TOWNSHIP OF HILLSIDE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MINUTES

June 23, 2026 @ 6:30pm *Agenda subject to change*

The Caucus-Regular Meeting of the Township of Hillside Township Council was held on June 23, 2026, in the Municipal Building, 1409 Liberty Avenue Hillside, New Jersey 07205 at 6:30pm.

CALL STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE
TO ORDER
Dr. Angela R. Garretson, Council President called the meeting to order.

Rayna E. Harris, Township Clerk read the following statement: This Meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was sent to the Star Ledger on January 20, 2026. In addition, copies of notice were posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building, posted on the Town Hall doors, and field in the Office of the Township Clerk. Notices on the bulletin board have remained continuously posted. Proper notice having been given; the Township Clerk is directed to include this statement in the minutes of this meeting.

ROLL CALL
Rayna E. Harris, Township Clerk, read the roll call.

PRESENT
Council Member Lisa Bonanno, Council Member George L. Cook III, Council Member Armando DaSilva, Council President Angela R. Garretson, & Council Member Calvin Lofton

ALSO PRESENT
Faheem J. Ra'Oof's, Business Administrator & Chief Financial Officer; Dr. Williee Parker, Esq. Township Attorney; Brook L. Nieves, Deputy Clerk and Rayna E. Harris, Township Clerk

EXCUSED
Council Vice President David Feuerstein & Council Member Daryl Joyner

MINUTES
1. Caucus Meeting of April 14, 2026
   Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
   All Council Members voted with the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**
2. Regular Meeting of May 26, 2026
   Motion by Council Member Lofton; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
   All Council Members voted with the Affirmative with the Exception of Council Member DaSilva who Abstain. **Motion Carries**

SPECIAL PRESENTATION
1. Finance Committee – Budget Update (By: Council Member Cook & CFO/BA Faheem Ra'Oof)

PAYMENT OF BILLS (June 23, 2026)
Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
All Council Members voted with the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

ORDINANCES >> First Reading & Introduction
O-26-20 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 291, CREATING SECTION 20.3, PARAGRAPHS "A" THROUGH "E", PROHIBITING REPAIRING OF VEHICLES OUTSIDE OF A FULLY ENCLOSED BUILDING
Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

ORDINANCES >> Seconded Reading & Public Hearing

O-26-17 An Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget up to 2% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Council of the Township Of Hillside in the County of Union finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2026 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Council hereby determines that a 3.5 % increase in the budget for said year, amounting to $1,573,710.79 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Council hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Municipal Council of the Township Of Hillside, in the County of Union, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2026 budget year, the final appropriations of the Township Of Hillside shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5 %, amounting to $1,573,710.79; *and*

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance, as introduced, be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance, upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.

First Reading and Introduction: June 9, 2026

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT	EXCUSED
		Bonanno					X
X		Cook	X				
		DaSilva		X			
	X	Joyner	X				
		Lofton	X				
		Feuerstein, VP	X				
		Garretson, CP	X				

Public Hearing: June 23, 2026

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT	EXCUSED
		Bonanno	X				
X		Cook	X				
		DaSilva	X				
		Joyner					X
	X	Lofton	X				
		Feuerstein, VP					X
		Garretson, CP	X				

Second Reading and Final Adoption: June 23, 2026

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT	EXCUSED
	X	Bonanno	X				
X		Cook	X				
		DaSilva			X		
		Joyner					X
		Lofton	X				
		Feuerstein, VP					X
		Garretson, Pres.	X				

Motion to Open Public Hearing by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton, **All-In-Favor**

None

Motion to Close Public Hearing by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton, **All-In-Favor**

RESOLUTIONS

R-26-121 Auth. 5-Year-Old Premiums and Foreclosed Tax Sale Certificates to Escheat to the Township

WHEREAS, 54:5-32 PERMITS the Tax collector to sell taxes, assessments or other municipal liens at Tax Sale to the bidder who offers to pay the highest amount of premium; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:5-33 any premium payment shall be held by the collector and returned to the purchaser of the fee if and when redemption is made. If redemption is not made within five years from the date of tax sale, the premium shall be turned over to the Chief Financial Office of the municipality and become part of the funds of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, if the property is foreclosed by an outside lien holder, the premium paid by that lien holder becomes Township revenue; and

WHEREAS, the records of the Tax Office indicate the attached Tax Sale Certificates labeled "Exhibit A" are premiums from 2020 and prior years which remain outstanding for greater than five years from the date of tax sale; and

WHEREAS, the records of the Tax Office indicate the following Tax Sale Certificates labeled "Exhibit A" were foreclosed upon in 2025 and prior years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside that the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to transfer the following funds:

A. The total premiums in the amount of $20,800.00 a unanticipated revenue
B. The total foreclosed premiums in the amount of $53,300.00 as unanticipated revenue.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-122 Auth. Property Tax Refund Due to Overpayment

WHEREAS, overpayment of property tax exists on the properties listed below.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside hereby that the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to issue checks, as indicated to refund overpayment.

1. The Chief Financial Officer is authorized to issue a check, as indicated, to refund overpayment.
2. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-123 Tax: Refund Tax Sale Payment

WHEREAS, property known as Block 902, Lot 1, 1155 Liberty Ave, was listed for Tax Sale held on December 18, 2025, and

WHEREAS, this property should not have been listed in our Tax Sale as the property owner had pre-paid the 2025 sewer but an issue with the Munidex System cause the property to be on the tax sale list, and

WHEREAS, a tax lien was sold on this property to Ram Tax Lien Fund II LP RTLF-NJ II LLC in the amount of $1,136.24 and a premium of $1,500.00 was also paid, now

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Township of Hillside, that the Chief Financial Officer, is hereby authorized to issue a check to owner of the Tax Sale Certificate in the amount of **$1,397.78**, and a premium of **$1,500.00** to refund the overpayment.

Ram Tax Lien Fund II LP RTLF-NJ II LLC
4450 Cedarglen Ct
Moorpark, CA 93021

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-124 Auth. Refund of Premiums for Tax Sale Certificates June 2026 as the Certificates of Sale Have Been Fully Paid & Satisfied

WHEREAS, Certificates of Sale for unpaid municipal taxes were issued and sold to the lien holders listed on the attached spreadsheet; and

WHEREAS, premiums were paid to acquire these Certificates of Sale; and

WHEREAS, these Certificates of Sale have been fully paid and satisfied.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HILLSIDE THAT:

1. The Chief Financial Officer is authorized to issue checks, as indicated on the attached spreadsheet, to refund premiums.
2. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-125 Auth. the Township of Hillside Tax Collector to Hold an Electronic Tax Sale

WHEREAS N.J.S.A. 54:5-19 requires that the Tax Collector hold a tax sale once a year for unpaid property taxes and other municipal charges; and

WHEREAS N.J.S.A. 54:5-19.01 authorizes electronic tax sales pursuant to the rules and regulations promulgated by the Director of the Division of Local Government Services; and

WHEREAS an electronic tax sale is innovative and provides a greater pool of potential lien buyers, thus creating the environment for a more complete tax sale process:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside as follows:

3. The Township Tax Collector is authorized to hold an electronic tax sale.
4. A certified copy of this resolution shall be provided by the Office of the Township Clerk to the Business Administrator, Township Attorney, Chief Financial Offer, Township Tax Assessor, Township Tax Collector, and Township Auditor.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-126 Auth. an Accelerate Tax Lien Sale for CY 2026 Pursuant to N.J.S.A 54:5-19

WHEREAS, Chapter 99 of the Public laws of 1977 of the State of New Jersey (P.L.1997, c. 99) (N.J.S.A. 54:5-19) was enacted on May 12, 1997: and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 54:5-19 permits municipalities to hold a "tax lien sale" for arrearages in real property taxes and other liens or charges, after the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the fiscal year, upon passage of a Resolution permitting the same, by the Governing Body; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year of the Township of Hillside begins on January 1 and ends December 31st: Now

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HILLSIDE THAT:

1. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 54:5-19, the Township of Hillside herby directs that for unpaid real property taxes or other municipal liens or charges, or any part thereof in arrears as of the eleventh of November 2026, the Tax Collector shall, subject to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 54:5-19, enforce the liens by selling the lien on the property, pursuant to law, provided that the sale is conducted no earlier than in the last month of the fiscal year, but not later than December 31, 2026.
2. Such sale shall include only such unpaid taxes or other municipal liens or charges as of or in arrears in the calendar year 2026.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-127 Auth. Submission of a Grant Proposal to the NJ Department of Community Affairs FY26 Management Enhancement Review Program (MERP) Grant Program by the Township of Hillside for a Technology Infrastructure & Efficiency Study

WHEREAS, the Township of Hillside desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs in the amount of $80,000.00 for a Technology Infrastructure & Efficiency Study; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Hillside recognizes that the total project cost is $100,000.00 and commits to providing a required local match in the amount of $20,000.00; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Hillside commits to funding its share of the project and to implementing the recommendations of the study to improve operational efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance service delivery.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1) That the Township of Hillside does hereby authorizes the application for such a grant; and

2) Recognizes and accepts that the Department may offer a lesser or greater amount and therefore, upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of any such grant agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of funds pursuant to the terms of the agreement between the Township of Hillside and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the persons whose names, titles, and signatures appear below are authorized by the Township of Hillside officials to sign the application, and that they or their successors in said titles are authorized to sign the agreement, and any other documents necessary in connection therewith.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-128 Auth. Submission of a FY-2026 Grant Application to the NJ Department of Community Affairs for Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs provides funding for governmental entities to develop or expand recreational programs for individuals with disabilities within their communities; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Hillside Council desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs in the amount of $15,000.00 to create recreational programs for individuals with disabilities within the Hillside Community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township of Hillside Council, County of Union, State of New Jersey, that:

1. It hereby authorizes the submission of an application for such a grant.
2. It recognizes that a 20% match is required.
3. It recognizes and accepts that the Department may offer a lesser or greater amount and therefore, upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of any such grant agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of funds pursuant to the terms of the agreement between the Township of Hillside and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.
4. The Business Administrator is authorized to sign the application, agreement and all documents required to obtain said grant.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Bonanno
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-129 Appointment of Public Agency Compliance Office (P.A.C.O.)

WHEREAS, the Township is obligated by law to comply with all equal opportunity and affirmative action compliance requirements imposed by federal, state and local laws, and, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.3, to annually designate a Public Agency Compliance Officer who shall be responsible for ensuring the Township's compliance with applicable State and Federal law and regulation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside as follows:

1. Dr. Willie Parker, Esq. is hereby appointed as the Township's Public Agency Compliance Officer for a term of one (I) year, commencing as of July 1, 2026, and ending on June 30, 2027.
2. As the Township's Public Agency Compliance Officer, Dr. Willie Parker, Esq. shall be responsible for the following:
   a. To take responsibility for the Township's equal employment opportunity reporting obligations, and to ensure the timely completion thereof;
   b. To be responsible for performing such other duties and responsibilities as may be determined by the Township Council for the purpose of implementing the Township's equal employment opportunity and public agency compliance program; and
   c. To carry out all other duties related to equal employment opportunity and public agency compliance per N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.3 and as may otherwise be required by law.
   d. An appropriate notice of this appointment shall be promptly furnished to the State of New Jersey, Department of Treasury.
3. This Resolution shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Motion to Adopt by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-130 Auth. the Township of Hillside to Enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the Educational Services Commission of NJ (ESCNJ)

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(5) authorizes contracting units to establish a Cooperative Pricing System and to enter into Cooperative Pricing Agreements for its administration; and

WHEREAS, the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey, hereinafter referred to as the "Lead Agency " has offered voluntary participation in a Cooperative Pricing System for the purchase of goods and services;

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2026 the governing body of the Township Of Hillside, County of Union, State of New Jersey duly considered participation in a Cooperative Pricing System for the provision and performance of goods and services;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside, in the County of Union, and State of New Jersey as follows:

TITLE

This RESOLUTION shall be known and may be cited as the Cooperative Pricing Resolution of the Township of Hillside.

AUTHORITY

Pursuant to the provisions of *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(5)*, the Mayor and Business Administrator/CFO is hereby authorized to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the Lead Agency.

CONTRACTING UNIT

The Lead Agency shall be responsible for complying with the provisions of the *Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.)* and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-131 Auth. an Event Application for a Block Party on Long Ave.

WHEREAS, Tanky's Bar & Grill Inc. has submitted an Event Application for a Block Party being held on June 27, 2026 (rain date: June 28, 2026), from 1:00 p.m. ending at 9:00 p.m. at 330 Long Avenue, Hillside, New Jersey (New York Place / parking lot); and

WHEREAS, said application has been presented to the Police, Fire, Building, Recreation, and Health Departments for findings and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Township Clerk has reported that the requisite fee has been paid.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside, County of Union, State of New Jersey that **Tanky's Bar & Grill Inc.** is issued an Event / Street Closure License in accordance with the Event Application provided the non-refundable application fee.

Motion by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

R-26-132 Auth. Emergency Budget Appropriations for Total Sum of $6,772,696.00

WHEREAS, an emergent condition has arisen wherein the appropriation set forth in the calendar year of 2026 temporary budget are insufficient to meet the financial obligation as set forth below and the payroll for municipal officers and employees; and

WHEREAS, the permanent budget for the calendar year 2026 has not yet been adopted; and

WHEREAS, the emergency appropriations resolution adopted for the calendar year 2026 pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20 is $6,772,696.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township of Hillside, by (not less than two-thirds (2/3) of all members of thereof affirmatively concurring), that, in accordance with the aforementioned statute, the CFY 2026 temporary budget be and the same is hereby amended to provide for an additional emergency appropriations in the total amount of $6,772,696.00 and distributed as follows:

Account # - Description	Amount
20-1001 General Administration S&W	$40,000.00
20-1002 General Administration O&E	$5,000.00
20-1011 Temporary Summer Employees S&W	$26,550.00
20-1101 Municipal Council S&W	$14,418.00

20-1102 Municipal Council O&E	$2,000.00
20-1201 Municipal Clerk S&W	$40,000.00
20-1202 Municipal Clerk O&E	$8,333.00
20-1212 ABC Control Board O&E	$1,400.00
20-1222 Postage O&E	$0
20-1232 Advertising O&E	$1.666.00
20-1252 Elections O&E	$15,666.00
20-1301 Financial Administration S&W	$83,333.00
20-1302 Financial Administration O&E	$25,833.00
20-1352 Audit Services O&E	$0.00
20-1401 Data Processing S&W	$0.00
20-1402 Data Processing O&E	$5,000.00
20-1451 Collection of Taxes S&W	$30,000.00
20-1452 Collection of Taxes O&E	$8,000.00
20-1501 Tax Assessment Administration S&W	$15,166.00
20-1502 Tax Assessment Administration O&E	$5000.00
20-1551 Legal Services S&W	$24,166.00
20-1552 Legal Services O&E	$25,000.00
20-1651 Engineering Services S&W	$0.00
20-1652 Engineering Services O&E	$43,250.00
20-1701 Economic Development Agencies S&W	$0.00
20-1702 Economic Development Agencies O&E	$0.00
21-1801 Planning Board S&W	$0.00
21-1802 Planning Board O & E	$4,500.00
21-1851 Zoning Board of Adjustment S&W	$0.00
21-1852 Zoning Board of Adjustment O &E	$1,250.00
22-1951 Code Enforcement /Building S&W	$81,666.00
22-1952 Code Enforcement /Building O & E	$2,500.00
23-2102 Liability Insurance O&E	$0.00
23-2152 Worker Compensation Insurance O&E	$0.00
23-2202 Employee Group Insurance O&E	$1,380,000.00
25-2401 Police Department S&W	$1,457,500.00
25-2402 Police Department O&E	$48,000.00
25-2411 Crossing Guards S&W	$40,833.00
25-2521 Office of Emergency Management S&W	$1,500.00
25-2522 Office of Emergency Management O&E	$1,500.00
25-2602 Ambulance Service Fees O&E	$6,500.00
25-2651 Fire Department S&W	$1,158,500.00
25-2652 Fire Department O&E	$36,500.00
25-2661 Uniform Fire Safety S&W	$12,500.00
25-2662 Uniform Fire Safety O&E	$2,000.00
25-2751 Municipal Prosecutor S&W	$5,166.00
25-2752 Municipal Prosecutor O & E	$0.00
26-2901 Streets and Road Maintenance S&W	$291,700.00
26-2902 Streets and Road Maintenance O & E	$56,700.00
26-3052 Solid Waste Collection O&E	$517,000.00
26-3062 Solid Waste Management	$0.00

26-3101 Buildings and Grounds S & W	$11,700.00
26-3102 Buildings and Grounds O & W	$19,500.00
26-3151 Vehicle Maintenance S&W	$16,700.00
26-3152 Vehicle Maintenance O & E	$17,500.00
27-3301 Public Health Services S&W	$29,000.00
27-3302 Public Health Services O & E	$3,500.00
27-3322 Protective Gear & Hazardous& I	$0.00
27-3402 Animal Control O & E	$20,000.00
28-3701 Recreation Services S & W	$43,500.00
28-3702 Recreation Services O & E	$6,500.00
28-3711 Senior Citizens S & W	$33,400.00
28-3712 Senior Citizens O &E	$3,250.00
29-3902 Municipal Library O & E	$325,000.00
30-4151 Accumulated Leave Compensation O & E	$0
31-4412 Utilities O & E	$126,700.00
36-4722 Social Security O & E	$200,000.00
42-2002 UC Fire-EMS Shared Dispatch Sv O & E	$10,150.00
42-2003 UC Health Officer O & E	$20,000.00
43-4901 Municipal Court S & W	$58,400.00
43-4902 Municipal Court O & E	$5,800.00
43-4952 Public Defender S & W	$3,500.00
43-4962 JOINT TRUNK SEWER O & E	$293,000.00
Totals	**$6,772,696.00**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the above Emergency Budget Appropriations is hereby authorized to provide for contracts, commitments and payments prior to the adoption of the 2026 Municipal Budget.

Motion to Adopt by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Member Lofton
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Motion to Open Public Comments by Council Member Cook; Seconded by Council Vice President Lofton, **All-In-Favor**

Paula King – 1462 Hiawatha Ave.

- I would like to raise two concerns. First, the sidewalks along Leslie Street and Hiawatha Avenue are in very poor condition. I often walk my granddaughter to school, and in some areas we have no choice but to walk in the street because the sidewalks are unsafe, which is especially difficult for seniors and anyone using a walker. I would appreciate clarification on who is responsible for repairing them and whether the Borough can help address this issue. Second, I want to commend the Police Department for their quick response whenever I have called. However, I remain concerned about groups of young people gathering in parked cars, smoking marijuana, and leaving bottles and litter on neighborhood properties. I believe our youth would benefit from more positive activities, such as summer programs or community events, to help keep them engaged.
- I came here myself with my client because we still haven't received an answer. We want to know how this matter will be resolved and when the property owner will be required to correct these violations. We would like to be able to walk safely on the sidewalk instead of having to walk in the street because of the condition of the property. We have been waiting for answers, and I hope we can receive an update tonight. Mr. Rumble, would you like to follow up on this matter?

Tyrese Outlaw – 357 Wines Ave.

- To answer your question, my family has been part of this township for 52 years. The sidewalks were replaced through a grant about 40 years ago, and it wasn't just the Westminster section, my home on the corner of Wines Avenue and Leslie was included as well. Today, sidewalk maintenance is the homeowner's responsibility. At the DPW, I often hear

claims that one side of town gets better service, but that's simply not true. Residents on both sides of the railroad tracks receive the same level of service, and we need to move past that stigma.

- Just call the DPW if you see trash being spilled or unsafe sanitation practices. We'll notify the contractor's supervisor so the issue can be corrected. We also have our summer cleanup team working to address litter hotspots throughout the Township. Please continue to report any problems.

Karen Franklin – 274 Clark St.

- The ordinance is the law. It requires property owners, tenants, or anyone in possession of a property to keep it free of high grass, weeds, brush, garbage, debris, and other conditions that create health or safety hazards or negatively affect the neighborhood. The notice clearly states that violations must be corrected immediately or a summons may be issued. My question is whether this ordinance is still being enforced. For the past 10 years, I have repeatedly called about properties in my neighborhood. Some complaints were addressed, but many were not. We now have properties with overgrown weeds, trash, and debris. One landlord's landscaper cuts the grass in just a few minutes but simply blows the litter and leaves to the side of the house instead of cleaning them up. The property smells because the garbage and debris are left there, and there is also a neighboring property behind me with accumulated garbage. I would like to know how the Township plans to enforce the ordinance consistently.

Vanessa Randalls – 274 Clark St.

- To piggyback on what Karen, the family member, said, she covered most of the issues. As she mentioned, the hedges have become so overgrown that they now look like trees. As a taxpayer, it's frustrating to walk out of your home every day and look at that. You work hard to keep your own property maintained, pay your taxes, and take pride in your neighborhood, so why should you have to live next to a property that's being neglected? Whether it's the landlord's responsibility or the tenant's, someone should be maintaining it. This has been an ongoing problem for nearly 10 years, so my question is: what has taken so long? Is there an ordinance or law that allows the Township to step in if the property owner fails to address these violations? Can the Township have the DPW or a professional contractor clean up the property properly, cut back the overgrown hedges, and restore it to a safe and presentable condition? If so, can the Township do the work and recover the cost from the property owner? I think that's what taxpayers want to know.

N/A - 172 Roman Ave.

- While I don't currently live in the Township, I grew up in Hillside, and my family has proudly owned property here since 1973. Because of my lifelong roots in this community, I understand the concerns about short-term rentals. No one wants party houses, noise, parking problems, or overflowing garbage. If changing the ordinance meant allowing unregulated rentals, I would oppose it too. However, the current ban doesn't stop short-term rentals—it only prevents the Township from regulating them. It pushes them underground and limits enforcement when problems occur. With major events like the FIFA World Cup bringing visitors to our region, neighboring towns can benefit while Hillside residents and businesses miss out on opportunities. Visitors support local restaurants, gas stations, and small businesses, and legal short-term rentals could also generate municipal occupancy tax revenue to help offset Township costs. Rather than a blanket ban, I believe Hillside should adopt strong regulations that protect our neighborhoods while allowing the Township to enforce the rules and provide accountability.

Mr. Helmet - 76 Maple Ave.

- I've been coming to Township meetings for the past seven or eight years because this issue still hasn't been resolved. I want everyone on the Council to understand why I'm here. I brought photos to show the condition of my property. I've cleaned up areas that looked better than this, yet these open garbage cans and the trash surrounding them have been left untouched. I'm asking the Council how long this situation has been allowed to continue. I've reported it many times, spoken with Township officials, and attended meetings after meetings, but the problem remains. I'm simply asking the Township to enforce its ordinances and make sure this property is cleaned up properly, because no resident should have to live next to conditions like these.
- The issue isn't simply having more people picking up trash. In other towns, such as Paterson, trash is collected every day, but the real solution is to address the source of the problem. Many of our public garbage cans have open tops that allow trash to overflow or blow away. Replacing them with covered containers that require people to open a lid before disposing of trash could help reduce litter. People may still leave garbage beside the cans, but that's where enforcement comes in. If a business is responsible for the trash around its property, then it should be held accountable. I own a business, and if I failed to keep the area around it clean, I would expect to receive a citation. In my opinion, the long-term solution is not just adding more staff it's replacing outdated trash cans and enforcing existing litter ordinances.

Arthur Kobitz – 327 Trinty Place.

- I have a few questions and comments. First, under the new ordinance, am I allowed to wash my car in my driveway on Sundays? Second, several years ago, the Township used to clean up neglected properties, place a lien on them, and recover the costs from the property owner. If I remember correctly, those costs were added to the lien. Is that still an option? I

know the DPW may be short-staffed, but when those properties were maintained, they were cleaned properly. Also, did the Township ever pass the ordinance restricting trucks from parking on residential streets? If so, someone should look at Long Avenue, where tractor-trailers are lining one side of the road and creating a serious safety hazard. Finally, I've been raising concerns all year about overgrown properties in my neighborhood. I'm glad residents are speaking up, but code enforcement needs to be out in the field addressing these violations, not just working from the office. Thank you.

Natasha Wilson -217 Williamson Ave.

- I have a question regarding the staff layoffs and the new hires. I noticed that some positions are being eliminated while new positions are being created. Can you explain the financial impact? Specifically, what is the difference between the salaries being eliminated and the salaries for the new hires? Is there an overall cost savings to the Township? I also have a question about the new Public Agency Compliance Officer position. My understanding is that this position will be responsible for reviewing compliance reports. Could you explain the purpose of this position and how it will benefit the Township? Regarding the staff reductions, what impact will these layoffs have on the Township's operations and the services provided to residents?

Melinda Franklin 274 Clark St.

- I have three concerns. First, is there an ordinance that addresses abandoned or inoperable vehicles parked in driveways? There are vehicles that have been sitting in the same driveway for eight to ten years, and they appear to have become shelters for stray cats and other animals. Second, I've noticed that the shopping center with the laundromat has become increasingly littered with trash. I've never seen it in such poor condition, and it's creating a negative impression of our community. Finally, I've spoken with landscapers who have said that some absentee landlords only do the bare minimum to maintain their rental properties because they're focused on collecting rent rather than caring for the neighborhood. I hope the Township will continue enforcing property maintenance ordinances and also look into who is responsible for emptying the public trash cans in commercial areas and how often they are serviced, because that may also be contributing to the problem.

Val Mayo – 1424 Liberty Ave.

- I have a couple of concerns. First, I wanted to follow up on the proposed housing development at the former Bristol-Myers site. At a previous meeting, I asked the developer return to answer additional questions, particularly about the proposed senior affordable housing. Could you provide an update on whether the developer will be coming back to address those questions? My second concern is about consumer protection. Are there any rules requiring businesses, such as gas stations or auto repair shops, to provide customers with itemized receipts for repair work? A friend of mine recently had repairs done and was only given a total bill, without a breakdown of the work performed or the charges. If a customer believes they should have received an itemized invoice, which agency or department should they contact for assistance?

Aldina Mitchell – 1431 Maple Ave.

- I have a couple of recommendations. First, the Township has several vacant lots that could be put to better use. Instead of allowing illegal parking, why not designate one as a parking lot for commercial vehicles or commuter parking and charge a monthly or daily fee? It could help address parking issues while generating revenue for the Township. I've also seen property owners make unauthorized changes, such as raising fences beyond the permitted height to hide vehicles. I think it's worth exploring better ways to manage these issues by making productive use of our vacant properties.
- Residents have been asking about groundhogs, raccoons, and other wildlife. For now, we refer them to Humane Society and other appropriate agencies for assistance.

Lesile Evans – 172 Grumman Ave.

- There is a serious rat infestation in the Township and the surrounding vacant lots. We've reported these properties many times, but the grass is often left overgrown unless the Township cuts it. The owner is a corporation that doesn't respond to tenants or neighbors, and the property continues to deteriorate. The vacant lots have become overgrown and are attracting rats and other pests. As homeowners, we're trying to improve our neighborhood, but it's difficult when neglected properties are left unaddressed. I love this town and remember when Hillside was a community everyone took pride in. I hope the Township will continue enforcing property maintenance and consider a public awareness campaign to encourage residents and property owners to take pride in keeping our neighborhoods clean and safe.

Motion to Close Public Comments by Council Member DaSilva; Seconded by Council Member Lofton, **All-In-Favor**

COUNCIL REMARKS

Council Member DaSilva
Council Member Cook
Council Member Lofton
Council Member Bonanno
Council President Dr. Garretson

Motion to Adjourned by Council Member Cook; Seconded Council Member Lofton, All-In-Favor

Adjourned at 8:19pm:

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Rayna E. Harris, Township Clerk

Date: August 17 2026

Council President Angela R. Garretson