

BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE – COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 14, 2017 – 7:30 p.m. – Location: 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ 08829

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Desire called the meeting to order.

FLAG SALUTE: LED BY MAYOR

ROLL CALL:

Councilman LoIacono, absent; Councilwoman Shippis, present; Councilman Strange, present; Councilwoman Hughes, present; Councilman Stemple, present; Council President Zappa, present; Mayor Desire, present. Also present were Attorney Barry Goodman, Administrator Michael Pappas, Acting Clerk Adam Young, and eleven public and press.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MINUTES – AUGUST 17, 2017

Motion to dispense with the reading of the August 17, 2017 minutes: Zappa ; Second: Hughes ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, absent ; Shippis, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 4 yes, 1 absent, 1 abstain

Motion to approve the August 17, 2017 minutes: Hughes ; Second: Shippis ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, absent ; Shippis, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 4 yes, 1 absent, 1 abstain

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON

Dr. Brenden Coughlin asked how retiring debt will reduce taxes, the costs the golf course has now, if the schools pay for water, what the administrative portion of the costs is. Council replied that the tax reduction amount is unknown at this time, the benefits for fixing the system are what are being analyzed now, and the Borough's administrative costs in different departments.

Jane Karp stated that she is running for Council, commented on the privatization and stated that she is concerned with New Jersey American Water brochures, the rate freeze, other communities have seen rate increases, asked what happens if New Jersey American Water decides to sell the system, stated that 4.1 million is a small amount of money for the water system, and asked what is the commitment by NJAM at this point to High Bridge, Council stated that the rates are subject to decisions by the BPU, that selling the system has contractual language that requires the Borough involvement, and the importance of attending the future meetings for information.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A.** Sale of old Borough Hall – 71 Main St. – Administrator Pappas spoke about the progress of getting bid specifications ready for this item.
- B.** Vacation of Borough alleys/roads - Administrator Pappas updated Council on the previous action taken to vacate alleys and an issue with a current resident for utilization of an alley that was not addressed in the previous Ordinance. An amendment is suggested.
- C.** Best practices - Administrator Pappas updated council on the Borough's required report of the best practices.
- D.** Construction permit fees - Mayor Desire discussed with Council that current construction permit costs and that a review has been done and found the fees to be high. It is suggested that they be adjusted to be more in line with the surrounding municipalities.

E. Fire hydrants - Administrator Pappas updated Council that an individual has proposed several hydrant designs for consideration. Council discussed methods of deciding how the designs are selected. Attorney Goodman stated the Mayor has the authority to select a committee and discussion of process ensued.

Motion to add item F., West Main Street Zoning, to discussion items section: Shipps ; Second: Zappa ;
Roll call vote: Lolocono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

F. West Main Street Zoning - The Mayor updated Council and the public on the progress the members of the committee have made and on the direction the committee would like to suggest. The Mayor will be attending the meeting coming up and mentioned the possibility of rezoning at the Planning Board meeting and stated that the Planning Board would like to see some examples of these ideas.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

A. **Ordinance 2017-22:** Appropriating \$60,000 from the capital improvement fund for leaf vacuum.

Motion to table **Ordinance 2017-22** to the next meeting: Strange ; Second: Shipps ;
Roll call vote: Lolocono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

The presiding officer states that the **Ordinance 2017-22** shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the Public Hearing date of September 28, 2017.

B. **Ordinance 2017-23:** Appropriating \$17,000.00 from the capital improvement fund for improvements to irrigation system and cart paths at the High Bridge Hills Golf Course

Motion to introduce **Ordinance 2017-23:** Zappa ; Second: Stemple ;
Roll call vote: Lolocono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

The presiding officer states that the **Ordinance 2017-23** shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the Public Hearing date of September 28, 2017.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to remove **Resolution 196-2017** from the consent agenda: Zappa ; Second: Strange ;
Roll call vote: Lolocono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

Motion to amend **Resolution 196-2017** to include Union Forge parking and McDonald street lot:
Motion: Hughes ; Second: Strange ;
Roll call vote: Lolocono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

RESOLUTION #	TITLE
Resolution 187 - 2017	20 Main utility proration adjustment/refund
Resolution 188 - 2017	Appropriation for funding litigation
Resolution 189 - 2017	Award of contract – M&W Communications
Resolution 190 - 2017	Award of contract – McGrath Municipal Equipment, LLC
Resolution 191 - 2017	Award of contract – Morbark Chipper
Resolution 192 - 2017	Cancel appropriation balances
Resolution 193 - 2017	Certificate of Continuing Occupancy refund - Buhot
Resolution 194 - 2017	Construction refund - Sohl
Resolution 195 - 2017	PERC test escrow refund – Peck

Resolution 197 - 2017	Purchase of new Police vehicle
Resolution 198 - 2017	Refund tax overpayment - Rosen
Resolution 199 - 2017	Authorize acceptance of historic grant agreement
Resolution 200 - 2017	Appointment of part-time, temporary public works laborers
Resolution 201 - 2017	Authorize street closure for tree lighting ceremony

Motion to approve the consent agenda items: Strange ; Second: Zappa ;
 Roll call vote: LoIacono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
 Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent
 Councilwoman Shipps abstains from Resolution 197-2017.
 Councilman Stemple abstains from Resolution 200-2017.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

- A.** Best practices
- B.** Vacation of alleys correspondence
- C.** Historic preservation grant agreement

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 3 MINUTES PER PERSON

Dr. Coughlin asked about tax increases dealing with the water system and what the Borough is paying for fire hydrants if the New Jersey American Water contract is signed. Council stated that they do not have that number at this time and urged Dr. Coughlin to come to the next meeting for information

Nancy Hunt stated a typo on a supporting document to Resolution 199-2017.

Leah Epstein asked Council about their reasoning as to why the referendum was done for the sale of the water system and who is speaking for retaining the water system. Council spoke about failing infrastructure, the cost of infrastructure repair, and that the information for keeping the system will be put out when it is completed, conveyed the burden of the current debt of fixing the system, the need for estimates on incoming expenses of the system. Council urged individuals to come to the meetings and look for the coming information.

Pablo Delgado asked if the next meeting is the time when the information for the scenario of keeping the water system will be released and stated his perception of what he observes with other residents in town on the issue.

Christina Whited stated that the gnome hydrant project has started with good progress, that the hydrants have not been maintained over time, the painting is maintaining the hydrant, and that the HBBA is behind the project.

LEGAL ISSUES: NONE

BILL LIST:

Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List. **Total Amount: \$568,511.65**
 Motion to approve bill list: Stemple ; Second: Strange;
 Roll call vote: LoIacono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
 Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent
 Councilwoman Shipps abstains from anything Police Department related.
 Councilman Stemple abstains from anything Fire Department related.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: LEGAL ADVICE CONCERNING THE CONTRACT WITH NEW JERSEY AMERICAN WATER

Resolution 202-2017 - Motion to move into executive session: Stemple ; Second: Shipps;
 Roll call vote: LoIacono, absent ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, yes ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
 Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent
 Action may now be taken.

Motion to move into open session: Zappa ; Second: Shipps ;

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

Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

ADJOURNMENT: PRESIDING OFFICER ASKS IF THERE IS ANY FURTHER BUSINESS.

Motion to adjourn: Zappa ; Second, Shipps ;

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

Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

Next Regular Council Meeting: September 28, 2017 - 7:30 pm – 7 Maryland Ave, High Bridge NJ, 08829

Adam Young
Acting Municipal Clerk

Mark Desire
Mayor