

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK  
MAYOR & COUNCIL CONFERENCE MEETING  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018

MINUTES

1. Council President George called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and 8:08 p.m.
2. PRESENT: Council (except Councilwoman Foster-Dublin); Borough Attorney; Borough Administrator; Borough Clerk.

**NOTE: Upcoming Meeting schedule:**

**February 13, 2018 Standing Committee Meetings; Special Meeting if needed.  
February 20, 2018 Council Committee Reports 6:00 PM; Agenda Meeting 6:30 PM; Regular Meeting 7:00 PM; Conference Meeting to follow.**

3. Public Discussion (15 minutes) – none.
4. Memorial or Commendatory Resolutions or Presentations scheduled as indicated:
  - a. Library Board of Trustees – March 6, 2018.
5. Ordinances on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading – no ordinances scheduled for introduction for 2/20/18:
  - a.
  - b.
6. Ordinances on 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading – no public hearings scheduled for 2/20/18:
  - a.
  - b.
7. Resolutions for Next Meeting - scheduled for 2/20/18:
  - a. Bills List (2/20/18).
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
  - f.
8. Appointments – Next meeting – 2/20/18:

HP Gives a Hoot – Michael Buchman, Sylvia, Hove, Thomas Scalfani, Beatrice Adler, Ashton Burrell, Monica Jackson, Lt. Gary Panichella.

Public Information Committee – Haim Cohen, Valeri Weidmann.
9. Borough Attorney's Report – none.
10. Borough Administrator's Report – none.
11. Standing Committee Status Reports – none.

12. Discussion Items.
  - a. Dissolution of Redevelopment Agency – Councilwoman Welkovits explained that the plan is to dissolve the Redevelopment Agency but keep the Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Screening Committee. The Borough Council will introduce an ordinance at the February 20, 2018 to dissolve the Redevelopment Agency. The Governing Body will also pass a resolution at that meeting to allow Joe Baumann, Attorney for the Redevelopment Agency, to file with the Division of Local Government Services an application to dissolve the Agency. The ordinance, once introduced and adopted, will designate the Governing Body as the Redevelopment Agency for the Borough.
  - b. Ash Tree Forestry Program – Councilman George advised the Governing Body about the problem with ash trees. The Emerald Ash Borer is a tree-killing non-native pest that was first detected in New Jersey in 2014. There are approximately 400 ash trees in Highland Park, of which only 73 of those trees are Borough controlled. The other trees are located in Donaldson and Johnson Parks. The Borough should be joining up with other towns to come up with a program that may be less expensive. The cost to remove these trees would be between \$300,000 - \$700,000. The Shade Tree Advisory Committee will be meeting next week. The problem with these trees is significant. He has been in contact with Rich Lear of the Middlesex County Park Department. STAC had done some trapping to determine if ash bores have been detected in Highland Park. As of 2016, none were detected. Borough Administrator Jover noted that this is very expensive to take care of once the problem is detected, you need to treat the trees or remove all of them.
  - c. Revised Budget Timeline – Borough Administrator Jover noted that the plan is to have full budget packets to the Governing Body by February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. March 6<sup>th</sup> will be for any specific department presentations. The Budget will be introduced on March 20<sup>th</sup> with the hopes of adoption by April 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be a resolution to extend deadline for budget introduction at the March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, with a Special Meeting scheduled for March 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - d. Code Clerk Position – Borough Administrator Jover advised that there is a temporary employee working in the Code Enforcement Office. She would like to stay and we would like to bring her on board as a permanent employee. Will post the position. By hiring her full time, as opposed to being a temporary employee, the annual salary will be less than the hourly rate paid the temp agency. Councilman George commented that he would like to see the total package with cost differential.
  - e. Code Blue Follow-Up – Mayor Brill Mittler noted that she and Councilwoman Foster-Dublin attended a meeting with the County. Presently, Highland Park has been sending people who need a warming center to New Brunswick and Perth Amboy. Most of the people New Brunswick gets are not actually from New Brunswick. Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that she was misinformed by OEM that the Borough needed to provide cots in order to open a warming center. She noted that she is concerned about staffing for a warming center. New Brunswick does it all by volunteers. Would like to offer the senior center as a warming center. Councilman Hersh noted that the Board of Health discussed this issue. There are community agencies providing shelter that still want to be involved. The Public Safety Committee needs to meet with OEM and the CERT Team to discuss further. Need to identify what triggers a Code Blue determination. No children will be allowed into a warming center and those that take advantage of the warming center need to leave the facility by 9:00 a.m.
13. On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, Council went into Executive Session

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at 6:07 PM to discuss one matter involving litigation and one matter involving personnel. On motion made by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the Council returned to open session at 6:33 PM.

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Hersh, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Hullings  
Borough Clerk