

**TOWNSHIP OF HILLSIDE
CAUCUS MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MINUTES**

OCTOBER 14, 2025

The Caucus Meeting of the Township of Hillside Township Council was held on October 14, 2025, in the Municipal Building, 1409 Liberty Avenue Hillside, New Jersey 07205 at 6:47 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Craig Epps, Council President called the meeting to order.

FLAG SALUTE

Council President Epps led the flag salute.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE

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 3, 2025. 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

The Township Clerk read the roll call.

PRESENT

Council Members: Lisa Bonanno, Craig Epps, Angela Garretson, Andrea Hyatt, Daryl Joyner

EXCUSED

Council Members: David Feuerstein, Robert Rios

ALSO PRESENT

Hope Smith, B.A; Glynn Jones, CFO; Gracia Montilus, Township Attorney; Brook L. Nieves, Deputy Clerk and Rayna E. Harris, Township Clerk

ABSENT

Council Member Daryl Joyner, Matthew Cove-Officer in Charge, Rashawn Carey-Fire Chief, Alfuquan Hardy-Recreation, & Anthony Russomanno-DPW Director

CY 2025 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

1. Public Hearing

Motion to Open Public Comments by Council Member Hyatt; Seconded by Council Member Garretson, **All-In-Favor**

Jonh Swisher, Auditor – He gave a brief speech on the process of the amendment to the budget.

Maddie Holloway – 141 Bailey Ave.

- In terms of dollars and cents, what would be the difference between 13.7% and 11.3% in the budget? Also, what parts of the budget would be affected if the amendment goes through?

Arthur Kobitz – 327 Trinity Pl.

- His only concern regarding the budget is whether enough money has been allocated for garbage pickup, because every year it falls short and funds have to be pulled from another line item. He also believes that if the town has a new mayor, they should not be burdened with debt from this year.

Aldena Mitchell – 1431 Maple Ave.

- How does the town account for other employees, such as those who aren't part of a union? How are their paychecks adjusted, and where does that money come from? There seems to be a lot of unnecessary spending in Hillside.

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

2. R-25-203A Permitting 2025 Municipal Budget to be Read by Title

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Hillside in the County of Union did in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5 introduced and approved the annual budget for the Township at a Meeting of the Township Council on July 23, 2025; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-6, the annual budget as introduced and approved was published by summary in the Star Ledger, a newspaper circulated within the Township of Hillside at least 10 days prior to September 2, 2025, the date set forth in the advertisement for public hearing to be held at the Meeting of the Township Council at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building located at 1409 Liberty Avenue, Hillside, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the provisions of Sections 1(a) and 1(b) of N.J.S.A.40A:4-8 have been met by making available for public inspection a complete copy of the approved budget at least one week prior to the date of the hearing and by making copies of said approved budget available to each person requesting the same during said week and during the public hearing.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside, in the County of Union, New Jersey that pursuant with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-8, the Township Council hereby determines that the Municipal Budget for the Calendar Year 2025 shall be read by its title and it is further declared that the conditions as set forth in Sections 1(a) and 1(b) of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-8 have been met.

Motion by Council Member Garretson; Seconded by Council Member Hyatt
All Council Members voted in the Affirmative. **Motion Carries**

3. R-25-203B Amend the CY 2025 Municipal Budget (FAILS)

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Hillside in the County of Union did in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5 introduced and approved the annual budget for the Township at a Meeting of the Township Council on July 23, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the public hearing on said budget has been held as advertised on September 2, 2025, and

WHEREAS, it is desired to amend said approved budget, and

WHEREAS, the amendment was advertised on October 9, 2025, after it was introduced on September 25, 2025, by the Governing Body, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-9.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside, in the County of Union, New Jersey that the following amendments to the approved CY Budget of 2025 be made:

2025 Municipal Budget Amendment

**TOWNSHIP OF HILLSIDE, COUNTY OF UNION
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025**

Revenue and Appropriation Summaries

	2025	
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Summary of Revenues - Current Fund	Anticipated From	Anticipated To
1. Surplus	0.00	0.00
3. Total Miscellaneous Revenues	15,663,847.65	15,776,705.42
4. Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	0.00	0.00
6. Amount To be Raised By Taxes	37,359,671.97	36,621,670.12
Total General Revenues	56,963,179.21	56,338,035.13

Summary of Appropriations - Current Fund	Appropriated From	Appropriated To
1. Operating Expenses: Salaries & Wages	21,717,450.00	21,578,500.00
Other Expenses	16,872,000.00	16,596,000.00
2. Deferred Charges & Other Appropriations	6,485,165.52	6,521,165.52
3. Capital Improvements	350,000.00	100,000.00
4. Debt Service	2,289,261.54	2,301,259.28
6. Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	896,216.28	888,024.46
Total General Appropriations	56,963,179.21	56,338,035.13

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that three certified copies of this resolution be filed forthwith in the Office of the Director of Local Government Services for certification of the local municipal budget so amended.

Motion by Council Member Hyatt; Seconded by Council Member Garretson
 All Council Members voted Nay with the Exception of Council Member Hyatt who Voted Yes. **Motion Fails**

4. R-25-204 Auth. the Adoption of the CY 2025 Municipal Budget (FAILS)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Hillside, in the County of Union, New Jersey, that the statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Municipal Budget of the Township of Hillside for the Calendar Year 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said Budget was published in the August 19, 2025, edition of the Star Ledger, an official newspaper of the Township of Hillside.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED a hearing on the Budget Resolution was held at a meeting of the governing body held on September 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at which time and place discussions to said Budget Resolution for 2025 was presented by taxpayers or other interested persons.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of the budget were available in the office of the Municipal Clerk, Township of Hillside, at the Municipal Building, 1409 Liberty Avenue, Hillside, NJ 07205, during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All persons interested in the proposed budget had an opportunity to address the Township Council during the aforementioned public hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Hillside does hereby adopt the Budget for the CY 2025.

Motion by Council President Epps; Seconded by Council Member Garretson (**Rescinded Motion**)

PAYMENT OF BILLS – October 14, 2025 (FAILS)

Motion by Council Member Bonanno; Seconded by Council Member Garretson

All Council Members voted with the Affirmative with the Exception of Council Member Hyatt who Voted Nay.

Motion Fails

Motion to Adjourned by Council Member Garretson; Seconded Council Member Bonanno. All-In-Favor

Adjourned at 7:48pm

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,


Rayna E. Harris, Township Clerk



Craig Epps, Council President

DATE: 12/23/2025