

REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 17, 2019

A Regular Meeting of the Highland Park Mayor and Council was held in Borough Hall, 221 South 5th Avenue, on Tuesday, December 17, 2019, and was called to order by Mayor Brill Mittler at 7:00 PM. Mayor Brill Mittler read the Open Public Meetings Statement.

Present: Mayor Brill Mittler, Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hale, Welkovits; Borough Attorney Schmierer; Borough Administrator Jover; Deputy Clerk Santiago.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan; Borough Clerk Hullings.

On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, the minutes of the Regular and Conference Meetings held on July 2, 2019, August 6, 2019 and September 3, 2019, were approved as distributed by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, George, Hale, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

Abstain: Councilperson Foster-Dublin,

Mayor Brill Mittler asked the Council members to present their reports.

Councilman Hale reported that the Main Street Highland Park building is now accessible with the installation of a wheelchair ramp. There will be a presentation on December 18th at 8:00 p.m. at the Conservative Temple on the results of a study done on anti-Semitism. Interested residents must register to attend. The Borough's new website is just about up and ready. It is user friendly, has quick links and is easier to navigate. Residents will be able to track what is going on with the Borough Council and the Boards and Commissions. It has been a long process and he thanked the Public Information Commission, Monica Jackson and Emma Missey for their efforts.

Councilwoman Welkovits reported that last Thursday, the Planning Board approved a yearlong project, the Master Plan. She thanked Jim Constantine and Chris Cosenza for their efforts and for the new zoning map. There will be a menorah lighting on December 22nd at 4:30 p.m. at the new pavilion, which was made possible by a matching grant from the DCA for downtown. The idea is to create a small area to mark downtown and the pavilion has been used several times this week. On December 26th there will be a Kwanzaa celebration at Kinetics.

Councilwoman Foster Dublin reported that due to the inclement weather, Highland Park has a Code Blue at the Community Center. Anyone who needs information should contact the Highland Park Police Department. The community center will open at 7:00 p.m., with a cutoff of 9:00 p.m. and attendees must be out by 7:00 a.m. the next morning so that the Community Center can prepare for the day's activities. Highland Park has been experiencing a number of break ins. Residents are urged to lock their homes and their cars. She encouraged residents to utilize the sidewalks when walking as it is getting darker earlier and the sidewalks are covered with leaves, ice, etc. On Friday at 4:30 p.m., the Teen Center will be celebrating Christmas and Santa will be making an appearance.

Councilman Fine reported that he attended the Library Board meeting last night and the children and teen book sale raised \$2,000. He wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Councilman George wished everyone a Happy Holiday and reported that volunteers were out working in the Meadows Trail in the inclement weather. He thanked them for their dedication. On the agenda tonight they will be voting on a grant submission for a roots for rivers reforestation grant and a grant submission for a clean fleet electric vehicle incentive program. He played a scam phone message from his cell phone and warned residents, especially seniors, that social security does not contact you via phone.

Borough Administrator Jover reported that she received a report from the drone survey for the counting of the deer in town. She sent the report to the Division of Fish and Wildlife. The Borough will hold a community meeting with representatives from the Division to go over next steps. Highland Park was recertified at silver level at the League of Municipalities Conference. They will continue to work on getting Highland Park to the next level.

Borough Attorney Schmierer- No report.

Mayor Brill Mittler reported that this is year 5 of the Park Partners Program. They will hold a public display in late February where residents can view the various submissions and cast their votes in the five different categories. Submissions are due by January 10th. Last week, there was a horrible act of anti-Semitism in Jersey City, which is a very diverse community with a lot of rentals like Highland Park. There was a vigil held last week for the victims and she thanked those who attended to share in the grief. Four lives were lost as a result of this senseless violence. Chief Abrams and members of his department attended the funeral for the Jersey City Police Officer that was killed.

Mayor Brill Mittler opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves.

Herb Gross, Adelaide Gardens, commented that he wanted to take a moment to extend an invitation to everyone to visit the Veteran's home in Edison, New Jersey. It is a beautiful facility and if anyone is uneasy, he will go with them. The veterans would appreciate people stopping by to say hello. Councilman George asked for a contact number. Mr. Gross provided the phone number for Commander William Young, 732-995-7501.

No one else appearing to be heard, the Mayor closed the public discussion.

The Clerk reported advertising an ordinance entitled, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK, CHAPTER 328, "SEWER AND WATER", for consideration of passage on final reading by title and that affidavits of publication thereto are on file. She also reported that the ordinance had been posted and made available to the public, as required by law.

On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilwoman Welkovits, and carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote, the above entitled ordinance was taken up on final reading by title.

Mayor Brill Mittler declared the public hearing on the ordinance open to all officials and persons present and called upon all those wishing to speak for or against the ordinance to do so.

No one appearing to be heard and no objections having been received in writing, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilwoman Welkovits, the ordinance entitled as above, being Ordinance No. 10-1782, was duly adopted by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hale, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilwoman Welkovits, and carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote:

No. 12-19-350

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Ordinance entitled, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK, CHAPTER 328, "SEWER AND WATER", passed on final reading at this meeting be delivered to the Mayor for her approval, and if approved by her, that the same be recorded in full by the Borough Clerk in a proper book kept for that purpose, and be advertised by publishing the same by title in the "Home News Tribune", of East Brunswick, New Jersey, a newspaper published in the County of Middlesex and circulating in this municipality, there being no newspaper published in this municipality, in the manner prescribed by law.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hale, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

No. 12-19-351

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that transfers of 2019 budget appropriation balances shall be made as follows:

Budget Transfer #3			
	Description	From	To
	Clerk S&W		2,500.00
	Planner OE		2,000.00
	Legal OE	4,500.00	
		<u>\$4,500.00</u>	<u>\$4,500.00</u>

Resolution Nos. 12-19-352 through 12-19-363, were duly adopted on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hale, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

The following resolution, introduced by the Council as a Whole, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-352

WHEREAS, the following have posted Escrow Fees in the amounts indicated for various projects as indicated below:

<u>ACCOUNT NO.</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</u>
T-12-56-825-191	Fox & Foxx	\$ 464.25	425 Donaldson Street
T-12-56-824-077	RCHP AHC	\$ 81.84	Reform Church
T-12-56-824-084	Parker	\$ 425.66	1421 River Road
T-12-56-825-180	Stern, Zev	\$ 340.00	27 Brookdale Court
T-12-56-825-190	Kemeny, Z	\$ 191.00	35 No. 6 th Avenue
T-12-56-825-194	Marcus, Daniel	\$ 206.75	74 Lawrence Avenue
T-12-56-825-195	Berman, Lisa & Scott	\$ 669.67	442 South 2 nd Avenue
T-12-56-825-198	Warton, Colleen & Ash	\$ 450.10	119 Johnson Street
T-12-56-825-202	Ghandi, Rohan & Dawn	\$ 113.50	348 Graham Street
T-12-56-827-127	Parker	\$ 791.50	1421 River Road
T-12-56-827-128	Hann	\$ 666.61	114 Johnson Street
T-12-56-832-081	Eleftheriou, Steven	\$ 500.00	217 Montgomery Street
T-12-56-832-087	Stern, Zev	\$ 500.00	27 Brookdale Court
T-12-56-832-089	AAA	\$ 500.00	204 Lincoln Avenue
T-12-56-832-090	AAA	\$ 500.00	38 Brookdale Court
T-12-56-832-091	AAA	\$ 500.00	500 So. 4 th Avenue
T-12-56-832-092	AAA	\$ 500.00	607 South 1 st Avenue
T-12-56-832-093	Gold Medal	\$ 500.00	28 South 3 rd Avenue
T-12-56-832-095	AAA	\$ 500.00	118 Washington Avenue
T-12-56-832-096	Gold Medal	\$ 500.00	708 Eden Avenue

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T-12-56-832-105	AAA	\$ 500.00	421 Grant Avenue
T-12-56-833-KRE	Kreitman	\$ 7,337.12	34 South 4 th Avenue
T-12-56-833-PDG	Park Dental Grp	\$ 1,319.40	515 Raritan Avenue
	Total	<u>\$18,057.40</u>	

WHEREAS, the Director of the Department of Code Enforcement has determined that Escrow Fees can be released.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Finance Director shall be and is hereby authorized and directed to remit to the above the amounts indicated, the same being the amount of refund due for return of Escrow Fees referenced.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Director of Code Enforcement and the Finance Director forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Council as a Whole, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-19-353

WHEREAS, the following have posted Escrow Fees in the amounts indicated for various projects as indicated below:

<u>ACCOUNT NO.</u> <u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>
T-12-56-829-TAN	Highland Park Development Partners LLC (Tantum)	\$14,505.02	Raritan Ave Gateway Redevelopment Project Block 173; Lots 41-49

WHEREAS, the above mentioned is no longer the named conditional redeveloper for the Gateway Redevelopment Project; and

WHEREAS, the remaining Escrow Fees are no longer required by the Borough of Highland Park and can be released.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Finance Director shall be and is hereby authorized and directed to remit to the above the amounts indicated, the same being the amount of refund due for return of the Escrow Fees referenced.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Director of Code Enforcement and the Finance Director forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-19-354

WHEREAS, more than 85 percent of New Jersey’s rivers and streams are impaired due to factors like erosion and polluted storm water runoff; and

WHEREAS, throughout much of the state, floodplains have been deforested and left without trees to help filter water, absorb flooding, or cool the river for fish; and

WHEREAS, reforestation of floodplains along river banks is an important way to help protect New Jersey’s water resources as trees help filter water, absorb flooding, and cool the river for fish; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park has municipal property known as the Meadows along the Raritan River, which has lost significant number of trees in the flood plain due to storms; and

WHEREAS, the Highland Park Environmental Commission have the skills and desire to take on this reforestation project and would like to apply for a grant from Sustainable Jersey and The Nature Conservancy to support reforestation efforts in the floodplain of the Raritan River in the Meadows area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Environmental Commission and Borough Administrator are hereby authorized and directed to submit said grant application to Sustainable Jersey; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Borough Administrator and the Environmental Commission forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-19-355

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park formally approves the grant application for the above stated project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and the Clerk are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application identified as LAIF-2020 Improvements to Woodbridge Avenue-00023 to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of the Borough of Highland Park.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mayor and the Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the Borough of Highland Park and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-19-356

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the Clean Fleet Electric Vehicle Incentive Program through the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to offset the cost of purchasing electric fleet vehicles and installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Mayor and Borough Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute and submit the grant application to the BPU.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Borough Administrator forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Economic Development and Planning Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-357

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park supported Main Street Highland Park in its grant proposal to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to install improvements at the Farmers Market parking lot; and

WHEREAS, Main Street Highland Park was not awarded the full grant request; and

WHEREAS, an additional \$12,000.00 is needed in order to purchase the pavilion that would be the appropriate size for the Farmers Market and other programs; and

WHEREAS, funds are available for this purpose in Account No. T-12-56-816-PUL as reflected by the certification of funds available by the Chief Financial Officer, shown below;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Assistant Finance Officer is directed to issue payment to Main Street Highland Park in the amount of \$12,000.00; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Borough Administrator and Finance Department forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-358

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park has need of the services of an engineer to provide engineering services in connection with the Implementation of the 2020 Roadway Improvements, in accordance with letter proposal from Bruce Koch, CME Associates, dated December 11, 2019, attached to the original of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, such services are professional services as defined in the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, CME Associates, Parlin, N.J., is a firm of licensed engineers of the State of New Jersey with extensive experience in providing these services; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council desire to provide for the method of compensation of said consulting engineer; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in Account No. C-04-55-821-001 in an amount not to exceed \$95,116.00, as reflected by the Certification of Funds Available by Chief Financial Officer, shown below; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Mayor and Borough Clerk are authorized and directed to execute and attest on behalf of the Borough an Agreement for professional services with CME Associates, 3141 Bordentown Avenue, Parlin, NJ 08859, a copy of which is attached to the original of this original, and that notice of this contract be published as required by law and that a copy of executed Agreement be placed on file in the office of the Borough Clerk.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-359

WHEREAS, there is a need for replacement of three (3) fire hydrants at 129 Barnard Street, 159 Exeter Street, South 8th Avenue and Woodbridge Avenue; and

WHEREAS, two (2) quotes were received as follows:

B&W Construction Company	\$23,800.00
Fletcher Creamer	\$24,000.00

and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Works has recommended that said removal and replacement be purchased from B&W Construction Company, South River, NJ; and

WHEREAS, funds are available for this purpose in Account No. 9-05-55-500-423 for a total amount not to exceed \$23,800.00, as reflected by the certification of funds available by the Chief Financial Officer, shown below;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Department of Public Works is hereby authorized and directed to accept the quote from B&W Construction Company, PO Box 574, South River, NJ 08882, at a total amount not to exceed \$23,800.00; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Department of Code Enforcement and the Chief Financial Officer forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Safety Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-360

WHEREAS, Gill Car 3, LLC, Car 20, LLC, RHN01 LLC, Frank R. Catalfamo has filed with the Clerk of this Borough an application for an Owners License to operate taxicabs in this Borough under the provisions of the Ordinance providing for such licenses for the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Chief of Police and/or his designee has investigated said applicant and has reported favorably upon said applications;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Council hereby determined that said applicant is qualified and that public necessity and convenience would be served by the issuance of such License.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk shall be and is hereby authorized and directed to issue an Owner License to the aforesaid applicants.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Safety Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-361

WHEREAS, David Angel, Robert Hala, Sukhchain Singh Gill, Robert Clementi, Venkateswara Reddy Chinthala, Richard Bernard Buck Jr., Frank Catalfamo, Nicholas George Lagakos and Chimaeze Oliver Nwaro have filed with the Clerk of this Borough an application for a License to operate taxicabs under the provisions of the Ordinance providing for such Licenses for the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Chief of Police and/or his designee has investigated said applicants and has reported favorably upon said applications;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that said applicants are qualified and that public necessity and convenience would be served by the issuance of said Licenses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk be and is hereby authorized and directed to issue an Operator License to the aforesaid applicants.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-362

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Borough Clerk be and is hereby authorized and directed to notify the Borough Finance Director that since the adoption of a resolution on January 2, 2019 showing the names of the officers and employees of the Borough of Highland Park whose salaries are on an annual basis, there have been the following changes, to wit:

PATRICK RENALDI, Emergency Services Director, at annual salary of \$40,000.00, effective January 1, 2020.

ELIZABETH ROESENER, School Crossing Guard, at an annual salary of \$9,208.00, effective January 1, 2020.

SADE EDENS, Police Officer, \$300.00 annual payment, attaining and maintaining EMT certification.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Finance Director be and is hereby directed to make the necessary changes in the payroll records of the Finance Department in accordance with the changes established by this resolution.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 12-19-363

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that all claims presented prior to this meeting as shown on a detailed list prepared by the Borough Treasurer, and which have been submitted and approved in accordance with Highland Park Ordinance No. 1004, shall be and the same are hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk shall include in the minutes of this meeting a statement as to all such claims approved as shown in a Bills List Journal in accordance with said Ordinance.

The bills approved for payment at this meeting, Bills List 12/17/2019 can be found in the Bills List Journal Book No. 39.

Mayor Brill Mittler opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves.

No one appearing to be heard, the Mayor closed the public discussion.

Work Session:

Veteran's Parking Signs – Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the County has signs available and she would like to get one for the Community Center. She would also like to reach out to businesses such as Quick Chek and Stop and Shop to see if they would be interested in placing signs in their parking lots.

Water and Sewer RFP Update – Borough Administrator Jover reminded everyone that she and Greg Fehrenbach have been working with McManimon and Scotland to draft the RFP and contract to go out to bid for operations and maintenance of the water and sewer system in the Borough. They have a strong draft developed and have shifted to a State Comptroller and have shared it with the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee. There is still time to make changes. The State Comptroller has 30 days to send back comments. They need to present plan to the DPW union as members of that union are directly impacted. The union is aware of the RFP and the plan is to have those employees to be put in the Public Works Department. The time line is fairly aggressive and the need to publish the notice by January 21st. Proposals are due February 21st and they plan to have a pre-proposal meeting in early February. They are looking to award the contract and start in June, 2020. The municipal budget will reflect this change.

Final Review of Goals - Councilman Fine noted that they are pursuing shared services for the Municipal Court. They had a meeting with representatives from New Brunswick, North Brunswick and Piscataway. The Court Administrator collected information to see if there would be a savings. More details to follow as they explore this possible option further.

Reorganization Reports – Mayor Brill Mittler wanted to confirm that she will be giving a Mayor's report only at the Reorganization Meeting to save time. The Council Members all concurred that there will only be a Mayor's report.

The following resolution, introduced by the Council as a Whole, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilwoman Foster-Dublin, seconded by Councilman Hale, and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hale, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

Abstained: None.

No. 12-19-364

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council is of the opinion that such circumstances exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, in the County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from the closed session at close of tonight's open session.

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2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
(Contract Negotiations)
3. It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matter will be made public when these matters are resolved or as soon thereafter as it is deemed to be in the public interest to do so.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilwoman Foster-Dublin, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Santiago
Deputy Clerk