

Minutes of the March 4, 2026 Special Township Committee Meeting of the Township of Hillsborough, in the County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, held in the Municipal Complex at 5:00 PM on March 4, 2026.

CALL OF THE ROLL

Upon call of the roll, the following Committee members were recorded present: Mayor Catherine Payne , Deputy Mayor Shawn Lipani, Committeeman Robert Britting, Jr., and Committeewoman Jill Gomez. Also in attendance were Township Administrator Anthony Ferrera, Township Clerk Sarah Brake, CFO Christiaan Bushell, and Township Attorney William Willard. Committeewoman Samantha Hand was absent.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

MAYOR STATES

Please be advised that in accordance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was made by the posting on the bulletin board at the Hillsborough Township Municipal Complex and notifying the officially designated newspapers that this meeting would take place at the Hillsborough Township Municipal Complex at Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 5:00 pm.

Mayor Payne stated: "I'd like to briefly explain why we called this meeting tonight. Our primary responsibility as a governing body is to ensure the continuous and effective operation of our township. To do that, we must fulfill our financial obligations, ranging from payroll for our employees to paying the vendors who keep our infrastructure running.

At our last meeting, the CFO provided an Emergency Temporary Appropriation that he deems necessary to run our township. Two votes were against it. This is not an authorization for new spending, nor is it a request for a loan or a tax increase. This vote is a bridge from the temporary budget appropriations to the final budget adoption, which has yet to be determined.

Tonight, we vote again, and my hope is that we can move forward with a unified voice to ensure that our township stays on track, our employees are paid, our essential services remain uninterrupted, and our bills stay paid until the full budget is finalized. This is about responsible fiscal management, plain and simple.

I would like to give a special thanks to our CFO for his patience, clarity, and the hours he has spent on educating our dais."

CONSENT

1. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS PRIOR TO ADOPTION OF 2026 BUDGET

WHEREAS, the 2026 Budget has not been adopted and additional appropriations are required in order to provide Township services until the 2026 Budget is adopted; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20 of the Local Budget Law authorizes the governing body by resolution adopted by a 2/3 vote of the full membership thereof to make emergency temporary appropriations for any purposes for which appropriations may lawfully be made for the period between the beginning of the current fiscal year and the date of the adoption of the budget for said year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hillsborough, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the following emergency temporary appropriations be made for the

year 2026:

Account Number	Description	2026 Temporary Budget	3/4/2026 ETA Request	Modified Temporary Budget
01-201-20-700-200	CENTRAL POSTAGE OE	3,500.00	0.00	3,500.00
01-201-20-701-100	TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION S&W	91,669.55	0.00	91,669.55
01-201-20-701-200	TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION OE	4,500.00	5,000.00	9,500.00
01-201-20-702-100	MAYOR & COMMITTEE S&W	13,475.00	0.00	13,475.00
01-201-20-702-200	MAYOR & COMMITTEE OE	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
01-201-20-703-100	TOWNSHIP CLERK S&W	106,381.45	0.00	106,381.45
01-201-20-703-200	TOWNSHIP CLERK OE	60,000.00	125,000.00	185,000.00
01-201-20-704-200	ELECTIONS/ OE	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
01-201-20-705-100	FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION S&W	76,650.00	0.00	76,650.00
01-201-20-705-200	FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OE	40,000.00	0.00	40,000.00
01-201-20-706-200	AUDIT SERVICES OE	50,000.00	0.00	50,000.00
01-201-20-707-100	HUMAN RESOURCES S&W	32,285.75	0.00	32,285.75
01-201-20-707-200	HUMAN RESOURCES OE	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
01-201-20-708-100	TAX COLLECTOR S&W	49,795.55	0.00	49,795.55
01-201-20-708-200	TAX COLLECTOR OE	20,000.00	0.00	20,000.00
01-201-20-709-100	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	73,671.50	0.00	73,671.50
01-201-20-709-200	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OE	100,000.00	0.00	100,000.00
01-201-20-710-100	TAX ASSESSOR S&W	120,321.25	0.00	120,321.25
01-201-20-710-200	TAX ASSESSOR OE	30,000.00	0.00	30,000.00
01-201-20-711-200	CENTRAL PURCHASING OE	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
01-201-20-712-200	LEGAL OE	100,000.00	0.00	100,000.00
01-201-20-713-200	HUMAN SERVICES OE	60,000.00	0.00	60,000.00
01-201-20-714-200	LEGAL OUTSIDE OE	40,000.00	25,000.00	65,000.00
01-201-20-715-100	ENGINEERING S&W	161,311.15	0.00	161,311.15
01-201-20-715-200	ENGINEERING OE	40,000.00	0.00	40,000.00
01-201-20-716-200	STORMWATER ENGINEERING OE	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00
01-201-20-719-200	PUBLIC MEETING RECORDING	15,000.00	0.00	15,000.00
01-201-20-722-100	ECONOMIC & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT S&W	51,176.30	0.00	51,176.30
01-201-20-722-200	ECONOMIC & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OE	12,000.00	0.00	12,000.00
01-201-21-720-100	PLANNING BOARD S&W	136,500.00	0.00	136,500.00
01-201-21-720-200	PLANNING OE	55,000.00	0.00	55,000.00
01-201-22-725-100	CONSTRUCTION OFFICIAL S&W	441,000.00	0.00	441,000.00
01-201-22-725-200	CONSTRUCTION OFFICIAL OE	25,000.00	0.00	25,000.00
01-201-23-731-000	OTHER INSURANCE OE	570,000.00	20,000.00	590,000.00
01-201-23-733-000	GROUP INSURANCE OE	1,950,000.00	250,000.00	2,200,000.00
01-201-23-734-200	UNEMPLOYMENT COMP OE	20,000.00	20,000.00	40,000.00
01-201-23-735-000	Employee Waivers of Benefits	50,000.00	0.00	50,000.00
01-201-25-745-100	POLICE S&W	2,996,000.00	0.00	2,996,000.00

01-201-25-745-200	POLICE OE	400,000.00	0.00	400,000.00
01-201-25-747-100	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT S&W	29,050.00	0.00	29,050.00
01-201-25-747-200	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OE	14,000.00	10,000.00	24,000.00
01-201-25-757-100	MUNICIPAL PROSECUTOR SW	49,000.00	0.00	49,000.00
01-201-26-764-100	DPW S&W	651,454.30	0.00	651,454.30
01-201-26-764-200	DPW OE	75,000.00	25,000.00	100,000.00
01-201-26-765-200	DPW STREETS & ROADS OE	100,000.00	0.00	100,000.00
01-201-26-767-100	DPW MOTOR VEHICLES S&W	84,700.00	0.00	84,700.00
01-201-26-767-200	DPW MOTOR VEHICLES OE	175,000.00	50,000.00	225,000.00
01-201-26-768-100	DPW STORMWATER S&W	33,820.85	0.00	33,820.85
01-201-26-768-200	DPW STORMWATER OE	25,000.00	0.00	25,000.00
01-201-26-769-100	DPW SNOW REMOVAL S&W	49,700.00	108,000.00	157,700.00
01-201-26-769-200	DPW SNOW REMOVAL OE	202,669.85	150,000.00	352,669.85
01-201-26-772-200	BUILDINGS & GROUNDS OE	175,000.00	0.00	175,000.00
01-201-26-774-200	RECYCLING OE	225,000.00	0.00	225,000.00
01-201-26-775-100	ANNUAL CLEANUP S&W	10,500.00	0.00	10,500.00
01-201-26-775-200	ANNUAL CLEANUP OE	45,000.00	0.00	45,000.00
01-201-26-847-000	MUNICIPAL SERVICES ACT	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
01-201-27-345-100	SOCIAL SERVICES S&W	141,750.00	0.00	141,750.00
01-201-27-345-200	SOCIAL SERVICES OE	20,000.00	0.00	20,000.00
01-201-27-785-100	BOARD OF HEALTH S&W	174,452.60	0.00	174,452.60
01-201-27-785-200	BOARD OF HEALTH OE	35,000.00	0.00	35,000.00
01-201-27-788-200	DOG REGULATION OE	35,000.00	0.00	35,000.00
01-201-27-789-200	WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
01-201-28-795-100	RECREATION SALARIES & WAGES	70,000.00	0.00	70,000.00
01-201-28-795-200	RECREATION OE	7,500.00	0.00	7,500.00
01-201-28-796-100	PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS S&W	294,354.90	0.00	294,354.90
01-201-28-796-200	PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS OE	150,000.00	0.00	150,000.00
01-201-30-797-200	CELEBRATION OF PUBLIC OE	25,000.00	0.00	25,000.00
01-201-31-824-000	FIRE HYDRANTS	400,000.00	0.00	400,000.00
01-201-31-825-000	ELECTRIC	400,000.00	0.00	400,000.00
01-201-31-828-000	WATER	75,000.00	0.00	75,000.00
01-201-31-829-200	HEATING FUELS	5,000.00	5,000.00	10,000.00
01-201-31-832-000	SEWER	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00
01-201-31-833-000	GASOLINE & DIESEL	150,000.00	0.00	150,000.00
01-201-31-836-200	CELL PHONES	14,000.00	0.00	14,000.00
01-201-31-839-000	PHONE & INTERNET SERVICE	125,000.00	0.00	125,000.00
01-201-36-844-200	PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM OE	0.00	1,409,975.00	1,409,975.00
01-201-36-845-200	SOCIAL SECURITY OE	600,000.00	0.00	600,000.00
01-201-36-846-200	DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN OE (DCRP)	12,500.00	0.00	12,500.00
01-201-36-847-200	POLICE & FIRE RETIREMENT SYSTEM OE	0.00	2,954,012.00	2,954,012.00
01-201-41-700-940	STATE & FEDERAL GRANTS	12,754.12	0.00	12,754.12
01-201-41-899-000	GRANT MATCH	2,688.53	0.00	2,688.53

01-201-42-108-100	Shared Service- Misc Courts	35,000.00	0.00	35,000.00
01-201-42-705-100	Alexandria Shared Service S&W	10,850.00	0.00	10,850.00
01-201-42-785-100	MILLSTONE INTERLOCAL S&W	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
01-201-42-855-000	MUNICIPAL COURT	153,517.35	0.00	153,517.35
01-201-42-855-200	MUNICIPAL COURT OE	35,000.00	0.00	35,000.00
01-201-42-856-280	SPECIAL DUTY OFFICERS FOR COURT SECURITY	18,000.00	0.00	18,000.00
TOTALS		13,000,000.00	5,156,987.00	18,156,987.00

Upon a motion by Committeeman Robert Britting, seconded by Deputy Mayor Shawn Lipani, the consent agenda was unanimously approved upon the call of the roll.

Committeewoman Gomez stated Committeewoman Hand could not be here tonight and zoom participation was not available. Committeewoman Gomez asked for a meeting with IT to see if that is something that can be provided in the future. Committeewoman Gomez explained that at the last meeting she and Committeewoman Hand voted no to approve the emergency temporary budget noting it requires a 4/5 vote due to the budgetary nature. She met with Administrator Ferrera and CFO Bushnell and made amendments cutting line items and thanked them for their cooperation. Committeewoman Gomez raised transparency concerns surrounding the timing of posting the agenda and providing additional documentation for future appropriations.

Committeeman Britting asked Committeewoman Gomez why she rejected the \$200,000 for the police. Committeewoman Gomez replied because it was a buffer and not needed for anything immediately, according to CFO Bushnell.

Deputy Mayor Lipani stated the line items are not additional taxes or discretionary expenses. This measure keeps the line items funded to get through the budgeting process. Deputy Mayor Lipani explained it will be necessary to add these line items back in a few weeks, such as \$3000 for postage, \$3000 for paper, and \$20,000 for dog tag regulation.

Committeewoman Gomez stated she and Committeewoman Hand want to pay for things due right now and understand that they will need to adopt other emergency appropriations as other items come due.

Mayor Payne clarified that the CFO has not yet started the 2026 budget but does not foresee a tax increase for the residents.

Lewin Weyl, 8 More Road stated he is glad to hear that there may not be another tax increase and urges transparency, including providing access to the meeting documents more than a few hours before the meeting. Township Clerk Brake stated that until a few years ago the documents were made available only at the meeting. The Township has come a long way and a draft agenda cannot be published. Mayor Payne is encouraging the various departments to publish their relevant documents and further stated that the prior substantial tax increase was from the Board of Education.

Lisa Dickholtz, 19 Dereimer Road thanked Committeewoman Gomez and stated that every dollar is important to save and contended that bringing up the police by Committeeman Britting was political. Committeeman Britting stated that it should be noted that she is an elected district official, as was Mr. Weyl.

Jodi Green, 21 Bloomingdale Drive thanked both Committeewomen and urged that greater transparency become the norm.

Philomena Cellilli, 24 Royce Brook Road stated the word transparency should be defined. She takes exception to the statement that the Township Committee lacks transparency when the meetings are public but there is very little

attendance. The committee and the employees are doing the best they can and takes exception to those coming out to complain and not learn or become involved.

Emily Benadon, 169 Beekman Lane, Unit 202 asked why a zoom meeting is not available, why can't minutes be done by AI, and why does the budget process take so long.

Mayor Payne stated they had no precedent or rigor around the zoom meeting.

Township Clerk Brake added there is not the technology for doing a 2-way zoom.

Deputy Mayor Lipani noted that the Township never stopped having meetings during the pandemic, providing live feed of the meetings.

Mayor Payne clarified that the presentation alluded to in Committeewoman Gomez' comment was a one-way presentation.

Township Clerk Brake stated the meeting videos are available immediately and the minutes must be approved by the committee and are not a transcript. She clarified that the Clerk's Office utilizes a software program for agendas and minutes, which makes it very efficient and not labor-intensive.

CFO Bushnell explained it took longer to close out 2025 than expected and he came to the position mid-year. The new year's budget process usually starts in February and, in addition, the state pushed back the deadline for budget introductions.

John Ciccarelli, 14 Southland Drive stated before the last meeting Committeewomen Hand and Gomez attended newly elected officials training, which includes budgeting training. Having taken those classes, they must have understood the super majority requirement, and he contended they politicized their vote.

Roy Freiman, stated everyone is looking for a safe, affordable community to live in and all have that in common. There are also different opinions and disagreement can be healthy and part of the process. He stated using township resources to educate the public is fine, but to condemn others on the committee he believes is outside the scope of using township resources, is inappropriate, and not the role of the Mayor.

Vinay Agarwal, 17 Campbell Road has been a resident since childhood asked if this resolution would lead to increased taxes. CFO Bushnell states this is just an increase to the temporary budget. The initial temporary budget is only allowed to be 35% of last year's total budget. These "emergency temporary appropriations" do not have the same requirement. The current increase will bring the total temporary budget to \$18 million.

Rob Lefkowitz, 21 Bloomingdale Drive stated throwing out the term "defending the police" is a divisive and unnecessary political term.

Committeeman Britting stated the Chief of Police should be able to state what he needs and Committeewoman Gomez didn't speak to him.

Cress Dominic, 46 Murphy Drive asked how the \$18 million is 35% of the budget. CFO Bushnell explained that it's not, only the initial temporary budget has to be 35%, each addition can add more and go over the 35%.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW BUSINESS AND MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Township Clerk Sarah Brake stated the following. The Township Committee now opens the floor for public comment. To ensure a productive and civil environment for all, please approach the microphone, state your name and address, and spell your name for the record.

The Township of Hillsborough maintains a strict standard of decorum; please ensure your remarks remain respectful and focused on township business. Each speaker is limited to a single three-minute allotment. This is a forum for public comment rather than a dialogue. Please address all remarks directly to the Deputy Mayor. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and for treating your neighbors, Township employees and this committee with courtesy.

None

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Committeeman Robert Britting, seconded by Committeewoman Jill Gomez, the meeting duly adjourned at 6:57 pm. Said motion was unanimously carried upon voice vote.

Attested:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Sarah Brake', with a stylized, flowing script.

Sarah Brake
Township Clerk