1. **Meeting Called to Order**
Mayor Berger called this meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. **Opening Statement and Roll Call**
Deputy Township Clerk Ciranni read the opening statement. Adequate notice of the holding of this meeting of the Howell Township Council was provided for in the following manner: (1) By the posting of a copy of said notice upon the bulletin board in the Township Municipal Building on March 18, 2019. (2) By the faxing of a copy of said notice to the Tri Town News, Asbury Park Press, and Star Ledger for information and publication on March 18, 2019. (3) By the filing of a copy of said form of notice in the Township Clerk’s office on March 18, 2019. The public will be allowed to attend and will be allowed to participate pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Law. The public is reminded that civility and decorum will be maintained during the meeting. Any contracts awarded at this meeting, or between now and the next meeting will be required to comply with the requirements of Public Law 1975 Chapter 127 (NJAC 17:27).

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Theresa Berger, Deputy Mayor Evelyn O’Donnell, Councilman John Bonevich, Councilwoman Pamela Richmond, Councilman Thomas Russo. Also present: Township Manager Brian Geoghegan, Community Development Director James Herrman, Township Attorney Joseph Clark, Deputy Township Clerk Allison Ciranni.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Moment of silence.

4. **Reports of Township Officials**
None

5. **Discussion**
**Public Hearing – NJDEP Green Acres Public Hearing for NJAW Water Transmission Main**
Community Development Director Jim Herrman introduced tonight’s presenters as follows: James Schaller, Senior Engineering Project Manager at New Jersey American Water (NJAW), Jaclyn Chapman, Environmental Scientist, HDR; Jill Marie, Project Manager, HDR; Andrew Coeyman, Supervisor, Land Preservation Office, Monmouth County Park System, Allen Weiss Esq., Special County Counsel.

(A sign in sheet was provided for those in the audience wishing to speak.)

Mr. Weiss provided the following prepared statement for the record: *My name is Allen Weiss and I am a Special County Counsel for the County of Monmouth and in that capacity I represent the County in the New Jersey American Water Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project on the property known as Block, 50, Lot 46 which is a part of the Howell Park Golf Course located in the Township of Howell, Monmouth County, NJ.*

*I would first like to thank the mayor, council members, staff, and Mr. Herman for their time and attention in making this meeting place available at this time to us for the purpose of a presentation to the public.*
This is a public hearing required by various sections of the NJ statutes and administrative code, specifically NJSA 40A:12-13.2 and NJAC 7:36-26.11 in connection with the sale, lease or exchange of county owned land and the major diversion of green acres designated parkland. The statute that I have cited requires among other things two public hearings for the sale, lease or exchange of county owned land, and one of the hearings must be held in the municipality where the property is located. Such is the case tonight. The section of the administrative code that I have cited also requires a public hearing for what we call the diversion of green acres protected parkland governed in part by the NJ DEP. This statute and the various provisions of the administrative code require many forms of written notice that includes mailings, advertising, press releases, and signage, all of which have been done prior to tonight’s hearing.

Prior to this evening the professionals at NJAW and their consultants, working together with various municipal, county and state officials, have spent a tremendous amount of time in the design and implementation of the New Jersey American Water Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project. Their efforts have included the making of surveys, studies and reports, as well as the participation of the public in scoping hearings. Monmouth County has specifically authorized the entry of a Memorandum of Agreement with NJAW pursuant to Res. # 2018-962 and has supported an application to the NJ DEP’s Green Acres Program for the disposal and diversion of parkland at Howell Park Golf Course pursuant to Res. # 2018-963. All of this will ultimately lead, we hope, to approval by the State House Commission in Trenton sometime in June of this year.

Generally speaking, the County’s involvement in the New Jersey American Water Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project within Howell Park Golf Course are as follows pursuant to the written MOA between the County and NJAW:

A. Monmouth County will grant an easement consisting of 0.25 acres to NJAW for the installation and maintenance of the water main within the park.

B. The parties will cooperate with each other in order to obtain State House Commission approval.

C. NJAW will compensate the County for the land and tree replacement.

I would like to add that a requirement of State House Approval will be for Monmouth County to spend the money on a replacement property and it might be somewhere within Howell Township.

The details of all of this will be explained by the professionals who are here tonight.

1. Professionals and Exhibits.
Tonight, we will hear from the following individuals who will present and explain the project in detail. They are:

A. James Schaller, Sr. Engineering Project Manager at NJAW
B. Jill L. Marie, Project Manager at HDR
C. Jaclyn Chapman, Environmental Scientist
D. Andrew Coeyman, the supervisor, Land Preservation Office, within Acquisition and Design, Monmouth County Park System.

These professionals will refer to the following exhibits which we have pre-marked as follows:

Exhibit 1: Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project Overview Map
Exhibit 2: Aerial Site Map for Block 50 Lots 44.04 & 46
Exhibit 3: Aerial Site Map for Block 28 Lots 1.04, 2, & 3

Mr. Coeyman provided the following prepared statement for the record: The Monmouth County Park System began in 1960, or 59 years ago, with the acquisition of its first parcel for Shark River Park. Today the Park System consists of over 17,343 acres in 44 park areas. All lands are owned by the County of Monmouth and managed and controlled by the Monmouth County Park System.

One of the subjects of this evening’s public hearing, Block 50, Lot 46 in Howell Township, is owned by the County of Monmouth and is part of Howell Park Golf Course. The property is 3.50 acres in size and was acquired in 1975 for public park and recreation purposes by the County. Upon its acquisition, the property was placed on the “Recreation and Open Space Inventory” maintained by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program. As such, it is subject to the rules and regulations of the Green Acres program, including restrictions against disposal or diversion of parkland for a non-park and recreation use. Howell Park Golf Course was the fourth Monmouth County park and its first golf course. The first acquisition for this golf course was in 1967 and it is currently 348 acres in size. New Jersey American Water has determined it needs a permanent easement on 0.25 acres in the southeast corner of the park for placing a water transmission main. This pipeline right-of-way will have no impact to the public play of the golf course nor to public access to the park or any public recreation facilities or activities.

To remove the Green Acres restrictions from the County’s and Howell Township’s parkland for this project, a formal application process is required, which includes this public hearing and the approval of the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the State House Commission. Also required is a scoping hearing which was held on September 19, 2017 to solicit public comment on this project.
On May 21, 2018 the Monmouth County Board of Recreation Commissioners adopted Resolution #18-5-2-203 recommending to the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders that it adopt a resolution endorsing the filing of a pre-application for the disposal and diversion of parkland at Howell Park Golf Course for the New Jersey American Water Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project.

On November 8, 2018 the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders adopted Resolution #2018-0963 endorsing the filing of a State House Commission pre-application to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program for the disposal and diversion of parkland at Howell Park Golf Course for the New Jersey American Water Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project.

The Monmouth County Park System, the Monmouth County Board of Recreation Commissioners, and the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders support and endorse the New Jersey American Water Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project.

Ms. Marie and Ms. Chapman presented an overview of the NJDEP Green Acres Major Diversion of Parkland Public Hearing (Power Point presentation)

**Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main Project**

**Green Acres Major Diversion of Parkland – Public Hearing**

**Public Hearing Requirement**

* A 30 day public notice period is required to advertise the scoping hearing.

* Public notices issued on March 1, 2019 using the following methods: Letters sent to landowners adjacent to the Green Acres parcels; Legal advertisement published in the Asbury Park Press and the Star Ledger; Large signs were posted at 3 locations – Alfred C. Sauer Park at Echo Lake, the entrance of the Howell Township Department of Public Works, and the entrance to Howell Park Golf Course.

* Adherence to NJSA 40A:12-13.5a(3): Two public hearings required in the municipality and county seat of the sale, lease, or exchange of property; First hearing to comply with Green Acres at NJAC 7:36-26.6; Second hearing scheduled for April 16, 2019 at 2:00 PM.

**Project Description**

Howell to Lakewood Transmission Main: Approximately 34,000 linear feet of water transmission main throughout Howell and Lakewood Townships. The project is necessary to increase the capacity of water distribution, increase fire protection, and improve system reliability. The project consists of two construction phases: Phase 1 Construction – complete. Phase 2 Construction – Mid 2019 (following Green Acres approval).
A Route Analysis was completed by NJAW in coordination with local, county, and state agencies. The proposed route avoids impacts to historic and environmental resources to the greatest extent possible and utilizes roadways with ample space to install and maintain the water main. The water main is largely being installed within local roadways that will be repaved when the project is completed. Phase 2 Construction requires installation of transmission main within Green Acres encumbered parcels.

Green Acres Encumbered Parcels
Block 28, Lots 1.04, 2 and 3
Alfred C. Sauer Park at Echo Lake – owned by the Township of Howell. The total area of the permanent easement within the park is 0.49 acres (20' wide easement, approx. 1000' long). Installation using Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) to avoid surface impacts to the park. No permanent changes to the surface of the park are proposed. Minor impacts associated with the drilling pits will be restored to pre-construction conditions. No tree removal is required.

Alternatives considered to avoid Green Acres Parcels Block 28, Lots 1.04, 2 and 3
Route constraints: Dam infrastructure, homes, and private residential wells on the east side of Maxim Southard Road across from the park. Property on the east side of the road at the Polypod Brook location is also Green Acres encumbered.

Green Acres Encumbered Parcels
Block 50, Lots 44.04 and 46
Block 50, Lot 44.04 – owned by the Township of Howell. Proposed diversion is located at the northern edge of property behind the recycling center at the DPW facility. The total area of permanent easement is 0.12 acres (20' wide easement, approx. 250' long). Installation by open cut trench method. Permanent and temporary tree removal is required.

Block 50, Lot 46 – owned by the County of Monmouth. Proposed diversion is located just south of the Howell Park Golf Course. No impact to golf course or disruption of play. The total area of the permanent easement is 0.25 acres (20' wide easement, approx. 550' long). Installation by open cut trench method. Permanent and temporary tree removal is required.

Alternatives considered to avoid Green Acres Parcels, Block 50, Lots 44.04 and 46
Route constraints: Historic landfill on Lot 44.04

Project Benefits for Howell Township and Monmouth County

10:1 Monetary Compensation for the value of the Green Acres diversion area. A land appraisal was conducted to determine the value of the easement area based on its highest and best use. Howell Township: Block 28, Lots 2, 3 and 1.04 have a land compensation value of $57,000. Monmouth County: Block 50, Lot 46 has a land compensation value of $7,000.
Tree replacement: A tree survey has been completed to determine the appropriate compensation for any trees greater than 6 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) in accordance with Green Acres regulations. Approximately 118 trees will be removed from Green Acres parcels: 14 trees on Lot 44.04 (Howell Township); 104 trees on Lot 46 (Monmouth County). These trees will be replaced based on a ratio established by the Green Acres program.

Tree replacement cost: Howell Township receiving $139,380.00 to purchase and plant new trees in local parks such as Soldier Memorial Park. Monmouth County receiving $909,000.00 to purchase a forested parcel within Howell Township, Monmouth County, or the watershed.

Optimal route to minimize traffic congestion during installation.

Roads will be repaved following installation.

Enhanced water service and fire protection.

Redundancy in the water distribution system increasing system reliability.

Mr. Weiss welcomed questions and comments from the governing body. Councilman Bonevich asked about increased fire protection, mentioned Southard Fire Department’s failed budget and inquired if there will be a fee for the additional fire hydrants passed on to the fire departments. Community Development Director Herrman responded in the affirmative. Councilman Bonevich asked if this will have to be revisited since they just addressed Southard’s budget. Mr. Herrman stated he does not believe these hydrants will be active this year so would not have to be added to the budget.

6. Hearing of Citizens
Mayor Berger opened the meeting to public comment.

Charles O’Donnell, 27 Barren Meadow Lane. Mr. O’Donnell asked how the project, once completed, will benefit Howell and its residents. Mr. Herrman replied that it will provide water service to anyone along the route who wants it. Water service could potentially be received at Echo Lake park which is currently on well and at the municipal complex on Old Tavern Road where they are currently trying to keep the well running. If the project is approved by Green Acres, we can potentially budget next year to have those services installed. Fire hydrants along the route have already been requested and approved. Roadways of over four centerline miles will be repaved curb to curb. $900,000 to $1 million worth of work that the town will not have to pay for. New trees at parks such as Soldier Memorial and other places that may need them. Plus the purchase price for the easements themselves. The easement at Echo Lake is worth $5,700 but they will have to pay 10 times that. Mr. O’Donnell stated that if you don’t cut down the trees, you don’t have to replace them. He stated that everything else Mr. Herrman mentioned is infrastructure; not everyone is impacted unless they drive on those roads.
Ricky Carr, 1216 Maxim Southard Road. Mr. Carr stated that he has a well and is concerned it could be affected. He questioned how deep they will bore under the lake. Ms. Marie stated about 20 feet below the bottom. Mr. Carr asked if they are going to do construction on the east side. Ms. Marie said there is no construction proposed on the east side, only the west side. Mr. Carr and Mr. Herrman discussed technical issues regarding drill rig setup and slurry. Mr. Carr asked if slurry could seep into the aquifer that feeds wells. Mr. Herrman stated that that is not anticipated. He added that the work was being done on the west side to avoid affecting wells. Mr. Carr asked if hookup will be mandatory; Mr. Herrman stated that it will not.

Kathy Novak, 16 Stratton Drive. Ms. Novak stated that she was in attendance at the public hearing on September 19, 2017. At that time residents were told they could not hookup because the pressure would be too strong. Mr. Herrman stated the water company has explained that there are ways the pressure can be reduced if someone needs to hook up. He added that there have been a few inquiries from people with wells that are going bad. If a resident wants to hookup to the water service there is no reason for them not to, but it is not a required hookup. Ms. Novak stated that the numbers of acres on the current information are not the same as the numbers from two years ago. Mr. Herrman explained that there were revisions made to the plans to narrow down the actual square footage needed. Ms. Novak asked funding for the project. Mr. Herrman explained that each project has its own specific source of funding, for example, the funding for the Freewood Acres water system is coming from a completely different source than this system. Ms. Novak also wished to inform everyone that Howell Township has a working Environmental Commission.

Raymond Betts, Newtons Corner Road. Mr. Betts asked what Mayor Berger thinks about this project. Mayor Berger stated she does not see an issue with it and thinks it is a benefit to the town. Mr. Betts stated Newtons Corner Road needs to be repaired and questioned how this project will benefit the town. Mayor Berger responded that roads will be repaved, we will receive more trees, and there will be increased access to water. Mr. Betts inquired why not put in a water system for the police department and library rather than catering to Lakewood. Mayor Berger asked for one of the professionals to address the question. Ms. Marie explained the transmission main provides water to Lakewood but an interconnect connects to the distribution system west of that area which is all within Howell Township. Mr. Schaller added that the project is important for sustainability and reliability; water main is not installed haphazardly and the project has been on the books for probably about 9 to 10 years. Mr. Betts asked if there will be disruptions in the water service. Mr. Schaller stated that any time there is this type of construction there could be temporary disruptions in service. Mr. Betts stated that he votes no on the project.
George Gregson, 34 Newtons Corner Road. Mr. Gregson asked if the only properties being sold are the small easements. Mr. Herrman responded that is correct. Mr. Gregson asked if there are any foreseeable future development/housing complex plans along the pipeline route. Mr. Herrman responded that there is nothing proposed at this time.

Councilman Bonevich asked how many fire hydrants will be added. Mr. Herrman answered probably eight or nine. Councilman Bonevich mentioned that homeowner insurance policy costs could come down for those who will benefit from the hydrants; Mr. Herrman agreed that they probably could, depending on the individual policy.

Councilwoman Richmond asked how residents have been informed about the project and how they will be affected. Mr. Herrman stated that letters were sent to residents within 200 feet of the diversions. The rest of the notification is based on his updates on the Township website. There is not a lot of notification until construction begins. NJAW will be required to provide letters and/or mailers. Residents will also be notified with a door hanger the day before construction begins in front of their home. Traffic notices will be provided about road closing dates.

Councilman Russo inquired about the $140,000 from NJAW to replant trees. He asked if there is a project already in the works for Soldier Memorial Park. Mr. Herrman responded that his first thought for the trees was for Soldier Memorial Park because there are very few trees; however, the Shade Tree Commission said last year that they wanted to use funds to plant trees there. Mr. Herrman stated that he stopped them because of this funding and that they must plant the trees within two years. Councilman Russo and Mr. Herrman discussed the number of miles of road to be paved. Councilman Russo asked how much Open Space money the town will receive from NJAW. Mr. Herrman stated he believes it is $64,000 in total.

Councilwoman Richmond inquired about potential start and completion dates. Mr. Herrman stated that it is contingent upon receiving State House approval. There is a meeting in June; if the State House Commission approves, Ms. Marie stated they could break ground in September and it would probably take six to eight months. Councilwoman Richmond asked if the winter weather would delay the project. Ms. Marie responded that it really should not; Phase I construction took place in winter and was not affected by the weather.

Ms. Marie addressed an earlier question. In Phase I construction, 18 fire hydrants were installed. Mr. Herrman added that those were all as requested by Ramtown, Southard and Squankum fire companies.

Mr. Weiss closed by stating that the Monmouth County Park System, the Monmouth County Board Recreation Commissioners, and the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders support and endorse this project.

Close Public Comment
7. Meeting Dates

Regular Meeting - Tuesday, April 16, 2019
   Executive Session   6:30 P.M.
   Regular Session   7:30 P.M.

8. Adjournment
Councilman Russo made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Donnell. Roll Call: Ayes: Mr. Bonevich, Ms. Richmond, Mr. Russo, Deputy Mayor O'Donnell, Mayor Berger. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Allison Ciranni
Deputy Township Clerk
Township of Howell