

**BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Date: October 17, 2017 – 7:30 p.m. – Location: High Bridge Elementary School, 40 Fairview Ave.

CALL TO ORDER: MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER

FLAG SALUTE: LED BY MAYOR

ROLL CALL:

Councilman LoIacono	present	Councilman Strange	present	Mayor Desire	present
Councilwoman Shipp	absent	Councilwoman Hughes	absent		
Councilman Stemple	absent	Council Pres. Zappa	present		

Also present were Administrator Michael Pappas, Acting Clerk Adam Young, and twenty-four members of the public and press.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON: NONE

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Council information on the water system – Council opened the floor to questions from the public

Council spoke on the process of bidding for the water system, the bidders involved in the bid process, the current state of the water system, items of the water system that are in need of maintenance or replacement, the statistics of the Borough, the New Jersey Clean Water Accountability Act, the current rates of High Bridge, the rates of New Jersey American Water, showed the chart of anticipated rates, the municipal buildings not paying for water ever which is agreed to at this time, the estimates done by the Borough engineering firm, discussion about the benefits of having a SCADA system to monitor the water system, the tank maintenance that may be needed to be addressed by the Borough, the rate of water loss in the Borough being higher than the state average, if a reactive or proactive plan will be put into place by New Jersey American Water and how the road projects will be handled in tandem, what New Jersey American's plan for High Bridge would be, how NJAM will begin making upgrades to the system, and the testing of valves in High Bridge.

The public spoke about the proactive nature of redoing the roads and asked what to expect considering the roads, how resources would be utilized in emergency situations, what is the break-even timeline for purchasing the system, if Council has reached out to Custom Alloy due to their high usage and if there are other costs to being with NJAM, that Mr. Gooley worked with the system and asked if they have been utilized for knowledge, the deterioration of the system, what costs will be expected in different points along the timeline, if water liners have been explored as an option, discussion of how much the line item for roads is and if it can be used for line repairs, how the future of the line item dollars for roads will continue or not, suggestions for thickness of road repairs, the need for certified water operators if the sale of the system does not happen, that a vote of no does not mean you are against privatization and that there is a significant amount of information to consider, an employee and resident expressed comfort knowing that NJAM could be their water provider, about further utilization of the DPW workers, and the rate structure as it stands.

Mr. Burke spoke to his support of having a professional organization run the current system and the want to have a good plan for fixing the system in a timely fashion, employee reviews showing positive work relationships, and where NJAM gives service to on the line. Jane Karp spoke about a November 1st meeting to present perspectives to keep water public with Food and Water Watch.

The Mayor and Council spoke about the want to have the roads taken care of how that works with a large company, the involvement of Custom Alloy and the schools at the meetings, utilization of the current water operator of High Bridge, what the sale money will be utilized for is completed, the involvement of the debt with the golf course and the economics of using that money, relining as an option was explored and found to be expensive and wouldn't fix a number of issues High Bridge is having, how grants and the line item dollars are

being utilized, the future of the line item dollars, the need for an in-depth assessment of the system if High Bridge chooses to keep it, how the Board of Public Utilities sets the rates compared to High Bridge, how DPW can be utilized for other tasks more efficiently, the process and time Council has taken to get educated as well as to offer information to the public, the dedication of Council to ensure that the system will be fixed no matter who does it,

B. Water system information from New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water spoke about their role in New Jersey, how they monitor water systems for safety measures, the plans they are working on to implement early on if the sale is made, how emergencies are handled with resource management, that there is no break-even on the system because putting investment into system is good for them, how the standby charge works, examples of replacements that have been done in other towns, an insurance policy available for coverage of laterals, and presented a video about Haddonfield and their experience with NJAM along with a video showing the SCADA control system.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 3 MINUTES PER PERSON: NONE

ADJOURNMENT: presiding officer asks if there is any further business.

Motion to adjourn: Zappa ; Second: Strange ;

Roll call vote: LoIacono, yes ; Shipps, absent ; Stemple, absent ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, absent ; Zappa, yes ;

Next Regular Council Meeting: October 26, 2017 - 7:30 pm – 7 Maryland Ave, High Bridge NJ, 08829