

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK  
MAYOR & COUNCIL CONFERENCE MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2018

MINUTES

1. Mayor Brill Mittler called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m.
2. PRESENT: Mayor; Council (Councilman George 8:21 p.m.); Borough Attorney; Borough Administrator; Borough Clerk.

**NOTE: Upcoming Meeting schedule:**

<b>Nov. 13, 2018</b>	<b>Standing Committee Meetings; Special Meeting if needed.</b>
<b>Nov. 20, 2018</b>	<b>Finance Committee Meeting 5:00 PM.</b>
<b>Dec. 4, 2018</b>	<b>Council Committee Reports 6:00 PM; Agenda Meeting 6:30 PM; Regular Meeting 7:00 PM; Conference Meeting to follow.</b>

3. Agenda Discussion – none.
4. Public Discussion (15 minutes) – none.
5. Memorial or Commendatory Resolutions or Presentations scheduled as indicated:
  - a. PBL Assay Science – Mr. Robert Pestka, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, appeared to address the Governing Body. They are a biotechnology company and do high-quality testing services to biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries. While New Jersey is debating the legalization of cannabis and cannabis products, they are considering the establishment of a cannabinoid testing facility in New Jersey and would like to consider locating their facility in Highland Park. It would be a testing laboratory and they would not be growing or distributing cannabis products. The proposed lab would be 5,000-10,000 sf. They would employ approximately 5-10 employees to start and then expand to 25-50 employees. Mayor Brill Mittler asked about the benefit to Highland Park for the location of this facility. Mr. Pestka stated that there would be a tax benefit to the Borough. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the Mayor's Association is working with the State about the percentage that would remain with the municipality. Right now, municipalities would get 2% and they are hoping to get the percentage up to 5%. Mayor Brill Mittler asked about the timeframe for the facility once the legislation is passed. Mr. Pestka noted that they hope to be up and running by the end of next year, but would need things in place at least six months prior to that. Councilman Fine noted that there is a portion of the community that would have a concern about this type of facility being located in Highland Park. Councilman Hale noted that he disagreed with Councilman Fine about people having issues with a testing facility as opposed to a dispensary. This type of facility would create jobs in Highland Park. Discussion about location of the proposed facility and the disposal of biohazard materials that would be used. Lastly, significant discussion about the legalization of marijuana.
6. Ordinances on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading – no ordinances scheduled for introduction for 12/4/18:
  - a. Bias-Free Commission.
7. Ordinances on 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading – no public hearings scheduled for 12/4/18:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

8. Resolutions for Next Meeting - scheduled for 12/4/18:
  - a. Bills List (12/4/18).
  - b. 31 River Road.
  - c. Adjourned/Reorganization Meeting Dates.
  - d.
9. Appointments – none.
10. Borough Attorney’s Report – none.
11. Borough Administrator’s Report – none.
12. Standing Committee Status Reports – none.
13. Discussion Items.
  - a. Police Department Transition – Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that the Chief will be retiring next year before his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Borough needs to do promotions from within, hire a Police Director or make Acting positions. They have had discussions with the Chiefs of Police Association from the State of New Jersey about the promotion process and to provide mentoring. The Borough is trying to change the culture that is within the Police Department. The process will involve oral interviews, followed by a written exam and then interviews by the Public Safety Committee. The process will be handled by the Chiefs of Police Association. Borough Administrator Jover indicated that she has an updated draft of the transition plan. Plan to be presented to the PBA with a specific timeline. Qualified/interested Officers can apply and after the oral and written examinations, the top 4 candidates will move on to be interviewed by the Mayor and Public Safety Committee. Based on those interviews, two individuals will be selected for promotion to Acting Chief and Acting Captain. A mentor will be brought in to work with the newly promoted Officers for up to one year. The mentor will provide monthly updates to the Governing Body. Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that the Highland Park Police Department can get accreditation. Councilman George noted that the accreditation is ongoing and has a significant impact on liability and insurance. Borough Administrator noted that there is a strict timeline for the promotion process. They will be meeting with the Department on November 19<sup>th</sup> at 5PM. Eligible Lieutenants and Sergeants to submit letter of interest by December 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be an 8 week study period, with oral exams administered on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Applicants need to score 70% and then would be invited to take essay test. Applicants will be given 2 weeks to complete essays, which would be by the end of February. The Mayor and Public Safety Committee to conduct interviews of candidates in march.
  - b. Main Street Highland Park Budget 2019 – Councilwoman Welkovits noted that she has prompted them so that the schedule for introduction can be accelerated.
  - c. Council Meeting Format – Discussion with Governing Body about changing format of agenda meetings and conference meetings. Council to go back to agenda meetings beginning at 6:30 p.m. and conference meetings being held immediately following the regular meeting.
  - d. Water & Sewer Update – Borough Administrator Jover noted that she and Councilman George have met with Middlesex Water about doing better with rate setting going forward. Councilman George to arrange meeting with Public Works and Public Utilities Committee. Working on ideas for large meter replacements and will need a person to pull off these projects. Middlesex Water has agreed to work with the Borough and plan to provide quarterly updates. Michael Barnes has run water utilities in the past (Monroe and Jersey City) and currently works for Middlesex

- Water. Looking at water/sewer fees for larger users. The Borough does not have an ordinance in place for penalties for large meters. Middlesex Water company to provide input on creation of ordinance.
- e. Reorganization Meeting Date – January 2, 2018 – Borough Clerk advised that the Reorganization Meeting is set for January 2, 2019. Resolution to be adopted setting forth date at the next meeting. Council Members were advised by Mayor Brill Mittler to report on a goal/accomplishment for their annual reports at the Reorganization Meeting.
  - f. Highland Park Signage – River Road – Councilwoman Kim-Chohan noted that there is no entry sign to Highland Park when you travel from Piscataway on River Road. Would like to come up with a uniform design and get a local business to sponsor the creation of the sign. Suggestion was made to ask Kaplan to sponsor the sign. Borough Administrator Jover to find out rules from the County about sign installation.
  - g. Bias-Free Commission – Mayor Brill Mittler noted that this group was formed after racial incident. Herself, Councilwoman Foster-Dublin, Councilman Hale and five residents meeting regularly. Need this group to be created formally and they will fall under the Health and Welfare Committee. The purpose of the group will be to learn from their studies. The group brought up a study that was done in 2002. Good things came out of that study, but it needs to be looked at again. They also addressed the issue of a civilian review board.

14. Executive Session – none.

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilwoman Foster-Dublin, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Hullings  
Borough Clerk