine Road between NJ State Highway Route 31 and Stony Brook Road; and

**WHEREAS**, the county-owned bridge, which has been closed for several years after being damaged by fallen tree limbs, was deemed structurally deficient and functionally obsolete by County officials; and

**WHEREAS**, Hopewell Township had met with representatives of the County Engineer's office and held subsequent discussions in 2020 to raise concerns over the County's plans for the loss of the historic structure with a bridge replacement program; and

**WHEREAS**, Mercer County responded, by letter dated September 22, 2020, and offered,

as an alternative to their plans for the replacement of the structure with a modern structure meeting current geometric and loading requirements, an option to maintain the existing structure, but restrict it to bicycle and pedestrian use only; and

**WHEREAS**, representatives of the Mercer County Engineer's Office presented their alternatives at the January 27, 2021 Hopewell Township Committee meeting, and described the limited options available to them with rehabilitating or repairing the structure if the geometric or loading requirements cannot also be corrected with those options; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous residents of the township participated in the meeting as well expressing concern for any plan alternative that results in the loss of the existing structure; and

**WHEREAS**, the Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commission also presented at the January 27, 2021 Committee meeting, and expressed concern for the loss of the historic structure.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Hopewell, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey that the township appreciates the efforts made by the County to investigate and offer an alternative to the replacement of the historic structure, and recognizes the overwhelming desire by the residents of the township to see the structure retained; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Hopewell Township Committee supports the second option offered by the County to permanently close the bridge to vehicular traffic and continue to own and maintain the bridge as a pedestrian/bicycle structure preserving this important historic asset for Hopewell Valley; and

**BE IT ALSO RESOLVED** that the Township Committee hereby directs the Clerk to forward a copy of this Resolution to Mercer County to memorialize its support for the preservation of the existing historic Mine Road bridge structure within the Township.

---

## 2021 MUNICIPAL BUDGET DISCUSSION

Committee Member Kuchinski explained that the goal was to go through the Capital budget one last time and that the Police Department decided to remove one SUV from their Capital budget in order to make other higher priority purchases.

Director Karmazin reviewed the following in the Police Department's Capital budget:

- Replacement of 10 in-car video recording systems – First Priority
- 32 Body Worn Cameras – First Priority
- Mobile data terminals – Tier 2 Priority
- Radar Units – Tier 2 Priority
- Portable radios – Tier 2 Priority
- Mobile radios – Tier 2 Priority
- Desktop computers – Tier 2 Priority
- Police Intercom System
- Alcotest

Committee Members questioned that there should be four SUV's on the budget and there were only two, however, there are currently two cars in the operating budget which were switched to SUVs. A discussion ensued regarding the importance of in-car video recording systems and body worn cameras and the importance of mobile data terminals and radars as the next most important items to purchase.

Committee Member Kuchinski mentioned that there will be Road Program money being repurposed and suggested repurposing it towards the 2021 additional roads budget.

In the Public Works Capital Budget, Mr. Snyder found an alternate source within the fleet for the Public Works vehicle that needs replacement and recommended reducing the Recreation Department's request for two vehicles to one.

---

Director Karmazin reviewed the Police Operating budget which included:

- Advertising

- Printing
  - Equipment Maintenance
  - Professional Services
  - Office Supplies
  - Dues/Training/Meetings
  - Uniforms
  - Capital Outlay
  - Minor Equipment
- 

Personnel Attorney Mark Ruderman answered questions regarding the public portion of the personnel discussion. Director Karmazin explained that James Bolling is a dispatcher for the Police Department who is returning to duty and the purpose of this discussion is to see what is the best schedule for him to return to. Mr. Karmazin imparted that it has been determined that he may return to an eight-hour shift and spoke about him being returned to a “Pitman Schedule,” which is two periods of two weeks on a rotation with a squad. Mr. Ruderman invited Mr. Bolling to make comments. Mr. Bolling stated that he would leave any comments to his representatives.

Mr. Snyder interjected that he wanted to ensure that the schedule would comply with the current collective bargaining agreement, to which Mr. Ruderman remarked that there was a provision in the collective bargaining agreement’s seniority clause that provides that the senior dispatcher would have the right to that shift, to wit, Mr. Bolling is not the senior dispatcher. He stated that the most senior dispatcher is currently working that shift and that he and Director Karmazin felt that that person should stay in that shift and deal with Mr. Bolling’s accommodations as much as the department could. Committee Members raised their hands in unanimous consensus with those recommendations.

---

## **PUBLIC SECTION**

The following members of the public spoke during public comment:

**Sheila Fields**, a resident of Hopewell-Princeton Road, wanted clarification on what the issue is with Mr. Bolling and questioned where the \$154,000 Capital budget limit comes from.

The detailed public comment may be viewed at [www.hopewelltpw.org](http://www.hopewelltpw.org) in the video library.

---

**EXECUTIVE SESSION RESOLUTION.** Read into the record.

Mayor Blake stated that the regular meeting may reconvene following the Executive Session.

Motion by Ruger, seconded by McLaughlin to go to Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations, real estate, legal and personnel matters.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**

## **R E S O L U T I O N #21-76**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary for the Township Committee to discuss contract negotiations, real estate, legal, and/or personnel matters; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 permits the Township Committee to conduct a meeting from which the public is excluded in order to discuss such matters; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee wishes to discuss the following:

- Personnel
  - Finance Assistant Position
  - Deputy Township Administrator Job Description
  - Township Administrator Position

**WHEREAS**, the time when and circumstances under which discussion conducted in executive session may be disclosed to the public is when appropriate.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, on this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2021 by the Township Committee of the Township of Hopewell, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that the Township Committee shall forthwith conduct an executive session to discuss the above.

---

At 5:59 p.m. the Executive Session was held.

At 6:27 p.m. the Regular meeting reconvened.

---

At 6:27 p.m., motion by Peters-Manning, seconded by Ruger to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**

The detailed public meeting may be viewed at [www.hopewelltp.org](http://www.hopewelltp.org) in the video library.

---

LAURIE E. GOMPF  
MUNICIPAL CLERK