

# BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE – COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 26, 2020 – 7:30 p.m. – Location: WebEx Online Video Meeting

## CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR LEE

## FLAG SALUTE: LEAD BY MAYOR LEE

## 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 Administrator/Tax Collector Bonnie Fleming, Attorney Barry Goodman, Municipal Clerk Adam Young and eighteen members of the public and press.

## ANNOUNCEMENT FROM MAYOR LEE

Good Evening everyone and thank you for joining us for our first ever live Council WebEx meeting. It seems like a lifetime since our last meeting two weeks ago at the firehouse. Together on this call we have all members of Council along with Borough Administrator Bonnie Fleming, Clerk Adam Young, Attorney Barry Goodman and Chief of Police Brett Bartman. I would like to give a special thanks to our Office of Emergency Management Coordinator Joe Trilone. Joe has been tremendously valuable for his leadership, knowledge and guidance over these last few weeks. On behalf of everyone in High Bridge I'd like to say we are safe in your hands Joe and lucky to have you. Joe and the team on the OEM, including Chief Brett Bartman of the PD, Chief Jeff Smith of the FD, Chief John Silliman of HB EMS have been providing daily updates. I would like to thank these men, our CERT team, and all of our first responders whose commitment to their work during this unprecedented public health emergency is not merely commendable, but heroic. I would also like to thank our Borough employees and Public Works department for their flexibility as we have closed Borough Hall and moved to remote operations. The daily tasks necessary and essential in running a municipal government continue to get done. The men of DPW remain on-call and ask for everyone's help to make sure only toilet paper is flushed... no wipes of any kind, even those that claim to be flushable. It is difficult to keep safe social distancing if you are working with a modified schedule and crew and have to clear a sewer line. We especially don't want to waste their limited resources to address a totally avoidable and costly issue. A couple of other announcements:

Spring and brush cleanup are suspended until further notice. The natural recycling center at the Commons will remain closed. Republic announced yesterday that bulk pickup is suspended, however they will continue to pick up garbage and recycling. The High Bridge annual Easter Egg hunt scheduled in April is cancelled.

The Hunterdon energy co-op presentation is available on the website and I encourage everyone to watch it. We will schedule a virtual town hall in April so we have the opportunity to join the cooperative in May before the next auction. While this seems non-essential on the surface, it's an opportunity to save every resident in the Borough money on their electric bill. There is an urgent need for donations of Personal Protective Equipment, or PPE in Hunterdon County. Masks, eye protection, gloves, etc. You can visit the HB website for the form and contact information if you have items to donate. The state has established a website I encourage everyone to check daily for updates, information regarding testing and other resources available. The website is:

<https://covid19.nj.gov/> As many people know I have tried to provide daily updates on my Facebook page regarding COVID-19 and the impact here in NJ and specifically High Bridge. We have made an urgent call to all residents to sign up for High Bridge email alerts through the website, [www.highbridge.org](http://www.highbridge.org). Important notices and Copies of the State's Executive order and Local State of Emergency are posted to the website and we will continue to send public service announcement on matters of critical importance. NJ has the second largest number of confirmed positive cases in the Nation, and as more testing becomes available these numbers will continue to grow exponentially. As of this evening, 6,876 Total NJ cases, 39 in Hunterdon County, 81 Covid-19 related deaths. Just before our meeting tonight I learned that High Bridge has its first confirmed case of COVID-19.

We have taken aggressive measures to help flatten the curve, and yet it was inevitable. The playground, gazebos, basketball courts are all closed. The golf course is closed. Public benches are also off limits. This is not meant to punish anyone or inconvenience people it's too keep us safe and prevent the virus from being spread. People are encouraged to walk or run on our trails or on the streets while also practicing safe social distancing. Passive recreation is allowed, though no groups will be allowed to congregate. With that in mind, the Commons lot, which serves as the entrance to the Columbia Trail has become grossly overcrowded and, unfortunately, we are currently exploring our options to ensure the safety and protection of all who visit the Borough.

To be perfectly frank, it's best if we all just stay home. It's Spring and I understand how difficult this is on all of us, but as the numbers continue to increase, and our senior citizens and special needs residents' lives are on the line, we need to do our part to protect their health and safety.

Make no mistake, this is going to get worse before it gets better. I say that not to scare people but to be realistic about the scale of this unprecedented situation. One thing I know with absolute certainty is that we will get through this together as a High Bridge community.

Mayor and Council spoke about ideas to limit distance between people at the Commons parking lot and the methods of blocking the back parking lot of the Commons. Council agreed that something should be done.

## **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion to dispense with the reading of the March 12, 2020 regular minutes: Hughes / Zappa

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

Motion passes. 6 yes

Motion to approve the March 12, 2020 regular minutes: Hughes / Zappa

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

Motion passes. 6 yes

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS: 5 MINUTES PER PERSON: NONE**

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**A. Ordinance 2020-011:** Ordinance confirming properties affected by vacations of portions of streets  
Motion to table the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-011: Zappa / Columbus  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

**B. Ordinance 2020-012:** CAP bank  
Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-012: Hughes / Strange  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Administrator Bonnie Fleming gave an overview of the Ordinance.  
Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-012: Moore / Strange  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-012: Zappa / Moore  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

**C. Ordinance 2020-013:** Water meters and equipment  
Motion to table the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-013: Moore / Strange  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

**D. Ordinance 2020-014:** McDonald Street engineering - Current  
Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-014: Zappa / Ferry  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-014: Strange / Moore  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-014: Moore / Strange  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

**E. Ordinance 2020-015:** McDonald Street additional improvements and engineering - Water  
Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-015: Strange / Columbus

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

Councilman Zappa spoke about the intent of the Ordinance.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-015: Hughes / Strange

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-015: Zappa / Strange

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

**F.** **Ordinance 2020-016**: Preliminary engineering - various road improvement

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-016: Zappa / Moore

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

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-016: Hughes / Strange

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-016: Strange / Zappa

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

**G.** **Ordinance 2020-017**: Purchase of 2020 Dodge Durango Police vehicle

Motion to table the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-017: Moore / Columbus

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

**H.** **Ordinance 2020-018**: Purchase of boom mower

Motion to table the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-018: Moore / Ferry

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

**I.** **Ordinance 2020-019**: Purchase of DPW Ford F250 Supercab truck

Motion to table the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-019: Moore / Strange

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

**J.** **Ordinance 2020-020**: Replace firehouse garage doors

Motion to table the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-020: Strange / Zappa

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

**K.** **Ordinance 2020-021**: Replacement of sewer pumps

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-021: Hughes / Strange

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

Mayor and Council spoke to the need of having replaced sewer pumps.

Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-021: Hughes / Columbus

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

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-021: Hughes / Ferry

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

**L.** **Ordinance 2020-022**: Various road improvements

Motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-022: Zappa / Strange

Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-022: Hughes / Ferry  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-022: Strange / Columbus  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

**M.** Ordinance 2020-023: Golf course improvements and equipment  
Motion to table the public hearing for Ordinance 2020-023: Columbus / Strange  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS: AMEND AND ADOPT BUDGET**

**A.** Motion to adopt Resolution 108-2020: Certification of compliance - civil rights: Zappa / Strange  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

**B.** Motion to open public hearing on budget Resolution 85-2020: Hughes / Moore  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Motion to close the public hearing on budget Resolution 85-2020: Hughes / Moore  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Administrator Bonnie Fleming spoke about the amendments to the budget.  
Motion to adopt Resolution 109-2020 amending the budget: Strange / Moore  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes  
Motion to adopt budget Resolution 85-2020: Hughes / Ferry  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

<b>RESOLUTION #</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
Resolution - 110 - 2020	Sewer utility rates updated
Resolution - 111 - 2020	Guidance for leave and staffing - Covid-19
Resolution - 112 - 2020	Appropriation reserve transfers
Resolution - 113 - 2020	Refund for construction permit fee

Motion to approve the consent agenda: Zappa / Moore  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

#### **LEGAL ISSUES: NONE**

#### **BILL LIST**

Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List. **Total Amount: \$228,791.53**  
Motion to approve bill list: Strange / Moore  
Roll call vote: Columbus, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hughes, yes ; Moore, yes ; Strange, yes ; Zappa, yes ;  
Motion passes. 6 yes

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

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

**Next Council Meeting:** April 8, 2020 - 7:30 pm – Fire House, 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ or online

**ATTEST:**



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Adam Young  
Municipal Clerk



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Michele Lee  
Mayor