

Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
April 19, 2021
6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Quattrone at 6:33 p.m. 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 on the Borough website.” Do to COVID-19 and self-distancing protocols, this meeting was held remotely through www.zoom.com.

The flag salute followed Roll Call.

	PRESENT	ABSENT
<i>Councilmember Susan Bluth</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Joseph Cicalese</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Cristina Fowler</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Joshua Jackson</i>		✓
<i>Councilmember Steven Misiura</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Dimitri Musing</i>	✓	
<i>Mayor Lawrence Quattrone</i>	✓	

Also in attendance: Margaret (Peggy) Riggio, Deputy Borough Clerk; Debra Sopronyi Borough Clerk/Administrator; Carmela Roberts, Borough Engineer and Fred Raffetto, Borough Attorney.

The Flag Salute followed roll call.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Quattrone requested that an Executive Session be added to the end of the meeting. Deputy Clerk, Peggy Riggio, added Resolution 2021-071 after Mayor/Council/Administrative Reports.

Moved as amended by Councilmember Misiura; Seconded by Councilmember Fowler.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmember Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Agenda approved as amended 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 1, 2021 – Public Session

Moved by Councilmember Musing; Seconded by Council President Bluth.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmember Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Minutes approved 5-0.

March 1, 2021 – Executive Session

Moved by Council President Bluth; Seconded by Councilmember Misiura.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmember Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Minutes approved 5-0.

PRESENTATIONS

Sydney Hopkins – Girl Scout Gold Project

Sydney is a sophomore at Hightstown High School. She presented a project for her Girl Scouts Gold Project. The project is for 2 little libraries. One at Association Park and one at the Methodist Church. Parks and Rec and HPC have approved the project. She is currently working with Zoning Official, George Chin, for the size of the library. The idea is that people can borrow and donate books. Council thought this was an outstanding project and congratulated Sydney on her Gold Award.

Councilmember Musing moved to approve this project; Councilmember Fowler seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Sydney Hopkins – Girl Scout Gold Project – Approved 5-0.

ENGINEERING ITEMS

Proposed Additional Improvements to Schuyler Avenue

Borough Engineer, Carmela Roberts, reviewed her letter to Council dated April 12, 2021. The awarded bid for this project came in \$92,654.97 below the engineer's estimate. She is now proposing improvements that will include new sidewalk and curb on the north side of Schuyler Avenue, needed curb replacement on the south side, curb ramps at all corners, pavement milling and overlay, signage replacement, and striping. These improvements are estimated to cost an additional \$56,000.00. She is for an approval to prepare a change order for this contract. Water is already incorporated into overall contract price.

Councilmember Misiura stated that Schuyler Avenue and Orchard are on the list of roads that need improvement and we would be completing this project at some point in the near future. He supports this project. Complete Streets has not discussed this; but he can say with pretty good confidence that they would support this.

Councilmember Fowler stated that doing this work in the larger project is getting us a much better price than if we did it in a year or so on its own. She supports this change.

Councilmember Cicalese moved to approve the preparation of the change order; Seconded by Councilmember Fowler.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Preparation of change order approved 5-9.

Ms. Roberts left the meeting at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT I

Mayor Quattrone opened public comment period I and the following individuals spoke:

Eugene Sarafin, 628 South Main Street - Questioned the Cannabis discussion tonight. Stated that there are not many places in town that are 1,000 feet from a school. Where would be put these types of businesses? Council will need to study the impact of our policing if this type of business is allowed in town.

There being no further comments, Mayor Quattrone closed the public comment period.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2021-064 Authorizing Payment of Bills

Moved by Council President Bluth; Seconded by Councilmember Cicalese.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Resolution adopted 5-0.

Resolution 2021-064

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

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, the appropriate Department Head and the Treasurer in the amount of \$1,476,678.22 from the following accounts:

Resolution 2021-065 Proclaiming Hightstown Volunteer Appreciation Week and Recognizing, Honoring and Thanking Hightstown's Volunteers

Moved by Councilmember Misiura; Seconded by Councilmember Fowler.

Council thanked all of our

Current		\$1,235,093.77
W/S Operating		184,298.85
General Capital		40,225.49
Water/Sewer Capital		7,230.50
Grant		0.00
Trust		3,600.00
Unemployment Trust		0.00
Animal Control		0.00
Law Enforcement Trust		0.00
Tax Lien Trust		0.00
Public Defender Trust		0.00
Escrow		<u>6,229.61</u>
Total		<u>\$1,476,678.22</u>

volunteers and stated that they are a crucial part of our town. We are lucky to have residents who help make the town what it is.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Resolution adopted 5-0.

Resolution 2021-065

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

**PROCLAIMING HIGHTSTOWN VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK AND
RECOGNIZING, HONORING AND THANKING HIGHTSTOWN’S VOLUNTEERS**

WHEREAS, the week of April 18 – 24, 2021 has been proclaimed National Volunteer Week to recognize and celebrate the efforts of volunteers at the local, state, and national levels; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Hightstown and its residents have benefited greatly from hundreds of volunteers who each year give tirelessly and selflessly to the service of others; and

WHEREAS, volunteerism strengthens communities, improves society, and enhances the overall quality of life for all citizens; and

WHEREAS, volunteering changes the lives of volunteers in a positive way, increasing self-confidence, self-esteem and physical wellbeing; offering the chance to meet new friends and associates; and providing opportunities to learn new skills and abilities; and

WHEREAS, the Hightstown Borough Mayor and Council wish to acknowledge and thank its volunteers

for their dedication and tireless efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown hereby proclaims the week of April 18 – 24, 2021, as Hightstown Volunteer Week and expresses its sincere appreciation and gratitude for the dedication and untiring efforts of all those who volunteer to help make our community a better place to live and work.

Resolution 2021-066 A Resolution Authorizing the Borough of Hightstown to Acquire an Easement for Temporary Construction Over a Portion of Certain Real Property Located within the Borough, in Order to Facilitate the Construction of Certain Improvements

Moved by Councilmember Cicalese; Seconded by Councilmember Misiura.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Resolution adopted 5-0.

Resolution 2021-066

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
TO ACQUIRE AN EASEMENT FOR TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION OVER
A PORTION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN
THE BOROUGH, IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE
CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS.**

WHEREAS, Matthew A. Gorajek And Pamela M. Gorajek, his wife, are the owners of certain real property located at 8 Spruce Court in the Borough of Hightstown, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, which property is more commonly known and designated as Block 62, Lot 31 on the Hightstown Borough Tax Map (hereinafter referred to as the “property”); and

WHEREAS, the Borough is undertaking a public project involving the construction of improvements to Springcrest Drive, Taylor Avenue, Spruce Court, Glen Drive, and Schuyler Avenue within the Borough (hereinafter referred to as the “project”); and

WHEREAS, in order to facilitate the project, it will be necessary for the Borough to acquire an easement for temporary construction over a portion of the property; and

WHEREAS, said easement is intended to be temporary in nature and shall endure during the period of construction of the project (only); and

WHEREAS, the terms and conditions associated with this undertaking are set forth in the attached Deed of Easement for Temporary Construction; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have determined that it would be in the best interests of the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Borough, and the general public, to move forward to acquire said temporary construction easement over a portion of the property (as set forth in the attached) in order to facilitate the project; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council therefore wish to authorize the Mayor to execute and the Municipal Clerk to attest the attached Deed of Easement for Temporary Construction.

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

1. That the Borough hereby authorizes the acquisition of a temporary construction easement over a portion of the property (as set forth in the attached) in order to facilitate the project, in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in the attached.
2. That the Mayor is hereby authorized to execute, and the Municipal Clerk to attest, the attached Deed of Easement for Temporary Construction on behalf of the Borough.
3. That a certified copy of this Resolution shall be provided to each of the following:
 - a. Debra L. Sopronyi, Borough Administrator/Clerk;
 - b. Carmela Roberts, P.E.; and
 - c. Frederick C. Raffetto, Esq., Borough Attorney.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Fowler moved Resolutions 2021-067; 2021-068; 2021-069; 2021-070 as a Consent Agenda; Councilmember Cicalese seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Resolutions adopted 5-0.

Resolution 2021-067

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

**ACCEPTING MEMBERSHIP OF ALEXANDRIA WEINBERG IN
HIGHTSTOWN ENGINE CO. NO. 1**

WHEREAS, Alexandria Weinberg of East Windsor, New Jersey has applied for membership in Hightstown Engine Company No. 1; and

WHEREAS Ms. Weinberg has undergone and passed the required physical examination, and her membership application has been reviewed and approved by Fire Chief Scott Jenkins;

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to Hightstown Engine Co. #1.

Resolution 2021-068

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PARTIAL WAIVER OF CERTAIN FEES FOR
USE OF OFF-DUTY POLICE OFFICERS – SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

IMPROVEMENTS TO STOCKTON STREET & JOSEPH STREET

WHEREAS, the Borough is currently undertaking a public improvement project known as “Safe Routes to School Improvements to Stockton Street & Joseph Street”; and

WHEREAS, in connection with said project, it is necessary for the contractor, Earle Asphalt Company, to secure police coverage for traffic control through the Borough’s third-party vendor; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Hightstown Borough Code Chapter 2, Subsection 2-19.19, an administrative fee of \$15 per hour and a use of police vehicle fee of \$20 per hour shall be charged in addition to the officer’s hourly rate as determined by the negotiations bargaining agreement between the Borough and FOP; and

WHEREAS, the Borough wishes to waive the administrative and use of police vehicle fees for this public improvement project; and

WHEREAS, the contractor, is still required to schedule all police coverage for traffic control through the Borough’s third-party vendor and pay all other applicable fees including the officer’s hourly rate.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that certain fees associated with the use of off-duty officers for the “Safe Routes to School Improvements to Stockton Street & Joseph Street” be waived as detailed herein.

Resolution 2021-069

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

ESTABLISHING REVISED RATE SCHEDULE FOR COLLECTION OF GARBAGE FROM CERTAIN LICENSED RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

WHEREAS, Section 18-1 of the *Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Hightstown* provides that:

Licensed food establishments located in Block 23 or Block 33 of the Borough of Hightstown shall be permitted to utilize municipal garbage dumpsters located in the Stockton Street parking lot, provided that a written agreement is entered into between the Borough and the licensed retail food establishment, and that the food establishment pays a share of the Borough’s cost for the provision of such service. A schedule of fees shall be established by Resolution of the Borough Council for services provided under this subsection, and shall be updated as necessary in order to ensure the fair distribution of costs among the users.

; and

WHEREAS, the Code Enforcement Official and the Borough Administrator have reviewed the fee schedule and have recommended that it be updated to reflect current usage;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that, effective January 1, 2021, the following rates shall apply for use of said garbage dumpsters:

Mannino’s Pizza.....	\$125 per month
Holy Wong.....	\$130 per month
Shop for Less.....	\$50 per month
Guatepan Bakery.....	\$80 per month
Antojitos Ecuatorianos.....	\$80 per month
Morgan’s Island Grill.....	\$125 per month
TacoRito.....	\$125 per month

12 Farms Restaurant\$125 per month
 Four Boys Icecream.....\$80 per month

and that these rates shall remain in effect until such time as they are modified by further Resolution of Council.

Resolution 2021-070

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
 COUNTY OF MERCER
 STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

**AUTHORIZING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS
 PRIOR TO ADOPTION OF THE 2021 BUDGET**

WHEREAS, an emergent condition has arisen with respect to inadequate appropriation balances remaining in some line items of the 2021 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 2021 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	779,097.00	106,400.00	885,497.00
Capital Outlay – Current	0.00	0.00	0.00
Debt Service - Current	0.00	0.00	0.00
Water/Sewer	232,966.00	175,000.00	407,966.00
Capital Outlay – W/S	0.00	0.00	0.00
Debt Service - W/S	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	1,012,063.00	281,400.00	1,293,463.00

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;
2. Each emergency appropriation listed will be provided for in the 2021 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 Chief Finance Officer.
- 4.

Borough of Hightstown

Emergency Temporary No. 2

4/19/2021

Schedule "A"

Current Fund

Mayor and Council	Salaries and Wages	2,000.00
Municipal Clerk	Salaries and Wages	15,000.00
Financial Administration	Salaries and Wages	10,000.00
Data Processing	Other Expenses	10,000.00
Collection of Taxes	Salaries and Wages	8,000.00
Collection of Taxes	Other Expenses	2,000.00
Municipal Court	Salaries and Wages	4,000.00
Police	Salaries and Wages	100,000.00
Police	Other Expenses	10,000.00
Fire Department	Other Expenses	10,000.00
Uniform Fire Safety Act	Salaries and Wages	2,000.00
Streets and Roads	Other Expenses	10,000.00
Sanitation	Salaries and Wages	15,000.00
Board of Health	Salaries and Wages	9,000.00
Environmental Commission	Other Expenses	700.00
Police and Firemen's Retirement System	Other Expenses	398,747.00
Public Employee's Retirement System	Other Expenses	172,650.00
		<hr/>
Total Current Fund		779,097.00

Water-Sewer Operating Fund

Salaries and Wages		75,000.00
Other Expenses		50,000.00
Social Security		15,000.00
Public Employee's Retirement System		92,966.00
		<hr/>

Total Water Sewer Operating 232,966.00

Total 1,012,063.00

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Meeting Dates

Discussion ensued regarding budget workshop dates. Council and CFO, George Lang, agreed on the dates of May 6th and May 12th for budget workshop meetings. Both meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. and take place via www.zoom.com. The May 6th meeting will discuss the budgets of Water, Sewer, Fire and First Aid.

Cannabis

Councilmember Fowler stated that she attended the League workshop recently. There has been some question regarding the interpretation of opting out and if/when you a municipality can opt back in. There are many more questions that need to be answered. She agrees with forming a subcommittee to thoroughly investigate the impact this could have on the Borough.

Mayor Quattrone appointed Councilmembers Fowler, Jackson and Musing to serve as the subcommittee and bring a recommendation to Council.

Borough Administrator Sopronyi stated that she has already been contacted by 2 individuals to open a dispensary in town.

MAYOR/COUNCIL/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Councilmember Cicalese

Parks & Rec - They had some concerns about the building in Rocky Brook Park. He commended the office and public works. An email was sent on Monday; within a day or two DPW had the building secured. He is helping Parks and Rec understand the protocol with getting things done. Communication is key. Jim Sidelinger will be calling into the next meeting to help them navigate Covid protocols for upcoming events.

Board of Health - We now have a vulnerable population outreach officer. This position covers all the health concerns of the Borough. Not just Covid vaccinations. This position is being paid for by a grant the West Windsor Health Department received. The Health Department is administering the Moderna vaccines and are working to get people back for their second shot.

Councilmember Misiura

Complete Street Committee - May is Bicycle Month. They are partnering with greater TMA for the May 15th bike event at the brewery. Greater TMA will be handing out safety tip cards and working with the Police Department to give them out. Greater TMA is working on a traffic and speed monitoring program. They will provide the Borough

with a digital speed sign that will collect data. The sign can be moved, and it will be moved to several locations throughout the Borough.

Rug Mill - We will be meeting with PRC. They are getting their approvals from DEP. Right now, they are working through some internal issues. He will have a more complete update at the next meeting.

First Aid - Will have a meeting this week. He will have a report next meeting. He is arranging to meet with the Water and Sewer departments.

Councilmember Fowler

Downtown Hightstown - The Historical Society will be having walking tours this summer; June 10 and July 15. The number of people in each tour will be less because of Covid protocols. Cappy Stults will be the tour guide once again. Businesses will piggyback events on the June 10th date.

Environmental Commission - The stream cleanup had 43 people volunteer and they planted a sunset maple tree in Association Park. Special thanks to DPW and the Environmental Commission. This year marks the 10th anniversary of Hightstown being park of Tree City USA.

Councilmember Musing

Welcomed Mayor Quattrone back.

Council President Bluth

Cultural Arts Commission - Will be meeting tomorrow night. Would like to express her deep thanks and appreciation to Peggy and Debbie for their help the past few months while she was filling in for Mayor Quattrone.

Borough Administrator/Clerk, Debra Sopronyi

Thanked Council President Bluth for filling in while Mayor Quattrone was out.

Deputy Clerk, Peggy Riggio

Elections - Petitions have been received for the June Primary. Petitions for the Democrats, Susan Bluth and Dimitri Musing. No petitions were received for the Republicans.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution 2021-071 Authorizing a Meeting that Excludes the Public

Moved by Councilmember Musing; Seconded by Councilmember Misiura.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Cicalese, Fowler, Misiura and Musing voted yes.

Resolution adopted 5-0.

Resolution 2021-071
*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

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 April 19, 2021, via www.zoom.com, 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:

Contract Negotiations – Police/Court Facilities

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 July 19, 2021, 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.

Councilmember Musing moved to adjourn to executive session at 7:46 p.m.; Councilmember Fowler seconded. All ayes.

Council reconvened into Public Session at 8:14 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councilmember Fowler at 8:15 p.m.; Seconded by Councilmember Cicalese. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret M. Riggio
Deputy Borough Clerk