BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: July 16, 2026 – 7:30 p.m. – Location: Fire House, 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge NJ

CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR LEE

FLAG SALUTE: LEAD BY MAYOR OR PRESIDING OFFICER

ROLL CALL

Councilwoman Conroy	present	Councilwoman Matos	present	Mayor Lee	present
Councilwoman Ferry	present	Councilwoman Murdock	present		
Councilwoman Hamlin	present	Councilman Nowell	present		

Also present was Attorney Mark Tabakin, Attorney Joseph Ranieri, Administrator Richard Sheola, Clerk Adam Young and nine members of the public and press.

READING OF PRIOR MINUTES: NONE AS PER RESOLUTION 006-2026

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES: 06/25/2026 EXECUTIVE AND REGULAR

Motion to approve the June 25, 2026 executive minutes: Nowell / Ferry
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
Motion to approve the June 25, 2026 regular minutes: Nowell / Ferry
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

VISITORS: NONE

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 3 MINUTES PER PERSON

Alfred Schweikert asked if the public may view the golf contract prior to the request for proposals going out. Mayor Lee spoke about there being no contract at this time. Alfred Schweikert spoke about a site visit to the golf course for the bidders being helpful.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Administrator's Report
B. Tax Collector's Report
C. Zoning Report

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION #	TITLE
Resolution - 154 - 2026	Amend Borough Event Resolution - Grounds For Arts Fest
Resolution - 155 - 2026	Appointment Of Water System Responsible Official - David Banks
Resolution - 156 - 2026	Appointment Of The Supervisor Of The Department of Public Works – Aaron Mandigo
Resolution - 157 - 2026	Approval Of Criterium Race Open Container Area
Resolution - 158 - 2026	Approval To Submit A Grant Application And Execute A Grant Contract With The New Jersey Department Of Transportation For The Mac Arthur St. And Patton St. Improvement Project
Resolution - 159 - 2026	Authorizing Professional Services, Colliers Engineering & Design Inc. For The Fairview Tank Water Connection

Resolution - 160 - 2026	Award of Contract - Golf Sprayer
Resolution - 161 - 2026	Borough Event - Info Session And Assistance For Residents Filing For The Senior Tax Freeze
Resolution - 162 - 2026	Confirming Recission Of Offer Of Employment
Resolution - 163 - 2026	Extend Grace Period for 3rd Quarter Property Tax Payments
Resolution - 164 - 2026	Extension of Contracts For Service And Use of Borough Grounds Regarding South Branch Emergency Services. Inc.
Resolution - 165 - 2026	Lien Redemption 1
Resolution - 166 - 2026	Lien Redemption 2
Resolution - 167 - 2026	Resolution Requesting Approval Of Items Of Revenue Appropriation - NJSA 40a4-87 - Clean Communities Grant 071626 - Ch 159
Resolution - 168 - 2026	Resolution Requesting Approval Of Items Of Revenue Appropriation - NJSA 40a4-87 - Recycling Tonnage Grant 071626 - Ch 159
Resolution - 169 - 2026	Resolution Rescinding Resolution 151-2026 - Authorization Of Preparing And Mailing Of Estimated 3rd Quarter Tax Bills

Motion to approve the consent agenda Resolutions 154-2026 to Resolution 159-2026 and Resolutions 161-2026 to Resolution 169-2026: Nowell / Murdock
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
Resolution 160-2026: Award of Contract - Golf Sprayer
Councilwoman Hamlin spoke about the intent of the Resolution and explain the purchase.
Motion: Murdock / Nowell
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
B. Motion to adopt Resolution 170-2026, Authorize Issuance Of Request For Proposal - Golf Course
Councilwoman Hamlin spoke about why the Borough is issuing a request for proposals, the financial and physical status of the golf course, and the Golf Committee input. Councilwoman Ferry asked how the request for proposal will be structured. Administrator Sheola spoke about lease structure within the request for proposal. Councilwoman Hamlin and Mayor Lee spoke about further drafting and legal review being needed.
Motion to adopt Resolution 170-2026: Nowell / Ferry
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES:

A. **Ordinance 2026-012**: Amend Chapter 303-7 (D) 6, Sewer Fees - To Be Set By Resolution
Motion to introduce Ordinance 2026-012: Nowell / Murdock
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
Mayor Lee states that the Ordinance 2026-012 shall be published in the Hunterdon Review and/or the Star Ledger if required and posted on the Borough's website along with the public hearing date of August 13, 2026.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE AND SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT REPORTS:

Councilwoman Conroy - Website / Green Team / Environmental Commission / Emergency Services
Councilwoman Conroy spoke about the Environmental Commission meeting, thanked the Department of Public Works for their assistance, managing invasive knot weed, pollinator garden progress, monitoring environmental areas, a public service announcement about the natural recycling center, recycling at the center, Green Team projects including Sustainable New Jersey, volunteer opportunities for the Green Team, future event planning, Police Department statistics, South Branch Emergency Services statistics, SBES events attended, and equipment received.
Councilwoman Murdock – Education
Councilwoman Murdock spoke about the High Bridge Board of Education training session regarding goal setting, Dr. Hobaugh presentation on ELA, staff and student focused goals, student achievements, Board of Education President Bob Imhoff's report on appointment, the intent to send a letter about the impact of a PILOT to the public, and the Board's meeting schedule and intended business. Report submitted for attachment to the minutes below.

Councilwoman Ferry - Historical / Economic Development / Board of Health
Councilwoman Ferry thanked all who attended the Howard Menger alien event, spoke about future Historical Committee events, and the Borough information session available pertaining to tax freezes.
Councilwoman Hamlin - Newsletter / Golf / Parks and Recreation
Councilwoman Hamlin spoke about the Recreation Committee event, the Criterium Race.
Councilwoman Matos – Reports
Councilwoman Matos spoke about attending the Recreation Committee meeting, working with the Recreation volunteers, event logistics communication, attending the Golf Committee meetings, the Historical Committee future event for the 250th, participating in a County organized event, and working with the Creative Team for the Grounds For Art Fest.
Councilman Nowell - Social Media / Public Works and Engineering / Creative Team
Councilman Nowell spoke about Department of Public Works projects completed including lighting, storm cleanup, catch basins, and assisting with Borough Hall, a water main break, debris cleanup at the natural recycling center, vendor update and a brass band for the Grounds For Arts event.
Administrator's Report
Administrator Richard Sheola spoke about a memo and logistics regarding the use of Borough Hall space utilization as it relates to staff.
Mayor Michele Lee - Executive Services
Mayor Lee spoke about welcoming Administrator Sheola, applications for the Administrator and Department of Public Works, conversations around the potential PILOT agreement, and waiting for the County certified tax rate.

LEGAL ISSUES: NONE

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST:

Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List. **Total Amount: $2,649,761.69**
Motion to approve bill list: Nowell / Murdock
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 3 MINUTES PER PERSON

Annette Tacconelli asked about the structure of the three-minute comment period and recommended handling of knot weed. Mayor Lee spoke about giving as much of the three-minute comment period to the speaker by not speaking over that time. Annette Tacconelli asked about email comments to Committees. Mayor Lee spoke about different communications with the Borough.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: PILOT NEGOTIATIONS, CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATOR'S POSITION, CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS FOR SOUTH BRANCH EMERGENCY SERVICES, INC., AND POTENTIAL LITIGATION

Resolution 171-2026 - Motion to move into executive session: Nowell / Ferry
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
Action may be taken.
Motion to return to open session: Murdock / Ferry
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
Motion to amend Resolution 142-2026, appointment of the interim Administrator to amend the hours of the Administrator from fifteen to twenty hours, retroactive to June 15, 2026: Murdock / Ferry
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn: Murdock / Ferry
Roll call vote: Conroy, yes ; Ferry, yes ; Hamlin, yes ; Murdock, yes ; Nowell, yes ; Matos, yes ;
Motion passes: 6 yes
Next Council Meeting: August 13, 2026 - 7:30 pm – Fire House, 7 Maryland Ave., High Bridge, NJ

ATTEST:

Adam Young
Municipal Clerk

Michele Lee
Mayor

Councilwoman Murdock submitted report:

Education Report July 2026

High Bridge Board of Ed met on July 13, 2026 at the Elementary School. The board had a training session with a representative from the New Jersey School Board Association. Many topics were discussed during the training, most notably goal setting.

The focus was "Charting Pathways to Student Success." The goals are related in part to the Board's self evaluation. There is a difference between District goals and School Board goals.

District Goals include:**	School Board goals include:***
Program	Process
Instruction	Procedure
Staff	
Professional Development	
Facilities	
Finance	
** These goals the Superintendent is in charge of	***The Board sets these goals

The goals are cyclical, and are usually set over the summer months.

A. Set
B. Key actions
C. Measure results
D. Evaluate process
E. Make adjustments
F. Evaluate Chief School Administrator (Repeat the cycle again the following year)

Goals should be reported on 3-4 times a year. The board and the superintendent present the goal updates at various times and update if needed. The various goals were explained.

Strategic goals
District goals
Board goals
Administrator goals
Department goals
Building goals
Teacher and classroom goals

All of these goals lead to student success!

Also discussed was Setting the Course for Student Success
~ Accomplishments
~ Needs Focus
~ Priority goals, core values
~ Address learning gaps
What did work to advance student achievement?

Also presented was "Where should the Board of Education focus be?"

- Student learning
- Social/Emotional
- Mental Health Improvement

Also discussed was where should Time/Talent/and resources to be focused on?

The presenter also talked about strategic planning goals and stated that to be wary of overreaching goals, and making sure the goals made can be accomplished. She also stated about not setting “wish list thinking,” but instead focus on impact and feasibility.

The board then reviewed their goals from last year and met each of them. Becoming a certified Board is a multi-year goal and will carry into the new goals.

Dr. Hobaugh presented that the district’s focus for the upcoming year to be English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. He also brought up a suggestion of a new program called “WIN” (What Individuals Need) where staff would work with students at the end of the day as well as having various activities and possibly having school assemblies during this time period. He also mentioned having Restorative Justice as the district’s secondary goal.

Dr. Hobaugh also reported that the student who won for their essay last month met with Congressman Tom Kean recently, who congratulated him.

Board President Bob Imhoff stated that there were going to be two board members on the negotiations committee- Karyn Gove and Collen Poles. He also mentioned that the attorney that usually works with the board on negotiations can no longer do so, due to change by the state that it cannot be an individual attorney, but a law firm. He also mentioned that the board plans on sending out a letter to residents informing them the impact of a PILOT program on the school district.

The board approved many action items, since they are only meeting one day in July, and the next meeting is on August 24. Some of the items were regarding student achievement, Human Resources, student records, educational resources- Finance and facility usage, approval of grant submissions, payment of bills, approval of professional services.

Dr. Hobaugh noted that the September 21 board of Education meeting needed to be changed due to the fact the school will be closed that day due to the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur. The board has switched the day now to be held on Tuesday, September 22 at 6:30 at the elementary school.

Respectfully submitted,
Councilwoman Mary Murdock
Education Liaison