

Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
Budget Workshop Meeting
March 12, 2012
7:00 pm

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kirson at 7:01 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 was followed by roll call.

	PRESENT	ABSENT
<i>Councilmember Bibens</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Bluth</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Doran</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Quattrone</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Thibault</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Woods</i>	✓	
<i>Mayor Kirson</i>	✓	

Also in attendance: Debra Sopronyi, Borough Clerk; Michael Theokas, Borough Administrator; George Lang, Chief Finance Officer; Ken Lewis, Public Works Superintendent and James LeTellier, Police Director.

Mayor Kirson opened the Public Comment Period and there being no comments, the public comment period was closed.

Budget Discussion

The CFO distributed materials consisting of the remaining departmental budgets and the budget at a glance. Mr. Lang reviewed the overall budget citing that as presented it would require an increase of .027 which would mean an average increase of \$72.04 per household. Discussion ensued regarding the impact of tax appeals on the budget; at this time the amount of tax appeals affecting the budget total over \$60,000.00.

Discussion regarding the Public Works budget took place and consisted of staffing, health benefits costs, union agreement requirements, increased cost of supplies, and the possible opportunities for increasing revenues through fees. Mr. Lewis distributed a summary of the services provided, and the duties performed by the department and there was discussion regarding the services performed for sewer and water line repairs.

Mr. Lewis was excused from the meeting at this time.

Director LeTellier addressed Council and began by suggesting that the Borough look into billing homeowner insurance policies for various services provided by the Fire Department to increase revenues.

Discussion consisted of staffing and overtime, union agreements, and benefit costs. Director LeTellier requested Council consider additional special and/or regular officers and the benefits associated with the new hires. Other items of discussion included uniform costs and the appearance of officers, DARE program and its effectiveness, community policing, K-9 expenses, training, website design and maintenance, and grant opportunities.

Director LeTellier addressed the need for new vehicles and reviewed the status of the present vehicles in the fleet. He requested three vehicles at a cost of \$35,000.00 each which would be an all wheel drive Ford Taurus designed as a police vehicle, and includes the installation of radios and etc. (the cost of radios and etc. would be additional). They could be purchased over a three year period as a lease purchase program which would result in the cost of one vehicle per year. There was discussion regarding radios and the new FCC narrow band regulations; and COLEA update requirements.

It was decided that the budget would not be introduced on March 19, 2012 and that an additional budget workshop meeting to be held on Wednesday, March 21, 2012 at 7:00pm in the Historic Society building.

Mayor Kirson opened Public Comment Period II and there being no comments, the public comment period was closed.

Councilmember Woods moved to adjourn at 9:40 pm, Councilmember Bluth seconded. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra L. Sopronyi, RMC
Borough Clerk