

OPEN SESSION
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Mayor Robert Patten called the meeting to order at 7:00 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: Leona Baylor, Deputy Borough Clerk; Carmela Roberts, Borough Engineer; James M. Eufemia, Chief of Police and Frederick Raffetto, Esq., Borough Attorney.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Added to the agenda under "Engineer's Items" was a discussion regarding the New Jersey Turnpike widening. The agenda was moved as amended by Council President Sikorski, seconded by Councilmember Rosenberg and unanimously approved.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the September 17, 2007 open and closed sessions were moved by Council President Sikorski, seconded by Councilmember Quattrone and unanimously approved as submitted.

### REPORT BY CHIEF OF POLICE: ROGERS AVENUE INCIDENT

Chief James Eufemia reported that, on September 21, 2007, two young men were stabbed on Rogers Avenue near Outcalt Street. The police responded to the call to find that the victims were no longer on the scene but had been driven to a local hospital by a friend, where they were treated and released. At the police department's initial contact with the young men, they were uncooperative and have remained so. Chief Eufemia stated that the investigation is ongoing and, although no arrests have yet been made, the department remains confident that they will be able solve this case. He went on to say that this was a rare incident in Hightstown, that it was not a random act of violence and that the police have increased their presence in that neighborhood as well as in the rest of the Borough. He asked that anyone with new information come forward, and he promised that the identity of anyone doing so would be held in confidence.

## PUBLIC COMMENT I

Mayor Patten opened the floor for public comment.

**Chris Moraitis**, 208 Stockton Street, expressed his concern that last week's incident on Rogers Avenue could harm the Borough's efforts toward revitalization, especially in the newly designated Historic District. He stated that people will be deterred by crime and lawlessness, and that safe neighborhoods are the cornerstones to good communities. Mr. Moraitis went on to say that he feels that people need to know and be made to respect the law. He suggested that our police become more active, and that perhaps Hightstown should become more like other communities with reputations for strict enforcement.

**Phyllis Deal**, 305 Stockton Street, requested that the taxi companies in town be made aware of the local speed limits and be held accountable. She stated that she has called the companies to complain about the speeding, but usually the person answering the phone speaks very little English.

**Stacy Trent**, 163 Rogers Avenue, stated that she purchased her home about a year ago and had some reservations about the purchase, including regarding the house at the corner of Rogers Avenue and Academy Street. She expressed concern that Rogers Avenue may not receive the same amount of attention from the Borough as other areas in town. She also stated her frustration at having her assessment increased because they made renovations and repairs, while the house on the corner is in a state of disrepair and ill-repute, and South Street is the only street in the Borough with speed humps. She said that she has had numerous conversations with officials in the construction office who, she said, seemed "put out" by her latest call, and she has also called the police on a few occasions to make complaints. Ms. Trent stated that she feels there is not enough police presence in her neighborhood and added that, for the Historic District to succeed, the Borough needs to enforce its existing ordinances.

**Eugene Sarafin**, 600-628 South Main Street, said that the only way for the Borough to survive is to merge with East Windsor. Our police force, he said, is inefficient with only 15 officers, and the community needs full-time detectives. Compared to East Windsor's force, he added, "there is no manpower."

No one else came forward and the floor was closed.

## ENGINEER'S ITEMS

### NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE WIDENING

Borough Engineer Carmela Roberts stated that the New Jersey Turnpike Authority held four hearings regarding the changes proposed at Exits 6 through 9, and she and the Mayor attended the hearing for Exit 8. She reported that the Turnpike Authority is proposing a major change at Exit 8. They will be moving the toll plaza and there will be a direct connection into the Route 133 Bypass. The connection will be elevated to cross over Route 33. There will be a traffic light under the elevated pass to allow access to Route 33. Milford Road will not have a direct connection to Route 133, but Route 33 will have a direct connection to Monmouth Street. The planned connection into Route 133 will benefit the Borough, but Milford Road should also be connected at Route 133, which would benefit everyone. She also expressed concern that connecting to Monmouth Street will increase traffic there because it could be used as a cut-through. Ms. Roberts recommended that the Turnpike Authority be formally requested by Council to make certain corrections to the plan in order to improve it.

Councilmember Quattrone expressed concern about an increase in truck traffic in the Borough as a result of the changes as proposed.

Councilmember Harinxma asked if there was a way to arrange a meeting between the town and the Turnpike Authority. Ms. Roberts explained that the deadline for oral comments has passed but the deadline for written comments is October 12, 2007. She further explained that she and the Mayor have had one meeting with Turnpike personnel already, and she recommended that the Borough's comments be put on record with a written statement.

Mayor Patten urged residents to get involved as well and to voice their concerns to the Turnpike Authority.

After further discussion, it was decided that a request could be made to the Turnpike Authority to meet again with the Borough, and also that a Resolution would be adopted at this meeting, based on a letter provided by Ms. Roberts, setting forth the Borough's position regarding the turnpike expansion project.

Council President Sikorski moved to amend the agenda to include this Resolution (to be numbered as 2007-228). Councilmember Harinxma seconded the motion, and the agenda was amended by unanimous vote.

Resolution 2007-228 was then moved by Council President Sikorski and seconded by Councilmember Quattrone.

Roll Call: Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider and Sikorski voted yes.  
Councilmember Thompson was absent.

Resolution adopted, 5-0.

**RESOLUTION 2007-228      REQUESTING THE NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE AUTHORITY TO REVISE ITS PLANS FOR THE  
RELOCATION OF INTERCHANGE 8 TO PROVIDE FOR A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN  
THE BYPASS AND MILFORD ROAD**

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (also referenced as the "Turnpike Authority") has been conducting public hearings and seeking comments and input on its latest proposal for the relocation of Interchange 8; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Hightstown (also referenced as the "Borough") has reviewed the Turnpike Authority's latest proposal, and believes that the proposed relocation of the toll plaza to the west side of the Turnpike and the proposed direct connection of the Turnpike to the Route 133 Bypass should provide significant improvements to traffic flow through the Borough; and

**WHEREAS**, though the Borough is extremely supportive of this aspect of the Turnpike Authority's proposal, the Borough is nevertheless concerned about the proposed change which would remove the current Milford Road and Route 133 direct connection; and

**WHEREAS**, as currently proposed by the Turnpike Authority, Milford Road would be re-routed over the Turnpike interchange and to intersect Route 33 at a new traffic signal that will be installed between Woodside Avenue and Route 133; and

**WHEREAS**, the Route 33 and Milford Road intersection also indicates that Monmouth Street will be directly connected to the relocated Milford Road; and

**WHEREAS**, the Milford Road connection to Monmouth Street and the lack of a direct connection to Route 133 are both problematic for the Borough as follows: While the new interchange and Bypass connection improve the Turnpike related traffic situation, the loss of the Milford Road connection to the Bypass will maintain the regional truck traffic that now travels through the Borough by way of Route 571, and will provide a new means for regional traffic to use the Borough as a cut-through; and

**WHEREAS**, a direct connection between the Bypass and Milford Road would provide a way for local and regional traffic on Route 571 to travel around the Borough; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Hightstown believe that the Milford Road realignment aspect of the Turnpike Authority's latest proposal for the relocation of Interchange 8 does not adequately provide for the needs of the Borough and the regional traffic demands in the area, and that this aspect of the project should be modified by the Turnpike Authority; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Hightstown hereby call upon the Turnpike Authority to revise its plans for the relocation of Interchange 8 in order to provide for a direct connection between the Bypass and Milford Road, which would significantly improve regional traffic flow and provide a means for local and regional traffic on Route 571 to travel around the Borough;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Hightstown, in the County of Mercer and State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. That, for the reasons expressed above, the Mayor and Borough Council hereby call upon the Turnpike Authority to revise its plans for the relocation of Interchange 8 in order to provide for a direct connection between the Bypass and Milford Road, which would significantly improve regional traffic flow and provide a means for local and regional traffic on Route 571 to travel around the Borough.
2. That a certified copy of this Resolution shall be provided to each of the following:
  - a. New Jersey Turnpike Authority
  - b. Surrounding municipalities
  - c. Carmela Roberts, P.E., Borough Engineer
  - d. Frederick C. Raffetto, Esq., Borough Attorney

## CONSENT AGENDA

Resolutions 2007-224 through 227 were moved by Council President Sikorski and seconded by Councilmember Schneider.

Roll Call: Councilmembers Harinxma, Quattrone, Rosenberg, Schneider and Sikorski voted yes.  
Councilmember Thompson was absent.

Resolutions adopted, 5-0.

### RESOLUTION 2007-224 AUTHORIZING REFUND OF TAX OVERPAYMENTS

**WHEREAS**, tax overpayments have been received by the Borough as follows:

Refund to:	Amount of Overpayment:	Block & Lot #	Property Address:
Drew and Lisa Kollman 108 Morrison Avenue Hightstown, New Jersey 08520	\$1,151.68	Block 43, Lot 1	108 Morrison Avenue
Stephen and Pauline Renaud 108 Manlove Avenue Hightstown, New Jersey 08520	\$1,434.12	Block 25, Lot 27	108 Manlove Avenue
First American Real Estate Tax Service 1 First American Way Mail Code: DFW 1-3 Westlake, TX 76262 Attn: Tax Refunds	\$1,272.77	Block 2.01, Lot 1, C0293	228 Mill Run Court
	\$1,121.90	Block 2.01, Lot 1, C0258	32 Mill Run West

; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector has requested permission to refund the overpayments;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that the Tax Collector and Treasurer are hereby authorized to refund the tax overpayments set forth herein.

**RESOLUTION 2007-225****AUTHORIZING ISSUANCE OF RAFFLE LICENSE #RL-181 TO EAST WINDSOR P.A.L.**

**WHEREAS**, the East Windsor P.A.L. wishes to hold an on-premise merchandise raffle at the Hightstown High School on November 3, 2007; and

**WHEREAS**, the group has submitted application number RA-181 for this raffle; and

**WHEREAS**, no fees are due and payable at this time because the amount of the prize is anticipated to be less than \$400.00; and

**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-181 to the East Windsor P.A.L. for their raffle to be held on November 3, 2007.

**RESOLUTION 2007-226****RESOLUTION FOR RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE MID JERSEY MUNICIPAL JOINT INSURANCE FUND**

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Hightstown is a member of the Mid Jersey Municipal Joint Insurance Fund; and

**WHEREAS**, said renewal membership terminates as of January 1, 2008\*, unless earlier renewed by agreement between the Municipality and the Fund; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Hightstown desires to renew said membership;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown as follows:

1. The Borough of Hightstown agrees to renew its membership in the Mid Jersey Municipal Joint Insurance Fund for a period of three (3) years beginning January 1, 2008, and ending on January 1, 2011\*, and to be subject to the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, coverages and operating procedures thereof as presently existing or as modified from time to time by lawful act of the Fund.
2. The Mayor and Municipal Clerk shall be and hereby are authorized to execute the agreement to renew membership which is annexed hereto and made a part hereof, and to deliver same to the Mid Jersey Municipal Joint Insurance Fund evidencing the Municipality's intention to renew its membership.

**RESOLUTION 2007-227****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 **\$1,918,335.36** from the following accounts:

Current	\$ 1,011,021.56
W/S Operating	126,690.88
General Capital	612,795.03
W/S Capital	115.00
General Capital Investment	150,000.00
Trust	7,529.51
RCA – COAH	1,592.00
Public Defender	300.00
Grant	4,045.90

Total

\$1,918,335.36

## COUNCIL COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council President Sikorski reported that, at the September meeting of the Board of Health, it was determined that a separate ordinance prohibiting farm animals is not needed in the Borough. Mr. Sikorski also expressed his displeasure at being excluded from the meeting held between the Turnpike Authority, Ms. Roberts and the Mayor. He stated that he, also, attended the public hearing for Exit 8 and felt that the Mayor's comments were appropriate.

Councilmember Quattrone reported that the new ambulance has been delivered and is now in service. He commented regarding the incident on Rogers Avenue, saying that Council's job is to monitor the quality of life in the Borough, and you "can't look at the individual incident but at all the Borough." He asked the Chief of Police if he believed that there has been a deterioration in the quality of life in the Borough and Chief Eufemia responded, "no." Unfortunately, he said, this kind of thing happens everywhere, and, in this instance, it happened to "shine a light on an area that may have needed it."

Police Chief James Eufemia expressed his agreement with Ms. Roberts' comments regarding the Turnpike expansion, and said that, as planned, it has the potential to increase traffic, particularly truck traffic, in the Borough. He said that this should be addressed now or it could be another 50 years before we have another chance. He also stated that he always welcomes comments and suggestions from the public, and urged people to call the department right away when they see a problem. "Sometimes," he said, "people wait and call weeks or months later, and it makes it harder" to address the issue.

Mayor Patten reminded everyone to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Fair on Saturday October 6.

## PUBLIC COMMENT II

Mayor Patten opened the floor once again for public comment.

**Richard Harlan Pratt**, 214 Stockton Street, noted that he formerly served as chair of the Public Safety and Signage Committee, and he would like to see signage changed to direct truck traffic out of the Borough. Currently, he said, the signs on the Turnpike direct traffic *into* the Borough, and there are no signs directing it to the Bypass. He commented that in towns such as Princeton and Cranbury, their reputation for aggressive enforcement of speed limits keeps traffic slow, and Hightstown should follow suit. Incidents like the one on Rogers Avenue can make us feel unsafe, he said, but safety is also threatened by bicycles on the sidewalks. He said that an employee of his firm was injured when leaving the building -- a person was riding a bike on the sidewalk and ran into her. Mr. Pratt said that he would like to see a greater police presence in the Borough.

**Paul Byrne**, 320 Stockton Street, said that some residents have told him that they are afraid to go into certain areas of the Borough. He said that he is concerned by this because he feels that everyone should feel safe anywhere in the Borough.

**Eugene Sarafin**, 600-628 South Main Street, expressed concern that the Water and Sewer Committee is made up almost entirely of Borough employees and that there is only one business owner on the Committee, with no Council liaison or Borough resident as a member. He also stated that volunteers are needed for the First Aid Squad and that the most important job in the Borough, "keeping people alive," is done by people who don't get paid.

**Jeffrey Bond**, 210 South Main Street, stated that, if the Milford Road disconnect is allowed during the Turnpike expansion, Monmouth Street will experience a heavy increase in traffic. He agreed that now is the Borough's chance to get what need.

No one else came forward and the floor was closed.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Ms. Baylor read aloud Resolution 2007-223, authorizing a closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel and possible litigation. The Resolution was moved by Council President Sikorski and seconded by Councilmember Rosenberg.

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

Resolution adopted, 4-0.

### **RESOLUTION 2007-223      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 October 1, 2007 at approximately 8:10 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 Possible Litigation**

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: January 1, 2008 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 Sikorski, seconded by Councilmember Harinxma and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona Baylor  
Deputy Borough Clerk