

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK
MAYOR & COUNCIL CONFERENCE MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018

MINUTES

1. Mayor Brill Mittler called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. and 8:45 p.m.
2. PRESENT: Mayor; Council (Councilwoman Welkovits 6:12 p.m.), (except Councilwoman Kim-Chohan); Borough Attorney; Borough Administrator; Borough Clerk.

NOTE: Upcoming Meeting schedule:

Dec. 11, 2018	Standing Committee Meetings; Special Meeting if needed.
Dec. 18, 2018	Council Committee Reports 6:00 PM; Agenda Meeting 6:30 PM; Regular Meeting 7:00 PM; Conference Meeting to follow.

3. Agenda Discussion – none.
4. Public Discussion (15 minutes) – none.
5. Memorial or Commendatory Resolutions or Presentations scheduled as indicated:
 - a.
6. Ordinances on 1st Reading – no ordinances scheduled for introduction for 12/18/18:
 - a.
 - b.
7. Ordinances on 2nd Reading – no public hearings scheduled for 12/18/18:
 - a. Boards, Committees, and Commissions Ordinance Amendment.
 - b. Property Acquisition Ordinance.
 - c. 31 River Road Redevelopment Plan.
 - d. Water & Sewer Ordinance Amendment.
8. Resolutions for Next Meeting - scheduled for 12/18/18:
 - a. Bills List (12/18/18).
 - b. 31 River Road.
 - c. Adjourned/Reorganization Meeting Dates.
 - d.
9. Appointments – none.
10. Borough Attorney's Report – none.
11. Borough Administrator's Report – none.
12. Standing Committee Status Reports – none.
13. Discussion Items.
 - a. Best Practices Checklist – Borough Administrator Jover noted that the Department of Community Affairs requires municipalities to fill out the best practices checklist. There had new questions on the checklist this year. The answers to the questions on the checklist affects the amount of State Aid received. The borough received 89%. The Borough answered no to 7 questions, one of which was fixed asset inventory, which will be completed and handled this year. The Borough answered

- “prospective” to 14 questions which will need to be handled in the next 2 years. One of the questions that they answered no to has to do with sick time reporting. The Police Department is an issue with utilizing the ADP payroll system.
- b. New Borough Communications Plan – Communications Officer Harry Glazer appeared to outline the plan. They plan to have twice-annual agenda-less public meeting. They plan to have a Mayor’s blog, with posts every six-eight weeks. They will have monthly lunch-time “What new and what’s news in the Borough talks at the Senior Center. They will enhance use of the Borough website as the primary information source of the Borough. They will use a monthly email to all opt-in-subscribers. They will issue monthly news release. They are trying to serve two difference audiences; seniors and millennials.
 - c. Plastic Bag Ordinance – Councilman George explained that the ordinance is being finalized with suggestions by Sustainable Highland Park. The draft ordinance was circulated along with the green agenda. Mayor Brill Mittler sent a letter to the sponsor of the State bill and he and Borough Administrator Jover met with her. The bill is pre-emptive of all municipal ordinances. Waiting to see what State is going to do. Going to try and do it before session breaks. Cannot do an introduction of the ordinance until next January. Borough ordinance is more user friendly to our merchants and residents and protects the smaller retailers. Mr. Glazer put together a report of all the Facebook comments, pro and con, along with any emails received. Councilman Hale noted that he would like to see the “changes” from each version.
 - d. Water/Sewer Update – Councilman George and Borough Administrator Jover have had a number of meetings with Middlesex Water Company over the last 2 years. They borough a punch list with a number of suggestions. Water requirements are set by the NJDEP. Need to replace large meters for rental properties. The large meters are inaccurate and there is a huge revenue loss. Need to add money for camera inspections for sewers on Raritan Avenue. Need to revamp ordinance for meters and testing. Need to test meters more often and perform mandated replacements. This will be a primary project in 2019. Borough Administrator Jover noted that the infrastructure bank has had an overabundance of requests. The Borough’s infrastructure is over 110 years old. Have to replace it at 150 years. Need to change our approach. Water consumption is below 2017 number. Getting analysis of rainfall in 3rd quarter over the last 3 years. If we contact DEP to reduce our water number, the issue of a water tower will be raised. Councilman George noted that once we start with some of the suggestions raised by Middlesex Water, you become more efficient.
 - e. Deer Management Update – Councilman Fine and Borough Administrator Jover met with representatives from Fish & Wildlife. Their recommendation is to allow for hunting in the Meadows. Would hold a special meeting to present to Borough Council and invite some of the individuals and them to a committee meeting. Will try to do this between January and mid-March.
 - f. Library Board – Councilman Fine noted that Borough Administrator Jover attended a Library Board of Trustees meeting. They handed in the same budget request as last year, where the Borough gave them \$30,000 less. They now want the \$30,000 plus 2%. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the met with Mayor Cohen of East Brunswick and was able to obtain information on what other libraries receive from their municipalities. Metuchen gives their Library \$767,000 and they are open 7 days a week. Told them to keep their request at same rate as 2017. Borough Administrator Jover noted that Highland Park is #1 in the County with regard to funding; #2 per capita; and #4 in total amount provided. The library staff is under union contract. Councilman Fine noted that if not provided with funding they requested, they would have to lay off a beloved Librarian. Mayor Brill Mittler would like to meet with them early on so that they don’t order magazines and newspapers. Councilwoman Foster-

Dublin noted that the Library is offering duplicate programs that the Teen Center is offering. Councilman Fine noted that they met with the Shared Services Czars. Appointments to the Library Board are for 5 years. A lot of the Board members have been serving for quite some time. There is one seat up for reappointment in 2019. Library Director plans to retire in April of 2020.

- g. Police Update – Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that they did a presentation of the promotion process to the Police Department. They asked them to submit resumes if they are interested in applying for the Chief and Captain positions. Four submissions were received and the Council needs to move forward with the process. The Police Chief will be staying until April 1, 2019.
- h. River Trail Connector – Councilwoman Welkovits gave update on progress on potentially getting a grant to connect trails along the Raritan River.
- i. CFO Position – Borough Administrator Jover advised that the contract with the current CFO will end at the end of April. The Borough must have a Certified Municipal Finance Officer. Need to advertise for part-time Chief Financial Officer. Working on job description. Need someone with experience and have availability to come in during the day. She spoke to Marc Pfeiffer and did a survey of the Municipal Manager’s Association. She is looking at a salary range of \$50,000 to \$55,000, no health benefits.
- j. Med Express – Borough Clerk Hullings explained that the Borough is looking to change the health clinic that employees are sent to for workman’s comp injuries. Had some issues with the previous clinic and would like to make the switch to this new clinic.
- k. Support Funding Private Schools – Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that the Public Safety Committee met and they formulated a resolution that they would like the Council to consider to support funding for private schools. She sent a copy of the resolution to the Mayor and the Borough Attorney.

14. Executive Session – none.

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilwoman Foster-Dublin, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 10:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Hullings
Borough Clerk