

The Highland Park eNews

February 20, 2018 www.hpboro.com 221 S. Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ, 08904 732-572-3400

Events & Meetings

Tuesday, February 20

Borough Council
7:00 p.m., Borough Hall

Tuesday, February 20

Commission for Universal Access
7:30 p.m., Borough Hall

Wednesday, February 21

Sustainable Highland Park
7:30 p.m., Environmental Education Center

Thursday, February 22

Food Pantry Distribution
9:00 – 10:45 a.m. & 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Senior/Youth Center

Thursday, February 22

H.P. Rehabilitation & Redevelopment
Screening
7:00 p.m., Senior/Youth Center

Thursday, February 22

Resume Writing Workshop
7:00 p.m., Library

Saturday, February 24

Food Pantry Distribution
9:30 – 10:30 a.m., Senior/Youth Center

Sunday, February 25

Move with the Mayor
12:00 p.m., Kinetics Flow

Monday, February 26

Recreation Advisory Committee
7:00 p.m., Senior/Youth Center

Monday, February 26

Library Board of Trustee
7:30 p.m., Library

Monday, March 5

Move with the Mayor
12:00 p.m., Kinetics Flow

All meetings are subject to change, please check the Borough's website at www.hpboro.com for updates

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Memo from Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler



Last year, I outlined for you the four main areas we were addressing: **Tax Stabilization, Downtown Development, Infrastructure, and Quality of Life.** For 2017, we added **Transparency** as a goal. Over the past year, we have accomplished some key goals in each of these areas. In 2018, I intend to work with the community to further our goals and continue our growth. Here are some highlights:

Tax Stabilization: Residents had the opportunity to pre-pay quarterly real-estate taxes, to compensate for the loss of the tax deduction in 2018.

The Borough was awarded multiple grants that will benefit the community in the coming year. Here are five of them:

- [Microgrid Feasibility Study](#) – to analyze the effects of a microgrid on keeping key Borough buildings open during temporary emergency outages
- [Safe Routes to School](#) – providing planning services to make walking and bicycling safer in town
- [Aetna Healthcare Grant](#) – bringing new community health programs to Highland Park
- [EPA/DEP Brownfield Investigation Grant](#) – an aid in downtown development
- [Transportation Trust Fund](#) – to repair designated roads throughout town

We also executed shared programming, and are working to reduce costs due to litigation. Finally, I continue to press our legislators to release the Energy Tax Rebates owed to us and other municipalities. Highland Park alone is owed well over \$5,000,000!

Downtown Development: Downtown Development is the key to our economic future. Designating the entire municipality as an “Area in Need of Rehabilitation” helps streamline our development processes. Several downtown development projects have come before our new Rehab Screening Advisory Committee. Two downtown projects have been sent forward to the Redevelopment Agency for approval. In 2018 we will continue to aggressively pursue downtown development.

Infrastructure: Highland Park, and most of the Northeast, relies on an aging infrastructure. In 2018 we will continue to identify areas in need of updating, and find ways to economically move our infrastructure into the 21st century. We have teamed up with PSE&G to replace gas lines and repair streets throughout town. We are working with Middlesex Water Company to identify cost effective ways to update our water and sewer lines and better monitor water meters. And, we are working with the New Jersey Department of Transportation on a number of pedestrian safety issues.

Quality of Life: The outstanding programs offered to our residents of all ages, by our dedicated team of employees and volunteers, are a reflection of the commitment we have to one another. This year, we hope to expand on our offerings. Here are some highlights from 2017:

- [Teen Center](#) - Groundbreaking held in November 2017, planning for late 2018 opening.
- [HP Gives a Hoot](#) – Over \$10,000 in donations to date, and over 500 lunches distributed in 2017. “Peer to Peer” mentorship program established at the high school.
- [Unity Celebration](#) – First celebration with community children in March 2017. Second celebration will be held on March 18, 2018.
- [Seniors and Adults](#) – Recognized as a “Healthy Town to Watch” for our many health initiatives, and received certification as New Jersey’s first HeartSafe Municipality.
- [Tree Dedication Program](#) – Program for residents to honor or remember someone with a plaque for a tree in Highland Park.
- [Arts](#) – Awarded Honorable Mention for Innovations in Governance by the League of Municipalities in 2017 for our outdoor public arts for all programs, including a Sculpture Walk and Chalk Art Festival.
- [Park Partners “Give Back” Grant Program](#) – Last year we saw record participation, with some incredible programs that benefitted our community. **This year’s Vote Session is February 25, 3:00-5:00pm at the Senior/Youth Center.** Come out to vote for your favorite program!

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Questions? Feedback? We want to hear from you!

Let us know what you think by writing to communications@hpboro.com

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Highland Marks

Highland Park resident **Gary Pfeffer** received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pride Center of New Jersey. This honor is reserved for "Extraordinary Commitments to the Growth and Sustenance of New Jersey's LGBT Community". Gary received his award, and a tree dedication, at the Pride Center's annual Volunteer Appreciation Brunch on January 21st.

Have you – or someone you know – done something recently that's particularly noteworthy? Let us know about it and we'll include it in Highland Marks! Write to communications@hpboro.com

Highland Park Book Club

The Highland Park Human Relations Commission, New Brunswick Area NAACP, and the Highland Park Parents of Students of Color are sponsoring the second session of the Highland Park HRC Book Club.

Thursday, March 29, 7:00pm at the Highland Park Senior/Youth Center, 220 S. 6th Avenue, join them for a discussion of the book *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of our Racial Divide* by Carol Anderson. Special guest Bill Davis will join the discussion. Davis is a Rutgers Professor & Historian for the New Brunswick Area NAACP.



If you made less than \$64k in 2017 you can get your taxes done free by an IRS Certified Volunteer provided by United Way. Beginning February 7, 2018 every Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. during tax season. By appointment only! Call 732-819-0052 or stop by the Senior/Youth Center, 220 South 6th.

You must bring the following items with you: W2, Picture ID, Social Security Card and copies of last year's form.

Mayor's Teen Advisory Council Elections

Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler invites all teens who will be in 8th-12th grade for the 2018-2019 school year to join the Mayor's Teen Advisory Council. Do you have great ideas? Do you want to improve programming for teens in the community? Work with the Mayor and Borough officials to create events for teens, discuss concerns, and organize volunteer work. Executive and Committee positions available.

Elections will be held on Wednesday, April 18, 3:00pm at Borough Hall, 221 South 5th Ave, in the Council Chambers. For more information or to receive an application, contact: Stacy Kaplan, skaplan@hpboro.com or 732-819-3781. Applications due by March 30.

Garbage Collection Schedule Change



Borough offices were closed on Monday, February 19 (President's Day). The Garbage collection is as follows for the remainder of the week:

- Tuesday – Business District, North Side & Triangle recycling collection
- Wednesday – Business District, North Side & Triangle g garbage collection
- Thursday – South Side recycling collection
- Friday – Business District & South Side garbage collection

Memo from Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler (Continued

Transparency: I believe that the keys to good local government include civic engagement and open, two-way communication. Over the years, we have endeavored to bring opportunities for participatory governance to our residents. In 2017, that meant:

- Open public meetings on important issues relevant to residents
- Creation of a Civics for the Community lecture series
- Increased social media, bi-weekly E-news reporting, and semi-annual newspaper mailed to over 4,000 households
- More timely posting of Council meetings and posting of agendas, draft resolutions and ordinances on the Borough's website
- Ongoing "Meet the Mayor" events throughout town

In 2018, we will:

- Update the Borough website to make it more user-friendly
- Explore additional social media venues for two-way communication between residents and the governing body
- Continue to schedule more informal "Meet the Mayor" get-togethers where I invite you to share your ideas with me.

I am looking forward to another successful year of growth and development in all of these areas for Highland Park. I am honored to serve as your Mayor, and welcome your input and ideas any time!

2018 Park Partners Voting Session

Come out to vote for your favorite programs to benefit our community at the 5th Annual Park Partner's Vote Session!

Sunday, February 25, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Senior/Youth Center, 220 South 6th Ave, Vote for one project in each category – each winner receives up to \$2,000 to complete their project.

Projects Include:

- **Arts:** Buck Art, Klezmer Series, Opera in the Park
- **Environment:** Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Colorful Birdhouse Project
- **Health & Wellness:** RVR Track for Kids, Gaga Ballpit, Virtual Reality for Senior Citizens
- **Cultural & Diversity:** Raices Roots Music Concert Series, Dance for Fitness & Community
- **Safety:** UNIFI (United Neighbors Improving Food Insecurity)

Use Your Reusable Bags and Win!



Sustainable Highland Park and Highland Park's Stop & Shop supermarket are teaming up to encourage shoppers to use reusable bags, and cut down on plastic bags. Use your reusable bags, or take no bag, and enter a free weekly drawing to win a \$25 gift card!

Help Highland Park become even more sustainable by cutting back on plastic bag use! This program is funded by a grant from Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G.

Move with the Mayor Mondays



Join Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler for winter "Move with the Mayor Mondays"! Starting Monday, February 5, join the fitness session from 12:00-12:50am at Kinetics Fitness, 409 Raritan Avenue. Sessions will be followed by a "Chat and Q&A" with a local healthcare professional.

Sessions are free and open to the public! Please register at kineticsnj@gmail.com or 732-317-8931 (Walk-ins Welcome).