



February 2023

QUARTERLY

A Publication of the Borough of Highland Park



HIGHLAND PARK COUNCIL ELECTS NEW MAYOR AND NEW COUNCIL PRESIDENT



At a special meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council on Tuesday night January 24th, Borough Council members voted for Acting Mayor Elsie Foster to assume the position of Mayor and complete the remaining one year in the term of Gayle Brill Mittler, who resigned at the end of December. Foster was one of three candidates nominated to complete the Mayor's term; the other nominees were Council Member Phil George and Council Member Matthew Hersh.

Council members also voted for Council Member Matthew Hersh to assume the position of Council President, which was vacated upon Foster's election to Mayor. Hersh was one of two candidates nominated for Council President; the other nominee was Council Member Stephany Kim Chohan.

In her remarks before the vote by the Council, Foster identified her priorities as Mayor to be safety, affordability, and downtown development. She stressed her 22 years serving on the Council and her considerable experience, having served on all the committees of the Council.

After the vote, she stated: "I'm complimented by the confidence my colleagues on the Council have placed in me. I look forward to working with them and with the residents to improve on the affordability, sense of community, and opportunities in our town."

Hersh stated after the vote: "Strong public and administrative leadership is what we need now. We need to build and leverage community relationships to establish trust and allyship through transparency, engagement, and equity. Thank you to my council colleagues for supporting me as Council President and congratulations to Mayor Foster."

Foster and Hersh were sworn into their respective new roles by Borough Attorney Ed Schmierer. Foster's son Brandon and nephews Travis and Tashawn participated in her swearing in.



UPDATES *from the* BOROUGH COUNCIL

Stop & Shop Update

The Mayor and Council understand that a grocery store is critical to the future of our town. The Borough is working on two parallel tracks: 1) find and recruit a new supermarket for the existing location; and 2) pursue redevelopment of the site, incorporating a grocery store as an anchor use. In addition, the Borough is pulling together a variety of resources, including different transportation options, to help bridge the gap between when the existing store closes and a new one reopens. For more information on this topic, please see the Frequently Asked Questions document, on the Borough's website, at www.hpboro.com.



Rent Control Ordinance

In December the Borough Council passed an ordinance updating rent control regulations in Highland Park. These regulations apply to all rental dwellings in the Borough including single-, two-, three-, and four-family dwelling units. The ordinance establishes an annual allowable annual rent increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) that is capped at 5 percent and also establishes a Rent Control Board made up of tenants, landlords, and homeowner/residents that will work to implement the ordinance. The new regulations go into effect upon publication.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES at the Highland Park Community Center

Office of Aging

Free Tax Assistance is available and open to the public sponsored by the HP Department of Community Services and United Way. If you made less than \$70,000 in 2022, you may file for FREE with one of our IRS Certified Volunteers. This service is by appointment only, February 1st thru March 29th. Please call (732) 819-0052 to make an appointment and for more detailed information. You must have the following information available: 2022 W2, 1099, Photo Identification, Social Security Card and Copy of last year's tax return.



Upcoming EVENTS

Join us at the Community Center for these upcoming events:

- **Shopping trip to the Walmart in Piscataway** Sunday February 12th leaving at 8:00 am, and to the **Brunswick Square Mall** Sunday February 26th leaving at 11:30 am

- **Valentine's Day Luncheon with special guest, Mayor Elsie Foster**, Tuesday February 14th at 12:00 pm



- **Blood Drive** Tuesday February 21st, 12:00 – 6:00 pm, organized by New Jersey Blood Services. For more info, call (800) 933-2566
- **Sweet Potato Pie and Such**, storytelling of tales from the African and African American Oral Tradition, by Karen "Queen Nur" Abdul-Malik, Tuesday, February 21st, 9:30 – 10:30 am. Advance registration required, please call (732) 819-0052

Highland Park Recreation

There are two BIG reasons we're celebrating in 2023: The HP Recreation Department is very excited to announce the return of our Winter Youth Basketball and Rovers Indoor Soccer programs for the first time since Winter 2020!! Youth ages 3 through 14 are once again honing skills all winter long in these two beloved sports. Once the basketball league is over, to help bridge the developmental gap in the off-season, youth players can enroll in our Spring Basketball Academy with Coaches Choice USA that begins March 27th.



HPYTC (Highland Park Youth Theatre Company) finished big with their performance of Mary Poppins Jr. thanks to Tova Halpern and Fresh Theatre Arts on January 7th and 8th.

Registration for the HPYTC Spring production of Peter Pan Jr. is already waitlisted and begins February 16th. Performances will be May 18th and May 21st. Keep an eye out for all new Theatre Camp options opening for registration soon!

Upcoming programs include Adult Softball, Spring Flag Football, T-Ball/ Baseball /Softball, Spring Rovers Soccer Clinics, Spring Track, Wrestling, Summer Camp, and more!!

at the Highland Park Public Library



Highland Park Public
Library

Now that we have made it through half of the winter, the library is planning a glorious spring filled with endless possibilities and opportunities. If you like to learn on your own, Northstar Digital Literacy is a program that helps you test your own computer and Internet skills and learn new ones at your own pace. To access please visit the library webpage or ask at the library on your next visit! Right now children can continue to enjoy STEM for Kids, Lego Club, Pokemon League, Yoga for Kids, Sensory Playdate, Books and Babies, Book Break, Tot Time, and Pajama Storytime.



Teens can join two new programs that meet monthly. The Teen Action Group meets the first Thursday of the month and invites teens to volunteer at the library. Earn one hour of community service for each meeting attended (next meeting March 2nd). Dungeons and Dragons meets the second Thursday of the month (next meeting March 9th).

Adults can stay active with ongoing programs as varied as Date With Death Club, CrafterDark, Crafternoons, Basic Computer Skills Class, Highland Park Crochet and Knitting Groups, Conversation Cafe, an informal conversation group, CineMusic Film Series, Virtual Writers Circle, Adult Game Nights and Virtual Play Reading Group.

Be sure to check out the library's website for a full calendar of



events, access to digital resources, and more information about the variety of services that we offer all year, including Notary service, HP Municipal IDs, free Internet access, printing and copying service, book group support, our new seed library, and more.

EVENTS

- **Date With Death Club**
Thursday, February 16th, 6:30 pm
Planning for Your Memorial Service
Thursday, March 16, 6:30pm
Death with Dignity
- **Rainbow Reads**
Pride Center of New Jersey
85 Raritan Avenue #100
Monday, March 6th, 7:00 pm
Discuss What you are Reading with
HPPL Librarians
- **Library Trivia Night at Pino's**
13 North Fourth Avenue
Tuesday, March 14th, 8:00 pm
Pi Day Theme
- **Adult Game Night**
Monday, March 20th, 6:30 pm
Play board games and card games
- **CineMusic Series-Under the
Cherry Moon (PG-13)**
Tuesday, April 25th, 6:30 pm
Prince's directorial debut in Memoria



NEWS from the Department of Public Works

Bulk Waste pick-up by appointment program

The Bulk's bulk waste collection is now by appointment. Pick-ups will be scheduled on **Wednesdays** during the months of **April, May, June, September and October**. To make an appointment, please call Public Works at (732) 247-9379.

Each household may request up to two collections per year. There will be an additional bulk pick-up in September.

Materials not properly secured/bundled and unacceptable items will not be collected. Materials put out for collection, without a scheduled appointment or on the wrong date, will not be collected.

For information on acceptable and unacceptable items for bulk waste pick up, please see: <https://www.hpboro.com/departments/public-works/bulk-waste-collection>

Chometz disposal

A Chometz disposal drop-off service is offered for any residents that wish to drop off garbage and recycling materials. Chometz disposal will be offered during the hours of 6:30 am – 1:00 pm on **Wednesday, April 5th** at the Department of Public Works building, at: 444 Valentine Street in Highland Park.

*Please follow DPW's regular recycling rules and separate garbage and Chometz from recycling items such as glass, plastic, paper and cardboard.

For additional information please call (732) 247-9379.



Law enforcement officers from throughout New Jersey were

honored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) in January for their commitment to DWI enforcement.

Congratulations to Highland Park Police Officer Kevin Garrity who was recognized by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). His commitment and dedication to keeping our roadways safe has undoubtedly saved lives.

Ptl. Garrity has won this award several times and continues to be one of the leaders of DWI enforcement in the county.

We are extremely proud of Officer Garrity!

HP Mental Health Commission Presents NAMI's 'End The Silence' program Wednesday Feb 28th, 6:30 pm @ HP Community Center

The Highland Park Mental Health Commission invites teens and their parents, and all who care about our community's youth, to attend a presentation of the National Alliance on Mental Illness' "Ending the Silence" program on Wednesday February 28th, starting at 7:00 pm, at the Highland Park Community Center. This program is free of charge.

Ending the Silence is an evidence-based, 50-minute session designed for families. Students will learn about mental health conditions through a brief presentation, short videos, and personal testimony from a young adult who describes their journey to recovery. The presentation includes warning signs, facts and statistics and how students can get help for themselves or a friend. Audience members can ask questions and gain understanding of an often-misunderstood topic.

Research has shown that NAMI Ending the Silence for Students is effective in changing middle and high school students' knowledge and attitudes toward mental health conditions and toward seeking help.

For more information on NAMI's Ending The Silence program, see: <https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/Mental-Health-Education/NAMI-Ending-the-Silence>



Photo caption:

Royalty free photo by Anthony Tran on Unsplash.com

Coming up in Downtown Highland Park: Winter Market, Farmers Market, 5k Race, Street Fair, and Planting Days!

WINTER MARKET

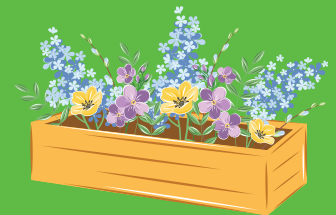
Miss the outdoor downtown markets? Love the cold? Join us for our new Winter Market, featuring some of our regular Farmers Market vendors and Night Owl Market vendors! Every Friday from 12 noon - 4:00 pm, from February 17th - March 31st.

FARMERS MARKET

Our full Farmers Market will begin on Friday April 7th! Every Friday from 11:00 am - 5:30 pm, from April 7th - December 22nd.

5K RACE, SPRING STREET FAIR, AND EARTH DAY FEST

Our annual Highland Park 5k race and Spring Street Fair and Earth Day festival will be on Friday May 7th. The 5k race starts at 9:00 am, and the Street Fair and Earth Day event both start at 11:30 am. Spend the whole day downtown!



PLANTING DAYS

Join us for our annual community planting days, where Main Street Highland Park helps volunteers fill over 150 downtown planters with beautiful flowers. Planting days this year will be Thursday May 25th, Saturday May 27th, and Sunday May 28th.

Check out mainstreethp.org for details, or follow them on Facebook at facebook.com/mainstreethp