

# Harding Township Civic Association

## THUMBNAIL ACCOUNTS OF CIVIC AFFAIRS

“Keeping Harding Informed Since 1949”

[www.HardingCivic.org](http://www.HardingCivic.org)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2020

#### TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

##### COVID-19

Please check Harding’s municipal website, which is updated throughout the day, for the latest information concerning the coronavirus, and meetings of boards and committees and other municipal meetings and activities. Currently Recycling at the Public Works Center is closed. The situation is in continual flux as Harding responds to state and county declarations and regulations. Harding’s emergency management operations are fully activated.

#### **Municipal Budget 2020: Tax RATE Down, But Your Taxes May Vary**

The Township Committee released the preliminary 2020 budget for Harding on March 9. Budget approval is expected April 13.

Remember, this budget only covers Harding municipal government (police, administration, DPW, Open Space, etc) - about 28% of your property tax bill. It does not cover Harding School and Morris County - about 46% and 26% of your property tax bill, respectively.

The bottom line is that the budget calls for a 1.7% increase in spending (“appropriations” in government-speak) to \$9.6 million. To pay for this spending, property taxes are pegged to increase 1.8%. However, because the assessed value of all property in Harding increased by 5.64% (as a consequence of the recent town wide re-assessment) the tax RATE will actually fall by 3.5% from .288 mils to .278 mils.

Though the tax RATE is down 3.5%, an individual homeowner may have a higher or lower property tax bill depending on how much his or her home's assessment changed.

Let's focus first on the Harding Township debt. HT debt peaked at about \$14mm in 2009 and has been falling ever since where today debt stands at just over \$4.1mm. The debt originated from affordable housing (44%), open space (27%), wild life (18%) and Glen Alpin (11%). HT is a AAA credit so it has ample ability to issue debt if needed in the future. With no more borrowing, Harding debt will be extinguished in 2029.

Now let's examine spending. Fully 59% of municipal spending is for employee compensation including salaries & wages, health insurance, social security and pensions. Non-police employees were awarded a 2% cost of living increase while the police contract called for a greater increase. There was no increase in total municipal headcount and some positions were changed to part time from full time. Surprisingly, health insurance cost actually decreased 1% as some employees declined the plan in favor of their spouses' plan. Taking all the factors into consideration, compensation expenses are forecast to rise 2.2% to \$5.475mm.

Health Insurance of about \$1.3mm covers both active (about 60%) and retired employees (about 40%). Contract negotiations a few years ago decreased the promised post-retirement benefit for newly hired so the expense for retirees has begun to decline.

Non-compensation costs are forecast to decline 0.4% led by a 3% decline in the largest line item "Other Expenses" which includes Building/Road/Park Maintenance, Miscellaneous, Utilities, Insurance, Legal, Technology, Engineering, Library (same \$40K as it's been for 20 years), audit, snow removal. The "Miscellaneous" line item of "Other" is \$609K and is unclassified expenses from the police dept (113K), solid waste collection (\$90K), general administration (\$54K), Planning Board (\$52K - decrease as the Master Plan was completed in 2019), etc.

The budget allocates \$625,000 to the capital improvement fund, an increase from \$616,000. Much of this goes to road maintenance, an expense that peaked 3 years ago in an effort to catch up on some neglected projects that required outsourcing to tackle.

By NJ statute, the budget must balance so that Harding has to raise revenue from

taxes (63% of the budget in 2020), Surplus (23%), Construction Fees (3%), “Energy Tax Receipts (5%) and Municipal Revenues (5%). The budget is keeping the Surplus level at \$2.1mm - a conservative practice rather than eating into it. The budget also anticipates a payment from the sale of “The Farm at Harding” (our low income housing project) in approximately May of 2020. The sale of The Farm has an estimated \$70K positive impact on the budget.

At this point in our review of the budget we would, in past years, show the change (generally an increase) in the tax bill for the “average property” in Harding (value about \$1.05mm). However this year it is not possible to show that figure because of the re-valuation. Readers will just have to look at their own bill to see the net result of the re-assessment and decrease in the tax rate.

### **Open Space Tax Remains at \$0.04**

About 3% of your property tax goes to the Harding Open Space Trust (HOST). The HOST had approximately \$3.5mm at the end of 2019. The Open Space tax of 4 cents per \$100 of assessed property value raises over \$800K per year. The tax has been at 4 cents since 2015 and will remain there for 2020, raising about \$850K. About 20 years ago, a town wide referendum allowed the tax to be set at high as 5 cents.

### **Capital Budget for 2020: \$585,000**

Preliminary capital budget is \$585,000. The shopping list includes a “full size dump truck” (\$215K); police vehicles (\$135K); road improvements (\$105K); police equipment such as table computers and radios (\$41K) and interior and exterior improvements at town hall and other township facilities (\$78K).

A Power Point presentation with more details of the budget and the six year capital plan can be found on the Township website under the “Government” tab then Township Committee.

## **PLANNING BOARD**

### **Planning Board Notes for February 24, 2020**

The Board approved the application for minor site plan approval at 33 Long Hill Road. This included two variances. One was for extra cupolas, the addition of which would result in a 20% savings in HVAC load. The other was for lot coverage which, at 10.5% was lower than the previous coverage of 10.9%. If the use of permeable pavers was

not counted as coverage, the coverage would be 9.7%. The Board considered a new application for a special flood hazard permit at 24 Miller Road; issuance of the permit was approved. The Board then continued with the Master Plan Reevaluation process. The Township Planner reviewed changes that were based on comments received from other Township agencies. Much of the discussion revolved around historic structures and business uses in business zones. Mr. Saulnier also discussed the Morris County Municipal Planning Board Survey which is due by March 27<sup>th</sup>. The survey is looking to identify the three most important land use issues facing Morris County; Harding's input will be discussed at the next meeting.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**To be Rescheduled: Free Trees to Good Homes.** The Environmental Commission and Harding Land Trust need your help! The New Jersey Forest Service has delayed the delivery of trees this Spring and we will not be able to distribute trees on April 25<sup>th</sup> as planned. The Forest Service is not able to provide a new date yet but we know that the trees need to be in the ground by the end of May in order to survive. We will need lots of help to get everything distributed and planted quickly. Announcements will be published on the town website as soon as we know we will have the trees.

**Annual Roadside Cleanup Cancelled.** Our official roadside cleanup will be cancelled this Spring. We have been fortunate to have a great many dedicated volunteers come out for this event in the past. We hope that you will take it upon yourself get outside to pick up a section of our beautiful scenic roads. We will be back with a new date for this coming fall.

### **Environmental Commission Speaker Series**

The EC is working on scheduling a number of speakers for late this Spring. More details will follow as the schedule gets finalized.

### **HARDING TOWNSHIP HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

#### **What are coronaviruses?**

A coronavirus is a type of common virus that can infect your respiratory tract. They can spread much like cold viruses. Almost everyone gets a coronavirus infection at least once in their life, most likely as a young child. They tend to circulate in the fall and winter.

## **What is the 2019 Novel Coronavirus?**

Sometimes a novel (meaning “new”) type of coronavirus emerges and begins infecting humans. The type of coronavirus that has recently emerged in Wuhan, China is a new type of coronavirus and is infecting people for the first time, which means people do not have any immunity to it. On February 12, 2020, the 2019 Novel Coronavirus was renamed by the World Health Organization as COVID-19.

## **How is it spread?**

Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes  
Between people who are in close contact with one another including caring for an infected person

## **Symptoms:**

- Cough
- Fever
- Shortness of breath

## **Prevention tips:**

- Stay home if you are sick
- Limit close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Avoid handshakes
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

## **Treatment:**

There are no specific treatments for COVID-19 other than supportive care as needed.

Know the Facts & Keep Informed By Visiting or Calling:

CDC’s COVID-19 Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Website:

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml> NJ COVID-19 Information Public Call

Center: 1-800-222-1222 or 1-800-962-1253 if in NJ but using a non-NJ cell phone.

## **HARDING LAND TRUST**

Dear Harding friends and neighbors,

On behalf of the entire HLT Board and Staff, we hope you are well and taking one day at a time.

Our community has and always will be ready to help one another during difficult times. As a reminder, for up to date COVID-19 information please check the Harding Township's website [hardingnj.org](http://hardingnj.org).

Although we cannot be together for our Annual Meeting (which will be rescheduled for the Fall) here are a few options if you need to get some fresh air and take a "walk about:"

- HLT's Gatehouse trails (accessible at HLT Headquarters at the corner of James Street and Harter Road). These trails connect to the Great Swamp Watershed Association's Conservation Management Area.
- HLT's Primrose Farm trails (accessible from the parking area at Barrett Field off of Brook Drive South).

While walking our trails, please stay to marked trail areas, and be sure to practice social distancing, keeping 6 feet from others you may see on the trail.

Stay safe, be well, and enjoy the Springtime weather,

Your friends at The Harding Land Trust.

## **HARDING TOWNSHIP PTO AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

The Harding Township Educational foundation (HTEF) and the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) have postponed the Harding Huskers Corn Hole Tournament/ Spring Fundraiser due to the Coronavirus. Our new date will be Saturday, October 3rd, 2020. We look forward to seeing you for a great night of fun in the fall!

## **NEW VERNON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **NVVFD AUX "BBQ" FUNDRAISER:**

In light of the situation we are all in, we must postpone our "All You Can Eat BBQ Buffet" that was scheduled for April 26th to a later date. I know many of you will be disappointed as we are as well. If you have already sent in a check, it will be refunded. We will keep you posted when we have a new date. Stay safe!

## **GREEN VILLAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **Community Shred Fundraiser - POSTPONED**

Saturday, April 11, 2020 at 9am until noon

Hosted by the Green Village Fire Department Auxiliary

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) - The Auxiliary of the Green Village Fire Department has decided to postpone their Paper Shred Fundraiser to September 20<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Flea Market Fundraiser - CANCELLED**

Saturday, April 18, 2020

Hosted by the Green Village Fire Department Auxiliary

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) - The Auxiliary of the Green Village Fire Department has decided to cancel their indoor Flea Market which was to be held on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Sporting Clays and Pig Roast**

Sunday, April 19, 2020 at 9 a.m. - RAIN OR SHINE

Hosted by the Green Village Fire Department

Please be sure to continually check our website at [www.greenvillagefire.com](http://www.greenvillagefire.com) for potential date change or cancellation of this event due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The annual event will be held at Miele Field, located at the end of Britten Road in Green Village. The event is a 100 Target Lewis Fun Shoot. The entry fee is \$120.00 if received on or before 04/11/2020 or \$135.00 if received after 04/11/2020. There is an additional Lewis Cash Option for \$10.00. Lunch is included with your entry fee. There will be a limited number of shooters so pre-registration is recommended. For more information, call the Fire House at 973-377-7073 or visit [www.greenvillagefire.com](http://www.greenvillagefire.com). No shot size larger than 7 1/2 will be allowed and eye and ear protection is required. This event is held RAIN OR SHINE.

### **Flag Display**

Deadline May 1, 2020

Hosted by the Green Village Fire Department

The Green Village Fire Department would like to honor those who have served their country or community. A 3' x 5' flag will be erected on the green in Green Village on both Memorial Day and Veteran's Day. The honoree's information will be placed at the base of the flag. The cost for the first year is \$50 and \$25 for subsequent years. Please visit [www.greenvillagefire.com](http://www.greenvillagefire.com) to download a form. Forms must be received no later than May 1st.

## **NEW VERNON FIRST AID SQUAD**

If you have a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19, the CDC recommends the following 10 things you can do to manage your health at home:

1. Stay home from work, school, and away from other public places
2. Monitor your symptoms. If your symptoms get worsen, call your healthcare provider.
3. Get rest and stay hydrated.
4. If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider ahead of time and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19.
5. For medical emergencies, call 911 and notify the dispatch personnel that you have or may have COVID-19.
6. Cover your cough and sneezes.
7. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
8. Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home.
9. Avoid sharing personal items with other people in your household.
10. Clean all surfaces that are frequently touched.

For any additional questions about your care, contact your healthcare provider or state or local health department.

For all those residents who responded to our urgent request for additional personal protective equipment, we say THANK YOU! As you know from TV coverage there is a shortage of personal protective equipment. We still need additional supplies of N-9 respirators, face masks, face shields, gowns and booties. Please look around your homes and if you have any of these supplies and would like to donate them to the First Aid Squad, call one of the officers listed below.

The First Aid Squad is committed to continuing to provide 24/7 coverage to our neighbors here in Harding. In responding to patients who potentially may be infected



with Covid-19, the First Aid Squad has adopted protocols to protect both our patients, the general public and ourselves.

The First Aid Squad continues to need volunteers to provide this 24/7 coverage that Harding residents enjoy. Please consider volunteering now, or to learn more about the First Aid Squad, contact:

- Lotte Newlin - 862-812-9997
- Larry Weppler - 917-838-3332
- George Barry - 646-361-5528

**WE ARE NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS**

### **THE KEMMERER LIBRARY**

As you may know, the Kemmerer Library temporarily closed its doors on March 14. We felt that this was the most responsible decision for our staff and volunteers, as well the community as a whole. We do not know how long the Library will be closed but will keep you apprised of status as circumstances change. If you would like to add your email address to the Library newsletter, please send an email to [desk@hardinglibrary.org](mailto:desk@hardinglibrary.org).

Whilst we are unable to offer our usual services, you are still able to use our electronic resources via our website, [www.hardinglibrary.org](http://www.hardinglibrary.org). We are expanding our collections and some are even available, free of charge, to non-library card holders. If you need help to access these digital resources, please email [desk@hardinglibrary.org](mailto:desk@hardinglibrary.org) and we will do what we can to assist you. In the weeks ahead, we will also be exploring other ways in which we can continue to serve the Harding community. We hope you stay well and we will try to help you through this!

### **FAQs**

**What if I have items due to be returned to the Library? Will I accrue late fines?**

The due dates for all checked out items have been extended to April 30. No fines will accrue on items due during the closure period.

**Can I return items to the outdoor book drop?**

The book drop has been removed. Please hold on to your items until we re-open.

**What if I requested items that are ready for pick up?**

Items that are ready for pick up will be held for you until we re-open, unless you notify us that you no longer want the item.

**Are there library resources I can use while the Kemmerer Library is closed?**

Yes! The Library offers eBooks for borrowing via the Libby app (our exclusive collection for Harding cardholders) and the Cloud app (shared with other Morris County libraries). These books can be downloaded for reading on your tablet, iPad, phone, computer or Kindle Fire. Libby eBooks can also be downloaded to regular Kindles.

Some titles are also offered as eAudiobooks. Cloud Library has a large selection of eAudiobooks.

You can read current issue magazines on the RBDigital app.

Children are invited to try our Tumblebook Library.

Newly added eResources which do not require a library card include, TumbleMath, TeenCloud, RomanceBookCloud, and an extra AudiobookCloud; there is something for everyone!

Please visit [www.hardinglibrary.org](http://www.hardinglibrary.org) and click E-LIBRARY to get started!

**I want to use the eLibraries but my library card has expired. How can I renew it?**

Please email [desk@hardinglibrary.org](mailto:desk@hardinglibrary.org) if your card has expired and we can renew it for you.

**What if I do not remember the PIN for my library card?**

Please email [desk@hardinglibrary.org](mailto:desk@hardinglibrary.org) if you have forgotten your PIN and we can reset it.

**What if I have mislaid my library card?**

Please email [desk@hardinglibrary.org](mailto:desk@hardinglibrary.org) if you have lost your card and we can locate your card number.

**What if I do not have a library card?**

If you would like to obtain a virtual library card, please email [desk@hardinglibrary.org](mailto:desk@hardinglibrary.org) and we will make arrangements to set up an account for you. There is no charge for having a library card at the Kemmerer Library!

## **HARDING TOWNSHIP CIVIC ASSOCIATION:**

Thumbnail & Website News and Announcements

If you have a submission for the **May 2020 Thumbnail** please email to: [htca@mail.com](mailto:htca@mail.com) by **Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. MS Word is the preferred format, thank you!

Current and past issues of the Thumbnail, as well as the Directory are available on our Website: [www.HardingCivic.org](http://www.HardingCivic.org). Send questions or comments about *Thumbnail* to editor to: [HTCA@mail.com](mailto:HTCA@mail.com) or PO Box 72 New Vernon, NJ 07976

## **HARDING TOWNSHIP RECYCLING**

April 11<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>

June 6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>

Hours of Operation:

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>

July 11<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>

Wednesdays:

7 am - Noon (7- 9am self service)

Every other Saturday:

9 am - noon (see schedule dates)

**Commingled Recyclables:** Consists of all aluminum and tin cans, glass bottles, all plastic bottles and containers with the Recycling symbol, and #1, 2, 4, 5 & 7. Try to crush plastic bottle to conserve space. Please remember no plastic or paper bags.

**Commingled Mixed Fiber:** 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); Automotive and light truck tires, (on or off rim), Propane tanks (BBQ size only) and fluorescent bulbs (tube and compact).

**E-Waste items accepted:** Computers, monitors, laptops and televisions cannot be put into household trash. However, all E-waste items including printers, copiers, fax machines and all computer peripherals can be brought to the Harding DPW recycling center at the regular hours of operation.

**Recycling Questions:** Please contact Tracy Toribio at Harding Department: 973 267 2448, Mon- Fri 8:30 am to 3 pm.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

Environmental Commission  
Seniors: Christ the King Church  
Planning Board  
Historical Preservation Committee  
Board of Health  
Board of Education  
Board of Adjustment  
Township Committee Executive  
Township Committee Public  
Harding Open Space  
Harding TWP Civic Association

**Meetings as noted**

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday  
4<sup>th</sup> Monday  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday  
2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday  
2<sup>nd</sup> Monday  
2<sup>nd</sup> Monday  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday

**Time**

7:30 PM  
11:00AM  
7:30 PM  
7:30 PM  
7:30 PM  
7:00 PM  
7:30 PM  
7:30 PM  
7:30 PM  
7:30 PM  
7:30 PM

**DATED MATERIAL**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED  
P.O. Box 72, New Vernon, NJ 07976  
*Harding Township Civic Association*

Non-Profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Chester, NJ  
Permit No. 60