

## OPEN SESSION

Mayor Robert Patten called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and read the Open Public Meetings Act statement which stated that adequate notice and posting of the meeting had taken place in accordance with the requirements of P.L. 1975, Chapter 231.

The flag salute was followed by the roll call.

### ROLL CALL

	PRESENT	ABSENT
<i>Mayor Patten</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Harinxma</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Quattrone</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Rosenberg</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Schneider</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Sikorski</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Thompson</i>	✓	

Also in attendance: Candace Gallagher, Borough Clerk/Administrator; Carmela Roberts, Borough Engineer and George Lang, Chief Financial Officer.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Deleted from the agenda was a discussion under "Unfinished Business" regarding the Request for Proposals issued for a power purchase agreement for solar energy. Added to the agenda was a discussion in closed session regarding contract negotiations for same. The agenda was moved as amended by Councilmember Sikorski, seconded by Council President Schneider and unanimously approved.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the April 17, 2006 open and closed sessions were moved by Councilmember Sikorski, seconded by Councilmember Rosenberg and approved as submitted by all but Councilmembers Quattrone and Schneider, who abstained.

## PRESENTATION

### SIGNAGE FOR RAILROAD BRIDGE ABUTMENT

Anne Marie Wiedemann of the Greater Hightstown-East Windsor Improvement Project presented the group's proposal for lettering to be placed on the Borough's railroad bridge abutment on Main Street, which she referred to as a "focal point," and a "gateway into town." "Historic Hightstown" would be spelled out in 12-inch, cranberry-colored backlit letters, with eight-inch (non-lit) letters beneath that reading "Est. 1721." A sample backlit letter was on display at this meeting.

The lighting would be on a timer, and the abutment would be power washed and, if necessary, pointed, before the installation. The lettering could be in place within about eight weeks, and the entire cost would be funded by GHEWIP. Banners which normally hang there could be placed at another focal point in town. This type of signage is simple and elegant, Ms. Wiedemann said, and would enhance the town's image. She asked for Council's approval to proceed.

Discussion ensued. Councilmember Harinxma expressed concern about drilling into the abutment in order to place the lettering there. Councilmember Rosenberg asked how durable these letters would be. "They do this type of lettering all the time," Ms. Wiedemann stated. Councilman Quattrone asked what would happen to the historical marker that is currently in place on the abutment. Ms. Weidemann said that the lettering could be laid out around that. Mr. Rosenberg questioned whether a backlit sign would be appropriate in a historic area. Ms. Wiedemann stated that GHEWIP looked into various options (including overhead lighting of the lettering) and felt that this would look the nicest.

Several members of Council expressed concern regarding where banners would be placed, as the abutment offers optimal exposure for events that benefit agencies such as the Community Action Service Center and Better Beginnings. Ms. Weidemann stated that poles could be erected in another spot for the banners, and that the proposed lettering would offer a "much more tasteful entry" into the Borough. The group feels, she said, that banners "cheapen the look of the bridge abutment."

Councilman Quattrone commended GHEWIP for their work, and said "I've never seen a group work so hard to make a place so much better." He said that he loves the abutment and likes the idea of being able to use it to convey to the public what's going on in town. He suggested that the word "Historic" and the phrase "Est. 1721" may be redundant, and one could be eliminated, which could leave room for banners to be placed there as needed. Mayor Patten suggested that the Borough look into other options for placement of banners as well as other ways of informing the public about upcoming events.

Council President Schneider noted that the lettering would look much different at night than during the day, and there is no graphic representation of it as it would appear on the abutment. He also expressed concern about where banners would be placed if not on the abutment. Ms. Wiedemann noted that Lambertville has similar signage, which is how GHEWIP found the manufacturer (Lakeshore).

Councilman Quattrone noted that banners cannot be placed across Route 33, as it is a State highway, and suggested that "we go back to the drawing board and think about it a little longer." Councilmember Rosenberg suggested that the Historic Preservation Commission be consulted about this proposal. It was generally agreed that the lettering will be revisited at a future meeting.

## PUBLIC COMMENT I

Mayor Patten opened the floor for public comment.

**Phyllis Deal**, 305 Stockton Street, noted that banners may span Route 33 if they go from pole to pole. She also stated that taxi drivers "should learn to drive 25 mph if they want to be licensed." Lastly, Ms. Deal encouraged donations to the Borough's Animal Welfare Committee.

**Eugene Sarafin**, 600-628 South Main Street, objected to being allowed only three minutes for comments, referred to the Borough's Extraordinary Aid application as "total crap," and said that to receive it would take funding away from the schools. "Close this place down," he said.

**Gary Grubb**, 302 Morrison Avenue, commended GHEWIP for their critical thinking and said that he is proud to be a part of that group. The proposal for signage on the bridge abutment, he said, "has been well thought out by people who have

many talents and interests. It should be seriously considered." Mr. Grubb noted that, at one time, it was proposed that the abutment be torn down, which would have been "hideous."

**Rob Thibault**, 504 S. Main Street, spoke in favor of the proposed signage and offered his staff of artists to prepare a digital simulation of how the signage would actually appear on the abutment, both during the day and at night. He said that it would be simple to find somewhere else to place the banners and has always felt that their presence on the abutment "looked kind of messy, and is not a good presentation for those coming into town."

Regarding the defeated school budget, Mr. Thibault asked Council to "apply the same efficiencies to the school budget that you have to the Borough budget." Hightstown, he said, has "been very efficient in finding ways to conserve resources," but he does not get that sense from the school board. He would like to see teachers and staff contribute to their healthcare costs. "I'd gladly pay \$360 per year more if I saw some efficiencies," he said.

**Charles Cohen**, East Windsor taxi owner, noted that Hightstown's taxi ordinance requires lettering on doors but not a dome light, which is standard for most taxis in order that they can be identified at night as taxicabs.

**Dylan Ross**, 126 Morrison Avenue, stated that the school budget election should not be used for the purpose of lowering taxes. He does not want to see the school budget cut and would like Council to consider *adding* something back in. Mr. Ross also asked if distribution of the free papers in purple plastic bags could be considered littering and if the distributor could be fined. Lastly, regarding signage for the bridge abutment, Mr. Ross noted that, most of the time, there is no banner in place, and suggested that the abutment could accommodate both the lettering and the banners. He expressed concern that, if the letters are backlit, bulbs may burn out. Ms. Wiedemann stated that the bulbs used have a 20,000 hour life, and would be on a timer. Mr. Ross said that he feels that the lettering would be just as effective without the lighting.

**Torry Watkins**, 68 Meadow Drive, asked, regarding the proposed signage, how the Borough would prevent pilferage and vandalism. He also asked about the total wattage, how much it would cost to light and who would pay the electric bill.

**J. P. Gibbons**, 602 North Main Street, said that he noticed that a new proposal came in for redevelopment of the Mill property, and is interested in reading the minutes of April 17. There is not a lot of developable property left in the Borough, he said, and the Mill's redevelopment will be more important to the Borough's ultimate growth and direction than the downtown revitalization work has been so far. He cautioned that the chosen developer should be an "accredited developer that knows what they're doing" and can complete the project in a reasonable period of time. "Some of the developers who have presented proposals," he said, "have done projects in the Borough and have been cited on numerous occasions for violations of contracts." In addition, he claimed, they "lied" and "misrepresented" things to Council.

**Mike Vanderbeck**, 344 Stockton Street, expressed his strong support for the signage proposed for the bridge abutment. "It will nail this community as easily recognizable," he said, and enhance its association with a "charming downtown." Mr. Vanderbeck noted that the ordinance currently regulating banners on the abutment was enacted in order to gain control and address a problem. Advertising is not permitted there, he said, "yet we see 'Macaroni Grill' and 'Ramada Inn'" on those banners. The proposed signage, he said, "is in keeping with where we are looking for this town to go."

No one else came forward and the floor was closed.

## ENGINEER'S ITEMS

### RESOLUTION 2006-111, AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH S. BROTHERS, INC. FOR THE PAVING OF CRANBURY STATION ROAD

Ms. Roberts stated that proposals were solicited for the overlay of Cranbury Station Road from Wyckoff's Mill Road to near the Borough line by the new water storage tower. The work would consist of a 2" overlay to the existing road for a length of approximately 1000 feet to a width of 22 feet. Proposals were received from five firms, and she recommended that a contract be award to S. Brothers, Inc., which firm submitted the lowest price (\$19,500.00) for the work. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Patten asked about the need for paving that road. Ms. Roberts acknowledged that its usage is light. The water tower and one business are located there. Originally, she said, the Borough tried to include the paving of that road in its contract for construction of the water tower, but there was not enough funding to include it and it was removed. "Before taking action on this," Ms. Roberts said, "we should discuss the next Resolution (authorizing bids for repairs to Wilson Avenue) also." She stated that there is funding available in the Borough's bond ordinance for road repairs to include both Cranbury Station Road and Wilson Avenue, but the extent of the repairs needed to Wilson Avenue is so great that even if we used all of the available funding for Wilson Avenue alone, it would still not be enough to complete all the repairs that are needed. The most that could be done, she said, is to put an overlay on top of a bad road. The other possibility is to remove most of it and put back in a stabilized base. "Do we stabilize it," she asked, "or just wait and think of it for a DOT trust fund grant?" She added that it is questionable whether Wilson Avenue would be funded by DOT, as it is a dead end street. "I would pave Cranbury Station Road, hold onto the funds for Wilson Avenue, and put in an application to DOT," she said, adding, "This road wants to cost \$100,000 to do the right way." Another option, she noted, would be to repair a portion of the road with a "tough riding surface." Ms. Roberts added that Wilson Avenue and Chamberlin Street have been on a request list with Mercer County for some time where they would perform the paving work with materials paid for by the Borough.

Councilman Quattrone stated that the Borough's grader can maintain Cranbury Station Road for a few more years. He is concerned, however, about Wilson Avenue. Ms. Roberts said that, if the Borough chooses not to pave Cranbury Station Road, the added \$20,000 may be enough to allow the Borough to repair *a portion* of Wilson Avenue "and do it right." She noted that, in addition to the road work, the storm inlets would need to be upgraded to meet the new DEP standards. After some further discussion, it was generally agreed that Cranbury Station Road would not be addressed at this time, and that the funds would be used toward the Wilson Avenue work. Ms. Roberts will prepare bid specifications to include the road work and two storm inlets, but no curbs or sidewalks.

No action was taken on Resolution 2006-111.

### RESOLUTION 2006-112, AUTHORIZING RECEIPT OF BIDS – WILSON AVENUE REPAIRS AND OVERLAY

Resolution 1006-112 was moved by Councilmember Sikorski and seconded by Councilmember Thompson.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes. Council President Schneider abstained.

**Resolution adopted, 5-0.**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the Borough Engineer is hereby authorized to prepare specifications and advertise for bids for Wilson Avenue repairs and overlay, and that the Borough is authorized to receive bids for same following proper advertisement.

## ORDINANCES

### PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL READING: ORDINANCE 2006-10,

#### AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN PROVIDING FOR THE PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION, APPROVAL AND ADMINISTRATION OF TAX EXEMPTION AND ABATEMENT AGREEMENTS

Ms. Gallagher stated that, at the last meeting, Council President Schneider asked if this Ordinance could be amended to apply also to single family residences. Mr. Raffetto stated at the time that he did not believe that the five-year exemption and abatement law, upon which this Ordinance is based, applies to single family residences. Upon returning to his office, however, Mr. Raffetto checked on this and found that it *can* be made applicable to single family homes. He has recommended that, if Council has any inclination to include single family homes in the tax exemption and abatement provisions, this Ordinance be defeated and a revised version introduced at a future meeting. This was Ed McManimon's recommendation as well, she said.

Mayor Patten opened the public hearing on Ordinance 2006-10.

**Eugene Sarafin**, 600-628 South Main Street, said that a PILOT program would benefit no one and "screws the kids and the community."

**J. P. Gibbons**, 602 North Main Street, said that "this issue of special treatment on taxes has been brought to the Supreme Court as unconstitutional." He said that he feels it would be a waste of the Borough's time and energy to adopt an Ordinance until we know what the Supreme Court is going to do. He urged the Borough to carefully consider what kind of tax abatement they will grant and said that "one of the biggest problems for the Borough is the fact that an exemption was granted to Peddie School a long time ago, as was granted to Princeton University."

**Sue Bottino**, 124 Center Street, stated that she is not willing to pay more in taxes so that "a big developer can pay less – it's not fair to the schools."

**Torry Watkins**, 68 Meadow Drive, noted the difference between tax exemption and tax abatement, but agreed that it is "wrong headed" to give an abatement to a "wealthy developer." The main purpose of an abatement, he said, is to encourage developers to redevelop properties. "We don't have an absence of willing developers," he said, "and they need no incentives. We're in the hottest real estate market in the hottest part of the country."

No one else came forward and the hearing was closed.

Ordinance 2006-10 was moved by Councilmember Sikorski and seconded by Council President Schneider.

Councilmember Sikorski noted that there are advantages to the Borough during the abatement period, during which time we would receive significantly more tax revenue than we would otherwise receive from the property. Tax abatement was upheld in Hamilton, he said, and if the matter is raised again, he will vote for it. "[The Ordinance] doesn't guarantee that we would be using it," Mr. Sikorski said, "but it allows for the possibility. Another option is that the Borough could take a portion of the monies received and refund it to the schools." He noted that the situation in Hamilton was quite different from this, and the Mill project is not on the same scale. He said that approximately 23 children could be added to the

school system if all of the units were occupied, and pointed out that the Borough's share of school taxes is based on equalized valuation, not on the number of children in the system.

Councilman Thompson said that it is his understanding that a PILOT would provide a great benefit to the Borough, and added that he has "new reservations" given the comments heard at this meeting.

Councilmember Harinxma asked if this would remove the Borough's dependency on Extraordinary Aid. Ms. Gallagher stated that it could, and noted that estimated revenue from the PILOT which had originally been discussed with Greystone would have been \$490,000 per year during the five-year abatement period, which is only slightly less than the Borough has requested this year in Extraordinary Aid.

Councilman Quattrone said that he has heard that the schools would not suffer as a result of a PILOT and requested clarification. Ms. Gallagher stated that it is her understanding that, during the abatement period, the school would continue to receive the same tax revenue that they are receiving now on that property – they would not receive less. In addition, the Borough could opt to share the PILOT funds with the district. "This council has been pro-school and has shown it," Mr. Quattrone said. Mayor Patten noted that the Borough's portion of school taxes is just over 13 percent, amounting to a cost of about \$1,500 per child.

Council President Schneider stated, "[A PILOT] is a benefit that goes in the direction of the taxpayers. If there is an additional cost in the school district, that cost would be shared between East Windsor and Hightstown. East Windsor saw a big increase in the number of kids attending, where Hightstown didn't, but we still pay our share. A PILOT is a clear benefit to the people of Hightstown, and there is no reason that the school needs to lose anything. We can make sure it is a benefit to us and we can make sure that there is no harm to the school. It's a plus to us and an enticement to the developer to do something."

The roll was then called on Ordinance 2006-10, which the Borough Attorney has recommended be defeated in order to bring a revised version back to Council.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted no.

**Ordinance defeated, 0-6.**

## INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING: ORDINANCE 2006-12<sup>1</sup>, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 7, "TRAFFIC," OF THE *REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN*

Ms. Roberts reviewed the provisions of Ordinance 2006-12, which will provide for 15-minute parking in the two new spaces on Stockton Street, and will make Railroad Avenue a one-way street so that the road can be narrowed to accommodate the Greenway. Ms. Roberts added that a preconstruction meeting for Phase II of the Greenway is scheduled for the coming week and work will begin soon.

Ms. Gallagher noted that, since this Ordinance was drafted, a local business has sought parking permits but hesitated to pay an entire year's permit fee for the two remaining months of the permit period. As the Ordinance is written, there is no provision for proration of these fees. She recommended that, if Council wishes to prorate the permit fees, this change be incorporated in Ordinance 2006-12, as it will affect the same Chapter of the Code. Council had no objections.

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<sup>1</sup> This Ordinance was handled under "Engineer's Items" on the agenda but is included here for the sake of continuity.

Councilmember Harinxma asked if making Railroad Avenue one-way would create a hardship for the residents in that area. Ms. Roberts stated that she has spoken with the Director of the Housing Authority, and "all are pleased with this." "They've been working with us," she said, "and they're very supportive."

Council President Schneider asked about the construction of the Greenway in this area. "It will be crushed stone," Ms. Roberts said, "just like near Enchantment."

Ordinance 2006-12 was moved for introduction, as amended to include the proration of parking permit fees, by Councilmember Thompson and seconded by Councilmember Rosenberg.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes.

**Ordinance introduced, 6-0.**

The public hearing and final reading for Ordinance 2006-12 was scheduled for May 15, 2006.

**INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING: ORDINANCE 2006-13,**  
**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 4-21, "TAXICAB LICENSING," OF THE *REVISED***  
***GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN***

Ms. Gallagher reviewed the provisions of Ordinance 2006-13, noting that the Ordinance will:

- Require a higher level of insurance coverage (equivalent to the requirements of Lawrence and West Windsor) for applications received after the effective date of the Ordinance. Ms. Gallagher noted that all other Mercer County towns, including Hightstown with its current ordinance, require insurance at the same level required by State statute (a total of \$35,000).
- Waives requirements for fingerprinting and physician's certification if the driver is licensed in and operating out of another Mercer County municipality.
- Removes the requirement that "Hightstown, New Jersey" be emblazoned on the rear door.

She noted that *all* licenses will continue to be approved only by Resolution of the governing body.

Ordinance 2006-13 was moved for introduction by Councilmember Quattrone and seconded by Councilmember Sikorski.

Councilman Quattrone thanked Ms. Gallagher for her work on this Ordinance.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes.

**Ordinance introduced, 6-0.**

The public hearing and final reading for Ordinance 2006-13 was scheduled for May 15, 2006.

## INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING: ORDINANCE 2006-14,

### AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE *REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN* BY THE ADDITION OF NEW SECTION 3-18 THEREOF, ENTITLED "REGISTRATION OF ALARM SYSTEMS"

Ms. Gallagher stated that this Ordinance was recommended by the DCA as part of their study of our police operations. It was compiled by Chief Eufemia using models from other towns, edited by herself and reviewed by the Borough Attorney. The Ordinance, she said, will require registration with the police department of fire and other alarm systems with an initial fee of \$25. In addition, it sets requirements for the alarm systems and provides penalties for non-compliance and repeated false alarms.

Ordinance 2006-14 was moved for introduction by Councilmember Quattrone and seconded by Council President Schneider.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes.

**Ordinance introduced, 6-0.**

The public hearing and final reading for Ordinance 2006-14 was scheduled for May 15, 2006.

## INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING: ORDINANCE 2006-15,

### AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE *REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN* WITH RESPECT TO VARIOUS FINES AND PENALTIES

Ms. Gallagher explained that a new State law increases the maximum penalty that the Borough may charge for violations of its ordinances. The new maximum penalty is \$2,000, up from \$1,250. This ordinance will increase the Borough's maximum penalty from \$1,000 to \$2,000 in accordance with this new law, and will increase the minimum penalty from \$100 to \$250, at the recommendation of Chief Eufemia. The Ordinance will also increase the minimum penalty for violations of the Borough's rental registration ordinance from \$100 to \$300, at the recommendation of the Construction Official.

Ordinance 2006-15 was moved for introduction by Councilmember Sikorski and seconded by Councilmember Harinxma.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes.

**Ordinance introduced, 6-0.**

The public hearing and final reading for Ordinance 2006-15 was scheduled for May 15, 2006.

## 2006 BUDGET

### PUBLIC HEARING: 2006 INTRODUCED BUDGET

Ms. Gallagher gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Borough's introduced budget for 2006. Highlights of the presentation included the following points:



- For four consecutive years, Hightstown's municipal budget has reflected an overall decrease in departmental operating costs\* a result of the successful efforts of department heads and Borough administration to keep costs in check and increase efficiency.
- Between 2004 and 2006, departmental operating costs decreased by over \$26,000 (4%) despite rising prices.
- In 2006, the Borough was able to utilize \$567,000 in available surplus funds generated during 2004 and 2005 to offset the potential 2006 tax increase, a considerably larger amount than has been available in years past. That surplus is largely the result of the collection of additional revenues during 2005 (including \$142,500 realized from the sale of two Borough-owned lots on Academy Street) and cost savings during 2004, as well as the collection of taxes from added assessments.
- Despite the Borough's efforts to create the leanest budget possible, property owners are faced with an increase in property taxes due to circumstances beyond Council's control. These include dramatic cost increases in health benefits, pension contributions, utilities, and the need in 2006 to contract for emergency medical services.
- Over the past two years, the Borough has been able to reduce its controllable operating costs by six percent; however, those costs which are largely beyond our control (and which comprise the largest part of our budget) have increased by 39 percent\*.
- In 2006, uncontrollable costs include the need to budget for the first time for contracted emergency medical services, a \$139,000 expense.
- That portion of municipal operating costs which is under Council's control has decreased steadily each year. In 2004, we controlled 35% of our operating costs. In 2006, we control only 27% of our operating costs, equivalent to about 32 cents of our tax rate\*.
- The Borough's introduced budget carries a proposed tax rate of \$1.398, representing an increase of \$0.273 over its 2005 tax rate of \$1.125.
- This budget does not anticipate the receipt of Extraordinary Aid. \$280,000 was received in 2005, and the Borough has applied for \$550,000 in 2006. If this year's request is fully granted, there would be a two cent municipal tax increase.
- The total amount to be raised by taxes, as represented in this budget is \$3,045,820.45, an increase of \$620,305.53 over 2005.

Ms. Gallagher's presentation included several charts depicting budget appropriations and impacts, as well as spreadsheets detailing expenditures over the past three years by cost center and by level of control. The complete presentation is included at the end of these 5/1/06 minutes.

Mayor Patten opened the public hearing on the 2006 budget, as introduced.

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\* Calculations exclude salaries and wages.

**Eugene Sarafin**, 600-628 South Main Street, asked how the \$567,000 surplus included in this budget was generated. Chief Financial Officer George Lang explained that the figure includes \$178,000 in unanticipated revenues. Other contributing factors are detailed in the Borough's Annual Financial Statement, available for review at the Borough Clerk's office and on the Borough's website. Mr. Sarafin objected to the fact that copies of the Financial Statement were not provided to the public at the public hearing for the budget. He asked why there is no appropriation included in the budget for revaluation. Ms. Gallagher explained that it is not necessary to appropriate funds in this budget, as a revaluation may be funded by appropriating funds from the succeeding five years. If the Borough were to begin this process in 2006, she said, monies would be appropriated from the budgets of 2007 through 2011. Mr. Sarafin referred to Ms. Gallagher's budget presentation and said that "there is no such thing as uncontrollable costs – just those you decide not to control." He claimed that no effort has been made to seek alternatives to various costs. He asked why the capital budget includes an appropriation for garbage trucks while there is also an appropriation for garbage collection. Ms. Gallagher explained that the Borough will be receiving bids on May 26 for garbage collection and will also be going out to bid for garbage trucks. At that time, costs will be compared and a decision made as to whether to continue outsourcing that service. Mr. Sarafin then stated that the budget is "a farce," and claimed that the Borough could save 50 cents on its tax rate by outsourcing police services. "We can close the Borough and save \$1.00," he said.

**J. P. Gibbons**, 602 North Main Street, asked why debt service increased in 2006. Mr. Lang stated that this was due primarily to an increase in interest rates for Bond Anticipation Notes. There was also an increase in the principal repayments on our BANs. Mr. Gibbons asked if the Borough negotiated variable rates. "It can only be done one year at a time," Mr. Lang replied. "We are looking into permanently financing some of that debt." Mr. Gibbons asked about increases in pension costs. Ms. Gallagher explained that the Borough (and all other New Jersey municipalities) are in the middle of a five-year phase in of pension costs, which causes a steep rise from one year to the next.

Mr. Gibbons also addressed the issue of tax abatements at this time, and the Mayor asked that he limit his comments to the introduced budget. Mr. Gibbons asked if the 2006 budget anticipates revenues from a PILOT program. Mr. Lang and Ms. Gallagher stated that it does not.

**Torry Watkins**, 68 Meadow Drive, commended Ms. Gallagher and the governing body for "coming up with the leanest possible budget that you could." "We've nibbled at the edges pretty much all we can," he said, "and we're still going hat in hand to the State for upwards of \$500,000. This can't go on, unless we go after the big ticket items." Mr. Watkins expressed support for contracting out police services, and suggested that the Borough look at Public Works costs as well. He said that it would save money to force residents to bag their leaves and asked where the planned committee meeting stands to discuss this.

**Rob Thibault**, 504 South Main Street, said, "I don't mind incurring pain with increased taxes, if I see Borough employees incurring pain as well." The union contracts should be renegotiated, he said, to increase employee contributions toward medical benefits. "[The union employees] can't withhold services," he said, "and if they do, replace them. They can't strike." He said that he "can't see paying time and again for salary increases." Mr. Thibault asked Council to revisit the issue of asking Peddie School to increase its contribution to the Borough and suggested that the Borough "hold the threat of eminent domain over them." He stated that children from the Peddie staff attend our schools, and Peddie uses our police protection, and said that the school isn't paying for these services. He suggested that the campus be condemned and sold to a for-profit school such as the University of Phoenix. "Peddie contributes less to the Borough each year than the cost of tuition for one student," Mr. Thibault said.

**Mr. Sarafin** spoke again to point out that Peddie School paid for the downtown parking lot improvements and renovated a building downtown which is on the Borough's tax rolls. "Peddie's contribution," he said, "is that 60 kids from Hightstown and East Windsor go there." Regarding the Borough's budget, he asked if the Borough has a five-year plan for revenue, and said that he does not see enough revenues to offset the Borough's increasing expenses. He asked if funds were included for "beautification," and it was confirmed that monies are included for shade trees, etc. Mr. Sarafin asked why

there is no donation to the East Windsor P.A.L. included in this budget. Mr. Lang stated that our auditors have determined that it is not legal for the Borough to donate directly to that program. Mr. Sarafin suggested that the Borough donate funds to East Windsor instead that could be used for that program.

**Kathy Patten**, 135 South Street, commended the governing body and administrator for "a beautiful job," and encouraged all, "if you really want to scream and yell," to attend the May 15 meeting at the school with our legislators. "There has to be another answer," she said, "and we have to demand it of those people."

**Mr. Gibbons** spoke again to ask what the projected pension costs will be over the next few years. Mr. Lang estimated that the Borough will eventually be paying another \$80,000, based on this year's amount. Mr. Gibbons said, "do something about salaries before the pensions get to 100%."

No one else came forward and the hearing was closed.

## CONSENT AGENDA

**Resolutions 2006-113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118 and 119** were moved by Councilmember Sikorski and seconded by Councilmember Quattrone.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes.

**Resolutions adopted, 6-0.**

### RESOLUTION 2006-113      AUTHORIZING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS PRIOR TO ADOPTION OF THE 2006 BUDGET

**WHEREAS**, an emergent condition has arisen with respect to inadequate appropriation balances remaining in some line items of the 2006 temporary budget; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20 provides for the creation of emergency appropriations for the purposes above mentioned; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the desire of the Mayor and Council to create emergency temporary appropriations as set forth on Schedule "A," attached; and

**WHEREAS**, the total emergency temporary appropriations in resolutions adopted in the year 2006 pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20 (Chapter 96, P.L. 1951, as amended), including this resolution, total:

	<i>THIS RESOLUTION</i>	<i>PREVIOUS TOTAL</i>	<i>CUMULATIVE TOTAL</i>
Current	116,850.00	1,085,487.00	1,202,337.00
Capital Outlay – Current	0.00	0.00	0.00
Debt Service - Current	0.00	127,207.00	127,207.00
Water/Sewer	139,800.00	347,896.06	487,696.06
Capital Outlay – W/S	0.00	0.00	0.00
Debt Service - W/S	0.00	591,550.00	591,550.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	256,650.00	2,152,140.06	<b>2,408,790.06</b>

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Borough Council of the Borough of Hightstown (not less than two-thirds of all the members of thereof affirmatively concurring) that, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20:

1. An emergency temporary appropriation is hereby made for each item listed on the schedules that are attached hereto and made a part hereof<sup>2</sup>.
2. Each emergency appropriation listed will be provided for in the 2006 budget under the same title as written herein;
3. One certified copy of this resolution will be filed with the Director of Local Government Services, and a copy provided to the Treasurer.

**RESOLUTION 2006-114      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 and the Treasurer in the amount of **\$2,685,376.56** from the following accounts:

Current	\$ 1,780,629.22
W/S Operating	299,578.05
General Capital	17,933.18
W/S Capital	561,876.42
Animal Control Account	30.00
Trust	3,084.50
Public Defender	312.50
Grant	532.00
RCA COAH Escrow	19,550.00
Escrow-Subdivision & Site Plan (First Washington Bank)	1,850.69
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$2,685,376.56</u></b>

**RESOLUTION 2006-115      ACCEPTING MEMBERSHIP OF JAMES MENNUTI IN HIGHTSTOWN ENGINE CO. NO. 1**

**WHEREAS**, James Mennuti of Hightstown, New Jersey has applied for membership in Hightstown Engine Company No. 1; and

**WHEREAS** Mr. Mennuti has undergone and passed the required physical examination, and his membership application has been reviewed and approved by Fire Chief John Archer;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the membership of James Mennuti in Hightstown Engine Company No. 1 is hereby accepted.

**RESOLUTION 2006-116      AUTHORIZING ISSUANCE OF RAFFLE LICENSE #RL-161 TO  
HIGHTSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC BOOSTERS ASSOCIATION**

**WHEREAS**, the Hightstown High School Music Boosters Association wishes to hold an on-premise 50-50 raffle at 25 Leshin Lane on May 21, 2006; and

**WHEREAS**, the group has submitted application number RA-161 for this raffle; and

**WHEREAS**, no fee is required as the winnings from this on-premise raffle are expected to total less than \$400.00; and

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule is on permanent file with original Resolution in the Borough Clerk's office.

**WHEREAS**, the Borough Clerk and the Chief of Police have reviewed the application and have determined that the requirements of N.J.S.A. 5:8-53, regarding the applicant, the members in charge of the game, and the game itself, have been met;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the Borough Clerk is authorized to issue Raffle License No. RL-161 to the Hightstown High School Music Boosters Association for their raffle to be held on May 21, 2006.

**RESOLUTION 2006-117          DESIGNATING MAY AS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH IN THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN**

**WHEREAS** in the course of any year, one in five people, adult and child, has a diagnosable mental disorder; and

**WHEREAS** four of the ten leading causes of disability in the U.S. are mental disorders—major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder; and

**WHEREAS** treatments for mental illness, including medication, therapy and rehabilitation, have high rates of success; and

**WHEREAS** discrimination against people who have mental illnesses keeps them from seeking help and from full inclusion in their community; and

**WHEREAS** people who have mental illnesses have the same needs as everyone else for meaningful work, decent affordable housing, access to health care, education, friendship, and acceptance by their community; and,

**WHEREAS** people who have mental illnesses can and do recover, live productive lives and make valuable contributions to society; and

**WHEREAS** people who have mental illnesses are living and working here in Hightstown with determination, dignity and courage;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown do hereby proclaim May as Mental Health Month in the Borough of Hightstown.

**RESOLUTION 2006-118          AUTHORIZING ISSUANCE OF TAXICAB DRIVER'S LICENSE - SILVIO GUZMAN**

**WHEREAS**, an application for issuance of a taxicab driver's license, which application complies with Section 4-21.5 of the *Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Hightstown*, has been submitted by Silvio Guzman, 367 Morrison Avenue, Hightstown, New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS** said application has been reviewed by the Hightstown Borough Police Department and approved by the Chief of Police;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the Borough Clerk is hereby authorized to issue a 2006 taxicab driver's license to Mr. Guzman as detailed herein.

**RESOLUTION 2006-119          AUTHORIZING LICENSING OF ADDITIONAL VEHICLE – UNITED TAXI**

**WHEREAS** on February 6, 2006, a Taxicab Owner's License for 2006 was issued to Rosa Mora of United Taxi for one vehicle owned by the firm; and

**WHEREAS** a second vehicle has been acquired by Ms. Mora which was previously licensed to Mega Taxi and has been transferred to her firm; and

**WHEREAS** all necessary documentation has been received and reviewed by the Borough, and the transfer of the license for this taxicab from Mega Taxi to United Taxi has been approved by the Chief of Police;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the Borough Clerk is hereby authorized to amend the Taxicab Owners' License held by Rosa Mora (United Taxi) to add the following vehicle:

Vehicle Description	VIN #
1996 Ford Crown Victoria	2FALP71W5TX967924

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this vehicle be removed from the 2006 licensing records of Mega Taxi, the previous owner.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### DRAFT ORDINANCE GRANTING MUNICIPAL CONSENT TO VERIZON, INC. TO OPERATE A CABLE TELEVISION SYSTEM IN THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN

Ms. Gallagher stated that the Borough's 45-day window to submit a draft ordinance to the Board of Public Utilities will expire on May 4. The BPU will review the ordinance for statutory compliance and administrative completeness, after which it will come back to Council for action. Changes can still be made, she said. A copy of the draft ordinance was provided in the meeting packets. "This Ordinance," Ms. Gallagher said, "meets the concerns of the Cable Television Committee, and they are comfortable with passing it along to the BPU."

Council had no objections to submitting the Ordinance as drafted.

### UPDATE ON MILL REDEVELOPMENT

Ms. Gallagher reported that she has not heard back from Dranoff Properties regarding the Memorandum of Understanding which was approved by Council, and no escrow funds have been received as of yet.

Councilmember Sikorski stated that he would like clarification from the Borough Attorney regarding whether the Borough will have an obligation, "based on fairness," to issue another Request for Proposals once the Redevelopment Plan has been revised. "Some developers may have chosen not to submit a proposal because the RFP was based on a plan that called for 80 units," he said. "If that number changes, others may want to submit."

### ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE REPORT

Kathy Patten reported on the activities of the Animal Welfare Committee, which she chairs. "The Committee has been working over the past year," she said, "and a major goal has been to develop a TNR program." Ms. Patten provided informational brochures along with a formal description of the program and its goals – "mainly to develop a program that will spay and neuter feral cats and return them to protected areas." She said that the committee will be issuing a renewed plea for help and donations and will be reporting to Council.

The TNR program began formally in December with a grant from the New Jersey Animal Rights Alliance, she said. So far, 21 cats have been trapped and neutered and/or vaccinated – nine males, nine females and three that had already been altered. "The process does seem to be working," she said. Ten volunteers participate in the program by feeding and trapping. All have been trained by NJARA. Trapped cats are taken to Twin Rivers Animal Hospital, where they are neutered, ear tipped and vaccinated against rabies and distemper. "They are treated very humanely," she said, "but they won't be multiplying." Ms. Patten estimated that the Committee has saved the Borough about \$3,150 in animal control costs to date, as it costs about \$150 to pick up a cat and take it to the shelter. Given the rate at which unaltered cats multiply, Ms. Patten estimated that the Committee has kept 106,209 cats out of Hightstown over the next five years! She

added that the Committee's brochure was prepared by Barbara Harrington, a graphic designer, who donated her time and paid for the initial printing. The Committee's activities are totally supported by donations of cash and food. At one site, the committee has neutered two-thirds of the cats, and at the other, about half. When 70% of a colony has been neutered, Ms. Patten said, it is considered to be stabilized. At higher rates, the colony will reduce in size and generally die out within three years.

Councilmember Harinxma asked if the Committee receives a discounted rate for neutering. "Yes," replied Ms. Patten. "We receive a special animal rescue rate." The cats are caught by trapping them. The committee is looking into trapping regulations, she said, and has invited a New Jersey licensed animal rehabilitator to speak at their next meeting in that regard. They will share this information with Council, she said. Councilman Quattrone asked, "don't we have regulations at the State level?" "Yes," Ms. Patten replied, "but not in a format that is useful for us. They are basically guidelines for hunters, and not applicable to feral cats. There is proposed legislation dealing with trapping because it is not yet specific within the State law."

## UPDATE REGARDING SHARED POLICE SERVICES

Mayor Patten stated that he and Councilmember Sikorski are representing Council to pursue more cost effective methods for police coverage. "We need to know from this Council if you support our efforts," he said. "There have been statements made that some are for it, and some are against it. For us to talk with representatives of other towns, we have to know that, or the talks won't go anyplace." Councilmember Sikorski said that he sees this "as the beginning of a process" and noted that a SHARE grant could fund a feasibility study, but would require the approval of both councils. "This could take a long time to evaluate," he said. "Some of the statements in the press caused the East Windsor Mayor and her representatives some concern about whether the Borough was genuinely pursuing this. Should we proceed, we need consensus."

Councilmember Rosenberg stated that he is "100% in favor of exploring our options."

Councilmember Harinxma stated that she is "leaning toward not knowing if it would be a good idea," but added that she needs to become "much more educated about it."

Councilman Thompson stated that the question was asked, "Do we want to consolidate?" but he would "hope that's not the only question." The question should be, he said, "can we identify economies of scale and reduce costs? That could mean contracting with any town, even providing services. We absolutely must explore options where we can identify and leverage economies of scale."

Council President Schneider said, "I'm fine with looking into how the net effect could be played out. I'm NOT in favor of the reduction of police services to Hightstown. If discussions between the Mayors are focused with the intention of cutting police service in half for savings, my answer is 'no.' I'm not in favor of reducing services." Mr. Schneider said that he does not believe that there would be a significant savings without a reduction of manpower inside the Borough. Officers are paid more elsewhere, he said, and "you can look at the contracts and see the percentage increases in surrounding communities. All I require is a pencil, calculator and time to figure what it would take to hire someone else to provide a certain amount of coverage," he said, adding, "What I would be looking for is a price quote, not a study." Mr. Schneider noted that if another municipality were to provide the same level of service to the Borough, it would have to be at a profit to them. "We don't need to be footing that bill," he said, "and I am not in favor of a reduction in police service." He added that East Windsor and Hightstown are very different communities with different needs, and spoke of the high quality of life in the Borough. "The town provides for cleanliness, health, safety and security," he said, adding, "Regardless of the first aid circumstances, our police have always responded quickly. You won't find that same response in Newark, although the 'economies of scale' are greater. As long as I'm paying a \$6,000 to \$8,000 tax bill, a few hundred extra dollars is not worth compromising for." Council President Schneider said that he is "okay with looking into [shared police

services],” and that he would like to see if it is possible to provide the same coverage at a savings to the Borough, “but not at the cost of the quality of life I’ve come to enjoy here.” “I think we should have the study,” he concluded, “but go into it with the understanding that we don’t want to see any reduction in police services.” He added that Hightstown having 13% of East Windsor’s manpower is not “providing the same service.”

Councilman Quattrone said, “I just voted to hire a new police officer. I’d give up garbage [collection] before police.” It’s important to look at priorities, he said. “I like my police department. My business handles cash, and they are there whenever I need them. They respond to EMS calls.” “I’d vote ‘no,’” he said. “This is a small community. Why are people moving in? They want those services.”

Councilmember Sikorski stated that he understands not wanting to reduce police services, but said “there is a possibility that coverage could be *increased*, at a lower cost. A study should be done first. I’m in favor of continuing discussions and keeping our options open.”

Councilman Quattrone said, “You would have to put a beautiful picture in front of me for me to buy it. What I can see as a businessman is ... they won’t do us a favor. They won’t cover the hours any better than we do, or be here as fast as our police department. Go ahead with the study,” he said, “but it will take a lot to convince me.”

“We have an excellent police department,” Mayor Patten said. “I’d like a unanimous decision, but the majority rules. Part of the majority is the public. We need to get a sense from the people. If we don’t have the community behind us ....” Councilmember Sikorski stated, “it seems to be the consensus tonight that there are no objections to a study. There will still be input after the study is presented. This is not a rush to judgment – the process may take two to three years.”

Mayor Patten noted that a study just determined that consolidation may be in the Princetons’ best interest, yet the people just voted it down.

Councilmember Sikorski again stated that the consensus appears to be to proceed. No objections to that statement were heard.

## BOROUGH SUMMER SCHEDULE

Ms. Gallagher asked Council for their decision regarding the Borough summer schedule which she has proposed at each of the last two meetings. At the last meeting, she said, Council President Schneider suggested that a schedule of 8:30 to 6:30 with an hour lunch break would be preferable to 8:30 to 6:00 with a half hour break, and she agreed. What she is proposing is a trial program for three months only, with a schedule of 8:30 to 6:30 Monday thru Wednesday, and 8:30 to 5:30 on Thursday. She cited the benefits this arrangement would offer to the Borough, its employees, the public and the environment<sup>3</sup>.

Councilman Quattrone said that, while he can see this “working easily in the private sector,” he is concerned that the public would prefer that the Borough be open on Fridays. He also expressed concern regarding the labor union and the effect of the revised schedule on overtime. “If you’d like to run it as a trial,” he said, “I could be convinced to try it, but not again without another Council vote.”

Councilmember Harinxma said that she would support trying this, and noted that employees would not be working fewer hours. “If the information is out there,” she said, “people can adjust.”

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<sup>3</sup> See minutes of April 3 and April 17 for details.



Councilmember Sikorski said that he feels it may be "premature to rush into this" and that he is not in favor of it at this time.

Councilmember Rosenberg said that he is "always in favor of trying new things." "Why not let Hightstown be the first?" he said. "We were the first to do curbside recycling. What is the fear in trying something new?" He noted that this would support the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement by helping to reduce emissions.

Councilman Thompson expressed concern about public perception, but said that he would agree to a trial of the program.

Council President Schneider said that he previously spoke in favor of this proposal based on information regarding the usefulness of the hours worked. It may boost morale, he said, but there would be a drop in morale if the Borough wanted to stop the program. He also expressed concern that the public may expect Borough offices to be open on Fridays and expressed hesitancy to proceed.

With a consensus of 4-2, and after brief further discussion, it was generally agreed that a Resolution to undertake a trial program that would formally change the Borough's hours during the summer months of 2006 would be placed on the next meeting agenda.

## COUNCIL COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilmember Rosenberg reported that he attended the most recent meeting of the Environmental Commission, where the group discussed:

- The RFP issued for the solar power project
- the Stony Brook Municipal Watershed's Municipal Assessment Program and how they plan to come to Hightstown and make recommendations regarding improving the health of our waterways.
- The planting downtown of 10 American Elm trees
- The possibly unauthorized removal of two trees on Stockton Street
- The award of a contract for Phase II of the Greenways project
- The need for landscaping at the High School
- Planning Board applications pending for two new homes on Grant Avenue and the environmental implications of this new construction, including the need to remove established trees on these wooded parcels in order to accommodate the new homes.

Councilman Quattrone stated that EMS Week is designated as May 14 – 20, and the First Aid Squad will be holding an open house. He invited all to visit the Squad, and said that they have prospective new members. He further reported that the Squad has begun covering Friday nights from 7 to 7, and may be picking up another night as well.

"All is well" at Public Works, Mr. Quattrone said, and again noted the importance of recycling and the money that could be saved if all residents recycled more. He recommended that Wyckoff's Mill Road be posted with a weight limit now that it has been reconstructed. "The ordinance does limit the weight," he said, "but it should be posted."

He asked Ms. Gallagher about the Borough's "opt out" list for the *Trenton Times Weekender*, referred to earlier by Mr. Ross during public comment as the "papers in the purple plastic bags." Ms. Gallagher stated that residents may opt out of receiving that publication, and offered to place Mr. Ross's address on that list.

Lastly, Mr. Quattrone commended the work done by GHEWIP to improve the town, and reminded all that the Parade Committee will meet on the following evening.

Councilmember Sikorski stated that he expects a recommendation from the Board of Health at their next meeting regarding fluoridation of the Borough's water. The Planning Board will meet on May 8, he said, and again in special session on May 22. He also reported that he and the Mayor are on the subcommittee to discuss the Board of Education budget with East Windsor representatives. Lastly, Councilmember Sikorski reported that information regarding the Stockton Street Historic District will be placed in the mailboxes of Council and the Planning Board within the next few days, and that the Borough is considering hiring an additional housing inspector to handle the workload. That position has been advertised, he said.

Ms. Gallagher asked Council to consider adopting a motion to permit the Borough to prorate any parking permit fees that are paid between this meeting and the next, when Ordinance 2006-12, which would formalize that provision, will be adopted.

**Motion:** This was moved by Councilman Quattrone and seconded by Council President Schneider, and a roll call vote was taken.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes.

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

## PUBLIC COMMENT II

Mayor Patten opened the floor for public comment:

**Paul Byrne**, 320 Stockton Street, noted the importance of communication among the Borough's various Boards and Commissions. Volunteers feel slighted, he said, when they do work on their own and then see another body working on something that they should know about. Everyone should be on the same page, he said. He expressed concern about engaging in a feasibility study for shared police services. "What if it doesn't work?" he said. He suggested that the Borough look into whether a database may exist of towns that have tried to consolidate, and what quality of life issues they faced. "Let's find out what has worked and what hasn't," he said.

**Torry Watkins**, 68 Meadow Drive, commended Council for its "willingness to develop a consensus to go out for an objective study regarding contracting police services," and stated that the DCA study was not objective because the DCA is "staffed by ex-cops" and "the PBA owns the legislature."

**Rob Thibault**, 504 South Main Street, commended Ms. Patten and the Animal Welfare Committee for their hard work. "They go out in every kind of weather and trap," he said, "and they do it humanely, so the animal doesn't suffer." Mr. Thibault objected to the proposal of closing Borough Hall on Fridays. Those who work in North Jersey, he said, would still have a hard time getting here by 6:00 or even 7:00, and since he himself works at home on Fridays, he'd prefer that Borough Hall remain open then. He added that he negotiated that with his employer and gave up other benefits in exchange, and suggested that Borough employees may be willing to do the same.

**Sue Bottino**, 124 Center Street, expressed her appreciation to Council for their discussions regarding shared police services, and added that she was concerned that residents' concerns about tax abatement are not receiving the same attention from Council.

**J. P. Gibbons**, 602 North Main Street, stated that “perception is everything” and that it may be inappropriate to close Borough Hall on Fridays. “There is nothing wrong with flex hours,” he said, suggesting that the Borough allow employees instead to take every other Friday off while keeping Borough Hall open. He also stated that productivity may decrease if employees work 10 hour days. Regarding signage, Mr. Gibbons asked if something could be resolved quickly regarding the signage for the bridge abutment “without having to go to graphic artists” and added that Hightstown is not historic. Mr. Gibbons also suggested that “someone do something about the ‘Welcome to Hightstown’ signs.” “They’re overgrown,” he said, “and you can’t read them anymore.” Regarding sharing police services, Mr. Gibbons stated that an hour of police protection costs more in East Windsor than in Hightstown due, in part, to their training budget, so it would be difficult to accomplish “economies of scale” by sharing services with them.

**Dylan Ross**, 126 Morrison Avenue, restated his concern about the *Trenton Times Weekender* publication and “coupons blowing around.” With respect to shared police services, he said that perhaps certain aspects of the service could be shared, such as equipment, administrative services or dispatch services, and that it should not be looked at as “all or none.”

**Fred Montferret**, 414 Stockton Street (Planning Board member), stated, “GHEWIP is a great organization, but I’m glad that no action was taken” regarding signage for the bridge abutment. He expressed concern about the lighting of the sign and its general look and maintenance, and said that the Planning Board’s sign committee should review this. With respect to sharing police services, Mr. Montferret said that it is good to have discussions with other towns, but urged Council not “to sacrifice trust for dollars.” He commended the governing body for listening to residents and for “keeping personalities and personal feelings out of the budget.”

No one else came forward and the floor was closed.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Borough Clerk read aloud **Resolution 2006-110**, authorizing a closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel and contract negotiations. The Resolution was moved by Councilmember Quattrone and seconded by Council President Schneider.

**Roll Call:** Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider, Sikorski and Thompson voted yes.

**Resolution adopted, 6-0.**

### RESOLUTION 2006-110      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 May 1, 2006 at approximately 11:05 p.m. at Borough Hall 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

Contract Negotiations – Transfer of Property

Contract Negotiations - RFP – Solar Energy

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: August 1, 2006, 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.

Upon reconvening into open session, adjournment was moved by Council President Schneider, seconded by Councilmember Sikorski and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace B. Gallagher, RMC  
Borough Clerk