

BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE – COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 24, 2018 – 7:30 p.m. – Location: 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ 08829

CALL TO ORDER: MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR DESIRE

FLAG SALUTE: LED BY MAYOR DESIRE

COUNCIL ROLL CALL:

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

Also present were Attorney Steve Firkser, Administrator Michael Pappas, Director of Public Works Michael Hann, and Acting Clerk Adam Young along with twenty-two members of the public and press.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to dispense with the reading of the regular May 10, 2018 minutes: Motion / Second: Strange / Zappa
Roll call vote: Columbus, abstain ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 5 yes, 1 abstain

Motion to approve the May 10, 2018 minutes: Motion / Second: Zappa / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, abstain ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, abstain ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 4 yes, 2 abstain

A moment of silence for Roger Cregar was observed.

APPOINTMENTS:

A. Resolution 148-2018 - Updating Council Committee assignments for Events and Golf

Motion to adopt Resolution 148-2018: Motion/Second: Strange / Zappa
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

AWARDS:

Motion to amend agenda to revisit to Awards section later in meeting if the recipient arrives:
Motion / Second: Zappa / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

A. Volunteer of the Year Award – No action taken at this meeting

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Sewer utility – The Mayor and Council spoke about the history of the Town of Clinton issue, the milestones of attempted mediation with the Town of Clinton, the need for the sewer rate increase to deal with expenses of the sewer utility, the handling of the monies which appear to be unpaid by High Bridge which are being held in an escrow account, the frustrations of delay and prolonging of the issue by the Town of Clinton, the intent to build a sewer processing plant to deal with sewerage, and the Council being in the same situation as the residents because they are tax payers as well and also pay the increased rates.

VISITORS:

- A.** Pablo Delgado and Nicole Poko – The dog park and pump track presentation was given outlining the logistics and placement of the proposed pump track as well as the initial support and logistics for a dog park located in the current Commons Department of Works area. Council discussed how the fence for the public works will be considered, the Department of Works maneuverability within the area concerning safety to people and the area, Dept. of Environmental Protection regulations to handling mulch, placement of fences for access, risk management issues, possible plans for alternate access, ground maintenance in the dog parks, possible relocation of the DPW yard, and making sure there is contact with the HBBA when issues arise.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON

Judy Linger asked several questions about the Town of Clinton sewer issue on behalf of herself and her neighbors. Council answered with a recap of the history of the suit. Jim Rispoli asked about his letter about landlord relief which Council replied would be on the next agenda. Mr. Rispoli also spoke about extending some parking spaces in the Commons park area. Doug Walker asked about the lawsuit and the correlation with the raising of the rates, asked when the Borough received the new sewer rate, the standing of the current budget, stated that a significant time had gone by between the letter and the rate increase, noted being included or not included on the agenda, and stated that he is unhappy with the draft agendas. Council spoke about the rate not being set in stone simply because it was submitted from Clinton to High Bridge and mediating the rate with the entities involved in the lawsuit from the time it was received up to the time of the budget being introduced. Paola Sahulka spoke about the river clean up, finding trash around the lake, requested a sign to put up about the issue of trash at the lake, and the concern for the library to continue being available. Council spoke about getting a sign put up, monitoring the trash dumping issue, and the want to keep the library on Main Street. Bob Smolarek asked about the sewer rate rising suddenly after a long period of not increasing. Council spoke about the charges from the Town of Clinton and the reason to handle the contract as a civil issue, the expenses of a law suit, and the aging system. Michele Lee asked for the annual financial statement to be posted on the website, asked if we got a special waiver for the municipal debt limit, asked how Council will afford the sewer plant to be built, if liability coverage has been decreased. Councilman LoIacono stated that he would look into the municipal debt limit waiver, spoke about the contractual obligation for the Town of Clinton to pay the Borough's share in the Town of Clinton sewer plant if they terminate the Borough's sewer contract, the need to repair the roads which had previously been less than adequately maintained, and Administrator Pappas spoke about the savings to the Borough with adjusting liability coverage. Karen Gove requested Councilman Strange to have the Huskies building bathroom opened and thanked Councilman Strange for his words on the dog park, stated that the fields are in terrible shape which leads to injury. Discussion ensued about who owns the Huskies restroom, when to open the restrooms, and contributions by different groups for maintenance. Christina Whited asked about the dirt in the Commons area. Council answered that it was brought in for use. Pablo Delgado commented about the sewer increase, spoke that the rate increase was a shock, asked that some of the monies be used for infrastructure, asked why sewer rates are differing between towns and if High Bridge would have a spot to build a plant. Council spoke about the past seventeen years the rates were kept low, the costs of infrastructure maintenance, and the question of sewer being done at a different rate, and encapsulated plants being smaller these days. Doreen Longell asked who reads the meters in High Bridge, about an issue with high usage, and if Council is looking into utilizing other towns for sewer processing. Council responded that DPW gets the reads and that Borough Hall can take a look at the accounts to see what the issue may be. Pat Bielcik asked why the Town of Clinton needs us as a customer, if there is an allotment of escrow monies and how people moving may be given their refunds. High Bridge responded that that Town of Clinton needs to utilize the capacity of their facility, that there is money being held in escrow, and that people getting their refunds who have moved would need to be decided.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- A.** **Ordinance 2018-018:** Amending the 100 West Main Street Redevelopment plan

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-018: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Hughes
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Council gave an overview of the amendments and spoke about a letter of intent for the property.
Tuck Batch asked if capacity will be available for building on that property. Councilman Zappa stated that there is a significant reserve.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-018: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Columbus
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-018: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

B. **Ordinance 2018-020:** Ordinance appropriating \$27,000.00 from the capital improvement fund for Hillcrest Lane engineering expenses for inspections

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-020: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Douglas Walker asked if it is 100% inspection. Council stated that it is.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-020: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-020: Motion / Second: Hughes / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

C. **Ordinance 2018-021:** Ordinance appropriating \$35,000 from the capital improvement fund for Mill Street engineering expenses for inspections

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-021: Motion / Second: Strange / LoIacono
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Doug Walker asked when Council anticipated the project to start. Council responded that they are not certain at this time.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-021: Motion / Second: Columbus / LoIacono
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-021: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Columbus
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

D. **Ordinance 2018-022:** An Ordinance to amend Chapter 167, Article IV, High Bridge Hills Golf, of the code of the Borough of High Bridge, establishing golf rates

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-022: Motion / Second: Hughes / Zappa
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Council discussed the items which Billy Casper and the Golf Committee discussed and what was agreed to with rates and eliminating trying to catch up utilizing pre-sales.

Doug Walker of the Golf Committee spoke about the history of utilizing pre-sales passes, and the percentage of play from Hunterdon County residents being able to be increased, and the cost of the balls being 5/10/15. Pablo Delgado asked about the pricing of rounds and spoke about profitability as well as

maximizing rounds. Council responded about the data analyst approach, utilizing the historic data, and the time it will take to see the changes.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2018-022: Motion / Second: Zappa / Columbus
 Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
 Motion passes: 6 yes

Motion to table Ordinance 2018-022 to the first meeting of September: Zappa / Columbus
 Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
 Motion passes: 6 yes

Add Resolution 153-2018 to the consent agenda setting some golf rates and amending golf ball bucket prices to \$5, \$10, and \$15: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Columbus
 Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
 Motion passes: 6 yes

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

A. Ordinance 2018-023: Amending Borough Code, Chapter 303-7, C.(7), Sewer deduction for filling pool

Motion to introduce: Motion / Second: LoIacono / Strange
 Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
 Motion passes: 6 yes

The presiding officer states that Ordinance 2018-023 shall be published in whole or summary in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat with the public hearing date of June 14, 2018.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

Official	Department
Councilman Zappa	Engineering, Department of Public Works Spoke about Cregar Road bridge update, Committee for affordable housing selection of administrative agents and funding
Councilwoman Hughes	Environmental, Solid Waste / Recycling, Public Health & Open Space Spoke about the Memorial Day ceremony, and weeding being needed
Councilman LoIacono	Education, Finance, Emergency Services Spoke about Police Department and Board of Education talking about the possibility of having a School Resource Officer
Councilman Strange	Economic Development Committee, Recreation Spoke about Recreation Committee having a second meeting, found members for appointment, EDC to work with Recreation Committee, new location to house Summer Recreation container, EDC meeting about bike park and dog park, way-finding signage and branding
Councilwoman Ferry	Cultural and Heritage, Events C&H Mother's Day Sunday, Solitude House open times, talks about St. Joseph's Church, wedding preparations at the Solitude House, Events Committee opening night concert update, Soap Box Derby, volunteer meeting dates, Pooch parade info
Councilman Columbus	Golf Statistics read, rates discussed
Michael Pappas	Administrator Brush pickup continues, road repairs continue with DPW, sewer pump station repair completed, annual assessment program success,
Mayor Mark Desire	Executive Services 100 West Main Street meeting, OEM Deputies found, support from entities about production of sewer facility, Solitude Village association contact, wedding ceremony

Motion to add Resolution 154-2018 to consent, CAS and Community Grants Planning and Housing to appoint administrative agents: Motion / Second: Strange / Hughes

Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

CONSENT AGENDA:

RESOLUTION #	TITLE
Resolution – 149 - 2018	Cancel tax balance – 11 Sunset Drive
Resolution – 150 - 2018	Authorize stipend – Summer Recreation Counselor – Brady Krushinski
Resolution – 151 - 2018	Designation of Municipal Humane Law Enforcement Officer
Resolution – 153 - 2018	Golf rates and price of golf balls per bucket
Resolution – 154 - 2018	Selection of Administrative agents for COAH obligations

Motion to approve the consent agenda items as amended: Motion / Second: Hughes / LoIacono
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

A. End of month Tax and Finance reports

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 3 MINUTES PER PERSON

Doug Walker asked Council how they created their temporary budget without knowing the rate, asked about the timing with retroactive billing, spoke about the billing for the golf course, stated that it will be a bad year for profitability at the course, and spoke about the DPW area limits needing to be addressed with the County if they are changes for a bike/dog park. Councilman LoIacono stated that he did not know about the letter from Clinton with the rate increase until putting together the budget, stated that he does not know who received the letter at Borough Hall and the needed clarification of retroactive billing. Pablo Delgado asked about next steps to the bike park. Council asked questions about risk management aspects of creating the park and the need for further clarification from professionals.

LEGAL ISSUES: NONE

BILL LIST:

Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List. **Total Amount: \$ 220,767.58**
but withholding bills 1135, 2383.

Motion to approve bill list as amended: Motion / Second: Zappa / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

EXECUTIVE SESSION: LEGAL ADVICE FOR TOWN OF CLINTON AND PERSONNEL ISSUE

Resolution 152-2018 - Motion to move into executive session: Motion/Second: Columbus / LoIacono
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
Action may now be taken.

Motion to move into open session: Motion/Second: Columbus / Strange
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Motion to add Resolution 155-2018, audit of water utility by Maser. Strange / Hughes
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; LoIacono, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

Motion to approve Resolution 155-2018: Zappa / Columbus

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

Motion passes: 6 yes

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

Motion to adjourn: Motion / Second: Zappa / Columbus

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

Motion passes: 6 yes

Next regular meeting: June 14, 2018 – 7:30 pm – 97 West Main Street, High Bridge, NJ