

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES
BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE**

MAYOR AND BOROUGH COUNCIL
Meeting Date: March 13, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of High Bridge came to order with Mayor Desire, at 7:30 PM on the above date. "Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of 2014 meeting dates was published in the Hunterdon County Democrat on January 9, 2014 and posted on the bulletin board in Borough Hall. The meeting was held in the Fire House, 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ. Action may be taken."

Mayor Desire led those present in the salute to the Flag.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Desire
Councilman Flynn
Councilwoman Hughes
Councilwoman Miller
Councilman Rapp
Councilwoman Scarcia
Councilman Stemple

Attorney Barry Goodman, Administrator John Gregory, Municipal Clerk Diane Seals and fifty-five members of the general public and news media were also present.

VISITORS:

Mayor Desire presented the "Friend of High Bridge" to the Garden Club of Somerset Hills "is hereby recognized as the **2013 HIGH BRIDGE FRIEND OF THE YEAR** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of High Bridge, in the County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey, for their philanthropy to the Borough through the donation of six garden grants to the Borough Environmental Commission. Their contributions have improved the quality of the natural environment at Union Forge Park, Commons Park, and along the main road into our town for all High Bridge residents to enjoy." Councilwoman Hughes explained that since 2005 the Garden Club has awarded grants to the Borough, \$250 for the Gazebo at Union Forge Park, in 2006, \$200 for perennial plants for the Gazebo, in 2008, \$200 for the entrance to the Commons, in 2009, \$1,000 for perennials for the Commons, in 2012, with \$1,000, planted trees and put in pavers at Police Headquarters, in 2013, with \$1,000 continued to add shrubs at Police Headquarters. This year marks the 100th Anniversary of the Garden Club and they have been very pleased to see that the grant monies was used to do so much. From pictures that Councilwoman Hughes has shown, young children and grandmas worked together on the projects.

Mayor Desire read the "Ambassador Award for 2013". The recipient is Gayle Maher. "Gayle Maher is hereby recognized as the **2013 HIGH BRIDGE AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of High Bridge, County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey, for making High Bridge look special outside our borders. As a member of the Hunterdon County Tri-centennial Committee and the High Bridge Cultural and Heritage Committee, Gayle scripted a re-enactment of the Hunterdon County Freeholders First Meeting three hundred years ago. The recent day meeting was held on January 1, 2014."

Mayor Desire presented the "Citizen of the Year Award" to Jamie Taylor. "Jamie Taylor is hereby recognized as the **2013 HIGH BRIDGE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of High Bridge, in the County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey, for her community service to the Borough through her efforts to raise funds for the newly formed Special Events Committee to sponsor 2013 Borough Events. Jamie Taylor's work has not gone unnoticed by the residents of High Bridge nor Mayor and Council Members. Thank you Jamie Taylor for your time and energy."

Mayor Desire presented the "2013 High Bridge Volunteer of the Year Award" Nick Raefski. "The **2013 HIGH BRIDGE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD** is presented by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of High Bridge, in the County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey to Nicholas Raefski, President and founder of "Together We Are One", a non-profit organization whose volunteers in Hunterdon County make it a better place to live. Nicholas is a dedicated individual and true leader and is passionate about community. Nicholas' dedication to High Bridge residents was demonstrated by leading and organizing a team of 20 youth volunteers for various assignments during Community Day and December's Tree Lighting Celebration. Nicholas is an outstanding High Bridge resident and we are proud to have a young leader make a difference in our community and throughout Hunterdon County with his organization. Regardless of age, the organization accepts applicants who demonstrate their willingness to bestow countless hours of volunteer service each week benefiting the community. Most admirable. Thank you Nicholas.

RESOLUTION #92-2014: Councilwoman Miller motioned to adopt a resolution recognizing the Hunterdon Huskies Junior Midget Cheer Team for their winning the National Championship title, a copy of which is attached hereto and made apart hereof these minutes. Mayor Desire read the resolution which declares July 28, 2014 as "Hunterdon Huskies Junior Midget Cheer Team Day" in High Bridge. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

MOTION TO DISPENSE WITH THE READING OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS:

Councilman Rapp motioned to dispense with the reading of the Regular and Executive Session Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2014. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:

Councilman Rapp motioned to approve the Regular and Executive Session Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2014. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: It is the policy of the Borough Council that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to five (5) minutes per person and no person may make more than one (1) comment per subject. Comments may be made on any subject pertaining to Borough issues. Comments pertaining to Public Hearings should be saved for that portion of the agenda. No debating between residents. Comments should be addressed to Mayor and Council.

Brent Dugan inquired about his OPRA request regarding Rescue Squad finances. It is being worked on.
Sally Ward read "Gardens of Daily Living" and gave copies to Mayor and Council.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE AND SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT: Monthly reports March 27, 2014

Councilman Flynn: **PLANNING & ENGINEERING**

Councilwoman Hughes: **PUBLIC HEALTH, ENVIRONMENTAL, SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING, OPEN SPACE**
ENVIRONMENTAL:
PUBLIC HEALTH:
SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING:

Councilwoman Scarcia: **INFORMATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE & HERITAGE & EVENTS**
NEWSLETTER/INFORMATION:
CULTURAL & HERITAGE:
Events Committee:
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
RECREATION:

Councilwoman Miller: **EMERGENCY SERVICES, EDUCATION & MUNICIPAL COURT**
POLICE:
RESCUE SQUAD:
FIRE DEPARTMENT:
EDUCATION:
COURT:
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:
CULTURAL & HERITAGE:
EVENTS:

Councilman Rapp: **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & RECREATION**
PUBLIC WORKS:
RECREATION:
SWAC:

Councilman Stemple: **FINANCE & GOLF**
FINANCE:

John Gregory: **ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

Mayor, Mark Desire: **EXECUTIVE SERVICES**

PUBLIC HEARINGS: 2ND Reading. None at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA: All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Borough Council and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

1. **RESOLUTION #78-2014:** Authorizing Redemption of Tax Lien.
2. **RESOLUTION #79-2014:** Award Contract for Removal of Underground Tanks.
3. **RESOLUTION #80-2014:** Approve the Easter Egg Hunt on April 12, 2014 at 11:00AM, Union Forge Park.
4. **RESOLUTION #81-2014:** Approve Plenary Special Permit for Fire Department, Annual Golf Outing on June 16, 2014 from 8:00AM to 1:00PM at High Bridge Hill Golf Club, 203 Cregar Rd.
5. **RESOLUTION #82-2014:** Approve the Re-Opening of Solitude House, Associated Building and Grounds.
6. **RESOLUTION #83-2014:** Approve Environmental Commission Sponsorship of Annual Electronics Recycling Event to be held on April 26, 2014 from 8:30AM to 12:30PM at Union Forge Park.
7. **RESOLUTION #84-2014:** Approve Environmental Commission Sponsorship of Shredding and Rigid Plastics Event to be held on June 28, 2014 from 9:00AM to 11:00AM.
8. **RESOLUTION #85-2014:** Support the Submission of a Strategic Plan for Voorhees Municipal Alliance.
9. **RESOLUTION #86-2012:** Approve Calling on the Legislature to Make Permanent the 2% Cap on Interest

Arbitration Awards.

10. **RESOLUTION #87-2014:** Authorize going out to bid for Field Maintenance.
11. **RESOLUTION #88-2014:** Approve that the Law Has Been Met So the Budget May be Read by Title.
12. **RESOLUTION #89-2014:** Re-appoint Diane L. Seals, Municipal Clerk and Registrar of Vital Statistics.
13. **RESOLUTION #90-2014:** Approve the Partial Release of Executive Session Minutes from December 16, 2010 through January 23, 2014.

Councilman Rapp motioned to adopt Resolutions #78 thru #90. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter from Tara Shepherd of "Hart" thanking the DPW for the great work done to keep the roads clear.
2. Utilities Report for month of February, 2014.
3. Ordinance from Township of Lebanon "Amending Chapter 400, Zoning."
4. Notice from Comcast regarding "On Demand" content change.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **RESOLUTION #66-2014: 2014 BUDGET** Public Hearing.,
Mayor Desire asked for a motion to open the Public Hearing on the 2014 BUDGET.
Councilman Rapp motioned to open. Councilwoman Miller seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes. Councilman Stemple explained what makes up the 2014 Budget. The 2014 Budget reflects an increase of 3.5 cents on the Tax Rate or \$6.00 per month based on the Borough's average assessment of \$251,152. 1.5 cents of the increase is due to a \$4.4M decline in assessments from 2013 to 2014. The change in the Municipal Tax Rate between 2008-2014 was equal to .09 cents. 75% of the increase was caused by the \$25M decrease in assessments. The 2014 Budget reflects an overall increase in the amount to be raised of \$81K which is within the mandated 2% tax levy cap. The 2014 Appropriations Cap is .05%. The Borough's Budget is within the .05% Cap allowing the Borough to add \$113K to our Cap Bank. The Borough will undergo a revaluation of all properties in 2014. The Budget continues to pay down existing debt, nothing is being deferred. Capital projects to be undertaken within the 2014 budget are: Phase II of the Streetscape project (\$215,000 was awarded to this project from NJ-TEA), Phase IV of the Cregar Road project (additional \$159,000 was awarded to this project from NJ-DOT), Phase II of the Underground Storage Tank Removal project, new tanks were installed in November; old tanks will be removed in early spring and a new Ladder truck will be delivered in May for the High Bridge Fire Department. The Municipal tax Rate is .877, amount to be raised by taxes is \$3,148,833. Mayor Desire thanked the Finance Committee for the work done developing the 2014 Budget: Councilman Stemple, Council President and Finance Chair, Councilman Flynn, Finance Committee Member and Councilman Rapp, Committee Member, with the invaluable help of Administrator Gregory and CFO Fleming.

Questions and Comments

Councilwoman Miller spoke regarding the revaluation, that every house is different, revising tax maps, and the cost is spread over 5 years. Sally Ward asked if the revaluation team has had background checks as they will be going to every house. They have had background checks and every house will be noticed by mail. Administrator Gregory will speak with Police Chief.

Chris Zappa inquired about the new police car purchase. It is a replacement not an addition. Mr. Zappa went on to ask about Streetscape, is that the last phase and Cregar Road Phases. This will be the last Phase for Streetscape and the last Cregar Road Phase will head towards Route 31.

Mayor Desire asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Councilman Rapp motioned to close. Councilwoman Miller seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

RESOLUTION #91-2014: Amend 2014 Budget:

Councilman Rapp motioned to adopt. Councilwoman Miller seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Mayor Desire asked for a motion to adopt the 2014 Budget as amended.

Councilman Rapp motioned to adopt. Councilwoman Miller seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

NEW ORDINANCES: Introduction 1st reading.

ORDINANCE #2014-7

ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$11,000.00 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR THE PURCHASE OF A CLAMSHELL BUCKET IN THE BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY.

Mayor Desire asked for a motion to introduce Ordinance #2014-7.

Councilman Rapp motioned to introduce. Councilwoman Miller seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Mayor Desire stated that Ordinance #2014-7 shall be published in its entirety in the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the Public Hearing date of March 27, 2014.

ORDINANCE #2014-8
“REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE”, TO BE ENTITLED “
“NUISANCES, PUBLIC HEALTH” UTILIZING NEW CHAPTER 276, TO BE ENTITLED “MAINTENANCE OF VACANT /
ABANDONED PROPERTIES”

Mayor Desire asked for a motion to introduce Ordinance #2014-8.

Councilman Rapp motioned to introduce. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Mayor Desire stated that Ordinance #2014-8 shall be published in its entirety in the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the Public Hearing date of March 27, 2014.

ORDINANCE #2014-9
“REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE”, TO BE ENTITLED “CHAPTER 265, DISORDERLY
TENANT ORDINANCE”

Mayor Desire asked for a motion to introduce Ordinance #2014-9.

Councilman Rapp motioned to introduce. Councilwoman Scarcia seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Mayor Desire stated that Ordinance #2014-9 shall be published in its entirety in the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the Public Hearing date of March 27, 2014.

ORDINANCE #2014-10
REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE ESTABLISHING AND
ADOPTING THE ABANDONED PROPERTY REHABILITATION ACT, N.J.S.A. 55:19-78 ET SEQ, CHAPTER 277.

Mayor Desire asked for a motion to introduce Ordinance #2014-10.

Councilman Rapp motioned to introduce. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Mayor Desire stated that Ordinance #2014-10 shall be published by synopsis in the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the Public Hearing date of March 27, 2014.

ORDINANCE #2014-11
ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$60,000 FROM THE SEWER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT
FUND FOR CREGAR ROAD PHASES III / IV IMPROVEMENTS IN THE BOROUGH OF
HIGH BRIDGE, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY.

Mayor Desire asked for a motion to introduce Ordinance #2014-11.

Councilman Rapp motioned to introduce. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Mayor Desire stated that Ordinance #2014-11 shall be published in its entirety in the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the Public Hearing date of March 27, 2014.

NEW BUSINESS: None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: It is the policy of the Borough Council that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to one minute (1) per person and no person may make more than one (1) comment per subject at this second Public Comment section. Comments may be made on any subject pertaining to Borough issues. No debating between residents. Comments should be addressed to Mayor and Council.

Adrienne Shippo thanked Councilman Stemple for the professional power point Budget presentation, thanked Council for allowing the Solitude House to be opened again with the help of the Historical Society, and the Ordinances are headed in the right direction.

LEGAL ISSUES: There were no legal issues at this time.

BILL LIST:

Councilman Rapp motioned to approve and direct payment of all vouchers as they appear on the Bill List in the total amount of **\$419,787.22**, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof these minutes. Councilwoman Miller seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Councilman Rapp motioned to amend the reason for Executive Session to “Legal Advice on Potential Litigation with Town of Clinton.” Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: RESOLUTION #93-2014: Legal Advice on Potential Litigation with Town of Clinton.

Councilman Rapp motioned to adopt a resolution as amended allowing for Executive Session for Legal Advice on Potential Litigation against Town of Clinton, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof these minutes. Councilwoman Hughes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Councilman Rapp motioned to return to Open Session. Councilwoman Miller seconded. Roll Call Vote: Flynn, aye; Hughes, aye; Miller, aye; Rapp, aye; Scarcia, aye; Stemple, aye. Motion Carried: 6 ayes.

Mayor Desire asked if there was any further business. There was none at this time. Mayor Desire asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilman Rapp motioned and Councilman Stemple seconded. Vote: 6 ayes. Motion Carried.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:08 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Diane L. Seals, Municipal Clerk, RMC