

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK
MIDDLESEX COUNTY
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 7, 2023

A Regular Meeting of the Highland Park Mayor and Council was held in Borough Hall, 221 South 5th Avenue, on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, and was called to order by Mayor Foster at 7:00 PM. Annual Notice of this meeting was provided to The Home News Tribune, the Star Ledger and the Highland Park Planet on January 4, 2023, 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 January 4, 2023, and has remained continuously posted as required by law.

Present: Mayor Foster; Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan; Borough Attorney Schmierer; Borough Administrator Jover, Borough Clerk Santiago.

Absent: None.

Senator Patrick Diegnan, Assemblyman Rob Karabinchak and Assemblyman Sterley Stanley appeared to present former Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler with a resolution from the New Jersey State Senate and Assembly.

Presentation of Historical Survey of Lincoln Highway (Raritan Avenue) - Grubb Associates – Lauren Dunkel, appeared to give the presentation. She is an Architectural Historian with Richard Grubb Associates.

Council President Hersh noted that this Lincoln Highway survey project is a very exciting initiative of the Highland Park Historical Commission. This survey was funded through a grant from Middlesex County with a match from the Borough. This is the fruit of that investment and we're excited to have the historical snapshot of our town.

Ms. Dunkel noted that she was the principal investigator for the Lincoln Highway historical survey here in Highland Park. As outlined here in red on the survey included all the resources on the avenue between Raritan River and Raritan Avenue's intersection with Woodbridge Avenue. The first phase of the survey identified a total of 86 properties along the Lincoln Highway. Each resource was inventoried on a survey form and assessed to determine their status as contributing, non-contributing, or key contributing to the overall proposed Ridge Avenue historic district. A key factor in determining the resource status within the proposed historic district relates to the main focus bar survey which is the historic route of the Lincoln Highway and its path through the Borough of Highland Park, overlapping with the present-day Raritan Avenue. The Lincoln Highway was established in 1912 and was proposed by a man name Carl Fisher. Spanning 3,300 miles, the purpose of the establishment of Lincoln Highway was to create a transcontinental route that connected New York City to San Francisco by following previously established trails, country lanes and downtown streets. The completion of the Lincoln Highway and its popularity transformed the rural communities along its route into automotive suburbs that cater to the traveling motorists. Its historic significance led to the National Park Service completing a Lincoln Highway special resource study in 2004 to assess whether or not the Lincoln Highway corridor should be added to the National Park system. In this study, five resources were identified within the Borough of Highland Park and two of which were located within the current survey area which were the buildings at 101 Raritan Avenue and 515 Raritan Avenue. Our survey documented both of these resources, however, only 101 Raritan Avenue was determined to have an historic function related to the Lincoln Highway and that resource in particular will be discussed in further detail later on in this presentation. Overall, the National Park Survey determined that the Lincoln Highway corridor as a whole did not retain a high degree of integrity and therefore did not meet the required criteria for inclusion in the National Park System. Though the entire route of the Lincoln Highway was deemed to not meet the necessary criteria for the National Park system, our survey was conducted to look at the portion of the route contained within the borough to assess its potential eligibility for listing in the national register of historic places. As you can see in these early 20th century photographs, the commercialization transferred on by the completion of Lincoln Highway is reflecting the architecture along Raritan Avenue particularly during the 1920's. The earlier residential buildings along the route began to be converted or expanded to include businesses that could serve the travelers on the highway. As a result, several businesses relating to the car industry began appearing along the route and generally consist of car dealerships, showrooms, filling stations and auto repair shops. The architectural resources within the Raritan Avenue historic district represent a couple different larger architectural trends. For the purpose of this presentation, I have them split to before the establishment of the Lincoln Highway and then after. The earliest resource we surveyed represents Highland Park's early architectural history that began during the mid-19th century when several farmsteads and mansions were built along present-day Raritan Avenue. By the second half of the 19th century, the area of Highland Park began to be further developed as a suburb of New Brunswick, which led to single-family estates and mansions being erected along Raritan Avenue, River Road, and South Adelaide Avenue. As shown here on this 1873 map, there are a few early to mid-19th century buildings present within this survey area at the time. Though most of these 19th century buildings have since been removed, one is still present within the survey area and is situated at 37 South Adelaide Avenue shown here in this first photo. It consists of an Italian dwelling that was constructed around 1860, though it has since been altered. The dwelling still retains several of its Italianate characteristics including its form cross gable roof, bracketed cornice, grouped arch windows, clappered siding and its large front porch. The next architectural phase that occurred within the survey area was around the turn of the 20th century when several vernacular Queen Anne and stick style residences were

erected. A notable example of a six-style residence is at 202 Raritan Avenue shown in the center photo which still features a steeply pitched cross-cable roof, overhanging eaves, bridge boards, decorative false timbering and an embellished front porch. Shown in the last photo are some other vernacular examples of the Queen Anne and stick styles that are still present within the historic district, though many have since been altered to accommodate commercial uses. A majority of the houses within the survey area date to the late 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century and they still contain their vernacular gable front and wing forms and their subtle architectural details that reflect popular national and regional styles of the time. As I mentioned, after the completion of the Lincoln Highway, many of these residences along Raritan Avenue were altered to suit new commercial uses. This resulted in the construction of several commercial additions on the front of the late 19th and early 20th century houses to create storefronts. Many of the commercial additions consist of one to two-story masonry additions featuring one or two commercial spaces. Though the commercial space has effectively covered the front of these dwellings, a review of Sanborn maps indicated that the building became mixed use, with the dwelling portion of these buildings continuing to function as a residence. In addition to the residences being modified to suit commercial mixed uses, several businesses related to the automobile industry were established along the route, though it is hard to tell on this 1950 map because the screen's so small. Several garages, filling stations and car showrooms were erected by the mid-20th century that were primarily built between 1920 and 1960. This map helped show the increased commercial development along Raritan Avenue following the introduction and continued use of the Lincoln Highway. So following this historic route of the Lincoln Highway, our study identified and proposed the Raritan Avenue Historic District which encompasses all of the resources flanking Raritan Avenue and within our survey area. We determined a period of significance spanning from circa 1860, which is the approximate construction date of the oldest building within the historic district. Circa 1960, which is the general date of when the automobile related buildings began to be removed or repurposed. The historic district was determined to be significant as an embodiment of Raritan Avenue's transition from residential to commercial use after its incorporation into the historic Lincoln Highway. This graphic here gives a general overview of our findings and determinations for the individual resources within the Raritan Avenue historic district. As I briefly mentioned earlier, we identified a total of 86 resources that were assessed into three main categories of non-contributing, contributing and key contributing. Indicated in orange are 14 resources that were determined to be non-contributing and then colored in green, 67 were determined to be contributing and then the remaining resources which are colored in blue were determined to be key contributing. The non-contributing resources consisted of buildings that were built after circa 1960 and therefore fell outside of the Raritan Avenue historic district's period of significance. Some examples of these are the 21st century Highland Cliffs development of 2 South Adelaide Avenue and then the commercial building at 320 Raritan Avenue, which was built circa 1969. Making up a bulk of our surveyed resources, the contributing resources consisted of any buildings that were erected circa 1860 to circa 1960 period of significance but did not have an historic automotive function tied to Lincoln Highway or its historic function relating to the automotive industry is no longer apparent. These primarily consisted of the residential and commercial buildings that were constructed in the late 19th century to early 20th century, but also contained a handful of commercial buildings that date to the mid-19th century and mid-20th century. The five key contributing resources to the Raritan Avenue historic district that were identified were determined to have an historic function that related to the automotive industry and were found to be associated with the establishment of the Lincoln Highway. Additionally, they also were determined to still retain a significant amount of their architectural character that reflect their historic automotive uses. The first key contributing resource that we identified is the building at 101 Raritan Avenue, which is a one-story concrete block, automotive building constructed in the art modern style, built circa 1950. The building was originally known at the Highland Esso Service Center and was built as a filling station and repair shop. Up until recently, the building functions as an auto repair and service center, although it has undergone the replacement of the main entry door, the removal of the gas pumps, the building still retains characteristics of its original design and it embodies the art modern style through its smooth wall surfaces, asymmetrical façade, flat roof, curved corner and its glass block windows. The next commercial building, or the next building that we identified as a key contributing resource is the commercial building at 114 Raritan Avenue. It's a circa 1922 two-story building historically known as the dinosaur building. It was first built to house the diner meat market and by 1921, it also had physician's offices and apartments. By 1927, it was functioned as an automotive display room with the DeSoto dealership present in the building. By 1929, the building contained or continued to function as an auto sales room well into the mid-20th century. Despite the replacement of windows and doors the building still retains key characteristics of its original design, including is Massey materiality and fenestration. The building at 127 Raritan Avenue is a two-story, three-way wide brick commercial building built circa 1920, historically known as Sexton's garage. The building was constructed to function as a sales room for high-end automobiles. The building functions as an automotive sales room into the mid-20th century and although the exterior cloudy materials, doors, and windows have since been replaced, the building still retains key characteristics of its original design including its original massing, fenestration, parapet and garage opening. The fourth key contributing resource we identified is the building at 610 North 2nd Avenue, which is a two-story commercial building built circa 1920. Research indicated that the early Council meetings were held on the 2nd floor of this building and it also housed the American Legion Post at one point. A 1950 Sanborn map indicated that the building was historically mixed use and contained a second story resident and an auto repair shop in the first floor. By 1985, it housed the business of Gold Rush Custom Auto. Though it has undergone the replacement of windows, doors, siding and the garage entry, the building still retains its key characteristics of its original design, including the hipped roof, main block and the roof ornamentation. The final key contributing resource that we identified is the building at 438-440 Raritan Avenue. It is a two-story tall, three-bay wide stucco clad building and was built circa 1924. Advertisement suggests that the building originally housed the Frank Van Sickie Garage Company and was functioned as an automotive dealership.

The building functioned as an automotive dealership/sales building into the mid-20th century and despite alterations to the exterior cladding materials and the replacement of windows and doors, the building still retains its key characteristics of its original design, including its original massing and fenestration. To conclude our overall study, we recommended the Raritan Avenue Historic District as eligible under criterion of the national register of historic places for the themes of commerce and transportation as it is historically tied to the Lincoln Highway. In addition to being recommended as key contributing resources to the Raritan Avenue historic district, the five key contributing resources are also recommended as individually eligible for the national register of historic places under criterion for their relation to the Lincoln Highway and the automobile industry.

Council President Hersh noted that this information will be posted on the Borough's website and the Historical Commission will continue to discuss this report and make recommendations.

Mayor Foster asked for a moment of silence for Sayreville Councilwoman Eunice Dwumfour.

Councilwoman Kim-Chohan reported that the property re-evaluation letter should be in your mailbox, and if it's not, it's on its way. The Borough property owners should have received a letter from our professional property appraisers, our re-valuation firm, providing the updated assessed property value for your home or the commercial property. These assessments are based on PPA's field inspections which have been ongoing since September of last year. This letter includes your total assessed value in 2023 as compared to 2022, as well as your total estimated annual tax bill utilizing the 2023 value. Please keep in mind that this calculation is based on the Borough's prior year's budget. The actual amount may change depending on the budget that is adopted by the Governing Body. One question that wasn't on the letter, and I highly encourage everyone to read the letter from top to bottom, was if my bill goes down, how do I get reimbursed for what I paid in the first and second quarter of 2023. Because of the timing of the adoption of the municipal budget, the first and second quarter tax bills each year are estimated. Once the budget is finalized and the tax rate approved, the new tax bills will go out in July. At that point, overpayments from the first or second quarters will be adjusted off of the third and fourth quarter bills. Similar, if your bill was too low, then that difference will be added to the last two quarters. If you have any questions about the revaluation or do not believe your 2023 total assessed value is accurate please contact PPA at 1-800-410-5815 during business hours and you can schedule a time to review the information. Lastly, if your property was not inspected, there's still time to schedule an inspection before the 2023 tax list is finalized. If you don't let the Assessor in, they may overestimate your property. She highly suggested residents to schedule that appointment. She is happy that we are finally able to see the finish line with this project and she looks forward to the Council coming up with the ongoing maintenance plan for this revaluation. She thanked the Borough Administrator, the Finance Committee and Tax Assessor Tom Mancuso as well as the firm that was hired. They really pulled it together last minutes as they were running behind on another town. So far, she's been getting nothing but praise which doesn't actually happen much.

Councilman Hale thanked Councilwoman Kim-Chohan for all of her work on the revaluation project. It was a lot of work and he thinks she did a great job on it. A couple of weeks ago, they put out a FAQ about Stop and Shop. Among the things that they asked for is for people who had ideas and thoughts to communicate those and send those in to our Borough Administrator. He thanked everyone who has done that, and in particular, he wanted to thank everyone who's done it with a spirit of trying to help, and a spirit of honesty. He wanted to mention a couple of those ideas tonight. It has been fantastic to see how people have contributed in this way. We've gotten ideas for different supermarkets we've never heard of such as Bingo and Sprouts, and we are feeding those ideas into the mix. There's also people who have been talking about new and different ways and shopping venues, food experiences, and delivery mechanisms. There has been talk about food salvaging and these are just some of the ideas that have been thrown into the mix that we're actively looking at and trying to work on. Aaron Dalton has started a petition to ask Stop and Shop if we can have free online delivery service when the store closes. He's a high school student and he thanked Aaron for that idea. He thanked the Economic Development Committee and Main Street Highland Park for putting forth professional ideas about what we can do. We've got a team of people who are interested in real estate, real estate development and general sales people, all of whom have contributed ideas and thoughts about how we might put this together. He thanked the Borough Administrator, because she's the one who's playing quarterback on this and the one who is fielding all of these ideas and putting them together and she's done a magnificent job. We're working very hard every single day on different aspects and different projects and different ways of making this work. The Planning Board has designated this area as an area in need of redevelopment. The next step is that our professionals put together a redevelopment plan. The Council will review that and then the public will have a chance to review that for the site that provides additional options which might be available for development of the site primarily all based on a grocery store. His wife's grandmother, Florence Thaler, died last week at the age of 106 and eight months. Her two daughters Joan Mitnick and Randy Levy, live in Highland Park and have lived here for a long time. As a result, Gigi, as we called her, showed up every single Jewish holiday and most birthdays. She was a force of nature. She loved learning, she loved politics, she loved Israel, but she also loved Highland Park. It was a long life and it was well lived and a lot of it was lived here. He felt a need to say thank you to her, thank you to this community for having all of this family together. She's going to be missed.

Councilwoman Canavera reported that February is National Black History Month, also known as American History Month. This is a time for all Americans to celebrate the achievements of African Americans. In addition, the month recognizes the central role of Black Americans in history. The Board of Health wants you to know Middlesex County covid levels are medium. This means if you are at high

risk of getting very sick, wear a high-quality mask or respirator when indoors in public. If you have household or social contact with someone at high risk for getting very sick, consider self-testing to detect infection before contact, and consider wearing a high-quality mask when indoors with them. Stay up to date with covid-19 vaccines, including recommended booster doses. Maintain ventilation improvements. Avoid contact with people who have suspected or confirmed covid-19. Follow recommendations for isolation if you have suspected or confirmed covid-19. Follow the recommendations for what to do if you are exposed to someone with covid-19. The Community Food Pantry is open the 2nd and 4th Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and the Saturday after that Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Donations can be made using their amazon wish list. The HP Gives a Hoot food pantry is open every Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Donations can be made by mailing a check to Borough Hall. They are also taking donations at the Zone 6 Teen Center. The Mental Health Commission wants to remind everyone that if you have a mental health crisis to please reach out for help. You can call the National Suicide Prevention line at 988. The Middlesex County hotline numbers are Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care HOTLINE: (855) 515-5700; Raritan Bay Medical Center HOTLINE: (732) 442-3794 Or Text HOME to 741741.

Councilman George thanked Councilwoman Kim-Chohan for stewarding the revaluation project and the Council for supporting it. It was a huge, unpopular project that seems to have been worked out very well for the town. We're celebrating Black History Month in February with events all over Middlesex County. One of the better websites listing events is the Middlesex County website under the arts and culture heading. This month, the Police Department will be available for another Cops and Coffee event on February 21, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Highland Park Community Center. These informal sessions have been popular so they're trying to restart them again after interruption. There's no organized agenda or format and you can discuss policing policy and raise any concerns that you want with the officers there and they'll take the information back to Chief Abrams. The Police Department has interviewed two new potential officers to fill upcoming vacancies. They're in the process of their final hiring and we hope to have them on board by March. The Public Safety Committee will meet on Tuesday, February 14th for its monthly meeting. He will be meeting with Chief Abrams to discuss some methods of improving our ability to update the town on what's going on in the department moving forward. The Library is facing a particular problem. As everyone knows, the roofing system in the library is a continuing source of irritation. In the last couple of weeks, it turned out that one of the HVAC units on the roof, which are the big units that control heating, air conditioning and ventilation, is over 20 years old and it has basically expired and we were required to shut it down. Luckily, it only heats and cools the large conference room in the back so that it doesn't interfere with the library's operation. At the last Library Board meeting, with the cooperation of the Borough Administrator, we had a meeting with the architect who supervises the ongoing construction project at the library and the Department of Public Works and discussed the HVAC units. The architect said that the crisis is a moderate crisis, but it turns out to be a blessing in disguise because the units have to be removed from the roof in order to replace them. Once they're removed, there's no obstacle to re-roofing the building without having to do any of the heavy duty work that we've had to do. There is a rough estimate for replacement of the HVAC units. The architect will come up with plans and hopefully wrap up the repair this year. They have a summary of 18 years of roof problems since the last roof was put on and failed rather rapidly. He hopes they get some numbers that they are able to work with. In addition, they are looking under every rock and at every grant for funding.

Council President Hersh commented about the presentation and thanked the Highland Park Historical Commission for all of its hard work and for being one of the boards and commissions that operates on all cylinders. Its members care deeply about the history of this community and documenting the history of the community is really important so that we have some type of historical record to provide a glimpse into history, understand that context moving forward and also making sure that we understand the physical history of our town, which was very automobile oriented. This is ironic, because I think we're trying to do things to move away from that, which is good. Our town was created as an automobile-centric community, as walkable as we think it is, and that's really important. Despite all of that, we had some really great buildings be part of the streetscape and I'm sure we'll have new buildings to add to the exciting streetscape. He thanked Councilwoman Kim-Chohan for her update on the revaluation process. It's really good to see that initiative take effect and he thinks that a lot of people were pleased with the letter that they might have received in the mail. He's happy that the Council put into place other guardrails that potentially helps offset any increases by those properties that were under valued and could see an increase. As liaison to the public schools, he is please to congratulate Michael Moore, Highland Park High School Math Teacher and AP Computer Science Teacher, whose efforts enabled the high school to receive the College Board's AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award. Highland Park is one of only 209 schools nationwide to receive this distinction. The environment in this classroom encourages young women's participation in the study of computer science, which is a field where gender equality is often not achieved. He thanked Harry Glazer for contributing to this report. He thanked his colleagues for taking the time to take the Garden State Municipal Joint Insurance Fund's ethics course. The Council will be doing some shuffling of our Council assignments for reorganization. We have a vacancy on the Council and when we fill that vacancy, the person there will take on a new portfolio, most likely Arts and Recreation, which was his old portfolio. It's a wonderful area because it really does focus deeply on quality of life issues. He is new to the Public Works Department, which is also really exciting to see how the nuts and bolts of the borough operate. This is one of our major agencies in town and Councilman George was the previous Chair and did an enormous amount of work. He was on the Public Works Committee with Councilman George so it's good to have that understanding of the infrastructural needs that we'll be facing of the maintenance needs and capital needs of Public Works. He thanked the Department of Public Works for fillings 93 potholes last months.

Borough Administrator Jover reported that in addition to letters residents received about the revaluation program, they should have also received a letter about the water meter replacement program. They will be having a contractor come in and do those replacements. They're very critical to the effective, efficient running of our utility. We're asking residents to make appointments to get their meters replaced.

Borough Attorney Schmierer – No Report.

Mayor Foster reported that as we are celebrating Black History Month, this weekend, the Black Caucus and Middlesex County did a celebration of black leaders in Middlesex County and they honored Councilmember Schiffman from Edison, herself, Councilwoman Kim-Chohan, and newly elected New Brunswick Councilmember Lolly. On February 12th, the NAACP will celebrate its 110th anniversary and that's a huge landmark. That was put together after the 1908 race riot in Springfield, Illinois. A group of African-American leaders and Jewish leaders came together to organize a permanent NAACP. It's interesting, because it's National Association of the Advancement of Colored People and she thinks that needs to be changed. We continue to fight for the rights of many people in our communities, not just black and Jewish people. They fight and they advocate on a daily basis. One of the things that she would like to do as Mayor is have a community conversation and education. She has reached out to some of the Jewish groups and the Jewish leaders. This came out of a long-standing debate that we had over the book at the library and she has had some of the Jewish leaders reach out to her and say how we can have a conversation about each other. She thinks it's critically important because there's a lot of things that we all say and it's inappropriate at times. She thinks now we need to be educated on what's inappropriate about those things. She's looking forward to having a Jewish conversation, Asian conversation, black conversation, Muslim conversation, and conversations with various religious groups. Not just her, but also members of the Governing Body. We need to be culturally sensitive and aware. Last Thursday, she attended the Conference of Mayors in Trenton. Her sole purpose to attend this conference was to talk about Stop and Shop. She met a number of Mayors and they gave her some referrals and business connections. She passed on the information today at the Administration meeting and hopefully they will find someone that is willing to come to town. We'll have to make some concessions but we hope to have a supermarket soon. Another thing that was discussed at this conference was Main Street. We talked about how we can use our main streets much more effectively to bring more resources to our town to address some of the closures that we have in our downtown. She is looking forward to having more conversations with Main Street Somerville and Main Street Highland Park to create a relationship between the two groups because Somerville is booming. We want to find out what some of the things they're doing. She is looking forward to speaking with Rebecca Hersh at our Main Street and connecting her with Stephanie in Main Street Somerville. A number of years ago, we started a road diet program on Route 27. We have not forgotten about it. It is still on our radar and we're still keeping in in focus because we are a walkable town. We want to keep our town walkable and we want to make sure that everyone is safe. We're going to continue to follow up with the D.O.T to make sure that they don't forget about us. Tonight, you're going to hear about a vehicle that's being donated from North Brunswick. Thanks to Jim Polos, he was able to get a vehicle for our CERT team. We're getting a free rescue vehicle that comes with all the bells and whistles so when we have an emergency, they'll have a vehicle that can go out and have all the equipment that they need. There are a lot of openings on our boards and commissions and we're still looking to appoint people. Anyone that is interested can go on the Borough's website and fill out an application. Last week, she had the opportunity to meet with the Mayor's Teen Advisory Committee. They have a lot of great ideas about what can happen in our downtown, how to network and how to approach things differently. She is looking forward to having more conversations with them as they try to help Highland Park businesses and try to boost and promote Highland Park.

Mayor Foster 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.

Mary Forsberg, 317 Denison Street, commented about the revaluation program and the fact that her taxes went down by \$1,000 and her assessment went up by \$150,000. She hopes that they can publish the information that has come out from the revaluation so that they can see whose assessments went up and whose assessments went down.

Helen Rovner, 115 Highland Avenue, commented that she is the President of the Library Board of Trustees and is here to talk about the library roof, which has been an ongoing problem for years. The Borough keeps putting more and more money to fix things on a temporary basis. They now have an additional problem with the HVAC units and one of them has been shut down completely. They are old and they all have to be removed. This is a perfect opportunity to remove and replace all three units and put in a new roof and get a warranty. The library is about to embark on a major construction project on the inside of the library and once we do all these nice renovations, we don't want the roof to leak.

Nancy Kranich, 136 North 7th Avenue, commented that she is a trustee of the Library Board and has had the good fortune to moderate community conversations in preparation for the library's new strategic plan in the fall. Overwhelmingly, community members indicated their excitement about recent directions the library has taken, but lamented the eight-month closing last year, especially the children's room, due to the flood from the faulty roof. The Library Director resigned last month and they are now in the midst of

recruiting a new one and they hope to attract someone of the caliber of our last director. They don't want to lose great candidates due to the infamous roof problems, especially when they are about to begin a long overdue transformative renovation. She encouraged them to get the roof replaced and fix this problem once and for all.

Nora Krieger, 19 North 6th Avenue, commented that she has been involved with the library since 1986 and is currently the Vice President of the Board of Trustees. The library is one of the central institutions of this town. Water has destroyed a lot at the library and has compromised the staff's health and has closed off patrons of all ages from necessary and beloved spaces such as the children's area, which was closed for about eight months. She has seen the different contracts that have come to address the roof problems. They need a confident contractor that can take off the HVAC units and replace the roof.

Ghislaine Darden, 126 Benner Street, commented that she is on the Library Board of Trustees and has been on the board since 2017. Throughout her tenure, the library roof has always leaked. A new roof had been installed, but was installed incorrectly and cost \$200,000. The leaks have continued and patch jobs have been done. There have been emergency resolutions and a PEOSHA complaint, but the roof still leaks. The Borough should stop wasting taxpayer money and solve this problem for good.

Jilma Dennis, 242 South 6th Avenue, commended the Police Department. She commented about the library roof being replaced 18-20 years ago. It is long overdue to be replaced again especially with the problems with leaks.

Shivam and Sean commented that they are representing Social Dispensary LLC, an applicant for a class 5 retail license at 223 Raritan Avenue. They wanted to come out and introduce themselves and are hopeful and eager to hear the decision. They speak to the Borough Administrator often but any insight on the decision making process or any timeline would be appreciated. They are really excited to be part of the community.

Mary Forsberg, 317 Denison Street, commented again about the revaluation program and that they should have a meeting before finalizing the numbers. The last revaluation program had problems and it took a while to fix those errors.

Abby Stern Cardinale, Harper Street, commented about accessibility of information being posted online. A lot of information posted online is posted as images and PDF's and that information is not accessible to the blind community.

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

Resolution Nos. 2-23-36 through 2-23-49 were duly adopted on a motion made by Councilman Hersh, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

Abstain: None.

Resolution No. 2-23-36

WHEREAS the Borough of Highland Park is in need of a janitorial contract for their buildings, as more fully described on the attached quote; and

WHEREAS, public bids are not required when the purchase is under a State Contract in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12 of the Local Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to purchase said maintenance contract under State Contract No. T-1480/77110, from Association for Choices in Community Supports and Employment Services – NJ (ACCSES), 150 West State Street, Suite 120, Trenton, NJ 08608, at the State contract prices; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in 2023 Temporary Budget, Current Fund Account No. 3-01-26-310-235, in an amount not to exceed \$80,000.00, and will be provided for in the 2023 Municipal Budget as adopted, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer no. 2023-10.

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 Borough Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute said maintenance contract for janitorial services under State Contract No. T-1480/77110, from Association for Choices in Community Supports and Employment Services – NJ (ACCSES), 150 West State Street, Suite 120, Trenton, NJ 08608, for a total amount not to exceed \$80,000.00, in accordance with the attached quote.
2. Certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Borough Administrator, Superintendent of Public Works, and the Chief Financial Officer.

Resolution No. 2-23-37

WHEREAS, on May 4, 2021 by Resolution 5-21-133, the Borough of Highland entered into a five (5) year contract (2021-2025) with Axon Enterprises for body cameras and services under State Contract No. 17-FLEET-00738; and

WHEREAS, Axon Enterprise Inc. is due Year Three Payment in the amount of \$19,092.00; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in the 2023 Temporary Budget, Current Fund Account No. 3-01-25-240-235, in an amount not to exceed \$19,100.00, and will be provided for in the 2023 Municipal Budget as adopted, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer, no. 2023-06.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that the Finance Director shall be and is hereby authorized and directed to issue payment in the amount of \$19,100.00 to Axon Enterprise, Inc., PO Box 29661, Department 2018, Phoenix, AZ, 85038-9661.

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

Resolution No. 2-23-38

WHEREAS the Highland Park Police Department is in need of a maintenance contract for their portable radios, as more fully described on the attached quote; and

WHEREAS, since the purchase is under \$17,500, public bids are not required as set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4 requiring public advertising and bidding for contracts for a sum exceeding the aggregate amount as calculated periodically by the Governor, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3 which amount is \$17,500; and

WHEREAS, public bids are not required when the purchase is under a State Contract in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12 of the Local Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to purchase said maintenance contract under State Contract No. 83932/83924, from Tactical Public Safety, 1036 Industrial Way, West Berlin, NJ 08091, at the State contract prices; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in 2023 Temporary Budget, Current Fund Account No. 3-01-25-240-235, in an amount not to exceed \$15,500.00, and will be provided for in the 2023 Municipal Budget as adopted, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer no. 2023-07.

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 Borough Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute said maintenance contract for the portable radios under State Contract No. 83932/83924 from Tactical Public Safety, 1036 Industrial Way, West Berlin, NJ 08091, for a total amount not to exceed \$15,500.00, in accordance with the attached quote.
2. Certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Chief of Police and the Chief Financial Officer.

Resolution No. 2-23-39

WHEREAS, the Borough has contracted with Integrated Systems and Services, Eatontown, NJ, for warranty/service for the Police Department video camera/swipe card system and contract has expired; and

WHEREAS, since the purchase is under \$17,500, public bids are not required as set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4 requiring public advertising and bidding for contracts for a sum exceeding the aggregate amount as calculated periodically by the Governor, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3 which amount is \$17,500; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to renew said agreement for the period January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in the 2023 Temporary Budget, Current Fund Account No. 3-01-25-240-235, in an amount not to exceed \$9,000.00 and will be provided for in the 2023 Municipal Budget as adopted, as reflected by the Chief Finance Officer's certification no. 2023-08.

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

1. The Borough Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute on behalf of the Borough an Agreement for warranty/service with Integrated Systems and Services, Inc., 541 Industrial Way, Suite B, Eatontown, NJ 07724 at a cost not to exceed \$9,000.00 for the period January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.
2. Certified Copies of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief of Police.

Resolution No. 2-23-40

WHEREAS the Highland Park Police Department is in need of a maintenance contract for their E-Ticketing System; and

WHEREAS, since the purchase is under \$17,500, public bids are not required as set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4 requiring public advertising and bidding for contracts for a sum exceeding the aggregate amount as calculated periodically by the Governor, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3 which amount is \$17,500; and

WHEREAS, public bids are not required when the purchase is under a State Contract in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12 of the Local Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to purchase said maintenance contract under State Contract No. 83904/89980, 17-Fleet-00716 from Gold Type Business Machines, 351 Paterson Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in the 2023 Temporary Budget, Current Fund Account No. 3-01-25-240-235, in an amount not to exceed \$11,500.00, and will be provided for in the 2023

Municipal Budget as adopted, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer no. 2023-09.

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

1. The Borough Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute said maintenance contract under State Contract No. 83904/89980, 17-Fleet-00716 with Gold Type Business Machines, 351 Paterson Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073, at a total cost not to exceed \$11,500.00.
2. Certified copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the Chief of Police and the Chief Financial Officer.

Resolution No. 2-23-41

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park is currently in need of a vehicle within the division of emergency management; and

WHEREAS, the Township of North Brunswick has a 2011 Chevrolet Tahoe (VIN# 1GNSK2E00BR223622) that is no longer needed for their municipal purposes and has generously offered to donate this vehicle to the Borough of Highland Park; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-36(2), a municipality may convey property no longer needed for public use to other political entities without public sale; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have determined that it is in the best interest of the Borough to accept this donation and take title to the 2011 Chevrolet Tahoe (VIN# 1GNSK2E00BR223622) from the Township of North Brunswick.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park does hereby accept the donation of the above-referenced vehicle and offers its gratitude to the Township of North Brunswick for its donation.

Resolution No. 2-23-42

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park is the owner of 101 Raritan Avenue, Block 1704, Lot 48; and

WHEREAS, said property was acquired to advance the Borough's redevelopment plans and the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park desire to utilize this resource and put it to beneficial use until such plans are ready for implementation; and

WHEREAS, on April 5, 2022 the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park adopted Ordinance No. 22-2047 authorizing a lease agreement with the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership for use of 101 Raritan Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the lease agreement with Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership ended on December 31, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Borough and the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership wish to renew the lease agreement for another year, or until such time the Borough needs the property to advance its redevelopment plans or the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership no longer has use for the facility.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that the Mayor and Borough Clerk are hereby authorized to execute the attached lease agreement with the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership for 101 Raritan Avenue for term expiring on December 31, 2023.

Resolution No. 2-23-43

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park is the owner of 212 Raritan Avenue, Block 2202, Lot 4; and

WHEREAS, said property was acquired to advance the Borough's redevelopment plans and the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park desire to utilize this resource and put it to beneficial use until such plans are ready for implementation; and

WHEREAS, on April 5, 2022 the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park adopted Ordinance No. 22-2047 authorizing lease agreements with Main Street Highland Park for use of the first floor of 212 Raritan Avenue as its primary office; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 22-2047 authorized a lease agreement with the Reformed Church of Highland Park-Affordable Housing Corporation (RCHP-AHC) for use of the second floor of 212 Raritan Avenue as a year-round emergency shelter for residents on an as-needed basis, including Code Blue emergencies and storm events; and

WHEREAS, both lease agreements ended on December 31, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Borough, Main Street Highland Park and the RCHP-AHC wish to renew the lease agreements for a one-year term, or until such time the Borough needs the property to advance its redevelopment plans or the RCHP-AHC no longer has use for the facility.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey that the Mayor and Borough Clerk are hereby authorized to execute the attached lease renewal agreements with Main Street Highland Park and the Reformed Church of Highland Park-Affordable Housing Corporation for 212 Raritan Avenue for term expiring December 31, 2023.

Resolution No. 2-23-44

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park is the owner of 127-133 Raritan Avenue, Block 1704, Lots 41 and 42, also formerly known as the Rutgers Gun and Boat Shop; and

WHEREAS, said property was acquired to advance the Borough's redevelopment plans and the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park desire to utilize this resource and put it to beneficial use until such plans are ready for implementation; and

WHEREAS, on November 9, 2021 the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park adopted Ordinance No. 21-2037 authorizing lease agreements with the Reformed Church of Highland Park-Affordable Housing Corporation (RCHP-AHC) for use of the first floor storefront and garage and the second floor apartment at 127-133 Raritan Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the lease agreement for the first floor ended on May 15, 2022 and the agreement for the second floor ended on November 14, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Borough and the RCHP-AHC wish to renew the lease agreements for a one-year term, or until such time the Borough needs the property to advance its redevelopment plans or the RCHP-AHC no longer has use for the facility.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey that the Mayor and Borough Clerk are hereby authorized to execute the attached lease renewal agreements with the Reformed Church of Highland Park-Affordable Housing Corporation for 127-133 Raritan Avenue for a term expiring December 31, 2023.

Resolution No. 2-23-45

WHEREAS, it is necessary to perform emergency repairs to the water & sewer system within the Borough of Highland Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Borough Administrator and the Department of Public Works are hereby authorized and directed to seek RFP's for emergency repairs to the water & sewer system.

Resolution No. 2-23-46

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the annual Salary Resolution No. 01-23-20, which was adopted on January 17, 2023, showing the names, titles and salaries of the officers and employees of the Borough of Highland Park, is amended as follows:

Deborah Layton, Part-Time Crossing Guard, \$20.14 per hour, effective 02/06/2023

Santina Garguilo, Part-Time Public Safety Telecommunicator, \$23.36 per hour, effective 02/13/2023

Maureen Pampinto, Assistant to the Borough Clerk, \$44,000.00 annually, effective 2/1/2023

Matthew Ware, Community Services Assistant (Recreation), \$43,832.00 annually, effective 2/16/2023

Sean Bibby, Police Officer, \$126,052.00 annually, effective 6/10/2023

Caitlyn Dean, Police Officer, \$78,017.00 annually, effective 3/19/2023

Bryant Fitzgerald, Police Officer, \$103,193.00 annually, effective 11/24/2023

Joseph Nickas, Police Officer, \$61,233.00 annually, effective 12/20/2023

Joseph Olarra, Jr., Police Officer, \$103,193.00 annually, effective 11/24/2023

Adalberto Pachecho, Police Officer, \$94,801.00 annually, effective 2/11/2023

Mark Reefer, Police Officer, \$52,841.00 annually, effective 2/01/2023

Roland Sams, Police Officer, \$66,625.00 annually, effective 3/16/2023

Justin Samson, Police Officer, \$52,841.00 annually, effective 12/01/2023

Alexander Triana, Police Officer, \$61,233.00 annually, effective 12/29/2023

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chief Financial Officer 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.

Resolution No. 2-23-47

WHEREAS, EK No. 11 (AA Checker Cab) has 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 2023; 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 by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey that said applicant is qualified and that public necessity and convenience would be served by the issuance of said License.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to issue an Owners License to the aforesaid applicant.

Resolution No. 2-23-48

WHEREAS, Ely Kotin has filed with the Clerk of this Borough an application for a License to operate taxicabs under the provisions of the Ordinance providing for such License for the year 2023; 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 by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey that said applicant is qualified and that public necessity and convenience would be served by the issuance of said License.

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

Resolution No. 2-23-49

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey 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 2/7/2023 can be found in the Bills List Journal Book No. 43.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilwoman Kim-Chohan, seconded by Councilman Hale, and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

Resolution No. 2-23-50

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-19 allows for a municipality to adopt a temporary budget within the first 30 days of its budget year when contracts, commitments or payments need to be made prior to the adoption of the regular budget, and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park requires additional appropriations to maintain operations until such time that the Borough Budget is adopted.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey that the following additional temporary emergency budget appropriations be authorized:

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	AMOUNT
Borough Clerk	O/E	\$4,000.00
Stormwater Management	O/E	\$5,000.00
American Rescue Plan Firefighter 2022	O/E	\$31,000.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Chief Financial Officer of the Borough.

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

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

Abstained: Councilperson Kim-Chohan.

Resolution No. 2-23-51

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that Councilwoman Stephany Kim-Chohan shall be and is hereby appointed to represent the Highland Park Governing Body as a member of the Middlesex County Housing and Community Development Committee for a term expiring December 31, 2023.

The following resolution, introduced by the Economic Development and Planning Committee, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilwoman Kim-Chohan, seconded by Councilwoman Canavera and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hersh, Hale, Kim-Chohan.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

Abstained: Councilperson Hale.

Resolution No. 2-23-52

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that Councilman Matthew Hale be and is hereby appointed as Council member of the Planning Board for a term expiring December 31, 2023.

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

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

Abstained: None.

Resolution No. 2-23-53

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Standing Committees of said Council for the year 2023 shall be and are hereby established as follows:

RECREATION AND ARTS	Councilpersons	_____, Canavera, Kim-Chohan
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING	Councilpersons	HALE, Kim-Chohan, Hersh
FINANCE	Councilpersons	KIM-CHOHAN, _____, Hale
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	Councilpersons	CANAVERA, Hersh, George
PUBLIC SAFETY	Councilpersons	GEORGE, Hale, Canavera
PUBLIC WORKS & PUBLIC UTILITIES	Councilpersons	HERSH, George, _____

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the first Councilpersons listed above for each Committee shall serve as Chair of that Committee.

Public Participation

Mayor Foster 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.

Abby Stern Cardinale, Harper Street, asked for a status update on hybrid meetings, pocket park improvements and the reopening of the South 3rd Avenue town tables.

Mary Forsberg, 317 Denison Street, commented that she thinks the Borough is doing a real disservice to the town by not having zoom meetings. It is difficult to hear the meetings and to know who is speaking. She thinks in the interest of transparency meetings should be in person and via zoom. She asked about the RFP for the emergency repair to the water and sewer system.

Grazina Strolia, 24 Redcliffe Avenue, commented about the Historical Commission report and hoped that they could save the Sexton building. She is not against redevelopment and hopes that they tear down the Stop and Shop and rebuild that whole block.

Jilma Dennis, 242 South 6th Avenue, commented about the issue with the sidewalks that are broken and cracked. This needs to be addressed as there are some days where she cannot drive.

Abby Stern Cardinale, Harper Street, appeared on behalf of Dan Stern Cardinale who cannot attend because the meetings are not hybrid. He wanted to ask how soon the pedestrian zone on South 3rd Avenue can be opened assuming the Borough gets DOT approval.

Hannah Shostack, 146 North 6th Avenue, commented about the sidewalk replacement program and the fact that she lost a street tree due to the roots being damaged when sidewalks were replaced. She asked that they look at the cost benefits and other ways of doing the work to not compromise the health of trees.

Diane Reh, 68 Donaldson Street, commented about approval of another taxi license. When they close off South 3rd Avenue, she wanted to know where the cabs will park since that is where the cab stand is. She also noted that cabs tend to idle and not turn off their engines. She asked if there is a limit to the number of cabs that can be parked on Borough streets.

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

Work Session:

Taxi Rates – Councilman Hale noted that earlier this week he and the Borough Administrator had a meeting with the taxi cab company. They put in a request for some fare increases. Fares within Highland Park are things that our ordinance has the ability to control. We have less ability to say how much it costs to go from Highland Park to any place outside of Highland Park. The taxi cab company has not had an increase in 10 years. An example, is that from one end of Highland Park to the other end, it costs \$3.00, which sounds unbelievably cheap to him. They have asked for an increase to \$5.00/\$6.00. He would like to bring the requested rate increases to the Economic Development Committee and we'll have another discussion about that and then bring it back to the Council. They did have conversations about a way to work with the taxi company to subsidize rides to food stores. They don't have a process yet, but the taxi cab company was very amendable to trying to work out something. When Stop and Shop closes, if we can figure out funding, we should continue to look for alternate ways and help subsidize our low-income residents to be able to take cabs for shopping. Mayor Foster asked if the Borough was in the process of hiring a CDL driver. Borough Administrator Jover noted that they have a 25-hour a week driver funded through the Easter Seals program. Councilwoman Canavera asked if there was a way to talk to the taxi company about a flat rate to go to a grocery store. Even though the Borough has a CDL driver, a lot of our lower income residents are at work and can only go on weekends or evenings. Borough Administrator Jover noted that they have weekend rides now too. They started this on a pilot basis with some of our part-time CDL drivers that Kim McGraw recently recruited. They are hopefully going to roll out the suite of transportation options, both Borough, County and State. She noted that she learned at the taxi cab meeting that they don't have meters like other places and mostly have flat rates. Their drivers do a lot of assisting for folks who have mobility challenges for getting in, getting out and loading and unloading groceries, etc. For that reason, it is also a challenge, because it slows down their ride process and time is money in that business. Councilman Hale noted that they do have a flat rate for Shop Rite on Route 1 and for the other Stop and Shop on Route 18.

State Funding Request: Electric Garbage Truck, Toters and Community Center Upgrades – Mayor Foster noted that she had an opportunity to speak with Senator Diegnan, Assemblyman Karabinchak and Assemblyman Stanley earlier. The Borough submitted a request to them for an electric garbage truck, which is pretty pricey; a toter for recycling so we wouldn't have to put everything outside in your own container. The community center roof also leaks and is in need of a lot of upgrades. Council President Hersh noted that the community center has perennial issues as well. It's a flat roof so there are leakage problems. There are also issues with space as the community center shares space with the food pantry. While it's a symbiotic relationship, there are ways to improve the interior there when it comes to storage

and that's been on our radar for a very long time. Kim McGraw has been very forthcoming when it comes to the needs of the center and they look forward to funding for all of these.

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

Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

Resolution No. 2-23-54

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:
JSM vs. Highland Park; Botteon vs. Borough of Highland Park
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 Councilman Hersh, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Santiago
Borough Clerk