

REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 15, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Highland Park Mayor and Council was held via Zoom, on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, and was called to order by Mayor Brill Mittler at 7:01 PM. Annual Notice of this meeting was provided to The Star Ledger on December 4, 2019 and to The Home News Tribune on December 4, 2019. In addition, notice this meeting via zoom was faxed to The Home News Tribune and emailed to The Star Ledger and the Highland Park Planet on December 11, 2020 and was posted on the Borough website at www.hpboro.com and on the bulletin board at Borough Hall, 221 South Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ on December 11, 2020 and has remained continuously posted as required by law.

Present: Mayor Brill Mittler; Councilpersons Canavera, Fine, Foster, George, Hale; Borough Attorney Schmierer; Borough Administrator Jover; Borough Clerk Hullings.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

Mayor Brill Mittler read the memorial proclamation for Rev. Dr. Alfred B. Johnson as well as the proclamation for the Tree Fund Donation. The Memorial Proclamation honored Rev. Dr. Alfred B. Johnson as a "Distinguished Citizen". The second proclamation was to recognize Mr. Paul Ehrlich, who donated \$2,000 to the Tree Replacement Fund in honor of his father, Solomon Ehrlich.

On motion made by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman George, the minutes of the Regular/Work Session Meetings held September 15, 2020, October 6, 2020, October 20, 2020, November 10, 2020 and December 1, 2020, were approved, as distributed, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, Fine, Foster, George, Hale.

Opposed: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

Abstain: None.

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

Councilwoman Canavera wished everyone Happy Holidays. Today is the 229th anniversary of the Bill of Rights being ratified. She is happy to work in a town where we consider people's freedoms. Lastly, today is National Cupcake Day.

Councilman Hale reported that Friday, December 18th will be the last Farmer's Market. With 2020 not being an easy year, Main Street Highland Park did a remarkable job in making it happen in the first place, but also making it thrive. He thanked the 25 local businesses who joined him and the Mayor along with Commissioner Kenneth Armwood and the County Economic Development Team for a special briefing about Middlesex County based small grant programs for small businesses. It was a great turnout and they received a lot of great information about how small businesses in Middlesex County are eligible for these grants of up to \$30,000 dollars. There is a lot of information on the County website for those who were unable to attend. He thanked Commissioner Armwood and his team for making it happen. He asked residents to shop local this holiday season for everything that they possibly can. He asked that if they shop local, they hold up their camera a shoot a 15-second video and post it on Facebook. This type of advertising is fantastic for the local businesses. He wished everyone a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

Councilwoman Foster reported that the Police Department hired a new Police Officer, Shakiyla Brown, who will be starting tomorrow. The Police Department has hired Rutgers University to do data analysis. This is something that the community was adamant about and that they did not use internal staff in the Police Department to conduct the analysis. They reached out to a number of agencies and Rutgers responded and will be able to assess our needs according to the criteria. Phase I will be an inventory of the Police CAD system beginning with a data aggregation. Tomorrow, we are expecting a major snowstorm and there are ordinances on the books regarding parking and snow removal. The information regarding these ordinances will be posted on the Borough website. She wished everyone a Happy Holiday. If you are celebrating with family, please wear your mask and be safe. She added that the Police Department Community Forum that was to be held on Thursday would be postponed until next year.

Councilman Fine noted that he would soon be completing his second three-year term as an elected member of this Governing Body. He has enjoyed being on the Council and trying to enhance the quality of life of the residents for the past six years. He wanted to thank the people of Highland Park for giving him the opportunity to serve the Borough as a Councilmember and the Highland Park Democratic Municipal Committee for nominating him as a candidate for Council in 2014 and 2017. He thanked the Borough Administrator, Teri Jover, who has worked diligently to put the Borough on good footing, and the Borough Clerk, Joan Hullings, and Deputy Borough Clerk, Jennifer Santiago, for all the work they do for Highland Park residents, including helping provide important information on a regular basis to the Council. He wanted to thank all the Department Heads and all Borough staff for all they do. He hopes they all know how appreciated they are. As former, Councilmember Nate Segal, of blessed memory, once told me, imagine how high our taxes would be without our volunteers. To all the volunteers that he has worked with on boards, commissions, and committees over these past six years, he offered his heartfelt thanks for the great amount of time and effort they have put in to make Highland Park a better place to live. He thanked all his colleagues with whom he has served on Council with over the past six years; Councilman Jon Erickson and Councilwoman Susan Welkovits, both of blessed memory; Councilman Gary Potts, Councilman Jim Walsh and Councilman Matt Hersh. For his current colleagues, he wanted to thank Councilwoman Stephany Kim-Chohan for bringing a millennial vision to the Council and Councilman Matt Hale for moving economic development forward in Highland Park. The people of Highland Park are extremely lucky to have both of them working on their behalf. He thanked Councilwoman Tara Canavera, who has only served the Borough as a member of the Council for a few months, but has already made a meaningful impact on the Council, and will hopefully; continue to serve the Borough for a long time. For all

six years on Council, he has served with three amazing public servants, who all live, breathe Highland Park, and are fighting for all of the residents on a daily basis. Council President Phil George, who helps the entire Council with his tremendous knowledge of municipal government and his no-nonsense attitude and his commitment to fairness. Councilwoman Elsie Foster, who has served our Borough admirably for twenty years, for her wisdom, sage advice, commitment to equity, institutional knowledge and always being willing to say what needs to be said. Finally, he thanked Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler, who truly works at her job with the best interests of Highland Park in mind, and continues to bring her vision for a vibrant downtown closer and closer to reality. In closing, he apologized to anyone that he may have offended. He knows that he has made mistakes and he hopes that he has made some worthwhile contributions to the Borough during his time on Council. He wished all Highland Park residents Happy Holidays.

Councilman George commented about Councilman Fine. In six years, he has never called Josh and received an answer that he could not do it or was too busy. He has had more stimulating conversations and more debates/discussions about what Highland Park needs to be and where it is going with Josh. They had a tradition that they did not always keep of being in contact on Thursday mornings by phone. They disagreed a lot and had some problems with some issues, some of which went on for almost a year. The conversations were actually pleasurable; there was never discourtesy; there was never insult and that was not only to him, or to the Mayor and Council, but to the residents. They always respected first and foremost the needs, desires and the wants of the residents, the requirements of our ordinances in State law and how all of those could work together to move us forward. He enjoyed every minute of it and he generally respects him. He will miss him on Council and he wished him the best. He had great training here for whatever he needs to go forward in how to work with people and he thinks that the residents of Highland Park owe him a great debt for bringing what he brought across the spectrum to the Borough. A snowstorm is approaching rapidly. He has been in touch with the Superintendent of Public Works, who is monitoring the State channels. The Department of Public Works will start brining the roads tomorrow morning. Those are the white stripes you see going up and down the road. Brining is not to melt the snow; it is to prevent it from freezing, which is a concern with heavy, wet snow. The plows will be deployed as soon as the snow starts and hits two inches. First priority for plowing is the main arteries throughout town. The safe walking streets and the dining areas will be cleared after all streets are accessible and passable. He gave thanks for the generous donation by the Ehrlich family to the tree fund. Trees contribute so much to Highland Park by providing a vibrant canopy over the town. There was a Public Works and Public Utilities Committee scheduled for Thursday, but he requested that it be rescheduled, as he would be riding with the Public Works Crews while they plow the streets. He wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Borough Administrator Jover thanked Councilman Fine for his kind words and wished him well. If the snow is as bad as they anticipate, they are going to have to cancel Thursday's South Side recycling because the Public Works employees will be up all night plowing. If the snowstorm is a bust and it rains all night, recycling buckets can be put out for collection. If there is at least four to five inches of snow, do not put out your recycling for collection. Borough Hall is still closed to the public, except by appointment only. Borough staff is working staggered schedules to reduce the number of employees in the building at any given time.

Borough Attorney Schmierer - No report.

Mayor Brill Mittler reported that despite the pandemic, one of the Borough's prized programs, the annual Park Partners Grant Program, would continue this year. The Borough invites applications, holds a public review and voting session and then provides up to \$2,000 each to help execute five winning projects. The number of residents participating in this vote has grown to over 400 last year. Project applications must be in one of the following categories: the environment; arts, culture and diversity; safety or universal access; and health and wellness. In this year's competition, they are particularly interested in seeing applications for activities or practices that are COVID-19 safe. That means virtually and/or with outdoor virtual social distance. The winning application in each category will be decided in an online applicant's exhibition and voting session, which will be held in February of 2021. Only Borough residents are eligible to participate in the voting session. Residents who are interested in obtaining a grant are asked to complete an application that is available on our website and submit it to Harry Glazer, Public Information Officer, by email at hglazer@hpboro.com no later than Monday, January 18, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. She is very encouraged to see the introduction of the coronavirus vaccine and the initial stage of inoculation for healthcare workers in major hospitals in our State including Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick. A number of residents have asked her about when the vaccine will be available for the general public and whether it will be covered by medical insurance and what side effects it might have. The current supply of vaccines is limited and healthcare workers and residents of long-term care facilities are being given preference in receiving the vaccine. According to the Wall Street Journal, while there is not yet an established schedule for when the vaccine will be available to the rest of the population, it is estimated that the first dose of the vaccine will be available to the general public in the late spring or early summer. She recommended that everyone interested in learning more about the vaccine visit the CDC website, which addresses many of these questions and that website is www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov. She is proud of the young Highland Park athletes and sports teams. The Highland Park Recreation Department's 12 and under boys baseball team, led by Coaches Sean Blumberg and Rob Kaplan Sherman, and Manager Jeremy Renner, finished their fall season with a strong 11 wins, 5 losses and one forfeit record and the 10 and under boys baseball team, newly formed in 2020, led by Coaches Benji Lockspiser and Rob Kaplan Sherman, and Manager Ari Lockspiser, had a stellar season starting with a 14-0 no hitter victory and concluding with a 13-0 record. They won the league championship in two hard-fought games against strong opposing teams from other municipalities. She congratulated Tim Stark, a Highland Park High School Alumni, and the Highland Park High School Boys Cross Country Team on being the Group One Central 2020 champions. This is the team's first title win since 1968. Senior Ben Goddish finished first, Senior Angelo Botteon finished second, Junior Liam Tilton finished third, and Sophomore Jason Lin finished fourth. Lastly, as Councilman Fine noted, this is his last Council Meeting. She publicly thanked him for all the service he provided over the last six years to all the Highland Park residents. He really cares about the

community. Josh served on the Health and Human Services Committee as Chair at one time and our Recreation and Arts Committee. He most recently worked very closely with her as the Finance Committee Chair and helped guide their decisions to keep taxes as reasonable as they possibly could. He has been a devoted Councilmember that cares a lot about the community. They may not have agreed on everything, but they knew how to work and move things forward. She appreciated all that he has done for her and for the community and she thanked him again for his service. She reported that she did all of her holiday shopping in the stores downtown.

Mayor Brill Mittler opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves. The total time for this session is 21 minutes; three minutes maximum per speaker. Comments are limited to items on the agenda. If you want to speak on an item that is not listed, there will be an opportunity to do so later in the meeting.

Sonya Headlam, 133 Benner Street, asked about item 14b on the Consent Agenda that would authorize Rutgers University Center in Policing to conduct an analysis of the Highland Park Police Motor Vehicle Stop Data. She asked why the analysis was so limited when residents have been asking for a more comprehensive analysis of that data. Councilwoman Foster noted that Phase I is an analysis of the CAD system, where they capture everything that is done in the Police Department and that happens on a traffic stop. Phase II will be where they actively have data at their fingertips that they can look at and it will also be a training tool for the Police Department.

Rebecca Cypess, 52 Brookdale Court, commented that she is a member of the Middlesex Black Jewish Coalition and asked that the Council consider adopting a resolution in support of bill A4656, which allows for the establishment of a Civilian Complaint Review Board with subpoena power. She also asked that an itemized Police Department budget be made available for public review.

Peter Spool, 146 Graham Street, commented about item 14b, noting that the resolution is sparse and there is no time for the services to be provided. It would be nice if it included analysis of the use of force. He checked on the Rutgers University Center on Policing and noted that they do not have a statistician. Chief Abrams noted that this is to look at their traffic stop data going forward. It is not going to include the time period that the DeLacey Davis report covered. This is because of recommendations made following his report. They are picking traffic stop data to begin with because that is the call type that we have the most data recorded for so that going forward, they can figure out what kind of data they have and what kind of data they need. They have been working on this for over a year and Rutgers does have statisticians assigned to them.

Lois Lebbing, North 2nd Avenue, commented that Highland Park has not heard of the new three year old New Jersey statute that pertains to free removal of snow and ice in residential areas for residential sidewalks, driveways and entrances.

Ravit Duncan, Lawrence Avenue, thanked Councilman Fine for his service and wished everyone Happy Holidays. She also asked about item 14b on the consent agenda and asked how Phase II fits into Phases III, IV and V. Chief Abrams noted that the DeLacey Davis report was begun before his tenure as Chief began. When it was presented, he had five recommendations of which they had already completed those tasks. The first step with Rutgers is to take the data we have to get meaningful answers and then show them how to use that data to make the Police Department better. It will drive policy and it will drive community engagement as well as community transparency. They want to start with traffic data and apply it to other parts of policing. He is excited to finally get this done.

Jessica Hundson, 304 Montgomery Street, asked about the community involvement and community input piece as it relates to the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council that has met three times. She wondered whether this proposal was discussed with the Equity Advisory Council. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the process for this came long before the Mayor's Equity Advisory Council. There will be a chance for the Equity Advisory Council to make recommendations after they see and hear the results of this collection of data. Ms. Hundson asked if this was discussed with the Equity Commission that preceded the Equity Advisory Council. Councilman Hale noted that the community was very adamant that there be an outside entity to monitor the data going forward and that the outside entity have the professional capability to provide an independent audit of data on an ongoing basis.

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

On motion made by Councilwoman Canavera, seconded by Councilman George and carried by affirmative voice vote of all councilpersons present, Resolution No. 12-20-326 was tabled from consideration.

Resolution Nos. 12-20-323 through 12-20-332, except Resolution No. 12-20-326, were duly adopted on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilwoman Canavera, and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, Fine, Foster, George, Hale.

Opposed: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

The following resolution, introduced by the Council as a Whole, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-323

WHEREAS, THE Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents,

youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey.

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey recognizes that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages' and therefore has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park further recognizes that it is incumbent upon not only public officials but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park has applied for funding to the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse through the County of Middlesex; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey hereby recognizes the following:

1. The Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park does hereby authorize submission of a strategic plan for the Highland Park Municipal Alliance grant for fiscal year 2021 in the amount of:

DEDR	\$ 7,664.00
Cash Match	\$ 1,916.00
In-Kind	\$ 5,748.00
Total Alliance Budget	\$15,328.00

2. The Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Safety Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-324

WHEREAS, there is a need for a statistical analysis policing data related to motor vehicle stop and policing data obtained by the Highland Park Police Department; and

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

Rutgers University Center on Policing	\$20,000.00
John Jay College of Criminal Justice	Unresponsive

WHEREAS, the Police Department has recommended that said services be purchased from the Rutgers University Center on Policing, 106 Somerset St., 7th Floor, New Brunswick, NJ, 08901 based on their quote for same and their ability to provide the work requested by the Police Department; and

WHEREAS, funds are available for this purpose in Account No. 0-01-25-240-237, 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 Police Department is hereby authorized and directed to accept the quote for a Statistical Analysis of Highland Park Police Departments Motor Vehicle Stop Data by Rutgers University Center on Policing, 106 Somerset St, 7th Floor, New Brunswick NJ 08901 at a total cost of \$20,000.00; and

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

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-325

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 7, 2020 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:

SHAKIYLA BROWN, Police Officer, at an annual salary of \$44,449.00, effective December 16, 2020.

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 Public Safety Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-327

WHEREAS, the Highland Park Fire Department had a need to make emergency repairs to Fire Engine No. 2; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Local Public Contracts Law NJSA 40A:11-6 et seq, a contract may be awarded and immediate delivery of goods or the performance of services may be provided when an emergency affects the public health, safety or welfare; and

WHEREAS, Fire & Safety Services is qualified and able to make said emergency repairs and has been authorized to proceed with the work in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in the amount of \$5,000.00 in Account No. 0-01-26-315-232, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer, shown below:

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 issue payment in the amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 to Fire & Safety Services, 200 Ryan Street, South Plainfield, NJ 07080, for services in connection with repairs to Fire Engine No. 2.

The following resolution, introduced by the Administration Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-328

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park has concluded negotiations with the Highland Park Superior Officers Association of P.B.A. Local No. 64 (SOA), on a Collective Bargaining Agreement for Calendar Years 2019 thru 2022;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park as follows:

1. The Mayor and Borough Council hereby approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Borough and the SOA, which is attached hereto;
2. The Mayor and Borough Clerk are authorized and directed to execute and attest the Collective Bargaining Agreement with SOA, said Agreement in a form having been approved by the Borough Labor Attorney;
3. The Borough Finance Department is authorized and directed to make payment of retroactive pay adjustments to members of the SOA, upon receipt and approval of a signed Collective Bargaining Agreement, and adoption of the appropriate salary ordinance amendments, if necessary.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Safety Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-329

WHEREAS, Gill Car 3 LLC 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 2021; and

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

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 applicant.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Safety Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-330

WHEREAS, Manzoor Batth, Sukhchain S. Gill and Michael Valor 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 2021; 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 Licenses to the aforesaid applicants.

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

No. 12-20-331

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 4-20-142, adopted April 21, 2020, the Borough Council authorized execution of a contract with Esposito Construction, LLC for Improvements to Cherry Street, South Park Avenue and South Adelaide Avenue, in an amount not to exceed \$790,229.95, without further resolution of Council; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to said resolution a contract was duly executed; and

WHEREAS, it appears from Pay Estimate No. 2, filed by CME Associates, that certain work under said contract has been completed and approved, and there is due to Esposito Construction, LLC the sum of \$494,103.21 in accordance with said Pay Estimate for work performed from September 10, 2020 to November 19, 2020; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in Account No. C-04-55-821-001, as reflected by the Certification of Funds Available by the Chief Financial Officer Lori Majeski, show below; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Chief Financial Officer be and is hereby authorized and directed to pay Esposito Construction, LLC the sum of \$494,103.21, as certified by the Engineer in Pay Estimate No. 2, subject to the Clerk's receipt of the Certified Payroll and Project Manning Reports and additional documents as necessary;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Borough Administrator, Chief Financial Officer and Esposito Construction, LLC forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 12-20-332

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 12/15/2020 can be found in the Bills List Journal Book No. 40.

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

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, Fine, Foster, George, Hale.

Opposed: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

No. 12-20-333

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill No. A4930/Senate Bill No. S3013 would change all references of security aid to health and safety aid in the "School Funding Reform Act of 2008", P.L.2007, c.260 (C.18A:7F-43 et al.), and related statutes to reflect that a secure school also includes students' mental health and wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill No. A4930/Senate Bill No. S3013 would also amend the “Secure Schools for All Children Act,” P.L. 2016, c.49 (C.18A:58-37.8 et seq.), to provide that the aid allocated for the provision of security services to nonpublic schools under the statute may also be used for mental health services. The bill also makes various other changes to the law to reflect this change; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park commend 18th District State Senator Patrick Diegnan for co-sponsoring S3013;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park as follows:

1. The Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park hereby urge its elected representative in the New Jersey State Legislature to adopt Assembly Bill No. A4930/Senate Bill No. S3013.
2. A certified true copy of this Resolution upon its adoption shall be furnished to Assemblywoman Nancy J. Pinkin, Assemblyman Robert Karabinchak, and State Senator Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr.
3. A certified true copy of this Resolution upon its adoption shall be furnished to the Governor of the State of New Jersey/

Mayor Brill Mittler opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves. Speakers are limited to 3 minutes and the discussion to end at 9:00 PM.

Councilwoman Foster and Chief Abrams noted that the contract for the Rutgers University Center on Policing would be for a year.

Jeff Vardaro, Wayne Street, asked about the data analysis that Rutgers is going to be doing. He questioned whether the data they would be looking at is something that is publicly available through an OPRA request. Councilwoman Foster noted that they would be looking at data that is on the CAD system. Chief Abrams noted that they will be looking at all the information they have in their CAD system, some of it is protected, and some of it is not from OPRA type requests. They are not going to just analyze what data we have, but will show us if we have a deficiency in the data that they are collecting. Mr. Vardaro wondered about the non-public data that will be shared with Rutgers and whether the results will be shared with the public at the end of the process. Borough Attorney Schmierer indicated that the data will be shared with the public.

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

Work Session:

Special Election – Borough Attorney Schmierer noted that the Borough will hold a Special Election on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. The purpose of the Special Election is to fill the final year of Susan Welkovits’ term through December 31, 2021. They are working with the Middlesex County Clerk’s Office and the County Board of Elections under Title 19. The Borough Clerk notified the County Clerk on November 18th that the Democratic Committee sent notification that Tara Canavera would be the candidate. No other petitions were received to run in the Special Election. The Borough Clerk’s office will conduct a ballot draw on December 18th. There will be one live polling location and there will be a ballot drop box located in front of Borough Hall for the mail in ballots.

Revaluation – Borough Administrator Jover noted that this matter was discussed with the Finance Committee. The State Board of Taxation has identified municipalities in the State of New Jersey that need to do a revaluation, which is a reassessment of all properties in the Borough to get their values up to market standard. She wanted to let the Council know that it is a possibility in the coming year and the Tax Assessor and the Finance Department are getting organized for when that happens. The Borough would have to do an RFP for a company to do the work on behalf of the Borough. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that it has been at least 20+ years since the last revaluation. Discussion amongst the Council about making sure that this process is communicated effectively so that people understand. Councilwoman Foster noted that she found a fact sheet on the County website that she would share with the Governing Body.

Goals – Not discussed.

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

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, Fine, Foster, George, Hale.

Opposed: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

No. 12-20-334

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.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
(Personnel)
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.

REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 15, 2020

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 9:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Hullings
Borough Clerk