

# **BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE – COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Date: August 15, 2019 – 7:30 p.m. – Location: 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ 08829

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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: CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR LEE**

## **FLAG SALUTE: LED BY MAYOR LEE**

## **COUNCIL ROLL CALL:**

Councilman Columbus	present	Councilwoman Moore	present	Mayor Lee	present
Councilwoman Ferry	present	Councilman Strange	present		
Councilwoman Hughes	present	Councilman Zappa	present		

Also present were Attorney Barry Goodman, Administrator Michael Pappas, Chief of the Fire Department Jeff Smith, Chief of Police Brett Bartman, Clerk Adam Young and thirty-five members of the public and press.

## **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion to dispense with the reading of the regular July 18, 2019 minutes: Hughes / Zappa

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

Motion passes: 5 yes, 1 abstention

Motion to approve July 18, 2019 regular minutes:

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

Motion passes: 5 yes, 1 abstention

## **AWARDS:**

**A.** Police Department awards - Chief Bartman presented awards to Officers for professionalism during service during a shots fired incident. Medals of Honor were awarded. Mayor Lee thanked the Officers, Chief Bartman, Mark Desire for his leadership during the incident, and the wives and families of the Officers.

## **OATHS:**

**A.** Oaths are administered to members of the Historical Committee: Nancy Hunt, David Goessling, and Kelly Matos

## **VISITORS:**

**A.** Jeff Smith - Hydrant report - Chief Jeff Smith presented the Hydrant Flushing Report to the public and Governing Body and read the July statistics report for the High Bridge Fire Department.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON**

Ann Willard of Woodland Terrace asked about how the Town of Clinton litigation has, or has not, affected her sewer bill. Attorney Goodman stated that half of the escrow monies were put into the Sewer Utility fund and spoke about the last few items pending for the formation of the sewer contract. Mayor Lee stated that the monies collected are held in the sewer fund for future projects, that there are a few minor reductions on the utility bill, and that litigation is ongoing to complete the service agreement.

Felix Seorge stated his appreciation for the job everyone is doing, stated that he Chaired the Committee to build the golf course, asked that someone consider the Chair of the Golf Committee be advisory in nature and suggested that there may be a point to consider that someone who used to be an employee at a golf course would be a great asset.

Attorney Goodman suggested that putting a former Billy Casper employee on a Borough Committee may need to be reviewed to ensure there is not a conflict of interest.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

### **A.     Ordinance 2019-025: Golf Committee**

Motion to continue the the public hearing for Ordinance 2019-025: Zappa / Columbus  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes: 6 yes

Mayor Lee states as a member of the public that she understands the passion everyone has for their parts in guiding the Borough, stated that she hopes the decisions of Council can bring more volunteers to the activities of the Borough, is sure that Councilman Columbus is receiving no monies from Billy Casper Golf, stated that she reimbursed the Borough for the costs of advertising to introduce the Ordinance, stated that she takes full responsibility for the oversight of introduction of the Ordinance at this time, and asked Attorney Goodman about the handling of excluding a former employee.

Councilman Zappa explained the process of Ordinance creation, spoke about how the process of Ordinance handling was done at the last meeting, and spoke to Councilman Columbus' idea being beneficial to have a Chair of the Committee be a Councilmember.

Councilman Columbus spoke about his thoughts to create the combined Chair/Council position as the golf course is an important asset of the Borough, and stated that he consulted Attorney Goodman about the idea for guidance. Councilwoman Ferry spoke about the Historical Committee overseeing Borough assets, that Council should take more time to consider parts of the Ordinance and collaborate prior to adoption, that there are some other areas where changes could be made for the benefit of the Borough pertaining to how votes are counted, that all Committees should be represented by residents other than Council, and stated that good Ordinances come from lots of review.

Attorney Goodman spoke about having a combined Chair/Council position, that it is a policy decision, and spoke about having a possible appointee to a Committee being reviewed prior to appointment on an ad-hoc basis.

Linda Demarzo of 67 Church Street stated that she believes the Ordinance needs more time and consideration, that it is empowering to the public to be a member appointed to a Committee rather than a Councilmember.

Gordon Marx stated his history with Borough involvement, stated his position in supporting the concept of the golf course, stated it is well run, stated his support of the establishment of a formal Committee, spoke about his comments about the proposed Ordinance during a Committee meeting, stated that he believes it should be open to someone other than a Councilmember, and stated he hopes it is a rumor that a former Billy Casper employee being excluded is not true.

Tom Wescoe of 27 Church St. thanked everyone with the work they are doing, stated his support for a separate Golf Committee as it offers a broader range of considerations for the course as future plans may be in motion.

Councilman Strange asked if a particular phrase changing can be considered a substantive change and that requiring financial disclosure for all Committees may turn some people away. Attorney Goodman advised that, in this case, it is, stated that financial disclosure being in for Committees is normal.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2019-025: Zappa / Columbus  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes: 6 yes

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2019-025: Zappa / Strange  
Roll call vote: Columbus, no ; Ferry, no ; Hughes, no ; Moore, no ; Strange, no ; Zappa, no ;  
Motion does not pass: 6 no

### **B.     Ordinance 2019-026: Water capital - water meters and meter equipment**

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2019-026: Strange / Zappa  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes: 6 yes

Councilman Zappa spoke about the body of this Ordinance, the status of getting bids for the project, and appropriating the funds for a future project.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2019-026: Columbus / Strange

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2019-026: Moore / Strange

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

## DISCUSSION ITEMS:

**A.** Grandfather clause - Administrator Pappas spoke about adding a Grandfather clause to the Code to give relief to building owners who have situations which pre-date the zoning laws when a building owner would like to make improvements on their homes as seeking a variance is a disincentive, stated that very few properties in one section of town currently have conforming lots, spoke about reviewing some examples from other towns, and asked if Council would like to consider this policy decision. Conversation of examples ensued and Council agreed to review this further.

Attorney Goodman added that grandfather clauses are not uncommon, that it isn't common to add a Grandfather clause after the fact to the Code, but that it can be done and takes away bureaucratic obstacles, however the Borough does lose some control of the planning process, and cautioned that an Ordinance should be carefully considered.

The Governing Body discussed and decided to put together a sub-committee with future action intended.

**B.** Solitude House caretaker - Mayor Lee spoke about placing the item on the agenda as it was requested by a resident, and that there may be interest in the caretaker role again. Administrator Pappas spoke about still having an application from a previous bid. Councilwoman Ferry spoke to having the Historical Committee review the request. Discussion ensued that another request for proposals would need to be done.

**C.** Huskies signs - Councilman Strange spoke about the removal of the Union Forge fence being taken down, that this was a source of income for the Huskies when placing ads, that there were three options proposed to display future sponsorship banners, that no notice was done but that perhaps this item can be considered. Councilwoman Ferry suggested some options with cabling and zip ties. Discussion ensued about ways to put up ads, where ads may be placed, and formulating a Resolution for this.

Motion to add Resolution 254-2019 to the consent agenda to review options for the Huskies to utilize a cable and post system and designating the Administrator to approve the project: Strange / Ferry

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

## INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

**A.** Ordinance 2019-027: Amending Code 184-17, Parking permits for municipal parking lots

Motion to introduce Ordinance 2019-027: Strange / Hughes

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

Mayor Lee states that the Ordinance 2019-027 shall be published in its entirety in the Express Times and/or the Hunterdon County Democrat along with the public hearing date of September 12, 2019.

## CONSENT AGENDA:

RESOLUTION #	TITLE
Resolution – 241 – 2019	Amend professional service contract - Maser - Planner
Resolution – 242 – 2019	Approval of PTO raffle
Resolution – 243 – 2019	Authorization to bid - Sewer pump house services
Resolution – 244 – 2019	Chapter 159 Master Plan Reexam Report - 08-15-19
Resolution – 245 – 2019	Summer Recreation dates for 2020
Resolution – 246 – 2019	Change Order - Washington Phase 2

Resolution – 247 – 2019	Updated Boards and Committees
Resolution – 248 – 2019	Approval of Fireman - John Hackney
Resolution – 249 – 2019	Amend professional service contract - Maser - Engineer
Resolution – 250 – 2019	Amend Personnel Policy
Resolution – 251 – 2019	Appointment of Primary and Secondary Sewer Operators
Resolution – 252 – 2019	Appointment of Crossing Guards
Resolution – 253 – 2019	Emergency appropriation for sewer plan equipment repairs
Resolution – 254 – 2019	Huskies sign installation with Administrator approval

Motion to approve the consent agenda items: Hughes / Strange

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

Motion passes: 6 yes

## **COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS/GOALS:**

Councilman Zappa - Engineering, Department of Public Works

Spoke about repairs at the sewer pumping station, a thank you for Dir. Rick Roll as the repairs have been completed, basin repair and blacktopping with work on Highland Ave., spoke about the Mine Rd. bypass work, repairs on a culvert which had slate which needs replacement, StreetScape is close to being approved, leaf pickup plans with the new leaf vacuum.

Councilwoman Hughes - Environmental, Solid Waste / Recycling, Public Health & Open Space

Spoke about Environmental Commission Main Street watering being ongoing and future planning, electronics recycling event collected a 52 foot truck's worth of recycleables, High Bridge is one of five towns that is certified as a monarch city, suggested that the heavy metal sign may be reutilized as a path marker to a walk way.

Councilwoman Moore - Special Events / Finance

Spoke about having notification of new members to the Committee, spoke about the creation of an online PaintOut form, Salsa Night Sizzle coming up along with future events including Community Day. Councilman Strange spoke about collaboration with map creation for Community Day. Councilwoman Ferry spoke about having a reptile and a horse at Community Day.

Councilman Strange - Emergency Services / Recreation

Spoke about the Police report to replace the P.D.'s side arms, a grant to replace the ballistic vests, reviewing the idea of having a parking kiosk, general P.D repairs. Recreation: spoke about redoing the Recreation Committee Ordinances, possible suggested amendments for the future, a discussion of brochures in the Borough, discussion of what will be at Community Day from the Recreation Committee, review of the Summer Recreation program, the coming August 27th meeting and working on future scheduling.

Councilwoman Ferry - Historical / Education

Spoke about Solitude House talks, the Lake Solitude Dam exhibit, yardwork being done at Solitude House, Kelly Matos and Nancy Hunt continuing document research, excavation of griding wheel pieces from Taylor Wharton, side porch projects, speaker series events, display and activities for Community Day.

Councilman Columbus - Golf / Economic Development Committee

Spoke about rounds for golf being up, read statistics for the gold course, revenue being slightly up, expenses slightly over the budget, under budget slightly overall, spoke about the course looking good despite heat conditions, spoke about the golf event raising over \$6,000 for building homes for families of veterans, and the new sprayer has been put on the golf course. Spoke about High Rail Brewing opening, the possibility of looking into ABC Ordinances, the SBA seminar not being allowed to work at night and having a new date, installation of way-finding signs, the State Tourism Grant status being a successful application, coordinating with Events Committee with Community Day.

Administrator Michael Pappas - Administration

Administrator Pappas spoke to having already authorizing the StreetScape bid, spoke about going out to bid for McDonald Street multiple times and waiting for the Department of Transportation to address the letter, less issues

with picking up trash in the Borough overall, spoke about authorization for Maser to undertake pre-liminary analysis of the sewer pump station.

Mayor Michele Lee - Executive Services

Spoke about the service agreement with the Town of Clinton and moving forward with the escrow release, thanked the DPW for the work on the sewer pump which is so important to the Borough, having the new playground installed in Union Forge park, the dog park plans being submitted, support of Borough projects, the opening of High Rail Brewing, Borough events coming up, the location for Coffee with the Mayor to be announced, merging EMS with Clinton talks are ongoing.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON**

It is the policy of the Borough Council that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to five (5) minutes per person.

Malte Pengergast-Fischer spoke about the difficulty of having a larger family in a smaller house and having a need to have careful consideration of a Grandfather clause, but also hopes that the sub-committee works quickly so that some relief can be given to those in need. Stated that many people are affected by this and that he and his family hope to stay in High Bridge. Mayor Lee spoke about getting the Ordinance correct for all in High Bridge and a quick timeline is intended.

Ann Willard asked if the NJ Astronomical Society was asked when considering town lighting and spoke about sky wash-out from lights.

### **LEGAL ISSUES: NONE AT THIS TIME**

### **BILL LIST:**

Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List. **Total Amount: \$2,085,745.29**

Motion to approve bill list: Moore / Strange

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

Motion passes: 6 yes

### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

**A.** High Bridge Master Plan Reexamination Report approval of scope of work

**B.** NJ Department of Transportation freight impact fund letter

**C.** Open Cupboard food pantry thank you letter

**D.** Monthly Tax and Finance Reports

**E.** Huskies signs

**F.** McGowan LLC. agreement

### **ADJOURNMENT: PRESIDING OFFICER ASKS IF THERE IS ANY FURTHER BUSINESS**

Motion to adjourn: Columbus / Strange

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

Motion passes: 6 yes

**Next Council Meeting:** September 12, 2019 - 7:30 pm – Fire House, 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ