

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

MAY 2010

### ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

*Please see Civic Assn Special Report below, p. 4: School budget analysis.*

**New Vernon Garden Club welcomes** spring with “When Birds of a Feather Flock Together”, a Standard Flower Show, 1:00 to 4:00 PM, on **Monday, May 24** at the Church of Christ the King, Blue Mill Road. Categories include Design, Horticulture, and Special Exhibits that utilize plant material from local gardens. A Silent Auction offers unique items available for bidding. Admission is free. Call (973) 644-3687 for additional information.

### THE LIBRARY

**Story Time** themes for the remainder of May: May 17, *The Grocery Store* and May 24, *Rainbow Fish and Friends*. June 7, *Curious George and other Monkey Stories*; June 14, *Ice Cream*; **New day: Mondays at 10 a.m.** for children ages 1-3. We listen to stories, sing songs, make a themed craft, and have a happy time!

**Jump into Summer: Saturday June 19 [note change of date!] at 12 noon...**a party for children who wish to join the **Summer Reading Club** or just want to have fun. There will be games, prizes, stories, and a take-home craft. For interested participants, Summer Reading Club packets will be handed out that day. For children of all ages; no sign-up required. This year's theme is *Make a Splash at Your Library*. Our weekly events will be related to this theme.

**Evening Book Group** will meet at 7:30 **Thursday, May 27** to plan the coming season. Please join us and come with suggestions!

**Extra! Extra...hot off the press!** *Harding Township Library: Historical Perspectives* by our own Katherine Josephson is now in print. Please call the Library to reserve your copy. A small donation to the Library would be appreciated.

*We thank you for your patience as we have moved first the children's and then the adult collections into the handsome new Library. We trust that soon all will be up and running smoothly; we are sure you will find it worth the long wait! During this time of flux and new beginnings, it is more important than ever to keep in touch via*

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[www.hardinglibrary.org](http://www.hardinglibrary.org). We have been assured that our new telephone number is 973-267-BOOK (2665)!

We are immensely grateful to the **New Vernon Garden Club** for the beautiful plantings around the building (landscape design by Nancy McClelland). It looks lovely!

**Don't forget the Harding Township's Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony to be held on Monday, May 31, 9:30 AM.** The Parade will begin promptly at 9:30 AM and the ceremony will begin immediately afterwards. Any Township group or organization interested in participating this year should contact the Parade Chair, Scott Shipley, at 908-406-1402. *In case of rain, the parade will be cancelled, however, the ceremony will be held in the Sellitto gymnasium at Harding School.* Entries for the essay contest have been submitted and winners will be announced at the ceremony.

### **"Calling all Veterans."**

The Harding Township Civic Association would like to invite all Veterans living in Harding Township to march in our Memorial Day Parade. If you are interested, please contact the Parade Chair, Scott Shipley by phone at 908-406-1402 or by email at [shipleys4@verizon.net](mailto:shipleys4@verizon.net).

### **NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND FIRST AID SQUAD**

#### ***Annual Steak and Lobster Dinner, June 4, 6pm***

Service begins at 6:00pm. ***Food orders begin at 5:30pm.*** Food is served until approximately 10:00pm or when the food runs out!!!

Steak Dinner: \$19.00; Lobster Dinner: \$ 23.00; Barbecue chicken Dinner: \$ 15.00

Extras: Steamed Clams: \$ 7.00; Corn on the Cob: \$1.00; Burgers for Kids only: \$8.00

**Notes from Your Fire Department and First Aid Squad** Come celebrate with us the arrival of our brand new Rescue truck! The New Vernon Volunteer Fire Department and First aid Squad are celebrating 89 years of service to the community with a Family Picnic/Open House on **Saturday June 19, from 12 noon to 3pm** (Rain or Shine) Our Open house offers an opportunity to meet the men and women we all rely so heavily on during an emergency, in a relaxed and personal setting and have any questions regarding the services we provide in New Vernon answered. Meet the personnel; see the Fire and EMS equipment. Bring the whole family. There will be entertainment for the

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kids (of all ages). Bouncy- House, Pony Rides, Dunk-Tank, Water Slide and the Saint Barnabas Burn Trailer. And of course there will be food and refreshments. There is no charge for the family picnic and everyone is welcome.

**The Harding Township Educational Foundation (HTEF)** is a not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) organization established in 1996. The mission of the Foundation is to raise funds to support curriculum enrichment projects for the Harding Township School that extend beyond the school budget. The HTEF will hold its annual Public Meeting on **Tuesday, June 15, 2010, at 7:00 pm** in the Harding Township School Library, 34 Lee's Hill Road, New Vernon, NJ, 07976, 973-267-6398. For directions to the school please visit [hardingtwp.org](http://hardingtwp.org).

### **MEMBERS WANTED FOR PARKS COMMISSION- CPAC**

The Township is creating a new committee -- Citizens' Parks Advisory Committee (CPAC). The mission of CPAC is to advise the TC on the operation and maintenance of four parks -- Bayne Park, Memorial Park, the Show Grounds and Barrett Field. CPAC may include one representative each from the Garden Club, Shade Tree Commission, Environmental Commission, HOST, Harding Land Trust, Bridal Path, Recreation Association, Wildlife Management Committee, Department of Public Works, and 1-3 at large members. If you are interested in applying to apply to become a member, go to [www.hardingcivic.org](http://www.hardingcivic.org) and look under Our Town- Citizens Park or stop by Town Hall and fill out an application with Cindy Philips.

**HARDING ALLIANCE AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE** The mission of Harding Alliance is to provide education and resources to promote healthy decision-making and to avoid substance abuse and risky behaviors. More information, including our meeting schedule and useful links to a variety of resources, can be found at <http://hardingalliance.hardingnj.org>.

Harding Alliance members are concerned citizens, police, health and school professionals. Next meetings: **Wednesday, June 30 at 8:45 AM** and **Sept. 15** in the Guidance Office of Harding Township School. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Judy Malloy, Chairperson, at [judymotown@comcast.net](mailto:judymotown@comcast.net).

### **Note from Your Police Dept/ Office of Emergency Management**

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Please register now for Disaster Assistance - FEMA has announced that funding is available due to the recent storm in New Jersey. Homeowners, renters, business owners affected by the severe storm and flooding are encouraged to register by phone: 1-800-621-FEMA (3362); On line [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) Register today even if you have flood insurance as some losses may not be covered. Harding Twp phone numbers for questions: 973 455-0500 or 973 267-8000.

### **SCHOOL BUDGET ANALYSIS SPECIAL REPORT BY CIVIC ASSOCIATION**

In April, Harding, like 58% of the municipalities in the state, narrowly defeated (by 9 votes) the proposed school budget. Voter turnout was typically poor at 513. That defeated budget called for a 2.69% school tax levy increase. At its 4/28 meeting, the Township Committee (where power over the budget now largely rests according to statute) stated that its “base position” is that would like to see at a budget that needs no tax increase, as the Township and the County both accomplished in their budgets. (See report on the 4/28 meeting in this Thumbnail) To build a budget with no school tax increase requires approximately \$230,000 in reductions from the original, defeated \$9.54mm budget. Readers might recall that the defeated budget included a two and a half person reduction in teaching staff, delayed computer upgrades and some other items. A subcommittee of the Township Committee and the Board of Education are currently working on the budget.

In light of all this, the Civic Association reporter has done some extra work on the school budget in an attempt to illuminate a somewhat heated situation. Admittedly this is not a complete analysis of the school budget, but rather an attempt to help citizens understand some of the bigger issues.

We studied the original defeated budget, interviewed Superintendent Purnell and gathered other relevant insights from the district business administrator and the president of the school board. Several observations come from our analysis.

#### **Spending is Mostly Compensation**

Like all schools, Harding’s budget is dominated by compensation and benefit expenses – approximately 75% of the budget. Compensation and benefits for the full and part time teachers (and two secretaries) are set by contract negotiation with the teachers union. (Currently there are 25 full-time and 3 part time regular ed teachers; 8 full time and 3 part time special education teachers and 8 full time special education teachers’ assistants.) All other employee compensation is determined “on an individual basis” in discussion with the superintendent and with approval of the board.

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Next school year (2010-11) is the last year of a 3-year agreement that called for a 4.55% increase each year. This 4.55% figure needs some explanation. Not every teacher gets a 4.55% increase. The 4.55% refers to the increase in the total compensation pool – some individuals get more than 4.55% (usually the more senior ones) and some to get less. But as a group, the teachers (and two secretaries) get a 4.55% increase.

Therefore, 75% of the budget will increase unless (1) the workforce is reduced or (2) teachers agree to a contract concession such as a freeze or a partial freeze.

Simple arithmetic says that if 75% of the budget is growing due to the 4.55% contractual increase with the teachers, the other 25% has to be drastically cut back (on the order of 10-15%) to keep the total budget flat. But in that 25%, are some line items that are difficult to cut like insurance and energy (which is 36% higher than it was in 2008 even with conservation efforts). Some other things could be completely zeroed out but at great emotional and educational cost -- like funds for extra-curricular activities, the bulk of which are teacher stipends (about \$2500-3000) for supervising these activities (which can run a few hundred to several hundred hours per season) and transportation expenses related to the activity. But assuming \$3500 per extra-curricular, a budget would have to eliminate 30 items to save \$105,000.

### "Controlling the Budget" is Heavily a Function of Teachers' Contract Negotiation

Because of the dominance of compensation (75% of total), "controlling the school budget" is largely a function of the Board of Education's negotiation with the teachers union. By the time a budget is defeated, there are very few degrees of freedom left – only layoffs and elimination of a host of small items...unless teachers make contract concessions. So the Board of Education needs significant foresight regarding public/voter opinion, as well as some economic forecasting ability, when negotiating the contract to avoid the crisis of a defeated budget.

### Cost Per Student – High for NJ, Similar to Bay Head and Alpine

We looked at the cost to educate a student in Harding and found that it's high relative to the average NJ school (according to NJ Department of Education data) but in line with a couple other very small, very wealthy districts.

In a February 2010 article, the Star Ledger, citing the NJ Department of Education's annual "Report Card", said that cost per student statewide rose almost 8% in 2009 to \$13,601. This figure likely rose again this year in New Jersey.

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We were quoted a cost per student of \$19,662 in Harding, and were told that figure is consistent with the only two districts considered comparable to Harding – Alpine and Bay Head in Bergen and Ocean Counties respectively. The NJ Department of Education’s methodology for evaluating districts considers these the only comparable districts because they are the only ones with (a) less than 400 pupils in K-8, and (b) are in similar wealthy areas (classified as “I” or “J”). Alpine and Bay Head spend \$22,947 and \$21,859 respectively.

As another data point, note that Harding pays the Madison district a fixed amount to educate our high school students. The current contract with Madison runs for five years from 2010 to 2014 and escalates 3.25% per year. The contract is independent of the number of students (currently 105) that Harding sends. For 2010, the tuition is \$1,450,000, or \$13,810 per student.

We performed a simple calculation that shows a much higher cost per student in Harding. We took the current year budget (\$9.06 mm), subtracted the \$1.45 mm tuition paid to Madison for our 105 high school students and divided the resulting \$7.6 mm by our 318 K-8 students and came up with the figure is \$23.9K per K-8 student. Including, the high school kids, it’s \$21.4K per student. (Note: These numbers are before debt service.) We asked about the discrepancy between our simple method and the official figures from the State and found that the methodology used by the state education department (explained in a six page appendix reminiscent of a tax filing) ignores significant costs in the budget. We would need more analysis to determine what was left out.

Cost per student is heavily a function of class size – more kids per classroom obviously lowers the cost per student. Average class size in Harding, as calculated by the NJ state methodology (which focuses on English classes), is 19.9. We were told that class size varies widely but is in the range of 15-25 depending on the grade and the subject.

With 319 total students in 2010 and 25 full time and 3 part time “regular” education teachers, the student teacher ratio (not class size but somewhat related) is under 13. But this figure is high, since it doesn’t account for the special education students and teaching staff.

There are 37 students that benefit from an “Individual Education Plan”, commonly referred to as special education. In addition to the 29 full time and 4 part time “regular education” teachers cited above, the district employs 8 full time and 3 part time special

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education teachers and 8 full time special education teacher's assistants. At 12%, Harding's special education student percentage is actually below the state average of about 17%, that we were quoted. Special education consumes a much greater percentage of a budget than the percentage of special education students. The special education services that a district provides are heavily influenced by state requirements, legal precedents and case law. A Director of Special Services (consultant) gives advice to the district on each Individual Education Plan.

Lastly, the small size of the district impacts cost per student. This is because in a smaller district, the administrative costs, some of which are state mandated, are spread over fewer students. Non-teaching staff includes a superintendent (state mandated because the district has two buildings), principal (retiring), business administrator (state mandated), three maintenance staff, four secretaries, two consultants and some part time employees.

### Harding Teacher Salaries Relative to Other Districts

For the 2008-9 year, the average Harding teacher's salary was \$54,461, before any stipends for extra-curricular activities and benefits.

We did some analysis of Harding teacher salaries relative to other districts in Morris County because the statement has been made that "the average teacher's salary in Harding is the lowest in Morris County."

Data from the New Jersey Education Association for 2008-2009 seems to bears this out. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that Harding teachers are paid less than their peers in other districts when years of experience and educational credentials are taken into consideration. So it is necessary to compare the pay scales in other districts for the same years of experience and the same amount of education.

We reviewed an analysis of various districts' "Salary Guides" shared with us by Dr. Purnell. We first looked at the 2008-9 data for Morris County, for teachers with a bachelor's degree. The data for the minimum (presumably the starting salary) and the maximum (attainable after the number of "steps", or years of service) is as follows:

	Minimum	Maximum	steps
Boonton	43,550	70,610	14
Dover	47,682	78,702	15
East Hanover	49,015	83,260	20
Jefferson Twp	45,300	70,350	16
Long Hill	42,595	78,900	18

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Madison	46,545	79,900	16
Mendham	42,800	70,170	18
Riverdale Boro	45,525	76,435	20
Roxbury	42,452	77,537	16
Chatham	48,820	76,386	16
Harding	44,960	72,665	18

Then we looked at the data for teachers with a bachelor's degree and 15 credits towards a master's degree (certain districts didn't report this data):

	Minimum	maximum	steps
Boonton	45,050	72,110	14
Dover	48,182	79,202	15
East Hanover	49,945	84,190	20
Jefferson Twp	46,300	72,380	16
Mendham	44,120	73,170	18
Roxbury	44,662	81,005	16
Chatham	49,820	78,516	16
Harding	46,610	74,315	18

There are 6 more categories of educational achievement that could be examined, but a pattern of under-payment (or over-payment) is not clear.

But what is clear from the data, is that Harding teachers as a group are tied (with Riverdale Boro) for the least years experience as measured by average years of teaching, at 9 years. The most experienced teachers are found in Netcong (16 years average), Mountain Lakes (15) and Hanover (15). So it would seem that Harding's relatively younger (in years on the job, not necessarily age) teaching staff explains at least some of the low average salary statistic.

Lastly, on the subject of comparing average salaries, we were told that typically K-8 districts, like Harding, have a lower average salary due to more turnover as teachers leave to have families.

### Summary

A school budget with no increase in the tax levy requires about \$230,000 more in cuts. Freezing teachers' salaries for a year would yield savings of \$136,000. A number of the non-teaching staff, including Superintendent Purnell and the 3 person maintenance staff, volunteered to forego increases totaling about \$10K. In response to the retirement of the principal, certain changes to the administrative structure could yield

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savings estimated in the \$30-40K range. Cutting extra-curricular activities seems like painful “nickels and dimes” in the context of the budget. So to accomplish a budget with no school tax increase and no concession by the teachers would likely require a few more staff cuts.

### What about Consolidation?

Certain points in this analysis, particularly how the cost per pupil is affected by the small size of the district, might seem to suggest that consolidating Harding with another district could bring efficiencies. As a matter of fact, the district is very close to releasing a study of consolidation.

Though consolidation might bring cost savings, there are two major negatives: (1) loss of local control and (2) the potential to raise the school tax levy (about 45% of a property tax bill) as all neighboring districts have a higher school tax rate than Harding. So from a purely financial standpoint, which is of course not the only consideration, the cost savings would have to offset the higher tax rate to make it financially attractive to Harding. Implications for taxes, is one of the items examined in the consolidation study. Under current law, districts cannot be forced to consolidate – they both have to agree.

### **TOWNSHIP NEWS: Township Committee Meeting, April 28**

There was standing room only at the Township Committee meeting on Wednesday night, April 28. Approximately 65 people came out to express their views and hear what the Township Committee would be doing with the school budget. This was in contrast to the less than 5 residents that showed up to the school board budget meeting just prior to the vote.

Voter turnout for the school budget/ board election was approximately 16% of the voters; with 247 voting “yes” and 256 voting “no” on the budget. The budget was defeated by 9 votes. In 2009 by comparison, 310 voters voted “yes” while 92 voted “no”.

Marshall Bartlett the Township Committee Chairman and Mayor started the discussion. A subcommittee consisting of Lou Lanzerotti and Ned Ward will meet with two representatives from the Board of Education, Evelyn Douglas and Norb Gambuzza on Saturday, May 1. A new budget must be presented to the State by May 19. For additional information regarding the process, see the article “[What Happens Now](http://www.hardingcivic.org)” at [www.hardingcivic.org](http://www.hardingcivic.org).

Marshall stated that the Township Committee’s base position going into the discussion is that they are looking for a 0% increase, the same as the 0% increase for

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the municipal budget this year. The proposed budget that was defeated called for a 2.69% increase. This would have amounted to \$51 per \$1 million dollars of assessed evaluation per property.

Where did that 2.69% proposed increase come from?

The proposed budget called for a \$250,740 increase in spending. As a result of the cuts that Governor Christie made, Harding lost \$251,355 in aid from the State. Adding some additional reserve funds to offset this gap, the residents were left to pick up \$230,304 of lost revenue. The proposed budget called for 2.5 teaching positions to be eliminated, an elementary world language class was eliminated, classes were consolidated, and the computer upgrades which are already a year over due were pushed back and eliminated.

### **Spirited Discussion**

There was spirited discussion regarding salary increases, administrative positions, and extra curricula programs. The teacher's contract calls for an average salary increase of 4.55% and one resident said she had not had a salary increase in 4 years thought the teachers should agree to a pay freeze for this year.

Several residents asked about the administrative positions. The Superintendent, Business Administrator and Principal/Director of Curriculum are all State mandated positions. The Principal has the dual role of Director of Curriculum. A number of the administrative staff including the Superintendent have agreed to a salary freeze.

Many of the parents urged the Township Committee to reconsider their base position of 0% increase. One resident mentioned that in order to keep the municipal tax increase at 0%, the Township Committee had the luxury of increasing fees to increase revenues for the town, but the school did not have that option and had to rely on the tax levy. They also did not want to see several of the extra curricula programs cut such as sports and the school play. A resident who works with the Vision Council was concerned that the residents that were voting "no" were allowing outside politics to mess with a good and effective school system. It was unclear if there would be another public meeting prior to the submission of the budget on May 19.

### **Municipal Budget**

The Municipal Town budget was approved. The budget will result in a 0% tax increase this year. It calls for a pay freeze for all administrative salaries, a reduction from 8 to 5 DPW workers and a 10% salary reduction, and an unfunded opening for a 13<sup>th</sup> police officer. While a few residents took issue with the reduction in DPW salaries and not

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hiring the additional police officer, the Township Committee explained they were being cognizant of the situation of many of the residents especially those on fixed incomes.

### **Proposed Cell Tower**

A cell tower operator is proposing a new cell tower be erected opposite Baxter Farm Road. This would be the site where the old pool had been located and the proposed strip mall had been defeated many years ago and is now an open space. The Township Committee met in executive session to discuss forming a Cell Tower Advisory Committee.

### **Route 202 Bridge**

There will be a public presentation from the DOT in June regarding the rebuilding of the Route 202 bridge near the Old Mill Inn and whether the road will be closed and for how long. There are currently three proposals under consideration:

1. Full closure of the bridge and road for 7 weeks. This is the cheapest from the DOT standpoint, cost: \$1,100,000.
2. Create a temporary bridge. Cost: \$2,250,000
3. Eight days of full closure followed by 8 weeks of night closures. Cost \$1,650,000.

The costs listed are the costs to the state (not Harding). Not surprisingly the DOT favors option 1. The township favors option 2, however the DOT is claiming the DEP will not approve it due to wildlife habitat.. Anticipated timeframe for the work being done is August of 2012.

### **Other News**

Patti Kickenweitz retired after 22 years with the Harding Finance and Tax department. Ginny Moriarity was appointed as Planning Board liaison and Mary Olsen as Bridle Path liaison to the Harding Open Space Trust (HOST)

The Township Committee will send a letter to the Governor's office opposing a new state law that stipulates that the zoning laws at the time an application is filed will apply, whether the application is complete or not and without regard for how long the development takes. The Town Engineer, Paul Fox, has recommended the speed limit on Baileys Mill Road be reduced from 35mph to 30mph. Since Baileys Mill is unsigned there was some discussion as to whether the current speed limit is 25mph or 35mph. The speed limit will be reduced to at least 30mph pending additional research.

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A new fertilizer ordinance was discussed. The State has asked each town to pass a resolution stating that lawn fertilizers not contain more than .05% phosphorus. This would only apply to lawns not gardens.

Approval was given to hire a new Tax Assessor. It is anticipated he will be available to residents on Tuesday afternoons and by appointment, check with the town for updates.

### **PLANNING BOARD April 26, 2010 cancelled No report**

Meeting of **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION** (EC), 5 April

Present: O'Keefe, Cotton, Kovacs, Dietz, Bartlett, Schindler, Allyn

Major items of discussion included (a) proposed phosphate ordinance mandated by NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), (b) establishment of baseline conditions and monitoring of environmental easements acquired by the Township, (c) lighting conditions and a potential ordinance proposal.

The NJ DEP has mandated that Harding (and similar towns) institute an ordinance that regulates the applications of fertilizers including the permitted concentration level of phosphate. Discussion at the Commission meeting centered on a draft ordinance developed by the Environmental Commission, the process for its adoption, and the township body that would be responsible for the enforcement. The draft ordinance was also being reviewed by a subcommittee of the Planning Board. The Commission had proposed that the Board of Health be the responsible body and it was planned that the Board of Health would introduce the ordinance at its meeting on April 8. After considerable discussion by the Commission and by the public in attendance it was concluded that the process for this initiative was inconsistent with prior processes for developing Harding land use policies and that any ordinance on this topic should proceed by the route of the Planning Board and the Township Committee.

The Commission discussed the possibility of developing a lighting ordinance for Harding. Such a proposal has been under discussion at various times over the past decade. It was noted that light pollution affects viewing of the night sky, that excess lighting uses energy needlessly, and that at times lighting at property boundaries can exceed current township limits, affecting neighboring property owners. The Commission noted that Harding recently was successful in having Jersey Central Power change a street light from a "high crime area light" (that had been installed when the previous light at that location was broken) to one in keeping with other street lights in

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town. This topic will be pursued further at a future meeting.

Meeting of **BOARD OF HEALTH**, 8 April

Present: Sraceno, Allyn, Schmidt, Halsey, Platt. Annibal, Board of Health official

The Board reviewed the monthly report of the Health Department. Annibal noted that that state had partially restored funding for professional training of health officials and members of the Board.

As it has for several years in a row, the Board approved the use of a private swimming pool for the Harding Township Recreation Association summer day camp. It was noted that the pool safety installations and personnel in attendance for the day camp exceed state requirements.

The Board further discussed the fertilizer ordinance that had been discussed at its March meeting. The Board noted the controversy that had arisen in the community over the process by which the ordinance had been developed and concluded that it should not introduce such an ordinance but rather refer the matter to the Planning Board and the Township Committee.

**HARDING OPEN SPACE TRUST (HOST)** 14 April 2010

Attendees: Loren Pfeiffer (Chairman), Ms Bologna (Harding Land Trust, Somers, Ward, Kovacs, Msrs Settle, Murray, Wepler, McKane ( HT Administrator).

Ms. Bologna (HLT) reported Fish & Wildlife have established a small pond on Waterman Meadow. Volunteers will help at The Gatehouse property. Volunteers worked Margetts Field & Von Zuben property where road from James St. will be smoothed. Glen Alpin needs volunteers. DPW will mow township properties once a year. Mr. Platt (Twp Com) announced the DPW now has 5 workers, formerly 8. PBA is now 12. Maintenance of The Farm (Harding low-income housing) is out for bid. New Business: Shade Tree Ordinance will be strengthened. Suggested Lighting Ordinance discussed to eliminate all-night lights. HOST representative to new Parks Committee will be Bill Settle.

**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, March 18, 2010**

Approved Resolutions

*Frank Callea and Jacqueline Fellippello, 79 Meyersville Road, Block 55, Lot 2, Zones R-1 & R-2*

Pending Applications

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*Eugenia Swift, 16 Meyersville Road, Block 12, Lot 9.01, Zone R-2, "C" Variance*  
Request for a one month adjournment granted.

### New Applications

*Arthur and Alma Papetti, 14 Hartley Farm Road, Block 4, Lot 58, Zone R-1, "C" Variance*

A variance is requested from the 10% maximum lot coverage ratio limit to allow construction of a swimming pool, cabana, connecting walk and related improvements that will result in a maximum lot coverage ratio of 12.6%. A variance is requested from the 100' minimum setback requirement to authorize the 99.7' south side setback for the existing detached garage. The application was recommended for approval.

*Matthew and Brenda Myers, 77 Glen Alpin Road, Block 49, Lot 11.02, Zones R-1 "C" Variance and "D" Variance*

A temporary use variance is requested to permit an existing residence to remain temporarily while a new residence and related improvements are constructed on the applicants' property. A temporary variance is requested from the 3% maximum building area ratio restriction to temporarily allow a maximum ratio of 4.52% during construction of a new principal residence. A temporary variance is requested from the 10% maximum lot coverage ratio restriction to temporarily allow a maximum ratio of 11.7% during construction of a new principal residence and related improvements. A variance is requested from the principal building height restriction to allow a maximum height of 36.42' and a maximum front façade height of 37.25' relative to Meadow Lane, both as calculated in relation to existing average grade, to permit construction of a new principal residence. The application was recommended for approval.

## **HARDING TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **Meeting – Monday, April 12, 2010**

Every three years, a technology plan is developed in an effort to further advance both the teaching and learning experiences within the Harding Township School. As the current plan concludes, a committee has been formed to evaluate the progress and identify needs related to technical advances in a new plan that support the school's mission. Dr. Tim Purnell discussed several advantages to the current learning environment that have come as a result of recently added tools and technology. He complimented the teachers and staff for their enthusiastic acceptance and every day use

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of these tools. Dr. Purnell also stated that most of the technology plan is funded through federal, state and private grants as well as E-Rate, a law resulting from the 1996 Telecommunications Act which called for all K-12 public and private non-profit schools and libraries to receive discounts in the form of rebates on telecommunication services with the idea of promoting and advancing technology and equality. For more information on the school's technology plan, please see Dr. Purnell's eBoard on the HTS website.

The school calendar for the 2010-2011 was also discussed. Though no final conclusion was made at this meeting, several members of the Board, the administration, the teachers and the public shared their perspectives. The most debated topic was the potential elimination of the February vacation week that would allow for school to end earlier in June (last day of school this year is June 25<sup>th</sup>). The school currently provides a week off in April as well. The discussion and vote were tabled until the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Dr. Purnell spoke about the Senior Citizens event that had recently been held at the school. In addition to being treated to a breakfast served by the students including music performance and sing-a-long, many guests participated in classroom and eBoard instruction. Dr. Purnell called the day a hallmark of our small school and its involvement with the community.

The Board then voted to accept, with regret, the resignation of Dee Klikier, School Principal effective June 30, 2010. Additionally, Jane Connell was praised for her contributions as a member of the Board of Education. Ms. Connell had elected to not seek another term.

### **Meeting – Monday, April 26, 2010**

The oath of office was administered to the newly elected members of the Board of Education, Norb Gambuzza and Dev Modi. An organizational meeting then commenced where Jim Novotny was elected as President of the Board and Evelyn Douglas was elected Vice President, both unanimously. In addition to various administrative appointments, the following delegates/committees were assigned:

NJ School Board Association	Kim Macaulay
Morris County School Board Association	Dev Modi
Educational Services of Morris County	Norb Gambuzza
Madison Board of Education Representative	Jim Novotny
Facilities and Finance	Norb Gambuzza & Dev Modi
Curriculum and Instruction	Kim Macaulay & Jim Novotny

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Personnel and Management

Evelyn Douglas & Norb Gambuzza

Dr. Purnell and Jim Novotny read prepared statements regarding the defeat of the school budget that occurred on April 20<sup>th</sup>. The process for addressing this defeat requires that budget documentation and details be submitted by the Board and school administration to the Harding Township Committee. Ultimately, the Committee will establish an aggregate tax levy that they determine is appropriate. The Board of Education will then have to make the necessary budget reductions (if required) to meet that tax levy. Dr. Purnell stated that if the directive was to have no tax levy, an additional \$250,000 would need to be cut from the current proposed budget. This would be above the reductions that have already taken place as a result of the elimination of state aid.

A resolution was passed recognizing the winners of the "What Prejudice Means to Me" Contest. This contest, sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, received close to 2000 written and art entries from 25 schools in Morris County. Three Harding Township School students of Mrs. Ruth McDowell won for their respective work: Julia Pallone, Outstanding; Joey Goret, Honorable mention; Mika Lesham, Honorable Mention. After lengthy discussion, a calendar for the 2010-2011 school year was passed. The significant change to this year's calendar is the elimination of a full week of vacation in February resulting in an earlier end to the school year. Next year's April break aligns with that of the Madison schools. The final calendar may be found on the school website.

### **Civic Association News and Announcements**

**Civic Association:** The DEADLINES FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are JUNE 11 and SEPTEMBER 3 (the September issue will be out after Labor Day). *This is a correction, your editor forgot there is a June issue*) Current and past issues of Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are also on our Website: <http://www.hardingcivic.org>. Send questions or comments about Thumbnail to editor, **email address: [hesnaj@verizon.net](mailto:hesnaj@verizon.net)**, or the Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976.

*Correction note:* To the Directory recently mailed to Residents. The Historian post, now vacant, had been filled by Swiss Schroeder, recently deceased; Thumbnail regrets any inconvenience.

### **HARDING TOWNSHIP CIVIC ASSOCIATION UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE**

The Civic Association is excited to release a new website ([www.hardingcivic.org](http://www.hardingcivic.org)). It's called Harding On-Line and we hope it will be a virtual town square for our community. Harding On-Line looks like an online newspaper. It has news articles, announcements, and posts of upcoming events. And you can now comment on the articles. You can

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

make suggestions to your Civic Association and in the near future you will be able to write letters-to-the-editors in a section called "Your Views". Harding On-Line is organized into five major content areas for information on the various groups that do so much to bring HT to life: Our Town; Our Kids; Our Surroundings; Our Community; and Civic Association. For more information, see the website.

If your own community organization or club wants to communicate with Harding residents, maybe to recruit members or announce an event, you can use Harding On-Line. Shoot us your copy and we'll post it for you. Photos are also welcome. Better yet, if you are going to contribute frequently, we'll teach you how to post copy yourself. (Of course our editors will oversee the postings.) So if your organization doesn't have a website, you can have an online presence by using Harding On-Line. And if your group does have a website, you can drive traffic to your site by posting articles and making announcements on Harding On-line and linking to your site. In the near future we will have a teach-in at the new Kemmerer Library to show you how your group can use the site effectively.

### **Want to learn more about Harding On-Line?**

Come to the Civic association **June 7 meeting at 7:30 pm** at the new Library. We will be showcasing the new site and discussing how you can leverage Harding On-Line for your organization to post announcements, events, and news. Have your own site? We can link to it and you can still add your announcements and events to the town calendar. We will also be discussing future enhancements and invite you to bring your own ideas. Then in the fall we will be hosting training classes for representatives of organizations who would like to post items to their own section.

### **EMAIL ADDRESSES – WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?**

In this year's dues solicitation, we requested e-mail addresses. Though we didn't fully explain why we wanted these email addresses, the response was excellent -- we now almost 400 in the database versus about 1450 household. So let us explain what we're up to. Recall that our mission is to create an informed citizenry (and to foster patriotism). Over the years we have been frustrated that, given the monthly publishing schedule of The Thumbnail, we sometimes fail in that mission. This is because an event will be imminent or news will break that residents should know about now, before the next Thumbnail can hit your mailbox. Unfortunately, these are often some of the most important items. So we are decided to go electronic. We are not going to do school closings, but we will promote civic government related events like an important

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upcoming budget review at the Township Committee or a deadline for filing to run for the Board of Ed (which we did a few weeks ago).

Rest assured that we will respect the capacity of your inbox and try not to clutter it with junk. However, what you may have a different opinion of what is junk than we Trustees who confess to being civic affairs junkies. If you really hate it all, you can of course opt out. Alternatively, if you're afraid a neighbor is in not getting the notices, tell 'em to "get with the program!" Since emailing is free, you can give us multiple addresses per household or even per person. *Also, you can trust us that we never have, and never will, sell or share your contact information to a third party.*

***One last point of clarification...If you give us your email address, you will still get Thumbnail, in hardcopy, in the mail. E-mail is simply an additional, timely channel.***

### **TOWNSHIP RECYCLING**

**The following Saturday recycling dates for MAY, JUNE, and JULY upcoming:**

**May 22, June 5, June 19, July 10 and July 24**

**The scheduled recycling date of Saturday Sept. 24 is changed to Saturday Oct 2, due to conflict with the Fire Dept auction**

**Commingled Recyclables:** consists of all aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles, and only plastic bottles and containers with the Recycling symbol, and #1 or #2. Try to crush plastic bottle to conserve space. Please remember no plastic or paper bags.

**Commingled Mixed Paper recycling;** consists of all paper, cardboard, newspaper, office paper, magazines, and books. Please put loose or shredded paper in paper bag. Please flatten all boxes or fill with other paper products. **Other accepted items;** Batteries; automotive (car) and household (rechargeable accepted); Computers and all related peripherals, i.e. printers and monitors; Automotive and light truck tires, (on or off rim) and Propane tanks (BBQ size only) **The Hours of operation are every Wednesday from 7AM. to noon (7– 9AM self service); and every other Saturday: 9AM to noon.**

# Harding Township Civic Association

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### **DATES TO REMEMBER**, meetings as noted.

Municipal Court (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)	3 PM
Municipal Court (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday)	11AM
Environmental Commission (1 <sup>st</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM
Seniors (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday)Chrst KingCh	11 AM
Planning Board (4 <sup>th</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM
Hist Preservtion Comm (1stThursday)	8 PM
Board of Health (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday)	8 PM
Board of Education (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM
Board of Adjustment (3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday)	7:30 PM
Township Committee(3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed)	7:30 PM
Harding Twp Civic Association (1 <sup>st</sup> Monday)	7:30 PM