

**ALEXANDRIA TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**MINUTES**  
**April 8, 2020**

This meeting was advertised in The Hunterdon Democrat notice posted in the Alexandria Township Municipal Offices and the Alexandria Township Website ([www.alexandrianj.gov](http://www.alexandrianj.gov)) as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et, seq., and in consideration of Executive Order No. 103, issued by Governor Murphy on March 9 ,2020, declaring a State of Emergency and a Public Health Emergency in the State of New Jersey, the State of New Jersey does hereby notify the public that to protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens while ensuring the continued functioning of government, the meeting of the Mayor and the Township Committee scheduled April 8, 2020 will be held electronically only. Members of the public who wish to participate in the meeting may do so by calling 1-978-990-5000 and followed by meeting number Access Code: 333891 at 7:35 PM. Individuals calling into this number will be able to fully participate in the meeting, including providing public comment. A non-public dial in number will be used if executive session is required.

**Meeting Called to order at 7:45 PM.**

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Plumer, Committeeman Pfefferle, Committeeman Kiernan, Twp. Atty. Dragan

**ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:**

OEM Harding, DPW Foreman Heiser, CFO Steinberg

**FLAG SALUTE:**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Covid 19 Update

Mayor Plumer noted that he has been on weekly conference calls with fellow County Mayors, Hunterdon County Freeholders, Senator Offices, Assemblyman Offices, and the Governor's Office. The Governor's latest Executive Order 118 on April 7<sup>th</sup> closed County and State parks at 8:00 PM but did not close municipal parks. The Township needs to monitor the park for increased people visiting as this is a concern due to the closure of State/County parks. Comm. Kiernan would like to keep the park open for residents and does not think it's a good idea to close the park as it will push people to walk on the roads. OEM Harding will place language on Facebook for all to assure that social distancing is being practiced while at the park and to prevent the park to close for not following the guidelines. Comm. Kiernan will have the DPW place large signs around the park indicating that the pavilion, playground, barn, and basketball courts are closed and that non-

compliance of social distancing will force the park to be closed. Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski advised that metal signs have been made and installed by the DPW around the park reminding everyone to social distance.

Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski noted that all employees have the capability of working remotely. There have been no issues to date with employees working from home and most are continuing to come into the office during their scheduled hours to ensure their work is being done and they are not falling behind. Those coming into the offices are coming in at staggered times to make sure social distancing is being practiced in the offices. The offices are being cleaned three times a week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday's. Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski noted that the Governor released today Executive Order 122 that will cease all new construction effective on Friday, April 10th at 9 PM. There are exemptions to the order that will allow for hospitals, healthcare facilities, and manufacturing to continue construction. Homeowners will be able to continue construction on current projects, but no new permits will be issued after Friday unless they are health related such as water heaters, furnaces/ac, etc. Inspectors are continuing to do inspections to homes as long as the resident or a family member has not traveled or is ill. Only one person is permitted in the home while the inspection is being conducted. The NJ Department of Community Affairs is permitting homeowners to take photos and use facetime to assist in inspections as well if the inspector is uncomfortable entering a home.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- 2020 Budget Discussion:

CFO Steinberg provided 2020 budget worksheets for review and noted that the Township Committee can go through the worksheet and nickel and dime the line items to get taxes down but those actions will create consequences next year. The Township will anticipate lower revenue this year and will need to look at reducing expenditures. CFO Steinberg noted that last year the open space tax was reduced from 4 cents to 2 cents, county/school taxes were flat to offset the budget, and raised taxes by 2 cents though the tax increase was balanced out from lowering the open space tax. Mayor Plumer noted that this year is an unprecedented year. The Township Committee needs to look at how they deal with professionals, educational expenses at the schools, and how to reconstruct municipal operations next year. Mayor Plumer will not vote for a tax increase this year as taxes will be raised by the schools. Mayor Plumer wants to ensure an additional 3% goes to fire/ems volunteer services that oversee the Township and will not take a salary for the remainder of the year and forth coming years to aid residents in these extraordinary times. CFO Steinberg noted that the Township can use the increase to the budget this year with surplus as there is plenty there in lieu of raising taxes as the budget is approximately \$50,000 over from last year. CFO Steinberg noted that State aid will remain flat and the Township Administrator needs to control spending by having a restrictive eye.

Comm. Kiernan agreed with the Mayor regarding spending for this upcoming year and will look at the DPW and their bills to try and reduce liabilities with maintenance of existing equipment. The Court budget numbers are needed to complete the Township budget. Comm. Kiernan noted that Court has not been in session for two months and tickets are down. Additional personnel has been needed in the Court due to an employee being on leave. A backup plan is being looked at with moving to the Raritan Township Court as the Frenchtown Mayor has been in talks with them in an effort to reduce costs.

Comm. Pfefferle spoke on the history of capital issues during the budget process with the DPW in regards to equipment and maintenance. An equipment fund was set up several years ago to put money away and every 3 to 4 years equipment for the DPW can be purchased. Not doing a tax increase will cause problems in the future for items not being funded and will hurt the Township. There has been a moderate tax increase over the last two years and the open space tax was used last year to offset tax increases. This year the open space tax will remain at 2 cents, same as last year.

CFO Steinberg asked for guidance from the Township Committee as to how they would like to proceed with the budget. The State budget has been extended until September 30<sup>th</sup> and other deadlines are changing daily due to the coronavirus. The Township Committee discussed proceeding with the current proposed budget along with adding a 3% increase which equals \$7,000.00 to go towards EMS/Fire services and to use surplus for the slight increase in this year's budget.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

All items listed with an asterisk on the agenda "\*" are considered to be routine by the Township Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Committee member or citizen requests, in which event the item will be removed from the General Order of Business and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

- Resolution 2020-068 Discharging Mortgage and Housing Rehabilitation Agreement and Restriction-Fabula B-3, L-16 700 Sweet Hollow Road

Comm. Pfefferle made a motion, seconded by Comm. Kiernan to approve Resolution 2020-68.

**Roll Call: Aye: Kiernan, Pfefferle, Plumer**

**Nay: None**

**Abstain: None**

**Motion Carried**

**RESOLUTION 2020-068 OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ALEXANDRIA, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON,  
STATE OF NEW JERSEY DISCHARGING MORTGAGE AND HOUSING REHABILITATION  
AGREEMENT AND RESTRICTION**

**WHEREAS**, a mortgage was made by **Edward F. Fabula and Fern Fabula, H&W** (“Mortgagor” or “Property Owner”) on May 12, 1995 to the Township of Alexandria (“Township”) to secure repayment of a rehabilitation loan in the amount of \$8,000.00 given by the Township for affordable housing rehabilitation purposes for the residence owned by them and located on 700 Sweet Hollow Road, also known as Block 3, Lot 16 in the Township (the “Property”) pursuant to the Township’s affordable housing and fair share plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mortgage was recorded on May 23, 1995; and

**WHEREAS**, simultaneously with the Mortgage, the Township and the Property Owners also entered into a Township/Homeowner Agreement whereby the Property Owners agreed to abide by the terms and conditions of the Township’s Housing Rehabilitation program and to deed restrict the residence on the Property for affordable housing for a period of six (6) years from the date the home improvements were completed: and

**WHEREAS**, the aforesaid Township/Homeowner Agreement and Deed Restriction was recorded in the Hunterdon County Clerk’s Office on May 23, 1995 in Deed Book 1126, Page 0524; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee is satisfied that the Property Owner fulfilled the terms of the Township/Homeowner Agreement and that they owe no interest on the loan since they resided on the Property for at least six (6) years which was the minimum number of years required in order to receive the loan interest-free; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township has received payment in full for the amount due on the loan and finds that it is appropriate to discharge the mortgage and deed restriction.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Alexandria, County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey, on this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020 as follows:

1. The Township Committee approves the discharge and cancellation of the Mortgage on the Property which was made by the Mortgagor **Edward F. Fabula and Fern Fabula, H&W** on February 12, 1995 to the Township and thereafter recorded in the Hunterdon County Clerk’s Office in Mortgage Book 1128, Page 875 on May 23, 1995.

2. The Township Committee also approves the discharge and cancellation of the Township/Homeowner Agreement and Deed Restriction which was recorded in the Hunterdon County Clerk’s office on May 23, 1995 in Deed Book 1126, Page 0524 on May 23, 1995.

3. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Township Clerk and/or Township Attorney, as applicable, are hereby authorized to sign the Discharge of Mortgage and the Discharge of the Deed Restriction on the above-referenced Property and/or any other documents necessary to effectuate the cancellation of same and to file them with the Hunterdon County Clerk’s office, as appropriate.

4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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**ENGINEER'S REPORT:**

Township Committee read the attached report for the month of April prepared by Township Engineer Decker. Comm. Kiernan sent an email to Twp. Eng. Decker regarding Hemingway Estates and would like him to re-examine the road before the Township releases bond money and takes over the road. The pavement is heavily cracked and there are inconsistencies in curbing along the road edge.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- January 8, 2020 Township Committee
- January 8, 2020 Township Executive Session
- February 12, 2020 Township Committee
- February 12, 2020 Township Executive Session
- February 26, 2020 Budget Meeting
- February 26, Executive Session
- February 27, 2020 Township Special Meeting
- March 11, 2020 Township Committee
- March 11, 2020 Township Executive
- March 25, 2020 Budget Meeting

Comm. Pfefferle made a motion, seconded by Comm. Kiernan to approve the above meeting minutes with the following corrections:

- 1.) On the January 22, 2020 Executive Session Meeting Minutes approved at the March 11, 2020 Township meeting to include a change of hours requested by Deputy Clerk Houck.
- 2.) On the February 12, 2020 Executive Session Meeting Minutes to include language regarding the Peacefield Management property that the Township Committee split the difference and the difference was less than the original appraisal amount the Township would have had to pay out.

**Roll Call: Aye: Kiernan, Pfefferle**

**Nay: None**

**Abstain: Plumer**

**Motion Carried**

**BILL LIST:**

Mayor Plumer made a motion, seconded by Comm. Kiernan to approve the April 8, 2020 bill list.

**Roll Call: Aye: Plumer, Kiernan, Pfefferle**

**Nay: None**

**Abstain: None**

**Motion Carried**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON GENERAL MATTERS:**

There were no members of the public on the conference call but members of the Township Committee discussed the following:

- Comm. Kiernan commended all the Township employees for keeping the Township going during the Covid-19 crisis.
- Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski will follow up with Park/Rec member Katie Wigness on the Park Maintenance Plan to see if the Hunterdon County Freeholder's have approved it yet.
- Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski will look into the cost of adding the Township meeting recordings to the website.
- Comm. Pfefferle would like to move forward with Mayor Plumer's suggestion at the March 11, 2020 Township meeting to have the Township Committee increase to 5 members from 3. Comm. Pfefferle noted that it has been challenging during the current Covid-19 crisis not being able to sit on conference calls and speak with other Township Committee members due to being in violation of the Open Public Meetings Act.
- Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski noted that the primary election scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup> and been postponed until July 7<sup>th</sup> per the Governor due to Covid-19. There has been not determination if the election will be a mail in ballot or not.
- Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski will follow up with Concord Energy in regards to the energy aggregation program.
- The auction of Township properties will proceed after the Coronavirus pandemic has ended.
- Comm. Pfefferle questioned why the solid waste bid is asking for financial information and that a company interested in bidding reached out to him to indicate that they have never had to supply their financial information on a bid. Twp. Attorney Dragan noted that information being requested is standard practice for soliciting bids and to protect the Township. Township Clerk/Administrator Bobrowski advised that the solid waste bid was amended and that all who requested bid packages were sent an addenda with the change to the financial information being requested. The bid date was extended from April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup> and the addenda along with the bid extension was published in the Hunterdon Democrat and the Star Ledger.

**CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Remember to file your US Census! New Jersey is stressing the importance of participating in the census, and residents are being encouraged to do so. Federal funding for social programs, transportation, public safety, and health insurance are directly tied to the census, as is New Jersey's representation in congress. A flyer and frequently asked questions document can be found on the Township website to encourage participation. It includes what residents will, and will not, be asked, and assures them that their responses are protected by law. In New Jersey, everyone counts!

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

Comm. Kiernan made a motion, seconded by Comm. Pfefferle to adjourn at 10:10 PM.

**Roll Call: Aye: Plumer, Pfefferle, Kiernan**

**Nay: None**

**Abstain: None**

**Motion Carried**

Meeting Adjourned at 10:10 PM.

**Respectfully Submitted:**

**Michele Bobrowski, CMC/RMC**

**Township Clerk**

I hereby certify that I have reviewed these Minutes of the Township Committee Meeting of April 8, 2020 and certify that said Minutes were approved by the Township Committee on the 13th day of May 2020.

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Gabe Plumer, Mayor

