

AGENDA
Hightstown Borough Council
October 5, 2026 | 6:30 p.m.
Hightstown Engine Company No. 1
140 North Main Street, Hightstown

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES DURING YOUR ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING TO AVOID SOUNDS/RINGING OR CONVERSATIONS THAT MAY INTERFERE WITH THE RECORDING OR THE ABILITY OF ATTENDEES TO HEAR THE PROCEEDINGS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Meeting called to order by Mayor Susan Bluth

STATEMENT: 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 advertised in the Trenton Times and the Trentonian as required by law and is posted on the Hightstown Borough website.

Roll Call

Flag Salute

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes September 22, 2026 – Public Session

Public Comment Any person wishing to address Council with his or her comments will have a maximum of three minutes to do so at this time.

Ordinances **2026-20 Final Reading and Public Hearing** Bond Ordinance Providing for Acquisition of Property in and by the Borough of Hightstown, In the County of Mercer, New Jersey, Appropriating \$350,000 therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$332,500 Bonds or Notes of the Borough to Finance Part of the Cost Thereof

2026-21 Final Reading and Public Hearing A Ordinance Authorizing the Borough Administrator to Bid on Behalf of the Borough for the Acquisition of Real Property at Sheriff's Sale

Resolutions **2026-208** Authorizing a Shared Services Agreement with the Mercer County Improvement Authority for Curbside Recycling Program and Services

Discussion Foreclosure Property Ordinance Changes

Subcommittee Reports

Mayor/Council/Administrative Updates

Executive Session **Resolution 2026-209** Authorizing a Meeting that Excludes the Public Personnel

Adjournment

Borough of Hightstown
County of Mercer

Ordinance 2026-20

BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN, IN THE COUNTY OF MERCER, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$350,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$332,500 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN, IN THE COUNTY OF MERCER, NEW JERSEY (not less than two-thirds of all members thereof affirmatively concurring), AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The improvement described in Section 3(a) of this bond ordinance is hereby authorized to be undertaken by the Borough of Hightstown, in the County of Mercer, New Jersey (the "Borough"), as a general improvement. For the improvement or purpose described in Section 3(a), there is hereby appropriated the sum of \$350,000, including the sum of \$17,500 as the down payment required by the Local Bond Law. The down payment is now available by virtue of provision for down payment or for capital improvement purposes in one or more previously adopted budgets.

Section 2. In order to finance the cost of the improvement or purpose not covered by application of the down payment, negotiable bonds are hereby authorized to be issued in the principal amount of \$332,500 pursuant to the Local Bond Law. In anticipation of the issuance of the bonds, negotiable bond anticipation notes are hereby authorized to be issued pursuant to and within the limitations prescribed by the Local Bond Law.

Section 3. (a) The improvement hereby authorized and the purpose for the financing of which the bonds are to be issued is the non-condemnation acquisition of property in furtherance of one or more redevelopment projects in the Borough, including property adjacent to and

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necessary for the effective redevelopment of one or more designated redevelopment areas, including all related costs and expenditures necessary therefor and incidental thereto.

(b) The estimated maximum amount of bonds or bond anticipation notes to be issued for the improvement or purpose is as stated in Section 2 hereof.

(c) The estimated cost of the improvement or purpose is equal to the amount of the appropriation herein made therefor.

Section 4. All bond anticipation notes issued hereunder shall mature at such times as may be determined by the chief financial officer; provided that no bond anticipation note shall mature later than one year from its date, unless such bond anticipation notes are permitted to mature at such later date in accordance with applicable law. The bond anticipation notes shall bear interest at such rate or rates and be in such form as may be determined by the chief financial officer. The chief financial officer shall determine all matters in connection with bond anticipation notes issued pursuant to this bond ordinance, and the chief financial officer's signature upon the bond anticipation notes shall be conclusive evidence as to all such determinations. All bond anticipation notes issued hereunder may be renewed from time to time subject to the provisions of the Local Bond Law or other applicable law. The chief financial officer is hereby authorized to sell part or all of the bond anticipation notes from time to time at public or private sale and to deliver them to the purchasers thereof upon receipt of payment of the purchase price plus accrued interest from their dates to the date of delivery thereof. The chief financial officer is directed to report in writing to the governing body at the meeting next succeeding the date when any sale or delivery of the bond anticipation notes pursuant to this bond ordinance is made. Such report must include the amount, the description, the interest rate and the maturity schedule of the bond anticipation notes sold, the price obtained and the name of the purchaser.

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Section 5. The Borough hereby certifies that it has adopted a capital budget or a temporary capital budget, as applicable. The capital or temporary capital budget of the Borough is hereby amended to conform with the provisions of this bond ordinance to the extent of any inconsistency herewith. To the extent that the purposes authorized herein are inconsistent with the adopted capital or temporary capital budget, a revised capital or temporary capital budget has been filed with the Division of Local Government Services.

Section 6. The following additional matters are hereby determined, declared, recited and stated:

(a) The improvement or purpose described in Section 3(a) of this bond ordinance is not a current expense. It is an improvement or purpose that the Borough may lawfully undertake as a general improvement, and no part of the cost thereof has been or shall be specially assessed on property specially benefitted thereby.

(b) The period of usefulness of the improvement or purpose within the limitations of the Local Bond Law, according to the reasonable life thereof computed from the date of the bonds authorized by this bond ordinance, is 40 years.

(c) The Supplemental Debt Statement required by the Local Bond Law has been duly prepared and filed in the office of the Clerk, and a complete executed duplicate thereof has been filed in the office of the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs of the State of New Jersey. Such statement shows that the gross debt of the Borough as defined in the Local Bond Law is increased by the authorization of the bonds and bond anticipation notes provided in this bond ordinance by \$332,500, and the obligations authorized herein will be within all debt limitations prescribed by the Local Bond Law.

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(d) An aggregate amount not exceeding \$45,000 for items of expense listed in and permitted under N.J.S.A. 40A:2-20 is included in the estimated cost indicated herein for the purpose or improvement.

Section 7. The Borough hereby makes the following covenants and declarations with respect to obligations determined to be issued by the chief financial officer on a tax-exempt basis. The Borough hereby covenants that it will comply with any conditions subsequent imposed by the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), in order to preserve the exemption from taxation of interest on the obligations, including, if necessary, the requirement to rebate all net investment earnings on the gross proceeds above the yield on the obligations. The chief financial officer is hereby authorized to act on behalf of the Borough to deem the obligations authorized herein as bank-qualified for the purposes of Section 265 of the Code, when appropriate. The Borough hereby declares the intent of the Borough to issue bonds or bond anticipation notes in the amount authorized in Section 2 of this bond ordinance and to use the proceeds to pay or reimburse expenditures for the cost of the purpose described in Section 3(a) of this bond ordinance. This Section 7 is a declaration of intent within the meaning and for purposes of Treasury Regulations §1.150-2 or any successor provisions of federal income tax law.

Section 8. Any grant moneys received for the purpose described in Section 3(a) hereof shall be applied either to direct payment of the cost of the improvement or to payment of the obligations issued pursuant to this bond ordinance. The amount of obligations authorized but not issued hereunder shall be reduced to the extent that such funds are so used.

Section 9. The chief financial officer of the Borough is hereby authorized to prepare and to update from time to time as necessary a financial disclosure document to be distributed in connection with the sale of obligations of the Borough and to execute such disclosure document

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on behalf of the Borough. The chief financial officer is further authorized to enter into the appropriate undertaking to provide secondary market disclosure on behalf of the Borough pursuant to Rule 15c2-12 of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "Rule") for the benefit of holders and beneficial owners of obligations of the Borough and to amend such undertaking from time to time in connection with any change in law, or interpretation thereof, provided such undertaking is and continues to be, in the opinion of a nationally recognized bond counsel, consistent with the requirements of the Rule. In the event that the Borough fails to comply with its undertaking, the Borough shall not be liable for any monetary damages, and the remedy shall be limited to specific performance of the undertaking.

Section 10. The full faith and credit of the Borough are hereby pledged to the punctual payment of the principal of and the interest on the obligations authorized by this bond ordinance. The obligations shall be direct, unlimited obligations of the Borough, and the Borough shall be obligated to levy *ad valorem* taxes upon all the taxable property within the Borough for the payment of the obligations and the interest thereon without limitation of rate or amount.

Section 11. This bond ordinance shall take effect 20 days after the first publication thereof after final adoption, as provided by the Local Bond Law.

Introduced: September 22, 2026

Adopted: **SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING 10/5/2026**

MARGARET RIGGIO
BOROUGH CLERK

SUSAN BLUTH
MAYOR

Borough of Hightstown
County of Mercer

Ordinance 2026-21

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR TO BID ON
BEHALF OF THE BOROUGH FOR THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY AT
SHERIFF'S SALE**

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have identified the real property located within the Borough, adjacent to Borough-owned property and a designated area in need of redevelopment, and available for acquisition through a Mercer County Sheriff's sale (the "Property"); and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have determined that acquisition of the Property would be beneficial to the Borough because of its location and its potential use in furtherance of redevelopment and other present or future municipal purposes; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Local Lands and Buildings Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 et seq., including N.J.S.A. 40A:12-5(a), authorizes a municipality, by ordinance, to acquire real property by purchase; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council desire to authorize the acquisition of the Property through the Mercer County Sheriff's sale and to designate Borough Administrator John F. Roman to bid on behalf of the Borough within the financial parameters separately established by the governing body;

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

Section 1. Authorization to Acquire Property.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 et seq., the Borough of Hightstown hereby authorizes the acquisition of the Property described herein through Mercer County Sheriff's sale, including any adjournment, postponement, continuation, or rescheduling thereof.

Section 2. Authority to Bid.

Borough Administrator John F. Roman is hereby authorized to appear and bid on behalf of the Borough at the Mercer County Sheriff's sale of the Property, including any adjournment, postponement, continuation, or rescheduling thereof. The Borough Administrator may submit such bids as he determines appropriate, provided that no bid shall exceed a maximum amount separately established by the governing body in accordance with law and permitted by the availability and appropriation of funds.

The Borough Administrator may decline to bid, discontinue bidding, or refrain from further bidding if he determines that further bidding would not be in the best interests of the Borough.

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Section 3. Completion of Acquisition.

If the Borough is the successful bidder, the Mayor, Borough Administrator, Borough Clerk, Chief Financial Officer, Borough Attorney, Borough Engineer, and other appropriate Borough officials and professionals are hereby authorized to take all actions necessary or appropriate to complete the acquisition of the Property.

Such authority includes execution of the conditions of sale and other necessary documents, payment of the required deposit and balance of the purchase price, acceptance and recording of the Sheriff's deed, and payment of reasonable and necessary acquisition costs, including sheriff's fees, recording fees, title and lien searches, title insurance, survey costs, environmental review costs, and other customary closing expenses.

Section 4. Availability of Funds.

The authority granted by this Ordinance is subject to the availability and lawful appropriation of sufficient funds for the purchase price, required deposit, and reasonable costs associated with the acquisition, as certified by the Chief Financial Officer.

Section 5. Severability.

If any section, paragraph, subsection, clause, or provision of this Ordinance is adjudged invalid, such adjudication shall apply only to the section, paragraph, subsection, clause, or provision so adjudged, and the remainder of this Ordinance shall remain valid and effective.

Section 6. Repealer.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

Section 7. Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication in accordance with law.

Introduced: September 22, 2026

Adopted: **Scheduled for Public Hearing October 5, 2026**

Margaret Riggio
Borough Clerk

Susan Bluth
Mayor

Borough of Hightstown
County of Mercer

Resolution 2026-208

**AUTHORIZING A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE MERCER COUNTY
IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY FOR CURBSIDE RECYCLING PROGRAM AND SERVICES**

WHEREAS, there exists a need in the Borough of Hightstown to provide recycling services to the residents of the Borough of Hightstown; and

WHEREAS, the Mercer County Improvement Authority (“MCIA”) has been designated by the County of Mercer as the implementing agency for the District Solid Waste Management Plan within Mercer County under the Solid Waste Management Act, N.J.S.A. 13:1E-1 et seq., for the curbside collection of recyclables; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Hightstown wishes to participate in the Mercer County District Solid Waste Management Plan by having MCIA provide for the Curbside Recycling Program and Services throughout the Borough during the term of the Agreement specified herein; and

WHEREAS, the Uniform Shared Services and Consolidation Act, N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 et seq., permits the Borough of Hightstown to enter into a Shared Services Agreement with the MCIA to provide for said Curbside Recycling Program and Services during the term of the Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Interstate Waste Services (“IWS”), the Borough’s current recycling vendor, has agreed to allow the Borough to join the MCIA program and to provide the services at the pricing established under the MCIA contract; and

WHEREAS, the Shared Services Agreement between the MCIA and the Borough of Hightstown for the Curbside Recycling Program and Services covers a term of two (2) years and two (2) months, commencing November 1, 2026 through December 31, 2028; and

WHEREAS, the Shared Services Agreement provides for 1,565 residential units at the following rates and charges:

Service Period	Rate Unit/Month	per Monthly Charge	Months Charged	Period/Annual Total
Nov. 1–Dec. 31, 2026	\$8.04	\$12,582.60	2	\$25,165.20
Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2027	\$8.64	\$13,521.60	12	\$162,259.20
Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2028	\$9.30	\$14,554.50	12	\$174,654.00

The total amount authorized for the entire term is \$362,078.40.

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WHEREAS, the Shared Services Agreement between the Borough of Hightstown and the MCIA supersedes all prior shared services agreements between those parties for the provision of Curbside Recycling Program and Services.

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

1. The Shared Services Agreement between the Borough of Hightstown and the MCIA for curbside collection and marketing of recyclable materials for the term of the Agreement is hereby authorized and accepted, and the Mayor and Borough Clerk are authorized and directed to execute said Agreement.
2. The Agreement shall take effect November 1, 2026, subject to the adoption of an appropriate resolution by the MCIA and execution of the Agreement by and between the Borough of Hightstown and the MCIA in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 et seq.
3. The Chief Financial Officer is authorized to make payments in accordance with the rates and charges stated above, subject to the availability and certification of funds and annual budget appropriation as required by law.
4. A copy of the executed Agreement shall be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services for informational purposes, as required by N.J.S.A. 40A:65-4(b).

I hereby certify this to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of Hightstown at a meeting held on October 5, 2026.

Margaret Riggio, Borough Clerk

REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES

Article 14-10 Registration and Maintenance of ~~Vacant and Abandoned Residential~~ Properties in Foreclosure

§ 14-10-1. Definitions. [Ord. No. 2002-23; Ord. No. 2003-05; Ord. No. 2005-11; Ord. No. 2012-08; Ord. No. 2014-03; Ord. No. 2015-10; Ord. No. 2015-16; Ord. No. 2017-02; Ord. No. 2018-04]

As used in this article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

CREDITOR — ~~A state chartered bank, savings bank, savings and loan association or credit union, any person or entity required to be licensed under the provisions of the "New Jersey Residential Mortgage Act," P.L. 2009, c. 53 (N.J.S.A. 17:11C-51 et seq.), any foreclosing entity subject to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 46:10B-51 (P.L. 2008, c. 127, Sec. 17, as amended from time to time) and any entity acting on behalf of the creditor named in the debt obligation including, but not limited to, servicers. A mortgagee, or an agent or assignee of a mortgagee, including a servicer, that has filed a complaint in the Superior Court seeking to foreclose upon a residential or commercial mortgage. If the foreclosing entity changes by assignment, transfer, or otherwise after filing, the new entity is the creditor. Creditor excludes the State, its political subdivisions, State, county, and local government entities, and their agents or assignees.~~

PROPERTY IN FORECLOSURE - A residential or commercial property in the Borough for which a summons and complaint in an action to foreclose on a mortgage has been filed in the Superior Court.

VACANT AND ABANDONED RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY — ~~Consistent with Section 1 of P.L. 2012, c. 70 (N.J.S.A. 2A:50-73), residential real estate with respect to which the mortgagee proves, by clear and convincing evidence, that the mortgaged real estate is vacant and has been abandoned or where a notice of violation has been issued pursuant to § 14-10-5A of this article and Section 3 of P.L. 2021, c. 444 (N.J.S.A. 40:48-2.12s3). Where a notice of violation has not been issued pursuant to § 14-10-5A of this article and Section 3 of P.L. 2021, c. 444 (N.J.S.A. 40:48-2.12s3), real property shall be deemed vacant and abandoned if the court finds that the mortgaged property is not occupied by a mortgagor or tenant as evidenced by a lease agreement entered into prior to the service of a notice of intention to commence foreclosure according to Section 4 of the Fair Foreclosure Act, P.L. 1995, c. 244 (N.J.S.A. 2A:50-56), and at least two of the following conditions exist: [Amended at time of adoption of Code (see Ch. 1, General Provisions, Art. 1-8)]. A residential or commercial property that is not legally occupied by a mortgagor or tenant and is in such condition that it cannot be legally reoccupied because at least two of the following conditions are present or found:~~

- A. Overgrown or neglected vegetation;
- B. The accumulation of newspapers, circulars, flyers or mail on the property;
- C. Disconnected gas, electric, or water utility services to the property;
- D. The accumulation of hazardous, noxious, or unhealthy substances or materials on the property;
- E. The accumulation of junk, litter, trash or debris on the property;
- F. The absence of window treatments such as blinds, curtains or shutters;
- G. The absence of furnishings and personal items;
- H. Statements of neighbors, association management, delivery persons, or government

REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES

employees indicating that the residence is vacant and abandoned;

- I. Windows or entrances to the property that are boarded up or closed off or multiple window panes that are damaged, broken and unrepaired;
- J. Doors to the property that are smashed through, broken off, unhinged, or continuously unlocked;
- K. A risk to the health, safety or welfare of the public, or any adjoining or adjacent property owners, exists due to acts of vandalism, loitering, criminal conduct, or the physical destruction or deterioration of the property;
- L. An uncorrected violation of a municipal building, housing, or similar code during the preceding year, or an order by municipal authorities declaring the property to be unfit for occupancy and to remain vacant and unoccupied;
- M. The mortgagee or other authorized party has secured or winterized the property due to the property being deemed vacant and unprotected or in danger of freezing;
- N. A written statement issued by any mortgagor expressing the clear intent of all mortgagors to abandon the property;
- O. Any other reasonable indicia of abandonment.

§ 14-10-2. Registration of ~~vacant and abandoned properties~~properties in foreclosure. [Ord. No. 2002-23; Ord. No. 2003-05; Ord. No. 2005-11; Ord. No. 2012-08; Ord. No. 2014-03; Ord. No. 2015-10; Ord. No. 2015-16; Ord. No. 2017-02; Ord. No. 2018-04]

~~A. A creditor filing a summons and complaint in an action to foreclose on a vacant and abandoned property, or a creditor who has previously filed a summons and complaint to foreclose on a residential property which subsequently becomes vacant and abandoned, shall within 30 calendar days after the building becomes vacant and abandoned or within 30 calendar days after assuming ownership of the vacant and abandoned property, whichever is later; or within 10 calendar days of receipt of notice from the Borough, and annually thereafter, file a registration statement for such vacant and abandoned property with the municipal clerk on forms provided by the Borough for such purposes. Any failure to receive notice from the Borough shall not constitute grounds for failing to register the vacant and abandoned property.~~

A. A creditor filing a summons and complaint to foreclose a residential or commercial mortgage shall register the property as a property in foreclosure, whether or not vacant and abandoned, within 10 calendar days after service of the summons and complaint. Lack of Borough notice does not excuse registration.

B. Each ~~vacant and abandoned property~~property in foreclosure having a separate block and lot number as designated in the official tax maps of the Borough shall be registered separately.

B-C. The registration shall identify the filing date, court and docket number; state whether the property is vacant and abandoned; provide the property street address, block and lot; and provide the creditor and contact information required by N.J.S.A. 46:10B-51 (residential) or N.J.S.A. 40:48-2.12s2 (commercial).

C-D. The registration statement shall include the name, street address, telephone number, and email address (if applicable) of a person 21 years or older, designated by the creditor as the

REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES

authorized agent for receiving notices of code violations and for receiving process in any court proceeding or administrative enforcement proceeding on behalf of such creditor in connection with the enforcement of any applicable code.

~~D.E.~~ The registration statement shall include the name, street address, telephone number, and email address (if applicable) of the firm and the actual name(s) of the firm's individual principal(s) responsible for maintaining the ~~abandoned and vacant~~ property. The individual or representative of the firm responsible for maintaining the ~~abandoned and vacant~~ property shall be available by telephone or in person on a twenty-four-hour-per-day, seven-day-per-week basis. The two entities may be the same or different persons. Both entities shown on the statement must maintain offices in the State of New Jersey or reside within the State of New Jersey.

~~E.~~ ~~The registration shall remain valid for one year from the date of registration except for the initial registration which shall be valid through December 31 of the year in which it was filed. The creditor shall be required to renew the registration annually as long as the building remains vacant and abandoned and shall pay a registration or renewal fee in the amount prescribed in § 14-10-3 of this article for each vacant and abandoned property registered.~~

F. Registration shall be renewed annually for as long as the property remains in foreclosure, regardless of occupancy. It terminates upon dismissal of the action, vesting of title in a party other than the creditor, or another event permitted by law; the creditor shall promptly report the event.

~~F.G.~~ The annual renewal shall be completed by January 1 each year. The initial registration fee shall be pro-rated for registration statements received less than 10 months prior to that date.

~~G.~~ ~~The creditor shall notify the municipal clerk within 30 calendar days of any change in the registration information by filing an amended registration statement on a form provided by the municipal clerk for such purpose.~~

H. Changes to representative, agent, or service-contact information are due within 10 days. If the property later becomes vacant and abandoned, the creditor shall promptly update its status.

~~H.I.~~ The registration statement shall be deemed prima facie proof of the statements therein contained in any administrative enforcement proceeding or court proceeding instituted by the Borough against the creditor.

§ 14-10-3. Fee schedule. [Ord. No. 2002-23; Ord. No. 2003-05; Ord. No. 2005-11; Ord. No. 2012-08; Ord. No. 2014-03; Ord. No. 2015-10; Ord. No. 2015-16; Ord. No. 2017-02; Ord. No. 2018-04]

~~The initial registration fee for each vacant and abandoned property under the provisions of this article shall be \$500. The fee for the first annual renewal shall be \$1,500 and the fee for the second annual renewal shall be \$3,000. The fee for any subsequent annual renewal beyond the second renewal shall be \$5,000.~~

Annual fee: \$500 for each registered property in foreclosure, plus an additional \$2,000 annually if the property is vacant and abandoned when the complaint is filed or becomes vacant and abandoned while in foreclosure. The additional fee is due when that status is identified and on each annual renewal while it continues. Registration fees are municipal charges under the Tax Sale Law, N.J.S.A. 54:5-1 et seq.

REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES

§ 14-10-4. Creditor responsibility for vacant and abandoned properties. [Ord. No. 2002-23; Ord. No. 2003-05; Ord. No. 2005-11; Ord. No. 2012-08; Ord. No. 2014-03; Ord. No. 2015-10; Ord. No. 2015-16; Ord. No. 2017-02; Ord. No. 2018-04]

A. A creditor filing a summons and complaint in an action to foreclose on a residential property within the Borough shall be immediately responsible for the care, maintenance, security and upkeep of the exterior of the property, after the property becomes vacant and abandoned as defined in this article.

B. Where a creditor is located out-of-state, the creditor shall be responsible for appointing an in-state representative or agent to act on the creditor's behalf for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of Subsection A of this section. Notice of said representative or agent shall be provided to the municipal clerk pursuant to § 14-10-2C and D and pursuant to Paragraph (1) of Subsection a of Section 17 of P.L. 2008, c. 127 (N.J.S.A. 46:10B-51). (N.J.S.A. 46:10B-51 for residential property and N.J.S.A. 40:48-2.12s2 for commercial property.

B.C. The creditor shall secure the property against unauthorized entry; comply with State and Borough exterior-maintenance codes; and maintain liability insurance, including a vacancy policy when applicable, covering harm caused by a physical condition of the property while registered.

§ 14-10-5. Notice. [Ord. No. 2002-23; Ord. No. 2003-05; Ord. No. 2005-11; Ord. No. 2012-08; Ord. No. 2014-03; Ord. No. 2015-10; Ord. No. 2015-16; Ord. No. 2017-02; Ord. No. 2018-04]

A. The enforcement officers designated in this article shall be authorized to issue a notice to a creditor that has filed a summons and complaint in an action to foreclose on a residential or commercial property within the Borough if the enforcement officer determines that the creditor has violated any provision of this article.

A. ☐ The enforcement officers designated in this article shall be authorized to issue a notice to a creditor that has filed a summons and complaint in an action to foreclose on a residential or commercial property within the Borough, if the enforcement officer determines that the creditor has violated this article by failing to provide for the care, maintenance, security, and upkeep of the exterior of a vacant and abandoned property. Where a Creditor is an out-of-state creditor, the notice shall be issued to the representative or agent that has been identified by the creditor pursuant to § 14-10-4B and Paragraph (1) of Subsection a of Section 17 of P.L. 2008, c. 127

(N.J.S.A. 46:10B-51).

B. A notice concerning a violation of the requirements for the care, maintenance, security, or upkeep of the exterior of a vacant and abandoned property shall require the creditor to correct the violation within 30 days. The notice referenced in Subsection A of this section shall require the creditor to correct the violation(s) within 30 days of receipt of the notice, or within 10 days of receipt of the notice if the violation presents an imminent threat to public health and safety.

B.—

C. The issuance of a notice pursuant to Subsection A of this section shall constitute proof that a residential property is vacant and abandoned for the purposes of this article. describe the violation and identify the applicable correction period.

§ 14-10-6. Enforcement officers. [Ord. No. 2002-23; Ord. No. 2003-05; Ord. No. 2005-11;

REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES

Ord. No. 2012-08; Ord. No. 2014-03; Ord. No. 2015-10; Ord. No. 2015-16; Ord. No. 2017-02; Ord. No. 2018-04; amended at time of adoption of Code (see Ch. 1, General Provisions, Art. 1-8)]

The duty of administering and enforcing the provisions of this article is conferred upon the municipal clerk, Construction Official, Zoning Officer, Housing Inspector, Health Officer, Borough police, and any other duly appointed representatives, including all municipal officials referenced in § 14-12-1 of the Borough Code.

§ 14-10-7. Violations and penalties. [Ord. No. 2002-23; Ord. No. 2003-05; Ord. No. 2005-11; Ord. No. 2012-08; Ord. No. 2014-03; Ord. No. 2015-10; Ord. No. 2015-16; Ord. No. 2017-02; Ord. No. 2018-04]

- A. A creditor subject to this article that is found by the municipal court of the Borough, or by any other court of competent jurisdiction, to be in violation of the requirement to correct a care, maintenance, security, or upkeep violation cited in a notice issued pursuant to this article shall be subject to a fine of \$1,500 for each day of the violation. Any fines imposed pursuant to this paragraph shall commence 31 days following the receipt of the notice, except if the violation presents an imminent risk to public health and safety, in which case any fines shall commence 11 days following receipt of the notice.
- B. An out-of-state creditor subject to this article that is found by the municipal court of the Borough, or by any other court of competent jurisdiction, to be in violation of the requirement to appoint an in-state representative or agent pursuant to this article shall be subject to a fine of \$2,500 for each day of the violation. Any fines imposed on a creditor for the failure to appoint an in-state representative or agent shall commence on the day after the ten-day period set forth in Paragraph (1) of Subsection a of Section 17 of P.L. 2008, c. 127 ~~N.J.S.A. 46:10B-51 or N.J.S.A. 40:48-2.12s2(N.J.S.A. 46:10B-51)~~ for providing notice to the municipal clerk that a summons and complaint in an action to foreclose on a mortgage has been served.
- C. A creditor subject to this article that is found by the municipal court of the Borough, or by any other court of competent jurisdiction, to be in violation of the requirement to register a vacant and abandoned property pursuant to § 14-10-2 shall be subject to a fine not exceeding ~~\$2,000~~\$1,500 per day. Any fines imposed on a creditor under this subsection shall commence ~~11-31~~ days following receipt of notice from the Borough pursuant to § 14-10-~~2A~~5.
- D. No less than 20% of any money collected by the Borough pursuant to this article shall be utilized by the Borough for Municipal Code enforcement purposes.

Borough of Hightstown
County of Mercer

Resolution 2026-209

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 5, 2026, at the Hightstown Firehouse Hall, 140 North Main Street, 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

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 5, 2027, 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.

I hereby certify this to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of Hightstown at a meeting held on October 5, 2026.

Margaret Riggio, Borough Clerk