

The Highland Park eNews

October 19, 2018 www.hpboro.com 221 S. Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ, 08904 732-572-3400

Events & Meetings

Monday, October 22

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

Monday, October 22

Zoning Board of Trustee
7:30 p.m., Borough Hall

Tuesday, October 23

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

Tuesday, October 23

Rehabilitation & Redevelopment Screening
Committee
7:00 p.m., Borough Hall

Wednesday, October 24

Public Safety Committee
7:00 p.m., Borough Hall

Wednesday, October 24

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

Thursday, October 25

Food Pantry Distribution
9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Highland Park Community Center

Thursday, October 25

Living Our Later Years Well
7:00 p.m., Public Library

Saturday, October 27

Food Pantry Distribution
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., H.P. Community Center

Saturday, October 27 & Sunday, October 28

National Prescription Take Back Day
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., H.P. Community Center

Sunday, October 28

Halloween Costume Parade & Festival
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., H.P. High School Gym

Sunday, October 28

The Magic of Recycling - A Family Show
2:00 p.m., Public Library

Thursday, November 1

Writer's Circle: A Monthly Writing Group
6:30 p.m., Library

Wednesday, November 7

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

Wednesday, November 7

Environmental Commission
8:00 p.m., Environmental Education Ctr.

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 Brill Mittler: Borough Government cuts costs with shared services



At Middlesex Mayors meeting, left to right: NJ Shared Service Czar Nicholas Platt, East Brunswick Mayor Brad Cohen, Highland Park Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler, and NJ Shared Service Czar Jordan Glatt.

Tax stabilization is the number one priority of my administration, not an easy task in this era of reduced State and Federal funding. As residents, we expect local government to keep taxes as low as possible. And while we realize that things like police and fire departments, a myriad of municipal services, and infrastructure maintenance come with significant costs, we don't want local taxes to increase any more than is absolutely necessary. I get that. After all, I am a Highland Park resident too.

For Highland Park, a small municipality with no indigenous industry or large retailer, situated in a state with one of the highest costs of living in the US, the challenge to keep taxes low is especially difficult. It requires creativity and determination.

One way that Borough government has tackled this challenge is by investigating and setting up "shared services" agreements with other towns and government entities. Such agreements make wise use of limited resources and allow Highland Park to save hundreds of thousands of dollars in expenses.

Over the past decade the Borough has established the following shared services agreements;

- Shared Custodial Services with the Highland Park Board of Education
- Shared Housing Authority Executive Director with Woodbridge
- Shared Animal Control Services with Edison
- Shared Health Officer with Middlesex County
- Shared Fire Marshall with Middlesex County

These arrangements are great steps for saving money. I believe that there are additional opportunities to realize significant savings through more shared services that will not impact negatively on our quality of life here in Highland Park.

Towards that goal, I worked with East Brunswick Mayor Brad Cohen to convene a meeting of Middlesex County Mayors earlier this month to explore additional opportunities for shared services agreements. For statewide perspective and encouragement, we invited NJ Governor Phil Murphy's two 'Shared Services Czars' - Jordan Glatt and Nicholas Platt - to participate in the meeting. The meeting was well attended, with dozens of towns represented, and the discussion was very informative. I anticipate continuing these conversations with the mayors from nearby municipalities. Clearly, there are some promising ideas of areas to explore for additional tax savings. I look forward to exploring these ideas in the months to come.

Questions? Feedback? We want to hear from you!

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

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Whether it's remembering to take out the trash or figuring out what you can and can't recycle, "Recycle Coach" has you covered.

The app will set you up with a personalized garbage and recycling calendar and send you collection reminders when you need them; that way you never miss garbage day again.

Recycle Coach is on every device, even Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant, making it convenient for you to get the information you need when you need it.

HP Public Library haunted by 'Frankenstein'



In honor of the 200th anniversary of the publication of Frankenstein, the classic novel by Mary Shelley, the Highland Park Public Library hosted a free live radio play of Frankenstein staged by Raconteur Radio on Monday October 15th at 7:00 pm.

The 50 minute performance attracted a standing room only crowd, which participated actively in a talk-back with the actors after the show. The program ended with a member of the cast singing "The Monster Mash," in a suitably comic/frightful tone, to the amusement of the audience.

Raconteur Radio stages theatrical presentations of vintage radio plays, classic works of literature and film, and pop culture parodies for live audiences at traditional and improvised venues throughout the Tri-State region. Raconteur Radio is the brainchild of Alex Dawson, an instructor in the English Department at Rutgers University, owner/operator of the former Raconteur Books store in Metuchen, and now a Highland Park resident. For more information on Raconteur Radio, go to: <http://raconteurradionj.blogspot.com/>.

Halloween Party and Costume Parade



Join us for our annual Halloween Party and Costume Parade on Sunday, October 28th from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Highland Park High School Gym. Enjoy music, dancing, bounce house, crafts and refreshments! There will be a Halloween Parade with prizes for best costumes, Halloween safety tips, giveaways, and more!

For more information call the Highland Park Community Center at 732-819-0052.

Residents Discuss Proposed 'Bring Your Own Bag' Ordinance

Roughly three dozen residents, including a few highly-motivated and well-informed high school and middle school students, came out on the night of Tuesday October 16th to discuss a draft ordinance to ban single use plastic bags in Highland Park. The public forum drew out thoughtful discussion on the scientific basis for the ban, the impact on local businesses, and the strategies for assisting residents in adapting to the new policies.



The proposed ordinance developed by Sustainable Highland Park and the Borough Council;

- Creates a six month window for businesses to phase out plastic bags and discourage their use through 10 cent fees on all single use plastic bags;
- Then requires Borough businesses to offer only compliant paper bags, with 10 cent fees to discourage their use in favor of reusable plastic bags.



This "Bring Your Own Bag" ordinance will be formally introduced at a public meeting of the Borough Council within the next month.

A second public forum will be held after the introduction of the ordinance. Following the second forum, the Borough Council will consider adoption of the ordinance.

Residents are encouraged to review the draft ordinance, which is posted on the front page of the Borough's website.

The Senior/Youth Center is Now Renamed, The "Highland Park Community Center" to Reflect the Expanded Mission & Services

Strategic managers recognize that *what* a product or organization is called can go a long way in signaling who should use it. Sometimes an 'old' name can become a restraint to growth and change.

With this perspective in mind the Highland Park Borough Council, at their October 9th conference meeting, decided to change the name of the Highland Park Senior/Youth Center. The building will now be known as the *Highland Park Community Center*.

The Borough Council made this change to reflect the fact that;

- The Center is venue to many HP Borough Youth and Adult Recreation programs i.e. table tennis, robotics and engineering classes, art classes, nature classes, youth theater, chess, and adult exercise classes;
- The Center offers many programs and services traditionally associated with community centers such as health & wellness activities, guest speakers, public forums, municipal band rehearsals, community events, and many other functions;
- Baby Boomers are reportedly uncomfortable being referred to as 'seniors' and the current name of the building may discourage some from associating with it.

Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler and Councilwoman Stephany Kim-Chohan (chair of the Recreation and Council on Aging Committees) discussed this suggested name change with the leaders at the Senior/Youth Center, before it was brought to the Council, and were encouraged by them to advance the idea.

The Borough is currently preparing new signage for the building and planning a renaming ceremony to take place in the weeks ahead.