

Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
Budget Meeting
March 30, 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 Stults moved the agenda for approval, Councilmember Bluth 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.

Budget discussion began with the need to establish budgets for the various Boards and Committees. Councilmember Montferrat reviewed the goals and accomplishments of the Historic Preservation Commission and there was discussion regarding the Cultural Arts Commission, Environmental Commission, and the Parks and Recreation Commission; it was noted that the Friends of the Monument and Garden Club do the plantings at the monument on Stockton Street and funds are needed for this program, and it was confirmed that these funds would be made available in the Public Works budget. Council decided on the following budgets for the various Board sand Committees:

Cultural Arts Commission	\$500.00	Environmental Commission: increase from \$700.00 to \$1,000.00
Monument Plantings	\$2,000.00	Historic Preservation Commission: increase from \$1,000.00 to \$1,900.00
Memorial Day Parade	\$1,000.00	

It was noted that \$6,000.00 has been budgeted for the Harvest Fair and there was discussion as to whether the Borough would hold it this year. Mayor Quattrone noted that he is in discussion with a resident who is interested in chairing the event. The consensus of Council was to hold the Harvest Fair, but not at the tax payers expense; it should be self-funded.

There was discussion regarding the water/sewer rate increase to replenish the fund balance shortfall; reduction in septic intake by 25% at the recommendations of the Engineers due to the impact on the plant; and the need to replace the media for the filters instead of replacing the filters themselves at an estimated cost of \$800,000.00. It was noted that the reduction in septic intake would extend the life of the equipment and reduce chemical costs at the plant.

There was discussion regarding the affect rain water has on the sewer plant; estimated revenues and expenditures; bond interest and principle payments; employee and Public Works allocations for salaries; the need for a Supervisory back-up license; possible downgrade of the classification of the plant for cost savings; automation capabilities; the capacity of the plant; the need for infrastructure pipe replacements; and gasoline/fuel costs.

Mr. Lang then explained the requirement for a 5% down payment on all bonded projects; self-liquidation; and that the bond principal and NJEIT payments are on a set schedule.

Council inquired as to the overall impact of this budget on the tax payers. Mr. Lang replied that it was about one cent due to a smaller rateable base. He recommended a one cent increase and that the budget be left as presented, using \$600,000.00 of surplus. There was discussion regarding the savings possible from the new police salaries and scheduled retirements.

Council approved the CFO to move forward with preparing the budget for introduction at the April 20, 2015 meeting, with the one cent increase. Mr. Lang noted that the amount to be raised by taxation is the same and does not increase in the municipal budget. There was discussion regarding the preparation of a press release regarding the budget, to be distributed after introduction.

Mr. Lang will distribute the revised budget, with the changes made to the Board and Committee budgets, prior to introduction.

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

Councilmember Montferrat moved to adjourn at 8:00pm, Councilmember Bluth seconded. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra L. Sopronyi
Borough Clerk