

BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE – COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 28, 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, present; Councilwoman Shipps, present; Councilman Strange, present; Councilwoman Hughes, present; Councilman Stemple, absent; Council President Zappa, present; Mayor Desire, present. Also present were Attorney Barry Goodman, Administrator Michael Pappas, Tax Collector / Certified Financial Officer Bonnie Fleming, Chief Brett Bartman, Acting Clerk Adam Young, and thirty-four public and press.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

Motion to dispense with the reading of the September 14, 2017 minutes: Hughes ; Second: Shipps ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, abstain ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, absent ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 abstention, 1 absent, 4 yes

Motion to approve the September 14, 2017 minutes: Shipps ; Second: Strange ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, abstain ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, absent ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 abstention, 1 absent, 4 yes

VISITORS / PROCLAMATIONS:

A. Appointment of Raymond Anthony McCarthy Jr. and Liam Daniel McCarthy as Honorary Police Officers – Chief Brett Bartman presented plaques and Police uniforms to the family of Raymond and Liam.

Motion to adopt **Resolution 203-2017** to appoint Raymond Anthony McCarthy Jr. and Liam Daniel McCarthy as Honorary Police Officers: LoIacono ; Second: Shipps ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, yes ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

B. Proclamation – Put the brakes on fatalities day – read by the Mayor

C. Presentation by Tara Sheppard – Street Smart Pedestrian Safety Campaign - Presented on the Street Smart Pedestrian Safety Campaign about restriping pedestrian walkways

D. Presentation – Water Utility System - Council presented rate comparison information and made this information available to the Borough residents. Kevin Watsey reported on New Jersey American's recent request for a 17% increase and reported that they received 33% of what was asked for by the Board of Public Utilities. Council asked Mr. Watsey about additional concessions which New Jersey American has agreed to reducing the fire hydrant rate and phasing the rate in with cases hear in front of the BPU and ensuring the fire hydrants are maintained, how the rate freeze is enacted, why the BPU cases take the time they do. New Jersey American Water has agreed not to charge for water services and fire services for any Borough buildings now and in the future.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON

Dr. Brenden Coughlin stated that the price difference between the current bill and future, projected bill is only \$160, stated that taxes will go up, the bills will go up, and stated that we will be paying for the problems of other towns.

Leah Epstein read a letter from Mara Farmer to Council about the water system. Leah asked Council if they have really explored other options.

The Council and the Mayor explained the reason for coming to the conclusion to propose the sale of the water system, including having explored leasing the system, partnering with other systems, fixing the system, the cost of modernizing the system including needing additional licensed staff, offered to hear other ideas from independent professionals and residents alike, the safety concerns that will be addressed. Mr. Ed McManimon, the Borough's Bond Counsel, explained the financial strength of the Borough and calculations done for the water system issue, explained the Borough's purchasing power versus New Jersey American Water and the advantage that New Jersey American water has with this issue, and urged people to consider the savings that will be had by paying off the debt from the sale of the system.

Pablo Delgado thanked Council for the information and asked for clarification on the handout, clarified with Council the expectations of spending over time, addressed the concerns on some social media issues and stressed simplifying the narrative.

Tom Wescoe asked for clarification on the cost of how the golf course will be handled, how much the fire hydrants may cost under NJAW. Council NJAM explained the use of retention ponds, how much water the golf course uses per year, and how the fire hydrants will be handled.

Nancy Hunt speaking for the Cultural Heritage Committee on the 275th anniversary of Taylor-Wharton foundry festival, speaking about what Taylor-Wharton produced such as a dredge bucket which will be brought in for viewing and is on its way to High Bridge now.

Alan Schwartz thanked Council for their work on presenting the numbers has concerns about the graph being a valid calculation and would like to know where the break-even amount is and what assessments will be used to find that number and asked if simply giving away the system would still be advantageous. Discussion ensued with Mr. McManimon about the economics of giving the system away, the break-even amount, and that the fact that the cost to the Borough will be higher than with a private vendor, and stressed the gain that will be had by paying off debt with the sale of the system.

Jane Karp of 83 Church asked who has access to vacated alleys, who can walk on them, and who is paying taxes on these alleys. Attorney Goodman explained that they alleys are private property; the owners are paying taxes on their portion. Discussion of how alleys are typically utilized ensued.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. **Ordinance 2017-23:** Appropriating \$17,000 from the capital improvement fund for improvements to irrigation / drainage system and cart paths at the High Bridge Hills Golf Course

Motion to open the public hearing for **Ordinance 2017-23:** LoIacono ; Second: Strange ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, yes ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

Motion to close the public hearing for **Ordinance 2017-23:** LoIacono ; Second: Strange ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, yes ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

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

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A.** Sale of old Borough Hall – 71 Main St. - Council discussed that the subcommittee has been working on rewriting the request for proposal for the Old Borough Hall.
- B.** Events Committee volunteers - Council discussed the regulations of utilizing background checks for events committee volunteers.
- C.** Redevelopment analysis of MUC zone – Council discussed the formalizing of what to present at future discussion for this issue.
- D.** Construction fees - Council has asked the Construction Officer to give recommendations to reducing fees for construction permits which will be presented soon for changes to the existing fee structure.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

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

Motion to table **Ordinance 2017-22** indefinitely: LoIacono ; Second: Shipps ;

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

Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS: END OF MONTH

Mayor, member, or official	Department
Councilman Zappa	Planning , Engineering, Department of Public Works Spoke about road projects, testing of water mains, road maintenance on Cregar Road, Taylor, Thomas, Fine, Beaver St, Jersey St, and Walnut St., DPW has started leaf collection and will continue through October
Councilwoman Hughes	Public Health, Environmental, Solid Waste / Recycling, & Open Space Spoke about the Environmental Committee recertified High Bridge as a wildlife habitat, hazardous waste cleanup at the county, county computer collection
Councilman LoIacono	Golf, Recreation No report at this time.
Councilman Strange	Emergency Services, Municipal Court, Cultural and Heritage Spoke about the Fire Department doing a squad 51 program, meeting with the Emergency squad to explore similar options, Cultural and Heritage has the dredge bucket coming and 275th plans are proceeding with the parade, the repairs on the porch at Solitude House have begun.
Councilwoman Shipps	Special Events, Economic Development, Newsletter, Website Spoke about Community Day successes, Salsa Night this Saturday, Halloween Event, Trunk of treat being offered, offerings to small business owners in High Bridge, the newsletter will be going out next week
Councilman Stemple	Finance, Utilities, & Education No report given at this time
Michael Pappas	Administrator Spoke on the change to the leaf collection system, the form of the current solid waste contract
Mayor Mark Desire	Executive Services Asked to meet with Clinton about the current arbitration, marriage performed, Police contract committee to put together, road cleanup, information for EDC for up and coming small business owners

CONSENT AGENDA:

Amend agenda to add **Resolution 212-2017** setting stipulations with the usage of leaf bags from the Borough:

Motion: Zappa ; Second: Strange ;

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

Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

Amend agenda to add **Resolution 213-2017** approving advertising and creation of new solid waste request for proposal and to extend the current contract:

Motion: Strange ; Second: Zappa ;

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

Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

RESOLUTION #	TITLE
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Resolution 204 – 2017	Approve Highlands Wastewater management plan – Mapping Updates
Resolution 205 – 2017	Authorization for social affairs permit – Califon Fire Company
Resolution 206 – 2017	Chapter 159 – Approval of items of revenue appropriation
Resolution 207 – 2017	Chapter 159 – End of summer drive sober
Resolution 208 – 2017	Fireman Approval – Eric Task
Resolution 209 – 2017	OPRA-OPMA legislation
Resolution 210 – 2017	Release of executive session minutes
Resolution 211 – 2017	Utility adjustment – 6 Driftway Drive
Resolution 212 – 2017	Leaf bag usage
Resolution 213 – 2017	Solid waste approval to advertise and draft request for proposal

Motion to approve the consent agenda items (add “as amended” if needed): Strange ; Second: Zappa ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, yes ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

A. End of month Tax and Finance reports

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 3 MINUTES PER PERSON

Pablo Delgado commented about the cost to the users, how savings to the users should be told to the people, what the payoff of debt means to the user, if sewer usage charges will change due to this issue, and what this narrative means for businesses. Council commented that businesses are positively affected.

Nancy Hunt commented about a particular set of pieces being shown at the 275th celebration.

LEGAL ISSUES: NONE

BILL LIST:

Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List. **Total Amount: \$383,583.97**
Motion to approve bill list: LoIacono ; Second: Shipps ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, yes ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes
Councilwoman Shipps abstained from anything Police related.

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

Motion to adjourn: LoIacono ; Second: Shipps ;
Roll call vote: LoIacono, yes ; Shipps, yes ; Stemple, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 1 absent, 5 yes

Next Regular Council Meeting: October 12, 2017 - 7:30 pm – 7 Maryland Ave, High Bridge NJ, 08829

Adam Young
Acting Municipal Clerk

Mark Desire
Mayor