

BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE – COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 08, 2018 – 7:30 p.m. – Location: 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ 08829

Please note: This meeting may contain discussion of items not mentioned on the agenda and, alternatively, any items specifically listed may be omitted.

CALL TO ORDER:

Presiding Officer calls meeting to order and states: “Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of 2018 Meeting Dates were published in the Hunterdon County Democrat on December 28, 2017, and posted on the bulletin board at Borough Hall. Action may now be taken.”

FLAG SALUTE: LED BY MAYOR OR PRESIDING OFFICER

COUNCIL ROLL CALL:

Councilman Columbus	present	Councilman LoIacono	present	Mayor Desire	present
Councilwoman Ferry	absent	Councilman Strange	present		
Councilwoman Hughes	present	Councilman Zappa	present		

Also present were Administrator Michael Pappas, Acting Clerk Adam Young, Attorney Barry Goodman, OEM Lead Coordinator Joe Trilone, and twenty members of the press and public.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MINUTES – FEBRUARY 22, 2018

Mayor asks if any corrections or for a motion to dispense with the reading of the prior meeting minutes.

Motion to dispense with the reading of the February 22, 2018 minutes: Motion / Second: Strange / Hughes
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

Motion to approve the February 22, 2018 minutes: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

ANNOUNCEMENT:

A. Storm and power outage update – The Mayor gave an update on the current situation concerning the storms and power in the Borough, the warming center, communications with the utility companies with the Borough, neighbors helping neighbors, the good work of the Department of Works, and the frustrations with the amount of time the Borough has been without power. Council encouraged the public to help their neighbors get help as well as to call JCP&L when needed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON

Alex Kinsky stated he is against the sale of marijuana on Main Street and that the sale of marijuana on Main Street would cause him to not be allowed to walk to Main Street.

Jessica Banich stated that she supports the decision to not allow the sale of marijuana in High Bridge, spoke about the effects of marijuana on adults and children, effects of the sales of the substance locally and globally, having sales draw those from outside High Bridge, how that may affect schools, and asked what the positive sale of marijuana really is.

Tom Wescoe thanked Council for their help with the storm, stated that Council should not rush to ban marijuana, and stated veterans may be helped by the sale marijuana in High Bridge.

Linda Demarzo stated that Council should not rush to ban marijuana, that Council should focus on current Ordinances concerning safety and beautification, that she visited Colorado and saw an economic boost to a community.

Sophia Desire stated that she is against the sale of marijuana in High Bridge, that she cannot travel particular areas in the woods any longer as some children do drugs in the woods, that they are leaving trash there, and that is not good for High Bridge.

Marybeth Strange stated that she supports the passage of the Ordinance as the decision can be changed in the future and that other towns can perhaps be the first to push forward.

Leah Epstein thanked younger citizens for being involved, stated that she does not understand the rush to pass the proposed Ordinance, that it appears to be a partisan move, and that the content of the Ordinance seems broad.

Christina Whited spoke about an article to Council concerning real estate as it relates to the sale of marijuana in High Bridge, asked Council to reconsider the manufacturing portions of the Ordinance.

Stephanie Bugis, a member of HBBA, spoke in support of keeping business options open for the sale of marijuana, urged Council not to rush to pass the Ordinance.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. **Ordinance 2018-006:** Various road improvements in and by the Borough of High Bridge appropriating \$602,000 therefor and authorizing the issuance of \$387,000 bonds or notes of the Borough for financing the cost thereof

Motion to open the public hearing for **Ordinance 2018-006:** Motion / Second: LoIacono, Hughes

Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;

Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

Council discussed the projects covered by this Ordinance, the bids submitted for the project, the Mill Street project being the beginning of the Washington Street project, and large grants being utilized for these projects. Christina Whited asked about Main Street grant utilization. Discussions about restrictions ensued, contractor issues with submissions, logistics and scope with the project. Pablo Delgado asked Council to speak about the long range plan for the streets and Councilman Zappa commented that his plan is to update the streets project plan for everyone.

Motion to table the public hearing for **Ordinance 2018-006** to March 22, 2018: Motion/Second: Strange, Columbus

Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;

Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

B. **Ordinance 2018-007:** Supplement Chapter 145, Land Use and Development

Motion to open the public hearing for **Ordinance 2018-007:** Motion / Second: LoIacono, Strange

Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;

Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

Mayor Desire spoke about High Bridge being a family town, asked if the sale will be a draw from homeowners or a deterrent to future buyers, commented about how children will be affected by this, spoke about the the current status of Main Street being full of businesses, and spoke about the challenges of local schools if there is the sale of marijuana in High Bridge.

Councilman Zappa stated that the Ordinance being utilized is the slow approach, that discussion on the topic is critical, stated his background with pharmaceutical machinery and that the smell of the marijuana processing facility was overpowering and would not be a good fit for High Bridge.

Councilman Strange spoke about similar types of regulations already in place in High Bridge, how different Colorado's budget and economic process is from New Jersey, and explained Manitou Springs' sales revenue being far less than previously claimed by another speaker.

Councilwoman Hughes spoke on being an educator in town and how the Ordinance is in line with education objectives.

Linda Demarzo stated that she is frustrated about how information is being presented from Council about moving slowly with this Ordinance. Council discussed how Ordinance process operates with business applicants as it pertains to this issue. Pablo Delgado commented about the land use Ordinances as they stand and stated that other changes could have a positive impact to the town.

Alex Maxwell of 45 Highland Ave. stated that he moved to High Bridge because he felt that it is a progressive town and encouraged High Bridge to be a pilot town.

Leah Epstein of 83 North Main commented that there seems to be an age difference in groups supporting each side of the issue, negativity about the issue, presented a story to Council, and views High Bridge as a hopeful progressive town.

Stephanie Butikis spoke on behalf of Nicole Poko, via text, which was read and supports commerce in town similar to other large tech companies in the United States.

Christina Whited spoke about no space being available in High Bridge for businesses to go in at this time, dispensaries being regulated like pharmacies, and values beginning at home.

Motion to close the public hearing for **Ordinance 2018-007**: Motion / Second: Zappa, LoIacono
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

Motion to adopt **Ordinance 2018-007**: Motion / Second: Zappa, Hughes
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A.** Water utility - Solitude Village pump – Council spoke about the damaged pump, estimates for relocation of the controls, specification changes, and the wait for further quotes.
- B.** Sale of Old Borough Hall – 71 Main St. - Administrator Pappas and Attorney Goodman spoke about getting the easement in place prior to the sale of Borough Hall so that the easement will be legally recorded.
- C.** Status of Solitude House bid proposals – Administrator Pappas spoke about the desire to move forward and the clarification of how the property taxes will be handled with the proposals, updates from the Tax Assessor about the value of the property, the annual property tax amount for the property, and that the Borough cannot waive part of the taxes for the school or County portion. Discussion ensued about terms of the lease, the history of Borough buildings and how they can be utilized, and setting a standard for future utilization.
- D.** Police Department firing range lease – Nothing to report at this time.
- E.** Raritan Valley Line task force report – Administrator Pappas spoke about the invitation to attend a meeting which will support a single ride proposition, logistics of building the proposed tunnel needed, and communication coming with other entities

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

A. Ordinance 2018-010: Authorizing easement on Borough Hall property
Motion to introduce Ordinance 2018-010: Motion / Second: Hughes, Columbus
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

The presiding officer states that the Ordinance 2018-010 shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the public hearing date of March 22, 2018.

B. Ordinance 2018-011: CAP bank
Motion to introduce Ordinance 2018-011: Motion / Second: Zappa, Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

The presiding officer states that the Ordinance 2018-011 shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the public hearing date of April 12, 2018.

C. Ordinance 2018-012: Adopting the 100 West Main redevelopment plan
Motion to introduce Ordinance 2018-012: Motion / Second: LoIacono, Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

The presiding officer states that the Ordinance 2018-012 shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the public hearing date of March 22, 2018.

D. Ordinance 2018-013: Bond Ordinance for the preparation of a water utility asset management study appropriating \$70,000
Motion to introduce Ordinance 2018-013: Motion / Second: LoIacono, Zappa
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

The presiding officer states that the Ordinance 2018-013 shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the public hearing date of March 22, 2018.

E. Ordinance 2018-014: Appropriating \$50,000 from water capital improvement fund for replacement of electrical equipment at the Solitude Pump
Motion to introduce Ordinance 2018-014: Motion / Second: Strange, Zappa
RRoll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

The presiding officer states that the Ordinance 2018-014 shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the public hearing date of March 22, 2018.

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.

RESOLUTION #	TITLE
Resolution 098 – 2018	Lien redemption
Resolution 099 – 2018	Landlord refunds
Resolution 100 – 2018	Approval of application for Open Space funds
Resolution 101 – 2018	Appropriation reserve transfers
Resolution 102 – 2018	Raritan Valley Line Mayors Task Force

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

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

- A.** Borough Hall access easement
- B.** 100 West Main Redevelopment plan draft
- C.** CAP bank email

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 3 MINUTES PER PERSON

Christina Whited commended Council for being willing to consider dropping the municipal portion of taxes for the new business and to consider this again in the future.
Pablo Delgado thanked Council for discussing the Annex issue, asked that reviews of the current Ordinances be considered to remove some restrictions for future businesses including tattoo studios, massage parlors, etc. Council spoke about looking at some items for review and looking to bring more business to Main St.

LEGAL ISSUES: NONE AT THIS TIME

BILL LIST:

Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List. **Total Amount: \$94,417.24**
Motion to approve bill list: Motion / Second: LoIacono, Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

EXECUTIVE SESSION: LEGAL ADVICE FOR TOWN OF CLINTON ARBITRATION

Resolution 103-2018 - Motion to move into executive session: Motion / L, Columbus
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent
Action may now be taken.

Motion to move into open session: Motion / Second: Zappa, LoIacono

Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;

Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

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

Motion to adjourn: Motion / Second: LoIacono, Hughes

Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, absent ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;

Motion passes. 5 yes, 1 absent

Next regular meeting: March 22, 2018 – 7:30 pm – 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ

Adam Young
Acting Municipal Clerk

Mark Desire
Mayor