

**Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
Budget Meeting
March 25, 2015
6:30pm**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Quattrone at 6:30pm 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 Bluth</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Hansen</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Kurs</i>		✓
<i>Councilmember Misiura</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Montferrat</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Stults</i>	✓	
<i>Mayor Quattrone</i>	✓	

Also in attendance: Debra Sopronyi, Borough Clerk; Henry Underhill, Borough Administrator; and George Lang, CFO

Councilmember Misiura moved the agenda for approval, Councilmember Quattrone seconded.

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

Agenda approved 5-0.

Mayor Quattrone opened the public comment period and there being no comments, the public comment period was closed.

Council then reviewed the budget figures as presented by the Administrator and CFO. George Lang reviewed the set up of the budget book he distributed and explained the Annual Debt Statement; Borough debt; the differences between bonds, notes and loans; and funded and unfunded debt. There was Council inquiry and discussion regarding the bond schedules, bond sale and the cancellation of unfunded debt.

Mr. Lang noted that the Borough has had no considerable impact on the tax rate since 2010 and the cost of bonding for the new proposed road project was discussed. Mr. Lang noted that it will have minimal impact on the budget and recommended that there be no reduction in the scope of work to be done, noting that whatever infrastructure work put off now will cost considerably more to complete in the future.

There was discussion regarding the water/sewer projects that are needed and their impact on future budgets; estimated FEMA revenues; capital purchases (fire truck and ambulance) and the required down payment; and the ability to cancel debt on finished projects. Mr. Lang noted that the overall debt has decreased from 2013 and 2014.

Discussion was held regarding the proposed road project bond.

Councilmember Misiura moved to authorize Bond Counsel to move forward with the preparation of the bond needed for this project, with no deductions; Council President Hansen seconded.

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

Motion approved 5-0.

Mr. Lang will contact Bond Counsel to have the bond ordinance prepared for introduction at the April 6, 2015 meeting.

There was discussion regarding surplus balance; assessed property values and the impact on the budget; and the estimated overall increase of \$23.36 per household.

Councilmember Misiura departed the meeting at this time.

Mr. Lang explained the history of the tax levy and tax rates; and the percentage of collections and State Aid.

Councilmember Misiura returned to the meeting at this time.

Mr. Lang continued with an explanation of the Tax Levy Cap and the Cap Bank Ordinance, noting that Hightstown is well within the tax levy and expenditure cap. There was discussion.

The Council then reviewed salaries and budget allocations; the estimate for the Grant Writer and the scope of work; the budget for Professional Services; the Legal and Litigation Budget; health benefit costs; Dispatcher salaries and overtime; an additional employee for Public Works and the Waster Plant (to be shared between departments); Harvest Fair costs and revenue; establishing budgets for the various Boards and Committees; additional funds for housing inspections; contracting with a notification service (Code Red); flood insurance costs; and Police salary projections.

Mr. Lang advised that 1 cent is equal to approximately \$39,000.

Mr. Lang and Mr. Underhill noted that if Council has any further questions, they can be contacted.

Councilmember Bluth moved to adjourn at 9:10pm, Councilmember Stults seconded. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra L. Sopronyi
Borough Clerk