

Minutes of the May 12, 2026 Township Committee Meeting of the Township of Hillsborough, in the County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, held in the Municipal Complex at 7:30 PM on May 12, 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., Committeewoman Jill Gomez and Committeewoman Samantha Hand. Also in attendance were Township Clerk Sarah Brake and Township Attorney William Willard.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (b) (1-9), Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee is of the opinion that such circumstances exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hillsborough in the County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of the hereinafter specified subject matters.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
 - o Litigation - Affordable Housing
3. The Township Committee may take official action on those items discussed in Executive Session upon completion of the Executive Session.
4. The minutes of the discussions shall be made available to the public as soon as the matters under discussion are no longer of a confidential or sensitive nature.
5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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 Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Executive Session, if deemed necessary, to begin at 6:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES JANUARY 27, 2026

Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Shawn Lipani, seconded by Committeewoman Jill Gomez, Executive Session Minutes January 27, 2026, were approved upon the call of the roll.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES MARCH 10, 2026

Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Shawn Lipani, seconded by Committeewoman Jill Gomez, Executive Session Minutes March 10, 2026, were approved upon the call of the roll.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES MARCH 24, 2026

Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Shawn Lipani, seconded by Committeewoman Samantha Hand, Executive Session Minutes March 24, 2026, were approved upon the call of the roll.

4. REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APRIL 28, 2026

Upon a motion by Committeeman Robert Britting, seconded by Committeewoman Jill Gomez, Regular Meeting Minutes April 28, 2026, were approved upon the call of the roll.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE LIAISONS, AND RECEIPT OF REPORTS, PETITIONS OR COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Payne

Mayor Payne announced that the Township will transition its daily food pantry services to regional partners, Feeding Hands and The Food Bank Network of Somerset County, effective July 24, 2026, to focus municipal resources on holiday distributions and financial stability services. Mayor Payne also announced a partnership with New Jersey American Water and Sherwin-Williams to paint 60 fire hydrants in patriotic designs for America's Semi-quincentennial.

PROCLAMATIONS

1. MADISON CAMPBELL- WRESTLER

WHEREAS, Madison Campbell, a seventh grader at Hillsborough Middle School has an exemplary wrestling career thus far; and

WHEREAS, Madison Campbell is a three time New Jersey Girls Youth Wrestling State Champion winning in 2024, 2025, and 2026; and

WHEREAS, Madison Campbell was the 2026 Jersey Girl Wrestling League All-Star Match Champion and the 2026 Middle School Wrestling Co-ed End of Year League Champion and Outstanding Wrestler award winner; and WHEREAS, Madison Campbell is a member of the Hillsborough Middle School Varsity Wrestling and Soccer teams and also plays Central Jersey flag football.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that we, the Mayor and the Hillsborough Township Committee, do hereby recognize and extend our sincere congratulations to Madison Campbell for achieving the 2026 New Jersey Girls Youth Wrestling State Champion title, an honor for both her and for those who have guided her. We wish Madison all the best in her future endeavors.

2. ALYSSA PAROLA- GOLD AWARD

WHEREAS, Alyssa Parola, a senior at Hillsborough High School and member of Girl Scout Troop 60243, has earned her Gold Award; and

WHEREAS, the Hillsborough Township Committee recognizes the many hours Alyssa devoted to earning her Girl Scout Gold Award, working with diligence to achieve this highly coveted recognition; and

WHEREAS, Alyssa Parola's Gold Award project educated the community on environmental sustainability and how one can take action to help reduce climate anxiety through cleanups, workshops, and seminars. The project took 95 hours to complete with the assistance of 10 people; and

WHEREAS, Alyssa Parola is a two-time Presidential Service Award recipient, a Girl Scout National Delegate, and a Hillsborough High School Cheerleader; and

WHEREAS, Alyssa Parola is an intern in the Hillsborough Township Administration Office and volunteers as a Junior Coach for Hillsborough Dukes Youth Cheerleading; and

WHEREAS, Alyssa Parola serves as an example to the youth of Hillsborough Township through her achievements, leadership, and community service. We are very proud that Alyssa is a member of our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that we, the Mayor and the Hillsborough Township Committee, do hereby recognize and extend our sincere congratulations to Alyssa Parola for having earned her Girl Scout Gold Award, an honor for both her and for those who have guided her. We wish Alyssa all the best in her future endeavors.

3. PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive, neurological disease and is the second most common neurodegenerative disease in the United States after Alzheimer's disease; and

WHEREAS, Parkinson's disease is currently estimated to affect approximately one million people in the United States and 90,000 new cases of Parkinson's disease are expected to be diagnosed this year; and

WHEREAS, research suggests that the cause of Parkinson's disease is a combination of genetic and environmental factors and lifestyle influences. The primary risk factor for developing Parkinson's disease is age. The exact cause and progression of the disease is still unknown, and while there are treatments options for the symptoms of Parkinson's disease, there is no cure; and

WHEREAS, the symptoms of Parkinson's disease vary from person to person and can include tremors, slowness of movement and rigidity, impaired balance and coordination, difficulty swallowing, chewing, and speaking, and a variety of other non-motor symptoms; and

WHEREAS, programs like Rock Steady Boxing and other therapeutic interventions provide invaluable resources and opportunities for individuals living with Parkinson's to improve their physical health, gain a sense of community, and enhance their quality of life through exercise and support; and

WHEREAS, this year Rock Steady Boxing took part in the international Sit to Stand challenge on April 11. Their two locations (Hillsborough and West Windsor) had a friendly competition. Between the two locations, including coaches, Rock Steady Boxing totaled 14,117 sit to stands to raise awareness for Parkinson's.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Mayor and Hillsborough Township Committee, hereby recognize April as National Parkinson's Awareness Month and continue to urge residents to support the search for a cure and assist those individuals and families who deal with this devastating illness on a daily basis.

4. EHLERS-DANLOS SYNDROMES AND HYPERMOBILITY SPECTRUM DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, Ehlers-Danlos syndromes (EDS) are a group of 13 heritable connective tissue disorders that affect 1 in 5000 people with symptoms such as joint hypermobility, skin hyperextensibility, and tissue fragility; and

WHEREAS, hypermobility spectrum disorders (HSD) are connective tissue disorders that cause joint hypermobility, instability, injury, and pain; and

WHEREAS, there is no cure for any type of EDS or HSD, only a management of symptoms by a variety of medical specialists; and

WHEREAS, lack of awareness about EDS and HSD in Hillsborough and across the world stands in the way of diagnosis, management, and research of these conditions; and

WHEREAS, awareness by both medical professionals and the general public can help improve the lives of people living with EDS and HSD; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Mayor and Hillsborough Township Committee, do hereby declare May as Ehlers-Danlos Syndromes and Hypermobility Spectrum Disorders Awareness Month.

5. NATIONAL WATER SAFETY MONTH

WHEREAS, swimming and aquatic-related activities contribute to positive physical and mental health and enhance the quality of life for all people; and

WHEREAS, education regarding the topic of water safety plays a vital role in the prevention of drownings and recreational water-related injuries; and

WHEREAS, the recreational water industry composed of community organizations, aquatic professionals, swim schools, and safety advocates, is dedicated to developing safe swimming facilities, public beaches, and home pools;

and
 WHEREAS, the New Jersey Recreation and Park Association is committed to educating the public on pool, beach, and aquatic safety issues; and
 WHEREAS, these essential programs and water safety legislation provide healthy environments for our citizens to learn, grow, and build self-esteem, significantly enhancing the overall quality of life in our communities.
 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Mayor and Hillsborough Township Committee, do hereby declare May 2026 as National Water Safety Awareness Month, and urge all residents to recognize the importance of water safety education.

PRESENTATIONS

PERSONNEL ITEMS/APPOINTMENTS

CONSENT

1. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP QUALIFIED PURCHASING AGENT TO SOLICIT REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS THROUGH THE FAIR AND OPEN SELECTION PROCESS FOR BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT ATTORNEY FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2026

WHEREAS, the Hillsborough Township Committee has chosen the Fair and Open process for the selection of professionals which requires the public solicitation on the Township's website of a request for proposals from any interested party for the various professional services and the Township Committee used the process again in 2026; and

WHEREAS, as of July 31, 2026, the Board of Adjustment Attorney position will be vacant and the Township seeks to fill the position for the remainder of 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hillsborough, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the Township Qualified Purchasing Agent is hereby authorized to solicit Requests for Proposals through the Fair and Open Selection Process for the position of Board of Adjustment Attorney for the remainder of 2026.

2. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATE MUNICIPAL COURT PROSECUTORS

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2026, the Township Committee adopted a Resolution appointing Rachel Campbell of the law firm of DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, P.C., as Municipal Prosecutor; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to name Alternate Municipal Prosecutors in the event Ms. Campbell is unable to appear for a scheduled Municipal Court session; and

WHEREAS, the following attorneys at the law firm of DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, P.C., are experienced Municipal Court Prosecutors and able to cover Municipal Court sessions in the event of Ms. Campbell is unable to appear: David Hummel; Brian Davis, Kevin Hewitt, Michael DiFazio, Matthew Dorsi, Richard Guss and Stephen Davis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hillsborough, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the following individuals of the law firm of DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, P.C., are hereby appointed as Alternate Municipal Prosecutors in the event Rachel Campbell is unable to appear for a scheduled Municipal Court session: David Hummel; Brian Davis, Kevin Hewitt, Michael DiFazio, Matthew Dorsi, Richard Guss and Stephen Davis.

3. RESOLUTION APPROVING REQUEST FROM THE SOMERSET VALLEY YMCA - HILLSBOROUGH BRANCH TO HOLD THE HILLSBOROUGH HOP 5K IN HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP ON SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2026

WHEREAS, Somerset Valley YMCA - Hillsborough Branch has requested permission to hold the Hillsborough Hop 5K on Saturday, June 6, 2026, in Hillsborough Township; and

WHEREAS, Somerset Valley YMCA - Hillsborough Branch has produced a certificate of insurance naming the Township of Hillsborough as an insured; and

WHEREAS, the Chief of Police and Hillsborough Township Police Department's Traffic Safety Bureau has reviewed the request and has no objection to its approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hillsborough, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the Somerset County YMCA - Hillsborough Branch is hereby authorized to hold a race in Hillsborough Township on June 6, 2026.

4. RESOLUTION MOVING ROBERT WAGNER FROM SEAT #2 TO SEAT #6 AND JASON FLAGG FROM SEAT #6 TO SEAT #2 ON THE PLANNING BOARD

Mayoral Appointments

Planning Board

Seat #2	Jason Flagg	Expiring 12/31/2026
Seat #6	Robert Wagner	Expiring 12/31/2026

Mayor Payne stated, "We are going to hear all the comments first. After that, if any committee member would like to take an item from the consent agenda for separate voting, I will give you the opportunity to do so. There is no need to take items separately for commenting and questioning.

Deputy Mayor Lipani congratulated Mr. Anderson on his retirement and thanked him for his many years of service.

Committeewoman Hand suggested they address the significance of switching Planning Board seats #2 and #6, and clarifying the implications of that.

Deputy Mayor Lipani explained that seat #2 pertained to a seat within the Municipality, while seat #6 was held by a resident. Switching the seats reflected Mr. Wagner's change in Employment and reflected Mr. Flagg's seat on the Environmental Commission, and a member of the Environmental Commission should be sitting in a Class 2 seat per the Land Use law.

Committeewoman Hand asked if Mr. Wagner was going to Environmental.

Deputy Mayor responded that Mr. Flagg was staying in Environmental.

Upon a motion by Committeeman Robert Britting and seconded by Committeewoman Jill Gomez, Consent Agenda Items #1 - 4 were unanimously approved upon a call of the roll.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

1. [CLICK HERE TO VISIT ENGAGE HILLSBOROUGH TO VIEW AND COMMENT ON INTRODUCED ORDINANCES](#)

CLAIMS LIST

1. CLAIMS LIST 26-08

Mayor Payne asked to approve Claims List 26-08.

Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Shawn Lipani, seconded by Committeeman Robert Britting, Claims List 26-08, was approved upon the call of the roll. Mayor Payne asked to approve Claims List 26-08.

Mayor Payne asked to approve Claims List.

Committeewoman Hand inquired about a discrepancy pointed out at the previous meeting regarding legal fees and a change in Mr. Bernstein's invoice. She stated that she couldn't tell if that was corrected.

Clerk Brake said this would be addressed during Public Comment.

Judy Haas 2 Titus Court said she wanted to point out that the Claims List was printed out on Friday, May 8th, and it would be lovely, since it was printed, if it could be put on the website so people could have time to look at the contents then instead of a couple of hours before the meeting.

Ms Haas also stated that there were two items that had to do with the Mindell Property that didn't look like they have anything to do with the Mindell Property. One of them is a Board of Adjustment matter and the other is a Penoni Associates bill for a Beekman's Gardens flood application.

Deputy Mayor Lipani said they would look into it.

Ms. Haas also pointed out an item called "pilot" and has a Penoni Associates bill and a disbursement for another Board of Adjustment matter. Aren't Pilots collected by the town as opposed to disbursed? Why would any bill go against a Pilot line?

Deputy Mayor Lipani said he would look for the answer for her.

Miss Haas said this is another reason why people should see the bill list before the meeting. She said she just caught the end of an \$18,000 legal bill and wanted to know if that was accurate.

Mayor Payne said she would address that later.

Ms. Haas said that it was on the bill list as about to be paid.

Mayor Payne asked if Ms. Haas was referring to a new charge.

Committeewoman Hand stated that there were two bills totally \$18,000

Ms. Haas asked if there's a "not to exceed" limit on legal bills.

Mayor Payne confirmed that they do.

Miss Haas stated that if you do the math, \$20,000 isn't going to get them to the budget for legal expenses and that it's time for the people on the dais to start looking very carefully at the legal bills and pull them back because they are out of hand.

Committeewoman Hand stated that there were questions about the claims list. Are they going to accept the Claims List or could it say that it was "pending changes" from the CFO especially about the escrows on page 18. She further stated that there were questions asked that weren't answered.

Clerk Brake stated that those questions will be answered at the next meeting.

Committeewoman Hand stated that it doesn't feel like they should approve it without acknowledging changes.

Committeeman Lipani stated that the claims list is being paid regardless of whether it's a wrong line item.

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT

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 Mayor. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and for treating your neighbors, Township employees and this committee with courtesy..

Mayor Payne read the following statements:

At the last meeting, there were some questions raised during public comment that we promised answers to:

- 1. A discussion took place about the Temporary Appropriations, including a statement that at this point last year it was 70% and this year it is only 47%. The question was asked whether the funds have been appropriated and/or added to the budget.**

The difference between last year's 70% temporary appropriation and this year's 47% does not reflect actual spending. The purpose of temporary appropriations is to keep the accounts funded and maintain operations until the budget is adopted. These temporary amounts are already included in the final budget amounts reflected in the budget document. The higher percentage used last year was simply an administrative decision to provide a larger "cushion" of

authorized funds, ensuring the Township could maintain all operations without interruption while the final budget was being prepared. This year's lower percentage doesn't mean we are spending less; it just means we opted for a smaller initial buffer. Ultimately, the town's actual day-to-day operating costs remain consistent, regardless of how much of that "safety net" was authorized upfront.

2. Clarification on the number of employees FT/PT/Seasonal

There are currently 210 full-time & part-time active employees plus 32 seasonal employees.

3. A question on a payment made to CME item from claims list.

This was a payment made for prior services, before the new Affordable Housing agent started

4. A question about a payment to Bernstein for Solar

The payment was to the correct Attorney but was charged to the incorrect line item. Finance has made a journal entry to correct it.

Committeewoman Gomez stated that she had a question and wanted to clarify. At past meetings, they asked for public comment for matters not on the agenda. At the last meeting, they allowed comments about the budget during public comment. From a consistency standpoint, is this the new procedure moving forward?

Mayor Payne stated that public comment is exactly that, and there have been at least three emails sent out in the past four months for how to answer questions and when per Roberts Rules and when it's an introduction, public comment is for public comment.

Committeewoman Gomez stated that just to clarify, they are allowing public comment for matters on the agenda.

Mayor Payne stated that public comment is for matters not on the agenda.

Attorney Willard said that residents can use their three minutes however they want. The purpose of having public comment earlier is to allow the public to comment before a matter is voted on. During open public comment at the end of the meeting, residents can comment on anything they want.

Susan Gulliford of Hunt Club Road stated that regarding Fox Chase Pond, the funds that were provided by the DEP to upgrade and restore the pond and the funds have to be used by December 31, 2026. Based on what she read online, failure to meet that obligation would result in having to return the unused portion. Are they planning on doing the work for the pond over the summer in order to meet this obligation? Also, the people who were cutting in that area cut out some of the plants that were planted by neighbors. She also stated that they may need to meet with someone because they have a no-mow zone due to the goose droppings.

Ms. Gulliford also stated that regarding federal property, the township has no authority over federal property located within the township. She asked if federal property was sold to a private owner, do we have an ordinance ready to

oversee the zoning and uses of the property and/or the buildings on the property, and can the federal government as the seller make any representations to the buyer about the uses of the property that can override any regulations that Hillsborough has in place or may put into place to cover that property?

Ms Gulliford also asked if we need to tighten any existing ordinances to oversee AI businesses and ICE detention centers and applications for these businesses because there is a "grandfather" problem for these businesses in New Jersey.

Ms Gulliford also stated that it would be helpful if Board of Adjustment meetings would also be added to the meetings that are video taped and available to the public. Over the past year she really had to way to follow it or answer people's questions about Board of Adjustment matters.

Mayor Payne asked to clarify Ms Gulliford's federal property question so that she can properly respond to it at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Attested:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sarah Brake', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sarah Brake
Township Clerk