

REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 20, 2018

A Regular Meeting of the Highland Park Mayor and Council was held in Borough Hall, 221 South 5th Avenue, on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 and was called to order by Mayor Brill Mittler at 7:07 PM. Mayor Brill Mittler read the Open Public Meetings Statement.

Present: Mayor Brill Mittler; Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Kim-Chohan Welkovits; Borough Attorney Schmierer; Borough Administrator Jover; Borough Clerk Hullings.

Absent: None.

Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the Governing Body would like to recognize some individuals. They have made some changes to the redevelopment organization and have taken the responsibilities of this agency into the Borough Council. They could not have done that without the work that had been done prior to this by the Redevelopment Agency. She publicly thanked the Redevelopment Agency for all their time and effort and for being able to get them to the point where they can now start really saying that we have some plans/developments that have made their way through the process and will be happy to see happening on Raritan Avenue in the not too distant future.

Councilwoman Welkovits commented on the tremendous success of the Redevelopment Agency. There is a new development application before the Planning Board, the first redevelopment application that will be built on the Avenue in over 50 years. They were also able to secure grant money to start remediation of sites on the Avenue that have been contaminated for quite some time and will allow them to do redevelopment on that site.

Mayor Brill Mittler and Councilwoman Welkovits presented the Redevelopment Agency members in attendance with certificates of appreciation.

The Governing Body took a brief recess at 7:12 p.m. and reconvened at 7:19 p.m. with all those previously in attendance still present.

On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, the minutes of the Adjourned and Organization Meetings held on January 2, 2018, were approved as distributed by affirmative voice vote of all Councilmembers present.

Mayor Brill Mittler noted that last week an unfortunate series of events occurred in Highland Park that troubled some of the residents, but also members of the Police Department. The event highlighted a couple of things that she, as Mayor, needs to address in the community. Clearly, there is a need for better communication of the actual number of burglaries and other incidents that occur in Highland Park, and the Borough's Facebook postings and Nixle messages are not enough. To that end, she has asked Councilwoman Foster-Dublin and Police Chief Rizco to report at Council meetings on the number of these incidents when, and as they occur. Additionally, they are preparing a safety tip sheet which will be distributed door-to-door in hopes of better educating the residents on steps to take to reduce the chance of becoming a victim to a home or car burglary. Since January, 2018, there have been a total of 42 burglary and criminal incidents in Highland Park, 12 home burglaries and 30 burglaries and criminal mischief to cars. That is an extraordinarily high rate of crime for Highland Park. This has resulted in greater police surveillance in hopes of cracking these cases. While we have the utmost confidence in the ability and integrity of our Police Officers, there is always room for enhanced communication between them and all of the residents. Until we live in someone else's shoes, we cannot expect to fully understand each other. She knows that, but she also knows the capacity of this community and the Police Officers want to do better and to strengthen the ties between all of us. The Police Officers, under the leadership of Chief Rizco, attend compulsory cultural awareness training in-house. In 2017, the Police Department was recognized by the NJ State Attorney General's Office for this program and overall community policing. That's not to say we shouldn't continually strive to enhance communication and understanding. To that end, today, she is forming a Mayor's Committee of Understanding Task Force that will be comprised of residents and members of the Police Department. The NAACP has already committed to be a member. If you are a resident of Highland Park here tonight and would like to join her in making Highland Park a more understanding and enlightened community, she asked that they sign up on the sheet on the table.

Mayor Brill Mittler asked the Council members to present their reports.

Councilwoman Foster-Dublin reported that the Public Safety Committee has talked about the creation of a Police Blotter in town so that information can be shared. If you see something, say something. She will report on the Police Blotter twice a month. A lot of other towns have a Police Blotter. They will create the Police Blotter and communicate the creation via Nixle and Facebook. The Governing Body has been working for a number of years on the creation of a Teen Center for latchkey kids. Next month, they will visit a teen center in Brick, NJ with young people from the schools so that they can meet with other teens to see how they set up their teen center. Two Police Officers have requested permission to go on this outing and one of them did a lot of the summer programs and grew up in Highland Park. Two years ago, they held a community forum with the Police Department and they learned things that are done well and things that need to be improved on. They will schedule another forum and see how they can continue to move forward.

Councilman Fine – No report.

Councilwoman Kim-Chohan reported that there is so much going on in Recreation for the spring and summer. Upcoming programs are baseball, softball, flag football, basketball, track and field, spring soccer. All adult and youth programs will be starting in April. This includes art, table tennis, chess class and engineering. The HP summer camp packets are out and they are now accepting registrations for day camp, sports camp, team camp and theater camp. Job opportunities for summer camp are posted on the Borough's website. The Senior Center is offering a take control of your health program that will run for 6 weeks beginning March 26th from 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. The program is free and open to all Highland Park residents. You should contact the Senior Center to register and for more detailed information. If you are over 90 years old or older or you know someone 90 years old or older, Middlesex County invites seniors aged 90 and over to a celebration of life in their honor. Each person who registers may bring one guest to attend this celebration luncheon. You must contact the Senior Center to register. This event will be held on Wednesday, May 9th from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. She told everyone to stay safe tonight and wished everyone who celebrates a Happy Easter.

Councilwoman Welkovits thanked the Redevelopment Agency Members for their service. Those members have been redeployed to other committees throughout the Borough. The Council will be voting on a façade improvement grant for a new restaurant in town, Bayleaf Grill. Elizabeth Chevy is being hired as a full time Clerk Typist in the Code Enforcement Department after being a temporary employee for the last few months. Thomas Hillman will be appointed to the Safe Walking and Cycling Committee tonight and Jeff Perlman will be appointed to the Planning Board.

Councilman Hersh reported that tonight the Council will vote on a resolution that supports the New Jersey Safe and Responsible Driver Act which purpose is to ensure that all drivers, regardless of immigration status, are properly tested and licensed and are driving vehicles that are registered and insured. He thanked the primary sponsors of this bill for taking the lead. He noted that Assemblywoman Pinkin is one of the co-sponsors for this bill. New Jersey is home to over 500,000 unauthorized immigrants. That is a fraction of the 11 million unauthorized immigrants in the Country. New Jersey being a driver centric state, with limited mass transit options in the southern portion of the state. The purpose of this bill is to influence road safety by ensuring that all drivers are properly tested and licensed and that the vehicles they are driving are registered and insured. The Highland Park Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs worked hard on developing this resolution, along with his assistance, and met with the legislators to address concerns in working with our immigration advocacy community. It is important to note that any personal information collected would be subject to the same disclosure restrictions for information collected from applicant's for driver's licenses. Under the bill, this information would not be considered a public record and would not be disclosed to any Federal, State or Local Government entity without probable cause or without a warrant. This is the third time this bill has been introduced, but the first time it has been introduced under this new Governor. He thanked the members of the Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs for all their work on this resolution. He also thanked members from the Alliance for Immigrant Justice, which is a statewide advocacy organization that has provided us with an incredible amount of technical support. On March 16th, he met with Dr. Cliff Lacy and Jennifer Shikadis, Assistant Professor and Educator in the Department of Family and Community Health Services at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension. They talked about partnering on health and wellness initiatives and other programs that fit into the goals of the Mayor's Wellness Campaign. The NJ Healthcare Quality Institute named Highland Park a 2018 New Jersey healthy town by the Mayor's Wellness Campaign. It allows Highland Park access to an Aetna Foundation grant. The Human Relations Commission Meeting tomorrow night is cancelled due to the weather. The Commission for Universal Access met last night and discussed the next steps for an inclusive playground and they reviewed the plans for the teen center. HP Gives a Hoot met March 12th and they are preparing to solicit applications for summer camp scholarships. Last year they awarded several four week scholarships and they hope to award more based on their finances. He thanked everyone who attended the Unity Day celebration at the Senior Center. The Mayor gave opening remarks and he was privileged to be the emcee. They enjoyed performances by bluegrass and folk singer Sheila Shukla, the BU Dance Center, Amandala, the Glow Program and the Highland Park High School Choir. Ray Anderson, who penned Highland Park's official theme song, stand in Unity, was unable to attend and Sheila learned the song on the fly. On March 29th at 7:00 p.m. the Human Relations Commission Book Club will meet to discuss Carol Anderson's, White Rage the Unspoken Truth of our Racial Divide. This powerful book examines obstacles against black progress in America and they will be joined by Bill Davis, Professor at Rutgers and Branch Historian for the New Brunswick NAACP. The book can be found at the Highland Park Public Library on audible or at your favorite bookstore. He encouraged residents to get their official municipal ID. Applications and additional information can be found at www.hpboro.com.

Councilman George reported that Saturday was St. Patrick's Day. On that day for many years it was celebrated for many years, the five Sullivan Brothers, who served in WWII on a cruiser that was sunk by the Japanese in 1942. Paul Allen discovered the remains of that ship and it was declared a national cemetery. He warned residents to be alert to a scam that is going around about inheritances. Finally, the Borough is in the middle of their 4th and are expecting the 5th storm in March. The Department of Public Works was going to start branch cleanup from the last storm but will unfortunately be busy plowing roads. He suggests residents stay off the roads so that they can be kept clear. Residents should be careful as it is expected to be an extremely bad storm. Crews will be out from the time it hits 2nd until the time they get all the roads cleared.

Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that a warming center will be available at the Senior Center, 220 South 6th Avenue. Anyone interested should contact the Police Department. It will be available from 7:00 p.m. until 7:00 a.m., but no children are allowed.

Borough Administrator Jover – No report.

Borough Attorney Schmierer - No report.

Mayor Brill Mittler reported that the Governing Body will be voting on the introduction of the 2018 municipal budget along with a water and sewer ordinance. The Borough has put new financial controls in place to better monitor the departmental budgets. The municipality has been subsidizing the Water and Sewer Budget over the years and you will hear more about it as they get more into the budget process.

Mayor Brill Mittler opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves.

Monique Coleman, 407 Lincoln Avenue, thanked the Governing Body for opening up the conversation about the incident that involved her family this week. She is here tonight about a police involved incident that occurred this past Thursday with her son, Amiri Tulloch. She also wants to address the broader concerns that this incident has raised regarding policing practices and community police relations, particularly related to people of color and other members of the community that may be more vulnerable to or in police/civilian encounters. She understands that by now most or all of you are aware of the situation, but she briefly summarized what happened. Her son Amiri returned home from meeting with his former teachers and friends at the high school Thursday afternoon. When he got to the intersection of Madison and Lincoln near his house, he decided to take a picture of the intersection for a class project. Since he saw that no cars were coming, he walked into the middle of the street and took a picture. He then proceeded to walk to their home which is the 2nd house in from the corner and he entered normally without incident through the front door. A few minutes later, an undercover officer knocked at her door. When she opened the door she was shocked to see several police car in front of her house and that number quickly jumped to five within a minute. The undercover officer asked if a male had just entered the home and I told him yes, it was my son. She saw an officer walk up from behind on the side of her house and at this point she asked what was going on and why was there such an excessive police presence. The Officer told me that he saw Amiri taking a picture of a corner house which raised his suspicion due to a rash of home burglaries and the burglaries had hit a number of corner homes in the area. He then ended the conversation without even an attempt at an apology for disrupting my son and my family's life at that moment and swooping down on their home with excessive police presence. This incident aroused the deepest concerns that she has a parent raising three black young men. Perhaps everyone in this room and certainly the Mayor, you are aware of the statistics of what happens to often to young people of color. We are proportionately being profiled and exposed to excessive use of force at the hands of law enforcement. After the initial shock of the overall police presence at her house, she couldn't help but wonder very painfully what would have happened if Amiri had been the one to answer the door. It also made her wonder how much of this was about him being perceived as not belonging in his own neighborhood. They do happen to be the only black family that she knows of that lives in the immediate vicinity in our neighborhood. She has poured everything she has into her sons as most parents would do, but she has done that with the added burden of knowing that in all things, wherever they move they have to be twice as good and even if they do act twice as good as their white peers, it is still not enough to keep them from experiencing discriminatory policing and harm that could cost them their lives. This incident with the Highland Park Police Department was a very personal reminder of just how vulnerable and susceptible her sons are to unwarranted treatment at the hands of law enforcement as they make their way in this world. Not only did the incident upset her and her family, it has troubled her mind ever since. Her next door neighbor who witnessed the incident was equally upset and distraught about what happened. Her eyewitness account includes seeing the detective who knocked on her door draw his gun out briefly before the point when she opened the door. The excessive police presence and aggressive stance that she witnessed struck her with fear for the safety of her own children because she didn't know what was happening and she knew that I was home because she saw my car. She and I both couldn't help but agree as we spoke later that evening that if her high school teenaged son who has white skin had done the exact same thing that Amiri did, take a picture of the corner intersection and walk into the front door of his own home, he would not have been followed and responded to with such an excessive police presence, even in the midst of this heightened security state they are in over the burglaries. Yesterday, she had a very lengthy and cordial meeting with the Police Chief and some other Officers, where they shared the information that they had pertinent to her incident. She appreciated their time and efforts to make her feel that they were fully disclosing all of the data they had pertaining to this case. Unfortunately, there are aspects of the detective's account that do differ from hers, Amiri's and her neighbor's testimony. Unfortunately, the video footage of the incident did not include the entire sequence of the detective's movements and actions leading up to her answering the door. She will likely never get closure on these matters. All she knows is that what her son did and what the Police Officer said he did. However, because her son was thankfully unharmed in this police encounter, she has the space now to focus not only on their particular incident, as troubling as it was, but rather on the broader issue of community concerns about bias policing in Highland Park that their experience has helped raise to the surface. One of the main takeaways that she got from the meeting yesterday with the Police Chief is that there is a huge divide between how many members of this community feel about and experience policing in Highland Park and the perception that the Police have of their own high marks and high performance in the area of racial profiling and bias policing. The Chief and the other Officers that she met with expressed their belief that racial profiling does not exist in the Highland Park Police Department. They feel that the HPPD truly does exist in a bubble untouched by all the discriminatory policing practices that have been documented in cities and towns throughout the country. How can the community be assured that this is indeed the case in Highland Park? The Chief showed her an internal log that they keep of traffic stops, but is this information periodically analyzed so that any discriminatory programs that do exist can be identified, reported out and dealt with? Police Chief Rizco said that he wants to figure out ways to better communicate with and reach out to the community and she can only take him at his word. She is asking the town council, as a first and crucial step to addressing the gap between the community and the police department to seriously consider pursuing an independent racial profiling bias policing audit that includes also narratives, qualitative data from the community about their experiences. They all need to know what the data really says about policing in Highland Park so that areas of need can be addressed head on with comprehensive and institutional change. She cannot be assured still as a member of this community as much as she is integrated here and comfortable here, she still cannot be assured that her 2 teenage sons are comfortable walking around in this community on their own at 10:00 pm at night like she saw her

neighbor's sons walking, without being treated as a possible suspect. She thanked the Council, the Mayor and everyone who has reached out to her personally, and she hopes that moving forward they do take serious consideration to the request that she is making. They need an audit; they need to know as a community that this really does not happen as the Police Department is telling us that it doesn't. If body cams are provided, every detective and officer should have them, and they should be on at all times.

Mayor Brill Mittler asked her to participate with her and other volunteers and Police Officers in the Committee of Understanding. There is no way that anyone other than you can know what is going on in your head and what you feel. The same thing is true of the Police Officer. None of us can know what was going on in his head and how he is feeling also. She is the type of person who likes to take people who are at odds and sit with them in a room, door closed, and not leaving until there is a better understanding of where we are each coming from. It is much more difficult to do in this type of situation. She is hoping that she will join her and other community members and members of the Police Department in this small group to talk about what is going on inside our heads and our bodies when things like this happen from a resident perspective, especially a resident of color, and the Police Officer's perspective as someone who goes out there trying to protect the residents, so that we can build together moving forward with a better understanding and a better future. If that committee will help guide us in the future and they say they want to get more information, she would like recommendations to come out of that committee. She hopes that something good can happen out of something that is disturbing to her and the Police Department.

Anna Haley Lock, 135 North 5th Avenue, commented that it is not Ms. Coleman's job to help the Borough understand and fight against racist police bias. She cannot imagine having the grace she must have had coming into this meeting and hearing in response to what happened to her son that you're going to increase reporting of crime, which sounds like you are justifying what happened, that you are going to talk to teens about how to not commit crimes and how to talk to the police. She is here in support of her friend and neighbor and her high school age son, who this past week was the victim of racial profiling by the Police Department. Do not tell people that came here tonight that it was not racial profiling. This was textbook racial profiling. A high school age boy taking photos of houses and trees, crossing the street and walking into the front door of his house is interpreted by a Police Officer as suspicious and that interpretation leads him to questioning the child's mother at the door of their home and looking beyond her to try and locate the suspect and 3 to 4 police cars showing up within minutes. The response would not be the same if her white son did exactly the same thing. Do not tell us that Highland Park is a bubble, immune to what every other city and town in this country faces, where this never happens, it just did. She wasn't this angry when she came, but hearing what she has heard, she is way angrier now. Mayor Brill Mittler asked that she be respectful and she noted that there is nobody up here that is disagreeing that in the world there is racism. Ms. Haley Lock is reacting to what she has heard and what has been reported. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that there are other things that were not reported tonight. Ms. Haley Lock commented that there are several things that should immediately be said in an accountable community with elected representatives that are concerned about this. What training has the Highland Park Police staff completed in bias pre-policing practices in 2017 and so far in 2018? State law applies here in terms of minimum hours of required training, but more specifically what topics has that training covered, completed by what percentage of officers in the field, and delivered by whom, with what expertise in implicit racial bias? What is Highland Park's bias free policing policy? If it doesn't exist, will the Mayor, Council and Police Department commit tonight to developing and passing one? What are the processes by which such profiling incidents are formally grieved by their targets, investigated by the police and external entities, and reported to the community? What has been the community's involvement in all of these various steps? Highland Park can take definitive meaningful action right now before this kind of bias results in further violence. If Highland Park has not taken proper and full steps, ones that have become fundamental police practices around the United States, they must take those steps now. If we have taken them, and they have not worked, the Borough should work together with the public so that they work. They are here to be sure that the Council acts so that this does not happen in this community again.

Mayor Brill Mittler commented that for many years she has sat on the other side of the room. It hurts her to think that she would think the Borough and she are not sensitive to what is going on. The action she called for to have this committee so that they can work together on something is important. She asked for Monique to participate with her and this committee because she values her opinion. She cannot feel what Monique is feeling. She needs her input to make things better.

Herb Gross, Adelaide Gardens, commented that he is authorized to speak about a benefit for veterans. Veterans can go to Motor Vehicle with their discharge papers and get a new copy of their driver's license that has veteran status on it at no charge.

Adam Gold, Social Studies Teacher, Highland Park High School, commented that he was Amiri's teacher. He is not only one of the best student's he has ever had, but he is one of the best people he has ever known. Two years ago, Amiri was part of the school mock trial team and his role on the team was to play a Police Officer. Officer Curbelo graciously gave of his time and support and provided Amiri with a sense of what it might be like to be a Police Officer. He keeps reflecting on those conversations that were had at that time and what those conversations would be like now. He would like to hear discussion of what is happening in the schools that needs to be part of this conversation. Even today, conversations about this incident last week trickle into the classroom. Every day he feels it is our job to help the students seek understanding of the world and of themselves and each other. It is these events that create distance and that distance is not bridged naturally, and not bridged through a series of policy changes at the Borough level, it is bridged in the classroom through conversation, but conversation that happens within a community atmosphere with information and appreciation for the truth. He hopes there is a recognition that this has an impact in the schools and what is happening there is the foundation for how they understand each other, themselves and the world for the rest of their lives. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the Governing Body has an excellent relationship with Dr. Taylor. She agreed that they need to find a way to bring this into the schools and bring more of policing aspects of life here in Highland Park.

She noted that Councilwoman Foster-Dublin mentioned an open public meeting they had not long ago where they invited the community to come in and talk with the Police Officers and the teenagers to discuss what they thought about the Police. The meeting was enlightening to hear some of the comments from the parents and that sparked the new Youth Officer for the schools and now the creation of the Teen Center. It was the parents who got up after the teenagers spoke and they told the Governing Body that they wanted more involvement with their teenagers and the Police and could the Borough help them find a way to make that happen. That is how the Teen Center came about and also the new role of the Youth Officer. We need to build on that and the Police Department wants to build on that. Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that a number of years ago they had some incidents occur. One of the things they did was to have an independent study done and an evaluation of where we are and who we are as a community. There were about 35 items on the list that the Borough needed to improve. Last year, this study was discussed with the Borough Council and it was recommended that it be revisited and see where the Borough needs to go now. During that time, there were different groups that were formulated in town. One of the groups was called, Bridge Builders, and they had people from all aspects of the community come together and talk about how they see race and how to deal with race and what are some of the divides. Thinks it is time to revisit the conversation that was had 15 years ago and the changes that came out of that conversation that were made. Formulating this group is a way to get the community involved to get real input and also a way for students to be involved and to hear their voices. On the Human Relations Commission there is a Police Officer that attends the meetings as well as a student member. There are always opportunities to get more people involved and the youth is our future. The more tentacles they can put together to get everyone involved, the better off the Borough is going to be able to look at themselves and say what they have achieved and what they need to work on. Unfortunately, incidents like this are not going to go away in our country. Everything starts locally and we have to make sure that Highland Park is setting the example and paving the way and doing the right things so that when our children go out into the greater world, that they will have the coping mechanisms. She went through this when her son graduated in 2012 and she was worried about him moving away to New York city and it is a different world. She is concerned about everyone's children, but she is particularly concerned about black and brown children, because they see it and face it every day.

Jessica Hundsten, 304 Montgomery Street, commented that she is here as a member of New Labor in support of the driver's license resolution that the Council will be voting on. She is joined by a few other members as well. This is a really important measure for the new labor community and all of New Jersey and she is grateful for the Borough's leadership on this. The ACLU People Power of Middlesex County group has been exploring practices and policies of various Police Departments through documents obtained via the Open Public Records Act. In Highland Park, they have gathered data on traffic stops, use of force, pedestrian stops, and in some cases arrest reports or dash cam videos. In a preliminary analysis of traffic stops and use of force reports from January, 2016 to November, 2017, which they have shared with several members of the Council and the Human Relations Commission, they have found some findings that could suggest patterns of racial bias. If there are questions about the analysis of this data that she will share, she and other members of the ACLU People Power of Middlesex County group will be happy to sit down and review the analysis. It is her understanding that the Highland Park Police Department voluntarily collects data on traffic stops by race, ethnicity and gender, with a purpose of reviewing and analyzing it in order to identify any possible racial profiling incidents. Therefore, she is sure there are findings based on analysis of citation rate in comparison to Highland Park racial demographics that won't be surprising to the Police Department. When taken into consideration, Highland Park racial demographics, black drivers are stopped and cited at 3 times the rate of white drivers. Specifically, what this means is that blacks make up 6% of the population of Highland Park, but accounted for 18% of traffic stops and 16% of citations during the timeframe she previously mentioned. The citation rates for whites in Highland Park over the past 2 years has been 46%. This means that if you are a white driver, on average 46% of the time you were stopped, you received a citation. If you are Asian and were stopped, on average, you received a citation 64% of the time. Taking into account the population of Asians in Highland Park, Asians are cited 2.5 times the rate of whites. Another data point they explored was use of force reports. According to the data received, there were 19 incidents of use of force in Highland Park from January, 2016 until October, 2017. Five were redacted due to involving individuals with a psychological condition or they were juveniles. In this analysis, they have been left out. In the 14 remaining reports, use of force could include compliance hold, hand fists, knee to abdomen, kicks or use of a chemical agent. 11 of the use of force report incidents occurred with people of color. While the Borough is approximately 64% white, 78% of incidents of use of force, involved people of color. With 71% of use of force incidents involving blacks. Anytime she analyzes data, she tries to understand the limitations of the data. For example, summary data doesn't look at individual cases and try to understand what happened in each case, which is clearly important. Several of these use of force reports need to be looked at more closely, which she intends to do. She knows that when she does analysis compared to population, not everyone who is stopped or received a citation is a resident of Highland Park. However, this preliminary analysis of data can help identify trends or patterns which should them to ask questions and reflect upon practices and policies. Given this data as well as recent disturbing incidents, one would think that the Highland Park Police Department would be concerned, and the Council would be concerned about the racial patterns that its officers and policies are producing. The community is telling you, and your numbers confirm, that there are clear racial disparities in both traffic stops and use of force among other policing issues mentioned here tonight. She asked what the Highland Park Police Department and the Council are going to do to address these disparities. Mayor Brill Mittler asked that she be provided with a copy of the report. She asked that the Public Safety Committee to review the report. Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that the Public Safety Committee did meet with Jessica and some of her members to discuss some of the items in the report. She advised them at that time that she was not finished and she was supplied with additional information about police practices and training.

Ana Pairet, 344 Becker Street, commented that she is here to lend support to Monique Coleman who had the courage to share her experience and to give testimony. This incident exposed racial bias and this is not an isolated incident in Highland Park. The first step in undoing racism is acknowledging bias in our institutions and in ourselves. The burden is now on us and she thinks we are in the position to request an investigation for this particular incident. She is happy to volunteer for community work, but she does not think that is enough. Amiri was here 2 years ago to talk about the Roots project. When he left to go back to school, he asked his mom not to keep the focus on him, but to make it about others who also experienced such an incident. She is a member of Highland Park Parents with Students of Color, which is where she met Monique. This group was created 3 years ago after parents reported similar incidents with the police around town. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the Youth Officer, Sgt. Curbelo, is anxious to become more familiar with this group and to meet with them so that they can build some bridges. Ms. Pairet noted that they started talking to Officer Curbelo, but she doesn't think an Officer with Hispanic heritage understands the relationship that black youth have to guns. She does not want him to come to one of their meetings with a gun, it's an issue. They are grateful that he reached out, but they were saddened that they couldn't talk because he didn't understand that the gun is a problem. It is part of his uniform and they cannot have an officer with a gun at their meeting. Lastly, she mentioned that her son got hit in the head with a pole from the tent of a local organization. Mayor Brill Mittler asked Councilwoman Welkovits to talk about this matter with Main Street Highland Park.

Mark Amrenko, 11 Sparkel Avenue, noted that Amiri is one of his closest friends and over 20 students from Highland Park High School are here in support of him tonight. He is an amazing person, someone he looks up to and aspires to be. He is destined for great things and is one of the best people he has ever met. In an instant, with one piece of miscommunication, one wrong move, all that could have been over and he could have lost an amazing friend. As a student of Highland Park High School he wants it known that this will not be tolerated. The students are all very forward thinking and they will not tolerate acts like this. It can be said that this wasn't racial profiling, but they do not believe that. They have seen the body cam footage and they watch the news and they know what happens and as a friend of Amiri, as a person of color, as a student and a future voter, he wants to know why this is happening in Highland Park in 2018. Who is next? He is a person of color, is this going to happen to him? He asked what is being done so that this will not happen in the future. This is an irresponsible incident and it cannot happen again and they will not allow it to happen again.

Chief Rizco thanked everyone for coming and for their comments and they will take them all into consideration. He would love to see a copy of statistics that someone spoke about. For him to say it was not racial profiling, would not be popular. He met with Ms. Coleman yesterday and let her see all the information that the Police Department has. The Police Department is willing to take any suggestions to improve relations with the community. They have taken steps since he's been Chief with different programs. If there are other incidents, that were mentioned, they need to be brought to his attention. Information can be provided to the Police Department anonymously. They are obligated under the Attorney General's guidelines to investigate matters. His primary concern is to protect everyone in the community. With the recent rash of burglaries, they have extra help out there to resolve this matter before someone gets hurt. Officer Curbelo and some of his other Officers know Amiri, but the Detective in question did not know who he was. One of the concerns was that he could be hiding behind the house or he could break into the back of the house endangering the resident. One of their concerns is that one of these burglaries is going to turn into an occupied home and things could get worse. The Highland Park Police Department is not perfect, but they are doing their best to catch the person responsible. They are getting many more reports of suspicious people in town. To date, they have received 46 calls, some white, some black, but they do respond. Most of the calls are unfounded. They are checking every lead. Investigation is still ongoing and most times the Highland Park Police Department does not have 5 vehicles responding to a call. He is willing to meet with anyone and take any suggestions on how to better communicate with the public and react and know other people's feelings and they can know the Police Department's feelings as well.

Dan Battey, 304 Montgomery Street, commented that he is here to support the driver's license resolution and second, he is part of the ACLU People Power of Middlesex County Group that has been examining policing policies and practices in different Police Departments. He is one of the members who met with Councilwoman Foster-Dublin and Councilman Hersh. The Police Chief mentioned the 2016 Attorney General directive and after receiving training at an accredited police academy, Highland Park Officers were required to complete 5 hours of continuing education by the end of 2017 and at least 3 hours a year after that. A list of topics covered are lengthy in the directive, but they include de-escalation techniques, cultural diversity awareness, racial profiling and implicit bias. From the report provided by the Police Department it was clear Officers received a number of different trainings around cultural awareness, sensitivity to different groups and that these trainings have been provided by volunteers from different community groups. He is interested in learning how these trainings align to the Attorney General directive, namely de-escalation techniques, racial profiling and implicit bias. He understands the importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity training that is significantly different than training on racial profiling and bias. In August 2016, it became a requirement for the State Department of Law and Public Safety to develop cultural diversity training materials and an online tutorial for local Police Chiefs who were required to draft a cultural diversity action plan. He wants to know how to obtain a copy of the cultural diversity action plan. That might be a step in communicating with the community in the ways in which it addresses some of the previously mentioned topics around racial profiling and implicit bias. The Police Department collects data on traffic stops based on race, ethnicity and gender and he has that data and has been analyzing it to identify any racial profiling incidents. He would like to learn more about how frequently it is reviewed and how it is analyzed and what patterns they are looking for. Their analysis of this data has raised a number of concerns. He wants to know why those concerns have not been identified within the Police Department. During a recent review of the 2002 Highland Park Community Relations Task Force, there are a number of recommendations, such as the Civilian Complaint Review Board, which doesn't seem to have been implemented. There needs to be a place for civilian complaints to be filed, understood and dealt with. The reason that this was recommended was to ensure a complete, fair and impartial process. Highland Park has been a leader on important policies like passing the

inclusive resolution last year and the driver's license resolution tonight. Therefore, it is upsetting to see the resistance to addressing issues of racial bias in our Police force. As someone who researches racial bias and education, he considers this a very complex issue and he thinks it is more complex than it is being made out to be tonight. Racial bias is not something that you can attest to having or not having. The nature of implicit bias, is that we as individuals are not aware of it, but act on internalized stereotypes. Due to the nature of how racial bias works, asserting that you have no racial bias, is actually counterproductive and likely a sign that racial bias is at work. Systemic bias becomes visible through patterns of behavior, rather than single incidents. The review of data for single incidents is likely not going to provide many results unless you look for patterns. As concerned residents, we must insist that a Police force that shows racial disparities in traffic stops, use of force reports, and the personal stories mentioned tonight, needs to be held accountable and do the work of uprooting racism and racial bias personally and institutionally.

Mayor Brill Mittler commented that the racial bias statistics that he has and quoted is a concern to them. She, the Police Chief and Councilwoman Foster-Dublin often talk about making sure that they are as objective as possible in everything they do regarding stops, but that may not be the reality. She does not have the numbers or the information that he has. When she first started on Council, the Human Relations Commission was one of her commissions, and there is a Police Officer on the Human Relations Commission. That is the place that people are encouraged to go to if they have any complaints or comments. This information needs to be more clearly communicated.

Chief Rizco noted that the 2016 mandate by the Attorney General for training for de-escalation techniques, racial profiling and implicit bias was completed by all staff in the Police Department and they will continue this education. They have conducted cultural and sensitivity programs that are more in tune with Highland Park residents. Budgetary constraints keep him from sending staff to all types of schools, not to mention he needs officers on the road. He has brought trainers in that are familiar with the customs of various cultures so that all the Officers can be trained. They have brought in Rabbis for Orthodox Jewish Religion, African-American culture conducted by the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Officers, Muslim religion, Asian Indian, Chinese culture, LGBT community by New York Police Department, southeast Asian women's culture, autism training, and whatever he can get for free that seems to make sense. He has also had Acute Psychiatric Services from Rutgers Mental Health to come in and address officers. They have had Cop to Cop training for officers who may have issues on their own.

Councilwoman Foster-Dublin commented about the 2002 report and some of the recommendations that were put in place starting in 2003. For the latest Clear training program, they have been ahead of the curve. Highland Park has worked diligently to find professionals in each area to provide the kind of training they need to address what was called out in the report and what they see they need to create a better society for the Police Department and the residents.

Catherine Burton, 40 Cedar Avenue, commented that she is a parent of a student of color. She has a 10-year-old black son who is in 4th grade. She is more interested in her son having less involvement with the Police. More involvement with the Police is not a goal for her. She is not interested in him being in centers in the community where Police are, not because she does not have respect for their job, because she does have the utmost respect for them. She served on the Middlesex Mobile Response Team for children for over 10 years. She is actually finishing up being a trainer for the NJ Children System of Care, specifically in cultural competence, and non-violent crisis prevention. She talks to people who go out into the community to see people with severe and persistent mental health challenges, as well as behavioral challenges, and they go out to see these people without the aid of guns. She has some respect for the challenge that is presented to the Police force. However, she knows that here in New Jersey there is the highest rate of disparity in the nation in terms of youth who are involved in juvenile justice. Currently, there are 222 youth who are locked up in the juvenile justice facility, and only 18 or 19 of them are white. We are not in a bubble. She has lived in Arkansas and has lived other places south of the Mason/Dixon line, her hometown is Flint Michigan. She is very aware of the challenges that are part of race in the country. This place is no different. It is one thing to not be a racist and it is another thing to be actively, intentionally, with resources, anti-racist. It requires a completely different set of policies; it requires a completely different mindset. That is the town where she wants to live. Two things happened after she heard about what happened to Monique and Amiri. On a Thursday, she heard her neighbors outside playing and her son was upstairs playing video games. She thought to herself, he's going to go outside. Her son is 10 years old, 5' tall and wears a size 10 shoe. She has opposing coaches for basketball teams ask her to produce his birth certificate to prove that he is the age that he is. She did not allow her son to go outside to play at dusk with his white friends because she does not know what will happen if he takes out his new cell phone and snaps a picture and that is not a risk she is currently willing to take. Her son came downstairs and asked to be able to walk home from school on Friday. They live 4 blocks away from Bartle School and she explained why he would not be walking home from school without fear of Police thinking he might be suspicious. She knows other friends of hers who have white kids who are worried about their kids walking home from school because they might be abducted, raped or molested. She has to verbalize to her son why she won't let him walk home from school because she is concerned about what will happen if the Police stop him. She hopes that they hear her alternative perspective that she hopes he never meets the Police Officers. She hopes that he never has to experience the trauma of being a black youth who comes into contact with the Police.

Bruce Morgan, 222 Benner Street, commented that he is the President of the NAACP New Brunswick Area Branch, and is the 2nd Vice President for the NJ State Conference of the NAACP. He is the child of a law enforcement officer and he has a son that was profiled in Highland Park and he has been profiled. He walked into this room tonight and something happened to him that just turned his stomach. He had a white parent who he is pretty friendly with say that my child would like to interview you to find out how to be a parent of a black kid. What is the secret to raising successful black children? Raising them is no different from white people or Asians. This is the mindset of America. He was part of the task force in 2002. Highland Park is not a bubble. Perhaps the ills of the world don't affect us as

much, but whatever is out there in that world, is here. In hindsight, they should have that task force every year and then it would become a part of our culture. We cannot forget the fact that this is America and this is not anything new to anybody in this room. What has anyone done about it until they stepped into this room tonight? He is fortunate to live in a town where he can call the Police Chief by his first name and have serious discussions about what is going on. Don't forget about this next week or two weeks from now, have this discussion in September, have this discussion in 2020. Let this be part of you in changing the culture of racism and hate in America. The NAACP is here to serve the community. He has other resources to try to help make this a better community. There is a hotline that residents can call if they feel they haven't been treated fairly and they don't want to talk to the Police Department. Residents can feel free to talk to him or to the Council Members. There are services for Police training and there are different services for the schools. He is 64 years old and he still gets profiled if he goes into a store. This is a community that is better than that, but it won't be better than that, until we all take a hand to make sure it is better than that and it stays better than that. The Highland Park Police Department is one of the best departments he has dealt with and they come to him because they've had problems and they sit down and work it out. We have to make this a better world and support our Council and support their Police. By supporting them, if there is a problem, you let them know. He is willing to join her committee.

Councilwoman Foster-Dublin commented that the community needs to help them make the change.

Sophia McDermott Hughes, 330 South 3rd Avenue, and Michelle, South 5th Avenue, commented that they both know Amiri. Sophia noted that she is covering the story for the Highland Park Fling, the school's student newspaper. She would love to get people's written comments and would love to interview anyone who has made comments. There are 20 Highland Park High School alumni and students who are here in support of Amiri. There has been an outpouring of both support and outrage about this incident in the high school. Even though Amiri left the high school 2 years ago, everyone remembers him because he is an incredible kid. She grew up admiring him. He is incredibly eloquent, so approachable, so charismatic and everyone loves him. She had seen Amiri at the high school at a meeting where they debated gun control and gun violence. They left the high school together and then they split off and the incident occurred about 5 minutes later. She believes that if they were still with him, he would not have been followed. In this day and age, teenagers are constantly pictures of themselves and their surroundings. She was walking alone and taking pictures of her surroundings and she was not followed. She has never felt afraid of the Highland Park Police Department or any Police Department. Michelle commented that 2 years ago she and Amiri were on the same mock trial team together and they both were playing Police Officers. Officer Curbelo came in and taught them about different mannerisms. It was fun and cool to step into his shoes and she feels it was interesting for Amiri as well, a black boy, to be stepping into the shoes of an officer, especially with this context that we are looking at this in. It would be really interesting if the Police Department could possibly do the same and reverse that and try to step into the shoes that he stepped into 2 years ago and what it must be like to be walking home, visiting your friends and your old school, and to be followed and have 5 Police cars show up around your house and make you feel like you don't belong there. Need to be leaders and take first step in admitting that they messed up.

Mayor Brill Mittler thanked the two of them for speaking. She hopes that the Committee of Understanding will make this process something that is an ongoing, regular process and for the Officers to better understand what Amiri or Monique might be feeling and for them to understand what is going on in the brains of the Police Officers at the same time, because if we don't talk to one another, than we will never get each other.

Sophia McDermott Hughes, 330 South 3rd Avenue, commented that an important thing that wasn't addressed is that the point of admitting that this is an incident of racial profiling.

Francesca Mareska, 216 South 3rd Avenue, commented that she is a mother of a child of color. She keeps hearing that we need to communicate better and to build bridges. She does not think it is about communication, she does not think it is about building bridges with the youth. She fully agrees with Catherine about her youth, especially children of color, not spending more time with the Police. It doesn't matter how much time her soon to be almost teenaged son is going to hang out at that teen center, because when it is dusk and when it is dark, it won't matter that he played basketball at the teen center with one of our Officers, because that is not who he is going to see. He is going to see a threat, a young black man and that is all he is going to see. This is not about understanding cultures; this is about systemic racist policing in 2018. In a State where 91% of our youth currently detained are black and brown, when research shows that black youth, both boys and girls, are perceived to be older, much older than their peers. When black and brown children are punished more frequently and more severely than their white peers in the schools, how can anyone state that Highland Park is different? We are a microcosm of a larger society, not just in the State of New Jersey, but in this entire country. We have to stop putting the burden of decreasing racist and bias responses on the victims. We have to take responsibility for our own biases. Nobody here has mentioned biased policing, that this was a biased, racist response to a young man walking home and walking through his front door after visiting his friends at school. This is about a young black boy being profiled and followed home and the Police Officer never identified himself. The first step is admitting that we have these biases. She is white and had to face her own biases as the parent of a black child and she continues to do it every single day. When a young black man walking home triggers a Police response of 5 Police cars, marked and unmarked, it really is time to acknowledge complicity. There is a power imbalance at work here and it is one that maintains silence because people do not feel that they can speak up. We have to look at who has the power in town and who has the power to speak and who feels safe enough to speak. There may have been people who have experienced racial profiling, but did not feel safe enough to say anything. She has very different conversations with her 8-year old and she explained to him what happened. She explained to him that one of the big boys got stopped walking home from school and she told him why. His response to her was that he is now afraid to walk outside by himself. She is preparing him for his reality and this is his reality in Highland Park and in New Jersey in 2018.

Rosa De Aguiar, 217 Lincoln Avenue, commented that she is in 8th grade and is close friends with Amiri's little brother. Neither of them have ever displayed any suspicious behavior that would cause them to be approached by Police, but it is the case no matter how much certain members of the community would like to deny it. They are at a greater risk of being profiled and potentially harmed by Police Officers. It is her opinion that speaking with Police Officers will not encourage progressive change. Where is your data? Why do you think that simply speaking to Officers, like Officer Joe Curbelo who is almost a constant presence at the Middle School, will start to stop racial profiling in our town? Furthermore, considering the building of the teen center and recent school shootings like the one in Parkland, Florida, she doesn't see why there should be a strong Police presence at the teen center like Councilwoman Foster-Dublin suggested. She knows for a fact that many of the Middle Schoolers, like she and her friends that are around Officer Curbelo, are already severely uncomfortable with the fact that he carries a gun with him at all times. Tamir Rice, who was 12 years old, was considered a man. Nicholas Cruz, who was 19, was considered a helpless boy. She noticed during a lot of these speeches a lot of the white people in the room had glazed eyes, not truly listening, because they will never understand the struggles that people of color go through. It is imperative that the Council listen to her. Ms. Haley-Locke used her privilege in the right way tonight. She was allowed to get angry about these issues in a way Ms. Coleman might not have socially allowed to and that is something that we need to combat when talking about these matters.

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

The Clerk reported advertising an ordinance entitled, AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK, IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DISSOLVING THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-24 AND N.J.S.A. 40A:5A-20, for consideration of passage on final reading by title and that affidavits of publication thereto are on file. She also reported that the ordinance had been posted and made available to the public, as required by law.

On motion made by Councilwoman Welkovits, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote, the above entitled ordinance was taken up on final reading by title.

Mayor Brill Mittler declared the public hearing on the ordinance open to all officials and persons present and called upon all those wishing to speak for or against the ordinance to do so.

No one appearing to be heard and no objections having been received in writing, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

On motion made by Councilwoman Welkovits, seconded by Councilman George, the ordinance entitled as above, being Ordinance No. 18-1955, was duly adopted by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

The following resolution, introduced by the Economic Development and Planning Committee, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilwoman Welkovits, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote:

No. 3-18-82

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Ordinance entitled, AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK, IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DISSOLVING THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-24 AND N.J.S.A. 40A:5A-20, passed on final reading at this meeting be delivered to the Mayor for his/her approval, and if approved by him/her, that the same be recorded in full by the Borough Clerk in a proper book kept for that purpose, and be advertised by publishing the same by title in the "Home News Tribune", of East Brunswick, New Jersey, a newspaper published in the County of Middlesex and circulating in this municipality, there being no newspaper published in this municipality, in the manner prescribed by law.

The Clerk reported that an ordinance entitled, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK, CHAPTER 328, "SEWER AND WATER", had been introduced in writing by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee for consideration of passage on first reading by title.

On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, the ordinance entitled as above was duly adopted on first reading by title by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Abstained: Councilwoman Kim-Chohan.

Absent: None.

No. 3-18-83

WHEREAS, an Ordinance entitled, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK, CHAPTER 328, "SEWER AND WATER" has been introduced and duly passed on first reading;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that this Council meet at the Borough Hall, 221 South Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, New Jersey, on Tuesday, April 3, 2018, at 7:00 PM, for the purpose of considering said Ordinance on final passage after public hearing thereon.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said a Notice of Pending Ordinance and Summary of said Ordinance be published once at least one (1) week prior to the time fixed for further consideration of said Ordinance for final passage in the "Home News Tribune", of East Brunswick, New Jersey, a newspaper published in the County of Middlesex and circulating in this municipality, there being no newspaper published daily in this municipality, together with a notice of the introduction thereof and of the time and place when and where said Ordinance will be further considered for final passage as aforesaid.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of said Ordinance shall be posted on the bulletin board at Borough Hall, 221 South Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, New Jersey, forthwith and that the Borough

Clerk have available in her office for the members of the general public of Highland Park copies of said Ordinance for those members of the general public who may request the same.

The Clerk reported that an ordinance entitled, CALENDAR YEAR ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14), had been introduced in writing by the Finance Committee for consideration of passage on first reading by title.

On motion made by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman George, the ordinance entitled as above was duly adopted on first reading by title by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote:

No. 3-18-84

WHEREAS, an Ordinance entitled, CALENDAR YEAR ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14), has been introduced and duly passed on first reading;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that this Council meet at the Borough Hall, 221, South Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, New Jersey, on Tuesday, April 17, at 7:00 PM, for the purpose of considering said Ordinance on final passage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said Ordinance be published once at least one (1) week prior to the time fixed for further consideration of said Ordinance for final passage in the "Home News Tribune", of East Brunswick, New Jersey, a newspaper published in the County of Middlesex and circulating in this municipality, there being no newspaper published in this municipality, together with a notice of the introduction thereof and of the time and place when and where said Ordinance will be further considered for final passage as aforesaid.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of said Ordinance shall be posted on the bulletin board at Borough Hall, 221 South Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, New Jersey, forthwith and that the Borough Clerk have available in her office for the members of the general public of Highland Park copies of said Ordinance for those members of the general public who may request the same.

The Clerk reported that the 2018 Municipal Budget and Tax Resolution were introduced in writing by the Finance Committee for consideration of passage on first reading. Copies of the full text will be available at the Highland Park Public Library and Borough Hall. The full final budget as adopted and approved will appear in the minutes of the meeting at which the budget is finally adopted.

On motion made by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilwoman Welkovits, the 2018 Municipal Budget and Tax Resolution were duly adopted on first reading by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Abstained: None.

Absent: None.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted on motion made by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilwoman Welkovits, and carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote:

No. 3-18-85

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Municipal Budget for the year 2018;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said Budget be published in the Home News Tribune, Neptune, N.J. in the issue of March 28, 2018.

The governing Body of the Borough of Highland Park does hereby approve the following as the Budget for the year 2018:

General Appropriations

Appropriations Within "CAPS"	
Municipal Purposes	\$12,744,753.69
Appropriations Excluded from "CAPS"	
Municipal Purposes	2,683,726.01
Reserve for Uncollected Taxes – Based on	
Estimated 99+ Percent of Tax Collections	<u>200,000.00</u>
Total General Appropriations	15,628,479.70
Less: Anticipated Revenues Other Than Current	
Property Tax	<u>3,058,055.23</u>
Difference: Amount to be Raised by Taxes	
For Support of Municipal Budget:	
Local Tax for Municipal Purposes Including	
Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	12,121,710.84
Minimum Library Tax	<u>448,713.63</u>

Water & Sewer Utility Operating Fund:

Total Water & Sewer Utility Revenues	<u>\$5,458,087.90</u>
Total Water & Sewer Utility Appropriations	<u>\$5,458,087.90</u>

Notice is hereby given that the Budget and Tax Resolution was approved by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, on March 20, 2018.

A hearing on the Budget and Tax Resolution will be held at Borough Hall on April 17, 2018 at 7:00 o'clock P.M. at which time and place objections to said Budget and Tax Resolution for the year 2018 may be presented by taxpayers or other interested persons.

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

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Kim, Chohan, Welkovits.
 Opposed: None.
 Abstain: None.
 Absent: None.

No. 3-18-86

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that transfers of 2017 budget appropriation balances shall be made as follows:

Description	From	To
Administration OE		115.00
Legal		460.00
Central Services OE		75.00
Motorpool OE		11,500.00
Finance OE	395.00	
Audit	685.00	
Tax Collector OE	2,500.00	
Human Rights Commission OE	870.00	
Construction Code OE	500.00	
Police Dispatch OE	1,000.00	
Building & Grounds OE	900.00	
Animal Control Services	2,000.00	
Dept on Aging OE	400.00	
Arts Commission	700.00	
Cable	300.00	
Telephones	1,900.00	
	12,150.00	12,150.00

Resolution Nos. 3-18-87 through 3-18-95, were duly adopted on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilwoman Welkovits, and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Welkovits.
 Opposed: None.
 Absent: None.

The following resolution, introduced by the Economic Development and Planning Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 3-18-87

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that approval is hereby given to Main Street Highland Park to hold its Annual Street Fair activities on May 6, 2018, from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that permission is hereby granted to the Highland Park Police Department to make application to the New Jersey Department of Transportation for a permit to close a portion of Raritan Avenue (Route #27) between 2nd and 5th Avenues on May 6, 2018, between 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Main Street Highland Park will work in close cooperation with the Highland Park Police Department to insure minimum inconvenience to Borough residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Council hereby waives the Transient Merchant permit fees and other Borough fees for vendors who register to participate in the Street Fair; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to Main Street Highland Park; Stephen Rizco, Chief of Police; Police Traffic Safety Bureau; Highland Park First Aid Squad Capt.; H. James Polos, Emergency Management Coordinator; Donald Rish, Dept. of Public Works Supt.; Lt. Gary Panichella.

The following resolution, introduced by the Economic Development and Planning Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 3-18-88

WHEREAS, the following business/property owners have submitted a completed application to the Borough of Highland Park for matching grant under the Highland Park Façade Improvement Program and/or the Highland Park Awning Promotion Program, both funded through the Community Block Development Grant and further described on the Purchase Requisition attached to the original of this resolution for the location designated, to wit:

<u>APPLICANT</u>	<u>BUSINESS LOCATIONS</u>
Bayleaf Grill	314 Raritan Avenue

and

WHEREAS, the Main Street Design Committee has reviewed the applications and has recommended that the above applications be approved by the Mayor and Council; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose will be available in Account No. G-02-16-CD6-210 for a total amount not to exceed \$1,500.00, as reflected by the Certification of Funds Available by the Chief Financial Officer, shown below;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the application from the above named business/property owner be approved for funding under the Highland Park Façade Improvement and Awning Promotion Program in the amount set opposite, to wit:

<u>APPLICANT</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Bayleaf Grill	\$1,500.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the applicant, Finance Department and the Main Street Executive Director forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 3-18-89

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that the Tax Collector is authorized to issue an appropriate Duplicate Tax Sale Certificate for #09-00068 in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 54:5-52.1.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk provide a certified copy of this Resolution to the Finance Department and the Tax Collector.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 3-18-90

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 6-17-211, adopted by the Borough Council on June 13, 2017, a contract was awarded to Astro Electrical Contractor of Linden, NJ, for the purchase and installation of an emergency generator at the Senior/Youth Center; and

WHEREAS, it appears from Pay Estimate No. 3, filed by the CME Associates, that certain work under said contract has been completed and approved, and there is due to Astro Electrical Contractor, the sum of \$21,756.00 in accordance with said Pay Estimate for work performed from December 8, 2017 to February 28, 2018; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in Account No. C-04-55-827-205 in the amount of \$21,756.00, as reflected by the Certification of Funds Available by the Chief Financial Officer, shown below;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Chief Financial Officer be and is hereby authorized and directed to pay Astro Electrical Contractor the sum of \$21,756.00, as certified by the Engineer in Pay Estimate No. 3, subject to the Clerk's receipt of the Certified Payroll and Project Manning Reports and additional documents as necessary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer and CME Associates forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Council as a Whole, was duly adopted as above:
No. 3-18-91

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park is proud to have developed a policy framework in Resolution 5-17-160 that creates a path toward being an Inclusive Community; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council recognize that there are many factors in creating inclusive communities where all residents can be prosperous and thrive with dignity within the margins; and

WHEREAS, having automobile access to move freely to and from the workplace is critical to one's ability to move away from financial hardship and to develop a solid personal financial foundation; and

WHEREAS, the current 6-point system prohibits access to driver's licenses to NJ residents who may be unable to present documents required under the current system, for example, those who are elderly, undocumented, survivors of violence, and veterans; and

WHEREAS, expanding driver's licenses to all New Jersey residents, regardless of status, would increase road and public safety and facilitate economic growth; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council value the contributions of all residents regardless of status, to the economic health, cultural diversity, and public safety of Highland Park; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council recognize the fundamental importance of all of our residents' ability to participate in civic life, ensure the health and safety of their families, and to move freely across this State; and

WHEREAS, the following twelve states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Nevada, New Mexico, Vermont, Utah, and Washington, as well as Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico have expanded access to driver's licenses regardless of status;

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council understand that the safety of Highland Park's roads would be enhanced if all residents of appropriate driving age were tested, trained, licensed, and insured; and

WHEREAS, States that were early adopters of expanded driver's licenses have seen reductions in fatal accidents that exceed the national average. Both Utah and the state of Washington have lower fatality rates than the national average, New Mexico's fatality rate is higher than the national average, but it has decreased noticeably after the state implemented its driver's license law in 2003; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey would become safer with fewer uninsured and unlicensed drivers on the road, resulting in a predicted decrease in fatal traffic accidents and fewer hit-and-run crimes; and

WHEREAS, the public safety of the Borough of Highland Park would be enhanced by helping the aforementioned vulnerable communities participate more fully in civic life, building trust and cooperation between these communities and law enforcement, and strengthening the ability of police to investigate and solve crimes; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey Policy Perspective's (NJPP) 2014 study estimates that if New Jersey law were changed to expand access to driver's licenses to, for example, the undocumented population, between 153,000 and 278,000 would apply for a driver's license within the first three years of eligibility; and

WHEREAS, expanding access to driver's licenses would enhance New Jersey's and our local and regional economies; and

WHEREAS, the undocumented population, for example, pay an estimated \$587 million in state and local taxes in New Jersey each year; and

WHEREAS, NJPP estimates that New Jersey insurance companies would take in over \$200 million in additional premiums per year from the undocumented population alone, saving money for existing policyholders by expanding the pool of policyholders and reducing the number of claims against uninsured drivers;

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey would take in millions in new revenue from fees paid by new driver's license applicants and license renewals;

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park's local economy would be bolstered by strengthening the mobility of its workforce and enhancing economic participation in vulnerable communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Mayor and Council support expanding access to driver's licenses to New Jersey residents regardless of status and other vulnerable populations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Mayor and Council have strong concerns about residents being made more vulnerable to detention by immigration agents as personal information is entered into a statewide database and will work with the sponsors of A-1738, the New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice, and others to address these concerns.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Mayor and Council urges the New Jersey State Legislature to pass legislation and urges the Governor to sign legislation expanding access to driver's licenses to undocumented New Jersey residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded by the Municipal Clerk to the offices of Senator Patrick Diegnan; Assemblywoman Nancy Pinkin, Assemblyman Robert Karabinchak, Assemblywoman Annette Quijano, Assemblyman Reed Gusciora, Assemblyman Raj Mukherji, Assemblyman Gary S. Schaer, Assemblyman Gordon M. Johnson, Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle, Assemblyman Joe Danielsen and Governor Phil Murphy.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 3-18-92

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Borough Clerk be and is hereby authorized and directed to notify the Borough Finance Director that since the adoption of a resolution on January 2, 2018 showing the names of the officers and employees of the Borough of Highland Park whose salaries are on an annual basis, there have been the following changes, to wit:

ELIZABETH CHEVRY, Clerk Typist, at an annual salary of \$34,998.00 effective April 1, 2018.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Borough Clerk be and is hereby authorized and directed to notify the Borough Finance Director that since the adoption of a resolution on January 2, 2018 showing the names of the officers and employees of the Borough of Highland Park whose salaries are on an hourly basis, there have been the following changes, to wit:

ELEANOR JOHNSEN, Library Page, at an hourly rate of \$8.60, effective March 7, 2018.

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Finance Director be and 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.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 3-18-93

WHEREAS, under the terms and conditions of the Public Contracts Law of the State of New Jersey, a municipality may purchase and/or rent items without competitive bidding from a firm or corporation currently under contract with the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park is in need of replacing photocopiers in the Municipal Building, the Police Department and the Department of Public Works, said equipment as more fully described on the attached proposal; and

WHEREAS, under State Contract No. 40467, the Borough may rent three (4) Ricoh MP 2555SPG Digital Copier Systems; one (1) Ricoh MP3555SPG Digital Copier System; and one (1) Ricoh MPC6004EXG Digital Copier System from Ricoh USA, 5 Detrick Place, West Caldwell, NJ 07006, for a 48-month rental contract, at the State contract prices; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose shall be made available upon adoption in the 2018 Municipal Budget in an amount not to exceed \$8,496.99, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer, shown below; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Borough Administrator and Borough Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to arrange for the rental of the aforesaid photocopying equipment from Ricoh USA, 5 Detrick Place, West Caldwell, NJ 07006; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to Borough Administrator, Chief Financial Officer, Municipal Court Administrator, Supt. Public Works and Public Utility, Police Chief and Borough Clerk, forthwith.

The following resolution, introduced by the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee, was duly adopted as above:
No. 3-18-94

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., a Notice to Bidders was issued by the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey for labor and equipment for sanitary sewer inspection and maintenance (hereinafter "project"), for the years 2018 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, one bid from National Water Main Cleaning Co. was received and opened for said project on February 22, 2018; and

WHEREAS, upon review of the bids, it was determined that ambiguities and inconsistencies existed in the Information to Bidders and General Provisions (hereinafter "bid specifications") and the Notice to Bidders; and

WHEREAS, it is the recommendation of the Borough Attorney's Office that this bid be rejected and that the bid specifications and the Notice to Bidders be substantially revised and clarified in order to correct said ambiguities and inconsistencies; and

WHEREAS, as authorized by law, the Borough of Highland Park reserved the right to reject bids in the Notice to Bidders; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park now wishes to reject the bid received for said project in order to substantially revise and clarify the bid specifications and the Notice to Bidders.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park as follows:

1. The Borough Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to reject the bid received on February 22, 2018 for labor and equipment for sanitary sewer inspection and maintenance for the years 2018 and 2019.

2. The Borough staff and professionals are hereby authorized and directed to amend and change the bid specifications and documents as needed and to re-bid the project as soon as practicable. The staff and professionals are expressly authorized to include any additional terms and conditions as they deem necessary and appropriate and to undertake any and all actions necessary to effectuate the terms and intent hereof.
3. A copy of this Resolution will be placed on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk and shall be available for public inspection.

The following resolution, introduced by the Finance Committee, was duly adopted as above:

No. 3-18-95

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park 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 3/20/2018 can be found in the Bills List Journal Book No. 37.

Mayor Brill Mittler appointed Andrea Alexander to serve as a Regular Member of the Recreation Advisory Committee for a term to expire December 31, 2018.

Mayor Brill Mittler appointed Thomas Hillman to serve as a Regular Member of the Safe Walking and Cycling Committee for a term to expire January 1, 2021.

The above appointments were confirmed on motion made by Councilwoman Kim-Chohan, seconded by Councilman Hersh and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, George, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Abstained: None.

Absent: Councilwoman Foster-Dublin.

Mayor Brill Mittler appointed Jeff Perlman to serve as the Alternate #1 member of the Planning Board for a term to expire September 2, 2018.

The Clerk reported receipt of notification of the election of Volunteer Firefighters Mario Diaz and Robert Howarth to the rolls of the Highland Park Volunteer Fire Department.

On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilwoman Welkovits, the above confirmation was confirmed by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Ayes: Councilpersons Fine, Foster-Dublin, George, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Welkovits.

Opposed: None.

Absent: None.

Mayor Brill Mittler opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves.

Adam Quinn, 113 Johnson Street, commented that when he heard about the events involving Amiri he was disturbed because he has known Amiri through the model congress and model united nations club at the High School. The Council recommended that parents of students of color or students of color speak to Police Officers here after the meeting or at some point and that hit him as racial profiling in a public setting. He thinks you should be telling all high school students to meet with Police Officers if you are not going to discriminate based on race. As a white student at the High School, he has never felt unsafe in Highland Park and has never worried about being followed. He has never asked himself what he would do if he was stopped by the Police and he acknowledged that it is his privilege and that is something he is upset by and he has this image in his head that if he is stopped by the Police he has done nothing wrong, but Amiri, someone who is black and has more accomplishments than him and who he thinks is a very well spoken, intelligent young man, for him to be stopped going into the front door of his own home, that is absurd. It hurts him to see that you are able to do that and continue that.

Mayor Brill Mittler thanked Adam for his comments and she is sorry if it came off that way. She hopes that everyone speaks to Officer Joe, he is trying his best to meet with all the students and the parents of students of color is one of the groups that he should be meeting with.

Sonya Hodlum, 133 Benner Street, commented that she is a fairly new resident to Highland Park, about 3 years. She acknowledged Monique and thanked her for bringing this issue to the Council Meeting tonight. She acknowledged the young people in the room, she is tremendously impressed with all of them. It fills her with emotion to hear them all speak and gives her hope for the future. She does not want to be here, but she has to be here because she is a black woman and she has a 3-year old son that she plans to raise in this community. She has no choice but to be here. She is happy that the Mayor is planning a committee and she is signing up to be on that committee. It is a burden that black people in this country have had to carry and they will continue to do so. What happened to her son, it could've been my family and she does not want this happening again. Bias has been talked about a lot. One of the things that worries her about current society is how much finger pointing we do. All of us, every single one of us, has bias. Black people themselves need to deal with what it means to live in a white society from when you're a child and you look in the mirror and you see your black skin and you wonder how you can be considered a beautiful person. We have been dealing with bias ourselves from when we are children growing up. You think because you are married to someone that is black or a person of color, or you put on a uniform, because you're a Judge or a lawyer or a social activist, you don't carry bias, you are sorely mistaken and you are contributing to the problem. Part of what we have to do is acknowledge

what is within ourselves. We cannot change unless that happens. She shared a story to show the face of reality of being black in Highland Park and the fear that black people carry of the Police. Around the time of Filandro Castio, when he was, in her opinion, murdered by the Police, the community here had their National Night Out. She went to that event with a lot of trepidation because she was so disturbed by the footage of that man being murdered. That evening she left her son sitting on the curb with a group of children, he was 3, and went to the hot dog stand to get some hot dogs. As she got up to the table, she saw her son get up and walk towards her. Her instinct was to walk around the hot dog stand to attend to her son. As she tried to move forward, she heard someone say you're not allowed behind the hot dog stand. When she went to grab her son she had a man in front of her with a puffed up chest and that is when the fear came into her. She looked at the man and stated that she was just trying to get her son and asked him to grab him for her. The aggressive behavior dissipated and he allowed her to grab her son. As a black person, when something like that happens, you think if I was a white woman, would that have happened? Would I have been treated like that? She will never go back to that community event again. When you are never given the benefit of the doubt, when you are always looked at as suspicious, you are putting yourself at risk by exposing and encouraging more interaction, even at an event that is supposed to be encouraging that. She brought that up so that they can reflect on that and to think about if that is the outcome that they wanted. If there is anything she can do to help, she will be there. She is here tonight because Monique's story is her story.

Lynn Freyer, 314 Wayne Street, commented that she has a 15-year-old son that is a sophomore at the High School. About a month ago, her wife got a call from Officer Joe saying can you meet me at the High School and can you bring Luke. The two of them went to the Police Department and it was in reference to some recent car burglaries that had happened the previous weekend. Someone had identified or thought that her son resembled one of the people in a grainy video that had been captured by someone's home security camera. Her son was scared and from what she heard the interactions were all professional. A week later, they got a call from a Detective at the Police Department to return with Luke and they all went back and spent about 20 minutes talking to a Detective. Luke was concerned and scared and they were concerned and worried. He wasn't threatened, coerced, or disrespected by the Detective. She did not hear a lot of the earlier talk and she can only imagine some of the other stories that were told, but this is white privilege, in her opinion. When the story was being told, she was saying her son had a brown boy moment, but he had a white boy moment. A brown boy moment would have looked a lot different and it hurts her. They are all kids and they deserve to be treated like the kids they are.

Dan Miladnick, 216 Graham Street, commented that he is a teacher in the Middle School. One of the best speaker/facilitator that he has ever listened to when it comes to reflecting on your own bias was Elizabeth Williams Riley. Councilman Hersh noted that she spoke at the 9/11 event. Mr. Miladnick noted that at the event he was sitting next to a former student and they ended up having a great conversation. She really got him to reflect on a lot of his own bias and his earliest messages and it was powerful and a good start. He thinks she is the kind of person that can be brought in as a resource. It was troubling to hear that there is not the budget for this type of training. As other speakers have said, bias is something we have and we have to deal with it and really dig deep and be working on it. He is working on it and he knows he is not done. Whatever the cost is to get her should be worked out.

Councilman Hersh noted that they have spoken with Elizabeth and he is meeting with her next week to talk about having her here quarterly. She does corporate, municipal, public sector, private sector, and public forums that help deconstruct the issues that we are facing and gives us a new understanding of the things that are inside of us and some of the external elements that we are facing. One of the things that struck him with her too is that she had an acronym, WAIT, which stands for "Why Am I Talking". Their job tonight is to be up here and listen and empower and she will be back.

Mayor Brill Mittler clarified that the Police Department has their own budget for training their Officers which is separate from what they have as Mayor and Council.

Olivia Estes, 311 North 4th Avenue, commented that we have all heard the same speeches and on behalf of the students she wants to hear that the Council is publicly condemning racial profiling in Highland Park. She wants them to acknowledge that this is a blatant act of racial profiling. She lives 2 blocks away from Amiri and she has never feared walking home from school. She has never thought she was going to get stopped despite burglaries that are happening in the neighborhood. Why does her friend have to worry about that? There needs to be an acknowledgement that this happened and what happened on Thursday night was an act of racial profiling.

Councilwoman Welkovits commented that clearly what happened the other day hit a nerve. Some of the stories she heard tonight, it was the first time she heard them. She would like to see the information that Jessica is working on. Back in 2002 the Borough did have a cultural diversity action plan. She thinks that the purpose tonight is to hear what everyone had to say and what steps they should be taking as a community. She is hearing that they need a lot of help with racial profiling and how to address this in the community and to have a plan that is ongoing and build upon year after year.

Councilwoman Kim-Chohan commented that this is the first time she is hearing from some of the students about their concerns about Officer Curbelo having a gun inside the school. She thinks that if anytime they feel uncomfortable, they can reach out to anyone of them, or the Mayor. She is a Councilperson in her 20's that sits on this dais. She can relate with them. She encouraged them to reach out to anyone of them and she will make sure their message gets conveyed to this Council so they can see what you see in the High School.

Councilwoman Foster-Dublin commented that she heard each and every person that spoke and they do have much more work to do. She is more than willing to work other Police Departments, with residents and other organizations to get Highland Park to where they can be on a better working

relationship with all the departments in the Borough. We all live here and we all have to be our brother's and sister's keeper. We need to take a look at ourselves and find ways to improve communication amongst all the groups. Just like Bruce said about someone asking him about his formula to raise a black child; that is bias within itself. She has heard that many times from people saying what did you do so right that your son is teaching in China. Isn't that bias to ask her a question like that? We all have our own biases. It starts within us to fix some of the problems that we see. She is not trying to get away from what happened this weekend and where we need to be as a Council, and where we need to be as a Borough and where we need to be as our Police Department; but there is some self-introspection that we have to do as well. You cannot look at the Council and say this is your problem, we elected you, you fix it. It takes all of us to make it happen and she is asking for their support.

Councilman Hersh commented that it is important to remember that we are all in this room because we believe in our community and we want to take the shape of our ideals. He is not in his 20's, but he can relate to the students too. He was on the school newspaper and he used to cover board meetings and he used to speak out also. He learned really quickly that when you participate and show up, and you demand accountability from a public official, you can help your community take the shape of its ideals. He finds it invigorating to walk into a full room for a Council Meeting, regardless of what the topic is. You then know that the community is paying attention and you know that people are willing to be here and participate and help the Council solve problems. Nothing is ever perfect in any community and there are serious problems that need to be addressed, but they can't do it alone and it is really important that they are here and that they are hearing from them and it is important for all of us to work together to address these issues. Nobody should be walking around feeling unsafe and unsure about approaching any municipal agency. That was the whole reason for our inclusive community and welcoming policies.

Councilman George commented that he has a different perspective as a Prosecutor and a trial lawyer and as a Municipal Attorney who terminates Police Officers for bias, prejudice, racial assaults and other matters. For the last 35 years he has generated something of a different perspective. He embraces his bias and his prejudice, which are two different things. He embraces them because it has taught him how to be good at what he does and how to be good as a parent in an inter-racial marriage. He has learned from his bias and his prejudice to listen to the conversations. Bias is in all of us. You may not like what they put together and you may not like 15 different boards or committees that are going to talk about the same things. Councilwoman Foster-Dublin mentioned something very interesting about the human relations study done so many years ago. It was spearheaded by the first 2 African-American ever elected to this Council, Elsie and his wife Carolyn. He was a Prosecutor for the Borough at the time and was prosecuting cases that were blatantly racial and taking corrective actions behind the scenes. He can attest to how far they have come since that report was done. The focus is not to have 20 different boards, the focus is to have the Commissions, the Boards, the Groups, the conversations that focus on the problems to get it done. The young generation is the generation that is going to make the changes, but they need to put down the phone and start a conversation with your neighbor.

Councilman Fine thanked his fellow Council Members for everything they said, he agrees with it. He thanked everyone who came out tonight. They need to see them here and to help them out in terms of working on things together to make this community the best it can be.

Monique Coleman, 407 Lincoln Avenue, asked about the timeline, she does not want to see this drag out. Do we all think we need a comprehensive review/audit? We need to start now to get this comprehensive plan in motion as quickly as possible.

Mayor Brill Mittler commented that nothing is more frustrating to her than local government. Sometimes it takes so long to get something done if you do it through the whole system. They are going to step back from that system as this is an issue that was addressed in 2002. It's been too long since it was last addressed. We have a whole new group of people sitting in this room. She was in the audience back in 2002 and she was talking to the people sitting on the dais, trying to get them to do something. She knows where Monique is coming from, but she cannot see everything the way she sees it. She wants to understand what she is seeing and she needs to understand that. She is not waiting for a month to pass. She asked for signatures for her Committee of Understand and Bruce Morgan was the first person she called when she had the idea of making this happen again. She needs more people to be with her to make this happen. She wants to hear from the Police Department, from the guys and gals that are out there every day. She wants to be able to hear from them, from you, and she wants all of us to hear each other. It is so good to see the young people get angry and stand for something and not give up. She is encouraging them to sign up to work with her to make this committee happen and to start meeting right away.

Monique Coleman asked whether the Council feels this is something that should be done regardless of a recommendation from a board or committee. Councilman Fine commented that as Councilwoman Foster-Dublin said it's been 15 years since it's been done and they should do it.

Sophia McDermott Hughes, 330 South 3rd Avenue, commented about her saying that students are the future. The problem with that is that she doesn't know when there have been 20 students able to come to a Council Meeting. The only reason we are here today and are able to be here today is because we have a snow day tomorrow. To say how important, it is for students to be involved in local government, it's not accessible to them.

Mayor Brill Mittler noted that she is reformulating a Mayor's Teen Advisory Council and that Council is get input and they are looking for high school students. She has a few people that have already signed up and Dr. Taylor has sent her some names. The meetings will be held well before 7:00 pm and anyone interested in working through her and be more involved in local government are encouraged to sign up.

Councilman Fine commented that it is upsetting to hear that they are not accessible. They need to figure out better ways to do that. He has a Digital Data Task Force that he is liaison to and explore ideas to make them more accessible.

Councilman Hersh added that it is incumbent upon them to reach out to the public and make sure the public is reached. Whether the public participates or not is another matter.

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

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 10:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Hullings
Borough Clerk