THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

## **NOVEMBER 2010**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### The 7th grade at the HARDING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL proudly presents

**"Hardingopoly".** The 7th graders at the Harding Twp School are working hard to put together the first board game based on the town of Harding. The Monopoly inspired game will feature the merchants of Harding and be offered for sale for \$25. Anyone interested in purchasing a game or in advertising their business on the game board should contact Bobbi Collier or Lisa Gleason. Business advertisements are for purchase for \$250, don't wait to long there are only 42 spots! Please contact Bobbi Collier at bobbicollier@me.com or Lisa Gleason at INFANTECO@aol.com.

**HARDING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL news:** After two and a half years, Superintendent of Schools Timothy Purnell has resigned from his post, effective Feb. 1, 2011. He has accepted a job as superintendent in the Somerville district, where he'll be in charge of 2,300 students and 152 staff members in a three-building, K-12 district. He started in the Harding 320-student district in July of 2008, overseeing the 40 staff members. The Harding school Board has begun the process to identify candidates for his replacement. The public is urged to attend upcoming Board meetings and participate in this decision. School Board meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays at 7:30 PM in the Harding Township School.

## THE KEMMERER LIBRARY

**New Winter Hours:** Here are the library's new hours of operation: **Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri.: 10 am – 5 pm** 

#### Thurs.: 10 am – 7 pm; Sat.: 10 am – 2 pm; Sun.: closed

**New in the library:** As winter's cold weather forces you indoors, come to the Kemmerer Library to sit awhile in our cozy reading room by the fireplace and read the *Star-Ledger* or one of our new magazine subscriptions: *Better Homes & Gardens, Discover, Martha Stewart Living, New Jersey Monthly, The New Yorker, Reader's Digest* and *Vanity Fair.* And more are on the way!

**Titles/Authors on Order:** *The Mommy Diet; Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* by Karen Armstrong; *The Cat Whisperer* (Cesar Millan's feline counterpart!); Julia

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Child's personal letters; new fiction by Alice Hoffman, Daphne Kalotay, Michael Koryta, John T. Lescroart and Lauren Willig, and much more!

**New on <u>www.hardinglibrary.org</u>:** Our web site is constantly updated. Check it out for newly acquired local and national newspapers available free online to anyone with a Kemmerer Library card. Also, our Event Calendar is the best place to view all the library's programs for the month in one spot.

**Seeking a Boom Box:** Does anyone have a CD player with built-in speakers that you would like to donate to the library? If so, please contact us and tell us about it. Director Mary Witherell can be reached at 973-267-2665, x102, or mary.witherell@hardinglibrary.org.

Adult Book Group: The book group meets Wednesday, Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 pm at the library. This month's book is *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot.

**Display Case:** The library has two beautiful glass display cases in its adult reading room, and we invite Harding residents with historical, educational or artistic collections suitable for public display to place in the cases for three months at a time. If you are interested in being considered, please contact director Mary Witherell at 973-267-2665, x102, or mary.witherell@hardinglibrary.org.

**Storytime** for children ages 1-3: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. Children will hear stories, sing songs and make a craft.

**Singing Babies:** Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Babies should be 4-24 months of age. Listen to songs and finger plays.

**Santa's Workshop:** Saturday, Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> at 12 p.m. Make a holiday present for a family member or friend. All ages welcome.

**Fourth- and Fifth-Grade Book Group:** Thursday, Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4 p.m. Copies of the book to be discussed in January will be distributed at this meeting.

**Anime Party:** Tuesday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. Watch two short anime films presented and introduced by local anime enthusiast Katy Balog. Teens ages 15 & up.

**Teen Advisory Group:** Thursday, Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. Teens in grades 7 & up meet to discuss ideas for the Library.

<u>GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD PROJECT HELP NEEDED.</u> Shannon Macaulay, a resident and a Senior at Villa Walsh Academy is a member of Harding Girl Scout Troop

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1744. She is working on a Gold Award project regarding the Harding Township Kemmerer Library Teen Section. Her purpose is to help collect books for the young adult section. She helped host a 'get together' for publicity of the library, and is also hoping people will help contribute suitable books; she has a book list available. Please get in touch with her if you have suggestions, her email is smacaulay11@gmail.com **FROM THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE:** (*letter to the editor*)

"As the budgeting process for 2011 begins, we on the Harding Township Committee would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of our many volunteers.

"At a time when many of our sister municipalities are implementing cutbacks in important services to meet budget requirements, Harding Township has been able to retain its municipal services because of the high rate of volunteerism in the Township. For example, the library, fire department and first aid squad are not funded by the Township budget. Instead, these organizations rely on significant financial contributions from members of the public as well as donated time, while maintaining the same high level of quality services provided to residents year after year.

"We also wish to recognize the contributions of those individuals who volunteer to serve on the Township's boards and commissions. This type of service requires a large commitment of time from these individuals---a sacrifice that is not often acknowledged but is nevertheless appreciated.

"The Township Committee commends all Township volunteers and sincerely thanks them for their dedication to community service during these difficult economic times."

#### From the Civic Association:

Our appeal for annual dues has been sent to your home. We appreciate all your contributions that help our efforts to produce high quality reporting of civic events. **You help us achieve our goals by joining as a dues-paying member.** 

The Harding Township Civic Association serves an unusual role in the community. The goals of the Association have been to foster public interest in government, and to assist in achieving and maintaining **good mutual understanding** between citizens and public officials, to promote knowledge and appreciation of public problems through non-partisan publicity and to inform, arouse and lead

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*public opinion toward the solution of public problems.* To these ends, and for over 50 years, the Civic Association is staffed by volunteers who attend and report on many of the official doings of the Township government. Volunteer members also organize the Memorial Day Parade, the Civic Association website <u>www.hardingcivic.org</u>, the new neighbor welcome kits, and provide the Harding Township annual directory. These reports appear in The Thumbnail, the monthly newsletter which you are reading. Although the Civic Association asks you, and everyone living or working in the Township to join the Civic Association as a dues-paying member, the Thumbnail is mailed to every home in Harding Township, regardless of whether or not you contribute.

As you make your schedules for the fall, consider joining the Harding Township Civic Association. To learn more, email Steve Balog at stephenjbalog@gmail.com or just come to next meeting, which is the Oct 13, 7:30PM at Kirby Hall in the small conference room. Next meeting date is Dec 8.

**Civic Association Needs Interns** 

The Civic association could really use a couple of bright, high-school or college aged people to help us execute our mission. We need an **assistant treasurer** -- learn from our treasurer, investment banker Leon Desbrow, about cash flow...and processing and depositing dues checks. And we need an **assistant marketing manager** -- maintain our email address database and dream up clever promotions. In addition, the interns can cover and report on township government meetings like the Planning Board, and Board of Adjustment. Our interns will attend our monthly trustee meetings. Time commitment is a 2-3 hours per month. We are an all volunteer organization, so we don't pay. But this will look really good on your college or job application. So if you are or aspire to be a business, marketing, journalism, English or government major, please contact us at (stephenjbalog@gmail.com).

## Calling All Harding Community Organization Leaders:

Does your organization want to communicate with Harding Residents? Does your group want to have more reach and impact at zero cost? If so, Harding Township Civic Association has the answer...

On **Monday**, **December 13 at 7:30 PM**, **at the new Kemmerer Library**, the Civic Association will hold a TEACH-IN to show you how to use our website, Harding On-Line. We will teach you how to use our website to:

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- PROMOTE your organization's events,
- GET THE WORD OUT on your news and announcements,
- ADD your items to the Harding On-Line Community Calendar

It's easy. And better yet, it's FREE!

Our webmaster will walk you through the few simple steps to submit your material. Who should attend? You or the person in your organization responsible for public relations, promotion or communications. Computer skills are NOT necessary -- if you can click and type, you're good! Bring a laptop, if you have one. But even that's not necessary -- a pencil and a pad will do. *RSVP: Let us know that you will attend; Email response to (stephenjbalog@gmail.com).* 

## HARDING ALLIANCE AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

Check out the new parenting collection at the Harding Kemmerer Library. Titles on developmental milestones of children and substance abuse awareness have been added to the collection. Thank you to Jen Carlin, Children's Librarian, for her assistance with this project.

Our mission is to provide education and resources to promote healthy decisionmaking and to avoid substance abuse and risky behaviors. Harding Alliance members are concerned citizens, police, and health and school professionals. Please come and let your voice be heard. Our next meeting is **January 19, at 8:30 AM** in the Guidance Office of Harding Township School. Check out our new <u>website</u> at <u>https://sites.google.com/site/hardingalliance/</u> for further information about Harding Alliance. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Judy Malloy, Chairperson, at judymotown@gmail.com.

**WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** urges you to be alert to INCREASED DEER ACTIVITY. With the days getting shorter and white-tail deer entering their annual rut, motorists should be especially alert while driving, to avoid collisions with the animals. While deer may cross roads at any time, they are most active during the dawn and dusk hours. If you spot a deer, slow down and pay attention to sudden movement. If the deer does not move, don't go around it. Wait until the road is clear. And if you spot one deer, be alert for additional ones.

If you are traveling after dark, use high beams where there is no oncoming traffic. High beams will illuminate the eyes of the deer on or near roads and provide better reaction time for a

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motorist. If it appears you are going to collide with a deer, don't swerve to avoid impact. The animal, being totally unpredictable, may counter-maneuver. Brake firmly but stay in your lane. Fatalities are more likely, when a driver swerves to avoid a deer and instead, collides with oncoming traffic or a permanent structure alongside the road.

Please report any deer-vehicle collision to a local law enforcement agency immediately. The Harding Twp. Police Department number is 973-455-0500.

Save the Date for the <u>Second Annual Harding Twig cocktail party</u>!! Featuring keynote speaker Dr. Bennett of The Atlantic Neuroscience Institute's Concussion Clinic at Morristown Memorial Hospital on **January 22, 2011**. Proceeds will benefit the Pediatric Emergency Room of Goryeb Children's Hospital at Morristown Memorial.

## **TOWNSHIP NEWS:**

### Township Committee Meeting – 10/20/10

All five Committee persons were in attendance at this meeting which began by recognizing Judge Schaul's 38 years of service to Harding Township.

Mundane items of business included:

(1) Re-introduction of ordinance on soil erosion and sediment control; (2) Public hearing on code adoption legislation;

(3) Four escrow releases;

(4) October Bill List;

(5) Two tax appeal settlements totaling almost \$850K in assessed value for a \$2220 reduction in taxes;

(6) Authorized use of Barrett Field by a baseball league;

(7) Contract for snow removal at the Farm at Harding;

Promotion in Finance Dept Approved...but Questioned

Leonard Ho, senior bookkeeper was promoted to the open position of assistant treasurer which carries a salary increase of \$5K, or 12.5%, to \$45K. While not reflecting on Mr. Ho's job performance, a resident expressed "concern about the mixed message the Committee is sending the taxpayers with regard to the financial status of

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the Township." The resident further noted that the Committee had previously cut 3 positions in the DPW, "cut the salaries of the 5 remaining workers, cut the hours and salary of the Construction official and terminated the contract of a judge who had served the township for over 30 years--all in the name of saving money."

The resident's prepared statement continued, "We were told the town had no money to hire a replacement police officer. The residents were lead to believe the Township was in dire straights financially. Mrs. Egea stated in a previous meeting that one of the major reasons Harding taxes are so low was that the township saves considerable money by not having a public library and by not financially supporting a fire department or first aid squad. Our taxes are kept low by the people who volunteer for these positions, yet 3 of the 5 remaining DPW workers whose salaries were cut, are those very volunteers that serve the community by volunteering with the Fire Dept. What a slap in the face to recognize their extreme contribution to the town but then cut their salaries. The construction dept. has become extremely busy these past 6 monthsmaking their projected revenues by Oct. 18th. with 2 1/2 months still left to go. In looking at what's pending as of todays date-it's projected that the construction office will bring in an additional \$100,000 before years end yet when the committee was asked to reinstate the construction officials hours due to the volume of permits, it was denied because the committee wanted to proceed cautiously because they were not convinced the money was there. It was left to the administrator to decide on an as needed basis to allow the official to work up to 35 hours a week. For 10 months the committee has been claiming there is no money- so where is the proposed additional salary for this newly created position coming from? Why is one employee getting a \$5000 raise- nearly 12% increase in his salary while others have had their salary cut? Is the CFO taking a pay cut since obviously some of his workload is being reduced by Mr. Ho taking on added responsibilities? Is the committee not replacing the part time position in the finance dept? Where is the \$5000 coming from?"

Ms McKane, the township administrator, responded by saying that (1) the individual in the part time finance position is retiring, (2) that position being replaced at lower compensation, and (3) the total finance department salary expense is below budget.

Agreement on Cell Tower – Avoids Lawsuit

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Following discussions over the last several months, the TC approved an agreement with Verizon Wireless regarding its increase of the height of the cell phone tower at the Interstate-287 rest stop. The agreement specifies (1) a maximum height, (2) that the tower will be available to other carriers, and (3) that if Verizon wants to build another tower in Harding Township (very likely) that it will come to Harding's Cell Tower Committee which was recently formed around this issue. This agreement was said to avoid costly litigation with the wireless carrier that municipalities usually lose anyway. *Maintenance Plan for Windy Hill Approved* 

The Harding Land Trust submitted a plan for the maintenance of Windy Hill, a Green Acres property at the corner of Blue Mill Road and James Street, formerly known as the VonZuben property. The plan does not impose a financial burden on the town as Dr. Bloom, who owns the adjoining property has agreed to cut the grass. Surveyor makers designate where the Green Acres property begins and ends. The plan was approved.

#### Board of Health Report - Well Received

The Board of Health, in the person of Gary Annibal, made its report to the TC. Committee person Egea said that the Board of Health took seriously the TC's directive to look at the role of the Harding Board of Health versus that in other towns. In response to a question from the public, it was stated that almost all of what the Board does is mandated by the State – septic and well inspection; immunization programs, cancer detection programs, food establishment inspections. A municipality has discretion in how it executes these mandates – in house or shared service; charge for usage.

#### Budget Status Report – Township Running a Surplus

According to presentation made by the Township's CFO, the combination of revenues expected to be about 2% above plan and expenditures forecast to be about 10% below plan, will drive a surplus of about \$920,000.

In aggregate, the six activities that have revenues (Planning Board, Construction Office, Municipal Court, Zoning Board, Health Department and Interest Income) are estimated to generate nearly \$170K, more than expected (\$749K versus a plan of \$581K). Five of the six are delivering more revenue than plan, while only the Health Department is coming up short. The revenue of \$749K compares to last year's figure of

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\$483K, a 55% increase. Recall that the TC demanded and approved a slew of very large fee increases to attempt to bring these departments to as close to breakeven as possible and not have to rely on property tax rate increase.

Total revenue, including the six items mentioned, above is projected to be \$8.735 million versus a budget of \$8.589 million -- \$146K, or about 2 percent ahead of budget.

On the expense side of the ledger, most departments are about where they should be with 3 quarters of the year booked – 75% or less of projected annual expense. All departments and line items are at or below 75% of their 2010 budgeted expenditure levels except Health Department which is already a 79% of budget and Utility expense which is almost 83% of budget (\$183K year-to-date outlays versus a budget of \$222K).

Looking at year-to-date expenditures by major category, the projections given show that total outlays for the Township will come in 10% below budget -- \$7.82 million versus a budget of \$8.71 million. Contributing to the forecast positive variance are Salaries (95% of budget), Operating expenses (78% of budget) and Insurance (84% of budget). Debt service expense, Pension and Reserve are all expected to be on budget.

The combination of revenues 2% above plan and expenditures 10% below plan drives an expected surplus of about \$919,000.

The approximately \$900K surplus will be used to rebuild Harding's surplus fund which was tapped for the 2009 budget. A prudently managed municipality will try to maintain a surplus balance that can be used to to balance the budget in a tough year. However prudence also demands that surpluses get rebuilt when finances turn around. But due to State municipal finance rules, our 2010 excess of income over expenses cannot be put into surplus until 2012. So 2011 will have to be carefully managed again.

(Slides used by the CFO for the presentation are available at your Civic Association's website, Harding Online, <u>www.hardingcivic.org</u>.)

#### What's Next for the Financial Planning Process?

At the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting the TC will continue the benchmarking discussion focused on the DPW and Police. A preliminary 2011 budget will be reviewed. As well, revenue trends for 5 years will be examined.

At the December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, budgets for Administration, Finance, Planning, Zoning, Health, Court and Construction will be reviewed.

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And at the January 19<sup>th</sup>, the budget of the Police and DPW will be review again as will the plans for Capital and Open Space spending. At this meeting all options (spending priorities, tax and fee increases) for the 2011 budget will bediscussed.

### Planning Board, October 25, 2010 Roll Call: David Dietz absent.

Announcements/Reports/Presentations: The application of Gloria Glatt/Fawn Hill Associates, PB-04-10, is being carried to the next meeting given that an auction for the property has been scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup>. (Editor's note: this property appears to have been sold at the auction, information received indicates that the selling price was \$6.7 million for 34 acres and dwellings.) The Board continues to encourage the use of concept plan review and will place a one-pager on same in the application set. Mr. Newlin advised the Board that he would like to hold another operational review at the beginning of the New Year. The Board was advised that the Township Committee would like an update on the build out analysis. Mr. Schliefer reported that the Board of Adjustment was wrestling with the issue of alterations to historical buildings, and what percentage of the original structure needed to remain for the building to still be considered historical. Ms. Olcott reported receiving a community survey from the county which was chock full of interesting data. Morris County has the second highest median household income in the state (next to Hunterdon), and more than 50% of the adult population has bachelor's degrees. Ms. Moriarty reported that the Harding Land Trust was looking to celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the spring. It was reported that land for Phase 1 of the Primrose project had been purchased by the developers. The Cell Tower Advisory Committee met with T-Mobile and discussed a150 foot tree pole at the Seventh Day Adventist Church which would need variances

<u>Discussion</u>: Ms. Kimball discussed the appellate decision on COAH's revised third round rules which were challenged after Harding made changes. The court threw out the rules, and Ms. Kimball thought the subsequent process would be long, and it would be some time before Harding could assess the impact of new rules. Steep slope and dry well regulations were referred to the Board by the Township Committee for review since it is proposed that waivers for relief should come to the Board rather than the Committee. The regulations give the Township Engineer the authority to deal with the waivers where there is a single lot and there is no other proposal before the Board or the Board of Adjustment. The Board approved a recommendation to the Committee to put

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the regulations in the form of an ordinance. The Board also discussed Ordinance #TC-15-10 covering the recodification (or renumbering) of the Township Code which was referred from the Committee. This was described as housekeeping that occurs every so often but contains no substantive changes. The Board approved the changes to the development code, but advised the Committee that it needed to notify the Board is there was any substantive impact.

### Applications

PB-01-10, Applicant **William and Richard Blanchard**, Block 26, Lots 13 and 13.01, 42 Glen Alpin Road. Action: Request for Extension of Approval and Request for Modification of Approval Condition. In this case the development had not yet been perfected. The applicant is not going to build and is looking for relief for posting a bond for improvements to the property. The Board approved an extension until the end of the year and relief from posting a bond provided that the necessary conservation monuments were installed before the end of the year.

PB-05-10, Applicant **1300 Mt Kemble Avenue Associates LLC**, Block 46.01, Lot 10, 1300 Mt. Kemble Avenue. Major Site Plan Concept Review. Action: Informal Review of Solar Panel project. The applicant and various representatives presented a proposal for a solar panel installation on the property. A total of 6955 solar panels producing 1.7 mega watts would be installed over a portion of the parking lot and lawn area. A more detailed discussion will occur at the next meeting.

**Planning Board September 27, 2010,** <u>Roll Call</u>. Thomas dePoortere absent. <u>Announcements/Reports/Presentations</u>: The Board was given a "heads up" on a recodification of the Harding code; nothing substantive, the land use section will be renumbered. Mr. Dietz advised that the Environmental Commission was looking at the constrained lot situation. Ms.Olcott reported that the Advisory Review Committee had sent an email about dry well waivers. Mr. Newlin mentioned that the township Committee wanted a presentation on the build out analysis. Mr. Schliefer reported that the Board of Adjustment was considering the conversion of a historic building to a garage, but the changes beg the question when changes render the structure no longer historic. Mr. Dietz reported that the Environmental Commission was working on conservation easement baseline documentation. Mr. Bartlett reported that the Township Committee had taken strong action against the Cook house. Mr. Bartlett reported on the Primrose project. Morris County is putting up the money, and the Township Committee

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has nothing to do with negotiating the price, although Harding might contribute Green Acres funds for the purchase (but not tax money).

Resolutions

PB-10-08, Applicant **Primrose Partners, LLC**, Block 46, Lots 6, 7.01, 8.03 and 10.04, Brook Drive South. Action: Amendment of Approval Condition. A six-month extension from August was approved for the installation of monuments and markers for conservation easements.

PB-03-10, Applicant **Blanchard Partners LP**, Block 49, Lot 12, 55 Glen Alpin Road. Action: Preliminary and Final Major Subdivision. After some discussion and clean up of language regarding conservation easement requirements, the resolution was approved as amended.

<u>Presentation</u>: Representatives of the Historic Preservation Committee then gave a presentation of a survey of historic homes in Harding. It is a ready informational reference that can be used by all deliberating Township boards and committees. The information is available electronically and also clearly delineates all historic districts.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, no report this issue **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**, no report this issue

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

Civic Association: The DEADLINE FOR THE next 2 issues OF THE THUMBNAIL are

**December 10 and January 7, respectively**. 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,* or the Harding Township Civic Association, PO Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976. The Civic Association website,

<u>www.hardingcivic.org</u>, is updated frequently; we post events and announcements sent to our email address: <u>submissions@hardingcivic.org</u>.

#### **TOWNSHIP RECYCLING**

The Hours of operation are every Wednesday from 7AM. to noon (7– 9AM self service); and every other Saturday: 9AM to noon, *Dec 4 and Dec 18.* 

**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

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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)

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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 (1st and 3rd 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 (2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed)	7:30 PM