

**Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
Workshop Meeting
January 5, 2015
7:00 pm**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Quattrone at 7:00 pm and he read the Open Public Meetings Act statement which stated, "Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was sent to the *Trenton Times* and the *Windsor-Hights Herald*, and is posted in the Borough Clerk's office."

The flag salute followed Roll Call.

	PRESENT	ABSENT
<i>Councilmember Hansen</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Kurs</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Misiura</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Montferrat</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Stults</i>	✓	
<i>Vacant</i>		
<i>Mayor Quattrone</i>	✓	

Also in attendance: Peggy Riggio, Acting Deputy Clerk; Henry Underhill, Borough Administrator; George Lang, CFO; Fred Raffetto, Esq, Borough Attorney; Carmela Roberts, Borough Engineer.

Resolution 2015-23 Appointing Acting Deputy Clerk for Public Session

Council member Misiura moved resolution 2015-23, Councilmember Stults seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Council members Hansen, Kurs, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Resolution adopted, 5-0.

Resolution 2015-23
*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

NAMING AN ACTING DEPUTY CLERK FOR PUBLIC SESSION

WHEREAS, The Borough Clerk is not available for the January 5, 2015 meeting of the Borough Council; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of Borough Council to deputize Peggy Riggio to perform the duties of the Borough Clerk for the public portion of this meeting; and

WHEREAS, Peggy Riggio shall perform all the duties of the Borough Clerk for said meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that Peggy Riggio is hereby named as Acting Deputy Clerk for the public meeting of the Borough Council on January 5, 2015 and shall perform the duties of the Borough Clerk for said meeting.

Council member Misiura commented that the Resolution numbers on the Agenda were incorrect and be amended. Council member Misiura moved the agenda for approval as amended, Council member Hansen seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Hansen, Kurs, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Agenda approved as amended. 5-0.

Councilmember appointment

With the vacancy in the office of Councilmember due to the election of Lawrence Quattrone to the Office of Mayor effective January 1, 2015, the Borough Council will fill the vacancy with a member who would best serve the residents of the Borough. Mayor Quattrone called for nominations. Councilmember Kurs nominated Susan Bluth; Council President Hansen seconded.

Resolution 2015-24 Appointing a Councilmember to Fill the Vacancy of an Unexpired Term Ending December 31, 2015

Council President Hansen moved Resolution 2015-24; Council member Kurs seconded.

Roll call vote: members Hansen, Kurs, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Resolution adopted 5-0.

Resolution 2015-24

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

APPOINTING A COUNCILMEMBER TO FILL THE VACANCY OF AN UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2015

WHEREAS, there exists a vacancy in the office of Councilmember due to the election of Lawrence Quattrone to the Office of Mayor effective January 1, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Vacancy Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:16-1 *et seq.*), provides that the Municipal Committee of the party that previously filled the seat shall submit within fifteen (15) days three (3) names for Council's consideration in filling the vacancy; and

WHEREAS, the Democratic Municipal Committee submitted the names of three (3) Nominees on January 1, 2015; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Municipal Vacancy Law, the Borough Council must, fill the vacancy by the appointment of a successor from the three (3) Nominees put forward from same political party which had nominated the incumbent whose office had become vacant; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council has publicly deliberated the nominees presented by the Democratic Municipal Committee to fill the vacancy with a member who would best serve the residents of the Borough; and

WHEREAS, by vote of Borough Council, the Council has decided to appoint Susan Bluth to fill the position of Councilmember for the unexpired term ending December 31, 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that Susan Bluth is hereby appointed to serve in the position of Councilmember to fill the vacancy of the unexpired term ending December 31, 2015.

January 5, 2015

Mayor Quattrone swore in Councilmember Susan Bluth.

Council President Hansen moved the December 15, 2014 executive session minutes for approval, Councilmember Bluth seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Council members Bluth, Hansen, Kurs and Montferrat voted yes; Council members Misiura and Stults abstained.

Minutes approved 4-0, with two abstentions.

Council member Kurs moved the December 15, 2014 open session minutes for approval, Councilmember Misiura seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Council members Bluth, Hansen, Kurs, Misiura, Montferrat voted yes; Councilmember Stults abstained.

Minutes approved 5-0 with one abstention.

Mayor Quattrone opened public comment period I and the following individuals spoke:

Eugene Sarafin, 628 South Main Street – Spoke about the passing of Ernie Turp. Ernie Turp was Mayor of Hightstown on three separate occasions. He was a wonderful person and a wonderful Mayor.

There being no further comments, Mayor Quattrone closed the public comment period.

Resolution 2015-25 Authorizing Payment of Bills

Councilmember Montferrat moved Resolution 2015-25; Councilmember Stults seconded

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Hansen, Kurs, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Resolution adopted, 6-0.

Resolution 2015-25

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS

WHEREAS, certain bills are due and payable as per itemized claims listed on the following schedules, which are made a part of the minutes of this meeting as a supplemental record;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the bills be paid on audit and approval of the Borough Administrator, the appropriate Department Head and the Treasurer in the amount of \$1,146,444.31 from the following accounts:

Current		\$954,138.80
W/S Operating		41,269.01
General Capital		128,171.80
Water/Sewer Capital		13,992.00
Grant		0.00
Trust		215.55
Housing Trust		0.00
Animal Control		8.40
Law Enforcement Trust		0.00
Housing Rehab Loans		0.00
Unemployment Trust		0.00
Escrow		<u>8,648.75</u>
Total		<u>\$1,146,444.31</u>

Fire Truck Discussion

Mike Shannon, Past Deputy Chief of the Fire Company and Chairman of the Truck Committee addressed council about the need for a new ladder truck.

The old ladder truck is 25 years old and has exceeded its useful life. There have been repairs done to the truck recently. A demo model became available, but after seeing the demo, it was decided that this was not the truck for Hightstown.

The Fire Company feels that refurbishing the current truck is the best option. They are asking for funding of \$575,000.

There was discussion.

Mayor Quattrone assigned a committee to investigate the true needs and true numbers for the ladder truck. Mayor Quattrone appointed Councilmembers Misiura and Kurs and Administrator Henry Underhill to the committee. He asked that Mike Shannon appoint 3 members from the Fire Company. The Mayor also asked that CFO George Lang be available for financial direction.

It was decided that the committee present their options to Council at the next workshop meeting, February 2, 2015.

Hutchinson Road Project

The Borough Engineer spoke to Council regarding road work on Hutchinson Street referencing her letter dated December 24, 2014. The proposed improvements are to add a curb and sidewalk to the west side of Hutchinson Street between Park and Lincoln Avenues. The options outlined in the letter were as follows:

1. Remove a gum tree and all the sycamore trees on the West side of Hutchinson and install new curb and sidewalk to the West side only. The Hightstown School Travel Plan indicates that this area is in need of sidewalks in order to create a fully connected pedestrian route for children traveling to nearby schools.
2. Remove the gum tree and keep the sycamores on the west side of Hutchinson and do not install any curb or sidewalk on the west side. The roads will be milled and paved with no changes to the curbline. Curbs will not be installed on the west side of the road because installation of curbs would interfere with the roots of the sycamore making them unstable. This would save the sycamores on the West side of Hutchinson Street.

3. Remove the gum tree and keep the sycamores on the West side of Hutchinson Street and do not install any curb or sidewalk on the West side. Install sidewalks only on the East Side of Hutchinson Street where no sidewalks currently exist. This will save the existing sycamore on the West side while allowing for sidewalks as outlined in the School Travel Plan.

The Borough Engineer recommends Option 1.

Ken Lewis, Superintendent of Public Works spoke regarding this project. Mr. Lewis stated how the trees are a problem for the Borough. The roots of the trees are running into the sewer lines which create big problems. He recommends removing the trees, putting in the sidewalks and keeping the road the same width.

Barbara Jones, Chairperson, Environmental Committee spoke. Ms. Jones explained that many people move to older towns because of the treescape. There is value in the sycamore trees. Getting rid of 7 significant trees impacts our tree canopy which impacts Sustainable Jersey and our Shade Tree USA status. We also have the potential of losing our Tree Certification if we don't have a certain established tree canopy. All this is tied up in the amount of trees we have in the Borough. She feels there are many things that can be done to keep the trees.

The Borough Engineer informed Council that the project plans for replacement of the trees. New trees will be planted that will not cause the damage that existing trees are causing.

Ms. Roberts also told Council that the project is ready to be advertised so she needs direction from Council.

There was discussion among Council. Ms. Roberts agreed to supply illustrations of what each of the options would look like. By straw vote, Council agreed to refer this matter to the Planning Board and take action at the January 17, 2015 Regular Meeting.

Main Street Redevelopment Plan

Councilmember Stults recused himself from this discussion and left the meeting at this time.

Councilmember Misiura brought up the need to move this process along. The Redevelopment Plan from 2008 is out of date. Mr. Misiura presented a revised Redevelopment Plan. Council proceeded to go through the proposed changes.

After review and discussion of the changes to the Redevelopment Plan, Council agreed to refer the revised plan to the Planning Board. A resolution memorializing this decision will be on the agenda for the January 17, 2015 meeting.

Councilmember Misiura presented a proposal for an Environmental Review of the Former North American Phillips Corp., Bank Street, Block 21, Lots 1-5, 26. After discussion, it was discovered that there were environmental studies done on this property in the past. The Borough Engineer will look into this and try to get the information from previous discussions.

Councilmember Stults returned to the meeting at this time.

Water Plant Wells

The Borough Engineer reviewed her letter to Council dated November 25, 2014 which outlined Water Plant Projects. She is requesting permission to move forward with Grant Applications for two Water Plant Projects.

- The rehabilitation of Well #2 - \$186,000.00
- Rehabilitation of the settling tanks - \$102,075.00

The next step in the application process is to submit plans, specifications and applications as well as complete the on-line application prior to March 6, 2015.

Council unanimously approved the grant applications be submitted by the Borough Engineer. A resolution memorializing this decision will be on the agenda for the January 17, 2015 regular meeting.

Downtown Hightstown

Councilmember Stults reported about the developments in Downtown Hightstown. Downtown Hightstown needs two things; A description of the area itself and what Downtown Hightstown the Organization is looking to do.

The Streetscape was completed years ago and not much has happened since.

Downtown Hightstown is looking into having a “Downtown Plan” created. There is an RFP in process for a Planning/Vision Study. They have funds set aside from donations for this project. This study will be completed by a Planner. Once the study is complete recommendations for downtown will be submitted to Council and Planning Board.

The purpose of this study will be to evaluate the retail space and underutilized lots downtown. The will be getting input from landlords and business owners.

In speaking with business owners, he has heard several complaints regarding taxi’s parking on Main Street using spaces for customers.

Mayor Quattrone thanked Councilmember Stults for his work with Downtown Hightstown. The Mayor reported that he would like to create a liaison position for Downtown Hightstown and asked Councilmember Stults be that liaison and report activities back to Council.

Goals and Objectives for 2015

Mayor Quattrone – Would like to get final insurance information regarding Borough Hall

Councilmember Bluth – Would like to have a decision regarding the Police Department made as early as possible.

Council President Hansen – Formalize Rug Mill developments; Water/Sewer operations. She would like more time to make decisions.

Councilmember Montferrat – Would like to keep residents informed.

Mayor Quattrone – In speaking with Department Heads the issue of staffing was brought to his attention. It was suggested that the position of Deputy Clerk be brought back into our Ordinance. The Administrator and the Clerk will draft an Ordinance re-establishing the Deputy Clerk position.

Mayor Quattrone opened the public comment period II and the following individuals spoke:

Lynn Woods, 315 Park Avenue – Cannot believe the arrogance the Council had in selecting Susan Bluth for the open seat on Council. They totally disregarded the voters in the town. The public does not come to the meetings because all of their comments get ignored. What happened to the Artist Loft project that was interested in the Rug Mill? Did the deal fall through because Council also wants the Borough Hall property included in the development? Isn’t the taxi issues downtown an enforcement issue and shouldn’t the Police Department be notified? Outsourcing the Police department will not save the borough money.

Doug Mahr, 536 South Main Street – Applauded Mayor Quattrone about his new ideas and liked the idea of a workshop meeting. Asked the new Police Commissioner and Mayor to let the public know their intentions of what they are doing with the Police Department. Planning Board had no idea about Rug Mill contamination. Water Department – fees were just raised again. At what point to we look to outsource?

Eugene Sarafin, 628 S. Main Street – Council chose the best candidate from the 3 names submitted for the vacant Council seat. Regarding the Rug Mill, the Borough should look to buy the property as an investment clean it up and then sell it. Regarding the Water Department, if the Borough wants to maintain infrastructure we need to spend money. It's nice to see a council of new faces and new ideas.

Herb Smith, 150 S. Main Street – It's wrong to outsource the Police Department. We should be hiring more police officers. Downtown looks like a slum, it's going downhill. When people are looking at a town to move to they are looking for safety, a police presence and maintenance.

Scott Caster, 12 Clover Lane – He has been coming to Council meetings for 50 years. Hightstown used to be a safe place. We have no Borough Hall or Downtown. This does not serve businesses or the community. I don't see a police station or police department like there used to be. Goal for 2015 would be to restore Hightstown to what it used to be. This Cannot be done by just be spending less money.

There being no further comments, Mayor Quattrone closed the public comment period.

Mayor/Council/Administrative Comments and Committee Reports

Councilmember Bluth – Thanked Council for appointing her to the vacant Council seat.

Councilmember Kurs – Spoke about the house fire on Hauser Street and read a letter he received from a resident thanking the Police and Fire Department for their work that night.

Council President Hansen – Looking forward to this year. She feels they have a very good Council.

Mayor Quattrone – The reason the developer that was looking at the Rug Mill pulled out was because of restrictions coming from the Bank. We are working to cleanup downtown. As much as he would like too, he cannot talk about the Police Department. Welcomed Back Susan Bluth to Council.

Resolution 2015-26 – Appointing Acting Deputy Clerk for Executive Session

Councilmember Bluth moved Resolution 2015-26, Council President Hansen seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Hansen, Kurs, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Resolution adopted 6-0.

Resolution 2015-26

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

NAMING AN ACTING DEPUTY CLERK FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, The Borough Clerk is not available for the January 5, 2015 meeting of the Borough Council; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of Borough Council to deputize Frederick Raffetto, Borough Attorney, to perform the duties of the Borough Clerk for the executive session portion of this meeting; and

WHEREAS, Frederick Raffetto, Borough Attorney shall perform all the duties of the Borough Clerk for said meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that Frederick Raffetto, January 5, 2015

Borough Attorney, is hereby named as Acting Deputy Clerk for the executive session meeting of the Borough Council on January 5, 2015 and shall perform the duties of the Borough Clerk for said executive session meeting.

Resolution 2015-27 Authorizing a Meeting Which Excludes the Public

Councilmember Misiura moved Resolution 2015-27; Councilmember Stults seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Hansen, Kurs, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Resolution Adopted: 6-0.

Resolution 2015-27

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

AUTHORIZING A MEETING WHICH EXCLUDES THE PUBLIC

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that this body will hold a meeting on January 5, 2015 at the end of the open public meeting in the First Aid Building located at 168 Bank Street, Hightstown that will be limited only to consideration of an item or items with respect to which the public may be excluded pursuant to section 7b of the Open Public Meetings Act.

The general nature of the subject or subjects to be discussed:

Personnel – Professional Services
Contract Negotiations – Shared Services (Various – Police/Dispatch/Court)

Stated as precisely as presently possible the following is the time when and the circumstances under which the discussion conducted at said meeting can be disclosed to the public: April 5, 2015 or when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

The public is excluded from said meeting, and further notice is dispensed with, all in accordance with sections 8 and 4a of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Councilmember Misiura moved to adjourn at 9:20 pm, Council President Hansen seconded. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peggy M. Riggio
Acting Deputy Clerk