

Minutes of a Council Meeting of the Borough of Hillsdale held at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, 2014, in the Council Chamber, Borough of Hillsdale, Hillsdale, New Jersey.

Mayor Arnowitz asked for a moment of silence. This past week Hillsdale lost a resident, Mark Becker, in a car accident and an ex-Chief from Wallington, who passed while battling a fire.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Arnowitz who also led the Salute to the Flag.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT:

This is a meeting of the Hillsdale Borough Council on this 4TH day of March 2014. Notice of the time and place of this meeting has been provided to The Ridgewood News, Pascack Press, The Record and Community Life; a copy was posted on the bulletin board outside of this meeting room and provided to any interested parties.

Please notify the Municipal Clerk for any disability requirements necessary for attendance at Mayor and Council meetings. The fire exits are located through the double doors to your left. Please silence all cell phones and pagers.

ROLL CALL:

On a roll call those in attendance were, Council Members DeGise, Frank, Kelley, Looes, Meyerson, Pizzella. Also in attendance were Mayor Arnowitz, Borough Attorney Bernstein-absent/late, and Borough Clerk Witkowski

APPOINTMENTS: for March 11, 2014

Mayor Arnowitz said the appointments will be made next week. We are going to re-create the Our Town Committee and has asked merchants, residents, churches or anyone who wants to get a message to our new residents to contribute. This group will meet people who come to Hillsdale for the first time and welcome them to Hillsdale. This has been done in the past and wanted to rekindle this. Everyone can put a little message which will be handed out, the concert series so that the new person is welcomed to Hillsdale but they know what is going on, the Council meetings in town, registration but more importantly, welcoming them to Hillsdale. If someone would like to be on the Our Town Committee he wants to hear from them. There is not a set number of people.

Our Town Committee, Pat Morrissey, Chair; Martin Ward, and Chrisoula Looes

Recreation Committee-John Noone

OATH OF OFFICE:

PROCLAMATIONS:

PRESENTATIONS:

Environmental Commission

Council Member Pizzella as Liaison and before Meredith Kates and Elizabeth Sneikus give a presentation, he wanted to give an introduction to them and to the Environmental Commission. He wanted to give the goal of this project and asked that comments be held until they give the presentation. He is very proud to be the Liaison to the Environmental Commission because this is one group of intellectual and intelligent people who put in a lot of effort who are residents and volunteers. This year the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commission (ANJEC) is offering a small grant, \$1500, to Environmental Commissions to support projects that advance local open space stewardship with the purpose for raising a profile of EC's in towns and also with creating an effort between the Environmental Commissions as well as the public. There are no tax credits required, no cost to the Borough and no matching component. The grant covers the cost of the materials as needed. The EC members along with their group of volunteers, which include a group of professionals and residents who will do the work at no cost to the Borough as well. The EC will continue their efforts to maintain this piece of property well into the future. The larger maintenance issues will have to be dealt with through the town but the smaller ones will be dealt with by the EC. The property we are talking about is the walking trails that are by Beechwood Park. This is the only passive open space recreational uses in the borough, it is an asset that is being utilized but under-utilized. There are many more people who can use these trails but because of the safety issues it imposes, not a lot of people do. It is also an eyesore. To completely restore the site, we would need about \$7,000 to \$10,000 but that is not the goal here. They are trying to clean it up and make it safe so that more people can use it and they are going to do all the work on their own and eventually we are hoping that it becomes restored through the years. This is just the first step and they are looking to make it safe. The volunteers would be creating value to

the borough and to the residents in the area and once it is completed, the site would be useable passive recreational space and their efforts will really make the borough nicer and will be a draw to people. He welcomed Elizabeth and Meredith to give the presentation.

Elizabeth Sneikus said she is a member of the Environmental Commission and tonight she and Meredith will outline the issues we feel need to be addressed at Beechwood Park Nature Trail as they have become a safety issue and possibly a liability issue for the town. Now is the time to take care of it. We have many parks in Hillsdale and 80% of our parkland is used for active recreation, baseball, football, soccer, La Crosse, swimming and all of the space that we have is well utilized. Every Saturday and every evening it is scheduled very heavily and is very popular. We also have 11 acres in the Beechwood Nature Trail portion that is for passive recreation, a low intensity kind of quiet type of exercise and it is open to everybody in the town any day of the week, any time of the day and there are no restrictions in terms of scheduling. You can enjoy nature and is an opportunity to get pedestrians out of the path of traffic. Most of Hillsdale does not have sidewalks and anybody who is jogging, walking the dog, walking for their own exercise, riding bicycles and are in the street. It is not the best situation; on this particular trail the path is completely moved within the property so there is no conflict between pedestrians and vehicles which is a wonderful asset to have.

We have reviewed the issues that need to be addressed and have photographs which she passed on and said it is clear what needs to be addressed. There is one very large tree on a section of the path that is snapped in half but is not completely broken. It is hanging over the path and in order to continue walking on the path, you have to walk under the tree. That is a falling hazard that needs to be addressed immediately. There is also a tree that has fallen completely and is laying across the path in one section and should be cut away and moved off the trail. There is also the wooden boardwalk that is in the lower lying area, a wet area, there are planks that are broken, planks missing, and there are sections of the trail that are uneven and is a tripping hazard. Even though the trail has all of these issues, you will notice in the photograph that there are footprints in the snow and people are still using it. It is a popular spot to walk the dog; people are there.

Tonight we are hoping for your support in moving ahead and applying for this grant and trying to see what opportunities we have for volunteerism to help us do the work in putting this back in a safe condition. To go over those volunteer opportunities and the grant, she turned the presentation to Meredith.

Meredith Kates, Chair of the Environmental Commission, 140 Sebastian Court –

She added that we have an opportunity through ANJEC, which is the State Organization of Environmental Commissions. Hillsdale has rejoined this organization this year and we go to the top of the list for towns to be considered for a grant. The project which is the criteria of the grant is a very short easy grant. Basically, we just need the administrator's signature that the town agrees to the project and it is for our Commission to undertake and there is no borough responsibility other than clarify with you how you want the project to be conducted. We have estimates for the work that needs to be done, Scott Raymond completed it, and it falls within our budget. There is a volunteer component we need to commit volunteers to certain number of hours to work and we have already secured volunteer support efforts through many organizations and the main one being Mahwah Environmental Volunteer Organization. He uses a go-getting youngster in his 20's who has a group of 50 volunteers that come out every weekend and they are experienced in trail work and they would love to get out and help. Scott Raymond has volunteered, if the DPW cannot do it, to remove the tree that Elizabeth was talking about bring his men in and do that work for free as a volunteer of the town. At this point, we see no cost to the town, we think it is really important to pursue it, we have been talking about it for years, we have a lot of citizen complaints and concerns about the condition of the trail and she walks there and sees people falling often. If it is not going to be fixed, she feels it should be closed but it is a wonder resource and we should address, she is willing to answer any questions.

Mayor Arnowitz said he is against this project. Over the years we have had scouts do projects in there, the Environmental Commission under Jack Stubbs put thousands and thousands of dollars in taxpayer dollars there. Years ago the engineer, the insurance safety person, all recommended that the path be removed because the problem with the area is, it is so wet and the ground levels change so frequently it is impossible to keep the path maintained in a safe manner. We didn't remove the path because we didn't have enough money to remove it and we didn't want to go in with bulldozers because the EPA said we couldn't. It would have been an easy way to do it but a destructive way of doing it. Even though it is a grant, it is still tax dollars and he believes tax dollars should be spent wisely. There are other areas in town in Beechwood Park itself that we could do something by creating a path but to put more money and more time and more effort into that path that next year will be in the same condition. It is fruitless.

Council Member Frank asked how involved the initial cleanup is. We don't have any other place where we have 11 acres in town that would be available for the public. We currently spend a million to three hundred thousand dollars to maintain our parks, how much more would it cost to maintain this?

Elizabeth Sneikus could not put a dollar amount on it, yearly it is going to be checking to make sure the trail is fit, if there are any loose boards they should be secured and if there are any trees that fall, she did not believe that there is need for a huge effort in terms of a tree, just the section that is blocking the path. That could be a

volunteer's afternoon. She believed with volunteerism we could handle most of it and she believed it would be minimal. You have to make a point of reassessing each year and taking care of things before they get to the level where they are today.

Council Member Kelley said it is clear that the EC wants to take control of this and if you think it is a worthwhile project, go ahead. You are doing it through a grant, through volunteers and believed it is a great project.

Meredith Kates said the Mayor has a longer history, we have all the files and paper work on this site, there have been many proposals for work done on this site and we could not find one invoice for work. There are receipts for all the work done and we couldn't find any for work to fix up the site since 2004.

Mayor Arnowitz said Eagle Scout projects were in there, scouts, DPW; the DPW Superintendent who was in charge of buildings and grounds, plus the Police Chief for safety hazards. They all said close the path, take it out.

Elizabeth Sneikus said people are going to continue using this path.

Mayor Arnowitz said the insurance person stated that once we repair it then we are responsible for it. If someone goes for a walk in the woods we are not liable but once we build, we take on the liability.

Council Member Pizzella disagreed.

Mayor Arnowitz said if you want to put in a path or boardwalk you would have to drive pilings into the wetlands and you can't drive pilings because of the wetlands.

Council Member Looes asked if there is any way to reconfigure the trails where you are not dealing with a boardwalk or a path higher and drier; more on the side of Liberty. It would be easier to maintain and we are not having a situation of a shifting built structure, we are having more of a maintained natural path.

Elizabeth Sneikus said that is something worth looking at. It would require getting a survey in there.

Mayor Arnowitz said he would rather have that. We have the area where the scouts hold their fright night, that type of path could be built on Liberty; we have another path that is behind Smith School that is in need of work. He is hoping to acquire the property on Pascack and Hillsdale behind the Tandy Allen lots where originally we talked about putting in the library and putting a walking path in there and benches. We have areas along the stream and none of them require construction but they could paths that are safe.

Elizabeth Sneikus said it is the only land in town that has the nature trail, nature preserve type of feel to it. It is unique and would be a shame to discourage people from visiting it. Something needs to be done either way.

Council Member Frank said there is a path there already, your liability is your liability, and these people are willing to go in with a bunch of over 50 volunteers, clean it and make it safer at no cost to the borough. The only thing it will do is enhance and create another walkable space in our town. This is just a first step, by fixing this and putting work to it we may also make ourselves eligible for further grants and if we keep up with it, we can actually get something really nice there. They are just talking about the first step to clean and make safe what we already have and with open space you don't have to clean it as a park; when trees fall, you want that, it creates more of a natural environment. You only have to clear the path so that people can walk through and we have to repair it in certain areas but you don't have to take down an entire tree or that level of work. He thought we should give the Environmental Commission a chance to show what they can do.

Council Member Meyerson said Council Member Pizzella makes a lot of sense. There is very little that the town needs to do and the Environmental Commission is doing it all. I don't know enough about that area and obviously the Mayor knows of the problems in the past and did not know why it wasn't maintained. In reality, the Environmental Commission is going to get a small grant and believed we should support them wholeheartedly and unanimously and support them for their attempt to get this grant and support the volunteers. He made a motion that we support the Environmental Commission.

Elizabeth Sneikus said if you are thinking the town needs more time to look at this; we are taking on a project on behalf of the town but if there is a greater need, little pieces of this have been done and if the town decides we need more time to look at the site, figure out if we want to rebuild the trail or not, that is also an option. We can pursue other sites, she has until April 4 to write a grant. If you have an idea for another site, she needs advisement.

Mayor Arnowitz would like the boardwalk removed and have a path without wood. The problem has always been the boardwalk and it is deteriorating.

Council Member Meyerson said he has already made a motion.

Council Member Pizzella seconded the motion.

Mayor Arowitz said all in favor.

Meredith Kates added that there will be an article on Mark Becker this Sunday and all of his work. He was a gem for everything that he offered to this town. We would want to discuss a tribute to him in town.

RECOGNITION: for March 11, 2014
Green Team and volunteers Ample Harvest Program

Mayor Arowitz said you need another name for the Green Team, someone that will work with us.

Council Member Pizzella referred to the Tandy Allen property. He was going to bring up an opportunity similar to this opportunity for that property. There is a group that is interested in purchasing it to create an open space area.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Regular Meeting February 4, 2014 and February 11, 2014
Closed Session Meeting of February 4, 2014 and February 11, 2014

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION:

BUDGET:

1. Payment of Bills
2. Tax Appeal 171 Oakland Street
3. Tax Appeal 8 Cottage Place B1904/L6
4. Tax Appeal 87 Deer Trail B21/L13.04
5. Stipulation of Settlement 175 Broadway B1201/L11
6. Stipulation of Settlement 309 Broadway B1002/L2
7. Proposal Engineering Services, Stonybrook ADA Chair Lift

Greg Polyniak, Neglia Engineering Associates –

Our office had issued a proposal for consideration for ADA pool lift at Stonybrook Swim Club. About a year and a half ago, the borough received Community Development block grant for funding for ADA chair lifts and in that grant there was a stipulation for engineering fees to submit and prepare that document and publically bid. We placed before you a proposal to provide those engineering services to move forward on this project so that it could be constructed within the required time frame by Bergen County which is June 1st.

Council Member Frank asked if the engineering costs are included in the grant.

Greg Polyniak said they are over and above what the grant amount is. He believed it was the same the prior engineer stipulated within the grant which is \$3000, we carried through with that same \$3000.

Mayor Arowitz asked if Stonybrook agreed to this.

Patty Hughes will discuss with Stonybrook.

Mayor Arowitz said we can vote on this at the next meeting next week.

Schedule date for preliminary Council Budget Meeting

Mayor Arowitz said this is the full Council and we need to publish the dates.

Council Member Meyerson said he needs the procedure to get to the end game which is introducing the budget and budget hearing. We have a meeting Thursday which is a Finance Committee Meeting and basically to discuss where we are with the budget. We are at the point where there were done some tweaks done between the last meeting and this one. He thought we could have that line by line discussion tonight; we have some ideas on how we want to go through that and want to discuss it with the Mayor and asked Council Member DeGise to sit

out because we can't have more than three people. You were interested in getting discussion out in the public and wanted to discuss where we are and the procedure in doing it and maybe on Thursday we could do the scheduling and have anybody noticed thereafter.

Mayor Arnowitz said for the public's sake, this will be the one and only chance you have before we introduce the budget and that is the meeting the entire Council has the opportunity for questions. You all have the budget.

Council Member Meyerson said you only have the appropriations, the comparison between the last two years and this year; what we don't have is the rest of the budget which is the income and the way it all fits together. That we'll have very shortly, everybody will have it before Thursday.

Mayor Arnowitz asked the Council to go through it. You can see one line item that went up 400% and everyone asks why and it is because the money came from somewhere else. Those questions can be asked beforehand and it makes it a lot easier. Ask the Finance Committee and after Thursday we will pick a date but it will be a separate meeting from the 11th.

Council Member Frank said it depends on the level of detail, it depends on how deep we want to go, he did not think we will go line by line but we should have a good presentation.

Council Meyerson said he wants Paul Lerch to make the initial presentation and he is available next Thursday. If we are going to do it at a separate meeting, it means that we have two separate meetings this month. We have three, we need a meeting to introduce the budget.

Attorney Bernstein said the state is not requiring that we are aware of, that anybody who fails to introduce it by the end of March there is a penalty. There are a number of municipalities who will not be able to introduce by the end of March.

Council Meyerson said we can introduce by the end of March easily and adopt in April. The question is whether or not we want to schedule one more meeting or two more meetings, that is the issue.

Mayor Arnowitz said you cannot adopt the budget until the state approves it.

Council Meyerson said we can easily introduce the budget by the end of March. The adoption is also a public hearing so the introduction is not the official public hearing. It will be the next meeting we have on the budget in public and the meeting we all talk.

9. Capital Budget items
10. Contract supplemental snow plowing for 2014-2015 season
11. Authorize of redemption and premium Tax Sale Certificate, B2303/L10
12. Authorize transfer overpayment 2013 taxes B1409/L8 to County Board of Adjustment
13. Resolution to make permanent 2% CAP on Interest Arbitration Awards

Mayor Arnowitz asked that this be put on; basically this came out of the Pascack Valley Mayors Association, the Sunshine Clause is setting in on this 2% CAP for arbitration awards. They are looking to endorse the extension of that by the state, it is state CAP on when you go to arbitration that they keep it at or below 2%. We have to pay for it and stay within the 2% CAP and the state should work within the 2% CAP also.

POLICY:

1. Board of Health request-Ordinance Banning Fracking

Mayor Arnowitz said he was surprised to see this.

Council Member Frank said in his opinion, no chance of fracking going on in Hillsdale. There is really no opportunity for drilling New Jersey other than the far northwest corner and most will be done in Pennsylvania. Fracking is an after effect of drilling. The geology in this area doesn't support drilling much less fracking and did not believe we need an ordinance banning fracking in Hillsdale.

Council Member Pizzella said a group met with the Board of Health and explained to them about fracking and they were impressed. They also want to appear before the Environmental Commission.

Council Member Looes said they met last month and we had a presentation to the Board of Health on fracking and said they were willing to come and present before the Council. It was the basics of what fracking is, how it affects the environment and the chances of fracking in Hillsdale non-existent. In New Jersey there is a small area but there have been other areas in the U.S. that were told that chances of any drilling are really slim to none and those residents found out that there was an area that there could be that type of drilling and then their water sources were affected. The reason for this ordinance is to be proactive and trying to show support from local municipalities in New Jersey saying we don't support this type of drilling in our state. It may not happen in

Hillsdale but we don't support it happening in northern New Jersey. It is just a statement that we don't support this.

Council Member Frank said we don't need an ordinance to make a statement. There is currently a moratorium on fracking in New Jersey and it expired a year ago and nothing has been done on fracking. The main issue right now is transport waste into New Jersey to be processed and that is a different issue. We don't need another ordinance to codify and put into our code about fracking because it is not necessary and chances of it ever drilling for natural gas in Hillsdale is slim.

Mayor Arnowitz said we have ordinances on the books that restrict drilling operations. He agreed with Council Member Frank, the expense and problems with another ordinance; what we want to do is cut back on these ordinances, we have so many.

Council Member Pizzella said he would suggest that this group meet with the Environmental Commission and have the Environmental Commission give us their opinion on it.

Mayor Arnowitz said the Environmental Commission is a separate board that can invite anyone, we don't have to give them permission to allow someone to talk to them. He was not in favor of a long presentation at a meeting on fracking; fracking has its purposes in some areas but we need energy. We have to become energy sufficient and if fracking is one way done in a safe area he doesn't have a problem with it. Hillsdale is too densely populated.

Council Member Frank said it is a state issue also.

2. Qualified Purchasing Agent.

Interim Borough Administrator Witkowski said this was placed on the Agenda for discussion due to Mr. DeJoseph leaving the Borough and no one else has that certification. Upon doing research, she came upon the Local Finance Notice stating that if there is vacancy and if there is an employee taking the course and the exam, we can ask permission from the Director of Division of Local Government Services to approve that person and we would not lose our QPA status. She put this before the Council, she has spoken to our Interim CFO who is more than willing to take the exam, she has the classes behind her being a CFO and she would take the exam. If the Council is not in favor of this, we can share the services with another QPA and still keep our status.

Council Member Meyerson asked if we have to approve someone to take the QPA exam.

Council Member Frank said we have to approve her as our Purchasing Agent. If you appoint her as our Purchasing Agent then the QPA transfers since there is a vacancy and we still qualify.

Interim Borough Administrator Witkowski said we have to write a letter to the Division and mention that we have someone going through the process and we would like to appoint that person as our Interim Acting-Qualified Purchasing Agent.

Mayor Arnowitz said whatever it takes to appoint her.

Council Member Kelley said start the process.

MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Approval of Bingo License BA703, PVRHS-PFO, May 8, 2014
2. Approval of Raffle License RA702, PVRHS-PFO, May 8, 2014
3. Approval of Raffle License RA701, PVRHS-PFO, May 8, 2014
4. Appointment of Zoning/Code Official/Fire prevention
5. Appointment of Part Time Office Clerk
6. Application for Earth Day Fair, April 27, 2014-Environmental Commission

Mayor Arnowitz said in past years there is a natural beauty parlor on Broadway called the BeeHive and they held it on their property. It is not big enough now and they want to hold it in the park. I informed them that it becomes a hassle with insurance and everything else and if they can get the support of the Environmental Commission and have them be the sponsor it would make it a lot easier. He assumed having this application the Environmental Commission has agreed to do that. As long as there are no scheduling problems on April 27, and the possible problem would be the cleanup and as long as they don't hold this the same day as the Fishing Contest. He will ask for approval for that date at the meeting next week. Meredith Kates's group will take care of this.

7. Tax Certification for year 2013 recycling
8. Approval Firefighter application

9. Grant Tenure to Tax Collector, Candace Schaefer

ORDINANCES:

INTRODUCTION:

1. Amending Salary ordinance to reflect Zoning/Code Official-in **closed session**
2. 2014 Salaries-Recreation Department

Patty Hughes addressed the Council regarding the minimum wage said the attorney gave us the letter stating that we now have to pay \$8.25/hour for our Recreational employees which took a huge jump in their salaries. Basically we are going from under \$7.00 to \$8.25 to start. Each ordinance for Rec and Stonybrook reflects those changes. She is still not clear on the Recreation end of it because according to the New Jersey State Laws Labor Abstract, it does say for camp for non-profit organizations which is the borough you do not have to pay minimum wage. She is not clear but the ordinance reflects the lower rate.

Mayor Arnowitz said we pay New Jersey minimum wage, not federal.

Attorney Bernstein said New Jersey minimum wage is actually higher than federal.

Patty Hughes said according to this it says that employees at summer camps, retreats and other non-profits, religious corporations or associations are exempt from minimum wage and overtime wage during summer months.

Council Member Meyerson asked if we have to pay minimum wage, it is not clear what is being said.

Patty Hughes said we have to pay it for the swim club and is questioning the Recreation camp.

Attorney Bernstein said the question is the camp counselors. Everybody else has to get paid the minimum wage. The question earlier was which one, the federal or the state, because the federal is \$7.25/hour and the state is \$8.25/hour as of the November election. It is our opinion \$8.25/hour; we have not totally rendered an opinion on the camp counselors because he not totally sure this is necessarily a qualifying camp.

Patty Hughes said the ordinance reflects \$8.25, it's a range so they get paid between \$7 and change and up to \$8.25 and if we don't have to pay them \$8.25 we are set in the ordinance and if we have to pay \$8.25 we will be set in the ordinance. Either way we don't have to present another ordinance.

Council Member Meyerson asked how it affects the Stonybrook budget.

Patty Hughes said when we first looked at it for new people for Stonybrook, it would be about \$5000. Now it is going to be substantially more but we will have to reduce staff to balance the budget.

Council Member Kelley said you are still going to work on the budget but will have to reduce staff to make up.

Council Member Pizzella asked how that will impact the pool. You will have less staff and we have the nicest pool and how is that going to impact the services at the pool?

Patty Hughes said we will have to watch our dollars for pre-opening and later at night.

Mayor Arnowitz said a lot of Hillsdale kids are not going to get summer jobs and that is one of the advantages of having a swim pool in town.

Council Member Frank asked if that is a magnitude of \$5,000.

Patty Hughes said only if kids jump up, some of the new kids; if you never worked before you'll get \$8.25/hour, my previous employees worked five years to get \$8.25/hour. Those employees will also have to have a little increase in their hourly rate.

Council Member Pizzella said the ordinance you have set to cover whatever changes.

Patty Hughes said we have to pass the ordinance because these are the new numbers.

Council Member Meyerson said we will pass the ordinance next Tuesday. The question for us is we need to know what this effect on the budget is.

Council Member Pizzella said they may be able to cover it.

Council Member Meyerson said their budget affects ours so we really need to get the answers.

Mayor Arnowitz said not really, we get our money from the town; the club is going to have to find the money and the worst thing is to have to cut staff because the kids rely on summer jobs. It will affect surplus.

Council Member Meyerson said cutting staff is the only solution. We need to have a look as to what we need to do here and we need to give Patty time to look at this budget and what she has to do and come up with a solution. He did not think it is as simple as these things can't be touched but other things can be touched.

Mayor Arnowitz asked Patty to work on the budget and come back with a plan as to what you are going to do whether it is to cut staff or be innovative.

Patty Hughes said she would consider cutting back on her wish list and really watch dollars and hopefully have a great membership this year. We will be doing an open house for the first time since she has been working here. We will introduce the club to people who may not come on a regular basis to see how nice our facility is.

Mayor Arnowitz said the new Our Town Committee will get new members.

Council Frank asked if the Rec salaries be impacted.

Patty Hughes said we still need clarification but the ordinance she proposes is set so that if we don't have to it is a minimum-maximum, so if we don't have to we will pay the minimum, if not we pay the maximum. It is all within the Rec trust so Rec should be o.k. They get paid a tiny more per hour than the Stonybrook kids. She has the two ordinances for our fees.

Council Member Frank asked if there will be increases in our fees this year?

Patty Hughes said it is 2% on Stonybrook across the board. Recreation fees for camp by \$5.00 and we have also added a new camp this year, Kindergarten camp and are hoping that will bring in an additional \$80,000.

Mayor Arnowitz asked Patty to get all the information and the new camp in My Hillsdale and work with the Administrator.

3. 2014 Recreation and Summer Camp Fees
4. 2014 Salaries-Stonybrook Pool
5. 2014 Fee Ordinance Stonybrook Pool

ADOPTION:

14-05 Amend Salary Ordinance to include Deputy Borough Clerk Position

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Arnowitz opened the meeting to the public at this time.

Thomas Galanti, 431 Piermont Avenue –

He has a comment about the EC comment proposal on the trails. The reason why the boardwalk is there is it is inaccessible on the south side of the trails because it is all swamp and water remains there throughout the spring and summer. His son plays baseball across the street and we go there and a lot of times we are hard pressed to even find a squirrel in that area and if you look at the water on the south side of that park, it is all tainted with oil. He did not know if that is stagnant, contaminated water. He frequents this park and there is a reason why that boardwalk is there, without a boardwalk you would be unable to get into that trail except through the west side of the trail. The boardwalk has to stay there or else you won't be able to access it through the field which is the baseball field and the softball field on the east side.

He is not surprised with all of the tax appeals because his taxes jumped 15% this year. He believed Mayor Arnowitz was President of the Finance Committee many years ago and he believed he did a wonderful job because our increases were very low back then. We had a referendum for Pascack Valley and we spent millions of dollars and our taxes increased only \$200 to \$300 a year; his taxes increased \$1200 this year and that is outrageous. He has no capital improvements on Piermont Avenue and is very upset and is the reason why he is here. He feels better because there are a lot of tax appeals in town and you are going to have one more.

David Norton, 76 Standish Road –

He wanted to know what happened with our last snow storm or what didn't happen. Why for 24 hours after it stopped snowing Standish Road took 24 hours to get one plow to plow that road. No matter where he goes, everyone is talking about this and how bad it was. He assumed there is a DPW Liaison and wanted to direct this to him. Finally a Downes Tree Service came through and asked if they had a schedule, did they have a route? What was their procedure to get this done?

Council Member DeGise referred to the storm before that because we had a salt issue where the state froze the salt and Hillsdale had very little and were only able to do partial mains and crosswalks. We were unable to get a salt layer down prior to the big storm. Unfortunately, we had a lot of icing on the roads and we notified the town that was going to happen and we put out notices that side roads, especially secondary, were going to be very bad. Before the big storm we hired supplemental plowing which was for the west side of town from Pascack west up

through Wierimus and that area. Our contract was to bring in two trucks from Downes Tree Service and eleven of our trucks to handle the middle section and the east side of town. During that snow storm, we had a five period of 2 to 3 inches from about 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The trucks got salt down on intersections. Because of the lack of salt, trucks got called out, Downes got called out around 1:00 a.m. and they started plowing and completed their routes. We had three breakdowns and at that point we contacted Downes and asked that they bring in seven additional trucks; they met our Superintendent at 9:30 a.m. and we deployed four to the east side of town by early afternoon and three more to the middle side of town. Again, we had no salt so icing became worse, temperatures were up and down, and there was a nightmare on the streets. He drove the entire times five or six times a day and some streets were a nightmare and some were good. The hills were good because we put salt on the hills; the east side of town was horrendous. The Administrator, Superintendent and myself were all out on the roads together, we had emergency meetings every hour and at the conclusion of that 35 hour storm before anybody from Downes or Hillsdale took a break, we hired an additional three crews from Downes which included a labor crew, plow crew and a bucket loader crew and deployed six loaders and five crews for two days and after that, pushing corners and scraping the roads we had a hard time with. Without salt there is no recovery, you can't scrape two inches of ice off the roads.

Mr. Norton (Contd).

He was more concerned about the frequency; just because you don't have salt you can still plow. The period of time when it stopped snowing to when the first plow came down my road was over 20 hours. You mentioned all these trucks.

Council Member Kelley said they were in the morning, they did the entire town by 7AM.

Mr. Norton (Contd).

He said he is a plumber by trade and went out on a call that morning, he got there and came back to the bottom of his road and got stuck. There was no clean portion of road and he was stuck there for 12 hours, that is how I know that a truck did not come by. A neighbor who had a private person do his driveway gave him a push.

Council Member DeGise said it was a bad storm; not every road was done perfectly, not every area in town done perfectly. We spent the resources to make it a safe environment and the Mayor authorized it. Police Department was also using DPW vehicles to get around with their vehicles. That was the best we could do with the resources we had. Our DPW was down to six people; there is a cost of service that we look at. This was the 14th worst winter in New Jersey since records were kept, it was the 4th wettest and 3rd snowiest within February 1st to where we are today. We had 51.3 inches of snow; Hillsdale can't really handle that, we are not snow experts.

Mr. Norton said the DPW should maintain the vehicles so that they don't break down. You said three vehicles went down for repairs, who is maintaining the vehicles. Who is making sure they are going to be ready?

Mayor Arnowitz said he was as livid as you are about this storm. I reached to Council Member DeGise and the other Council Members. The lack of salt was reported at a Council meeting but he misunderstood him, he thought we would be receiving salt. He hadn't heard anything from that meeting which was on a Tuesday until the following Friday and he scheduled a meeting for the following Monday for 10:30AM. Approximately 1:20PM the meeting ended and the Administrator and I reached out to the county and we received 125 tons of salt within the next 24 hours and have been receiving salt since. We have never used outside plows before, this is the first time we ever did so. He authorized at the request of the Liaison to spend any dollars necessary to get the job done. Next he was informed that we had a problem getting people to shovel sidewalks and hired an outside company to do that. We had four temporary people since Sandy from the county that supplemented the DPW and it is not a question that the DPW was short staffed. We are down one person from last year but we had these four people that worked for two years. He also questioned what happened during the storm; what Council Member DeGise recommended, our previous Superintendent was adamantly opposed to, but we went forward with it and put metal blades on our smaller vehicles and removed rubber blades. It was a disaster and I am still questioning what happened and the whole town is questioning. Another question is what is going to happen when the snow melts and the leaves we are going to find under the snow. That is another discussion down the road. The numbers he received is \$50,000 we spent over what we normally spend. It wasn't a question of dollars or people, it was a question of salt and that was taken care of. I don't know what happened.

Council Member Meyerson said every town he talked to it was a problem with the secondary roads and they were a disaster in every town. All areas were totally overwhelmed. He thought the comment about Keith Durie is unfair and it is unfair to what is going on now and unfair to the people involved.

Council Member Kelley believed he meant was Keith's experience; he had 30 years and he knew of the different storms. We are in a transition we really don't want.

Council Member Meyerson said I guess it is a matter of who is in charge and having no salt.

Mayor Arnowitz said if there are things we can correct for future storms; yes, 30 years of experience brings something to the table but everyone at the DPW and those with the least experience have at least 10 years'

experience and up to 40 years , they know what they are doing. They don't need supervision. Perhaps Keith had connections that we lost for salting.

Council Member Meyerson said that is misleading. We were on the schedule to get salt the day before that second to last storm hit and that is when the county stopped it all. That is the problem and when you don't have salt, we have a problem. Between the second to last storm and the last storm, we didn't get above 25 degrees and nothing melted. You had a tremendous amount of snow on top of the ice that already existed. The bottom line we ended up having a short straw on salt.

Council Member DeGise said we normally don't have a 10 inch storm and 10 days later have a 14 inch storm; as that was going down hill that is why we brought in the loaders. We know it wasn't done perfectly; Downes came to our town in a blizzard, they didn't know any of the streets, we knew it was bad and were trying to make it better. It was a supplemental rate, per hour, per truck, depending on the size of the truck. We paid \$44,000 extra for that storm to help the citizens of this town.

Council Member Meyerson said the trucks came through on his street and Downes did his street and when he got out of his house and drove around town, the west side was pretty close to black top. Downes did a decent job.

Council Member Pizzella asked how we got Downes.

Council Member DeGise said they were low bidder on the project. When the Mayor authorized what we had to do, we reached out to them and their emergency foreman and met with the DPW Superintendent and the Administrator, showed him the routes we wanted done. When the forecast was for more snow we brought in an additional three trucks so they had five on the west side and brought in another seven. We had 10 out but three down so on the east side we were down to seven.

This was the bid that was done in November and they charged a bit more, they were under the 10% because we didn't sign in November to use them.

Council Member Kelley said this is the correct forum to complain about this. These men were out 20 to 24 hours and asked that you not complain to them, it is not their fault.

Linda Parisi, 24 Hunters Court –

She said Downes did not show up until later that night, their truck got stuck on her street, they actually had to have another truck come and get them out. She and her husband travel through multiple towns for their jobs. Her husband that day drove through five towns, five towns were clear and Hillsdale was one of the worst towns, main roads and everything; he got stuck in front of his own house because we were not plowed out properly. It has been a bad winter and you have to get the main roads cleared first for safety reasons, but when you can drive through five towns pretty well and come to your own town and get stuck on your own street because it was not plowed properly, that was upsetting. We had to sublease to another company and my tax dollars are paying for that, I expect not to get stuck in front of my house. I am upset. To see that happen is awful. For the first time I was proud of the DPW on my street for the first couple of storms because I felt they were doing a great job and the past couple of storms, I don't know what happened. It's not just the salt, it was the plowing. To watch a truck who is supposed to be digging me out get stuck and call for backup, I actually called the non-emergency number for the Police Department because I live on a very small street and a lot of times we are last. If there was an emergency, not one emergency vehicle would have been able to come down that street.

Council Member Kelley said he got done at 6:30 a.m. and that is when they finished their first run, they started at 1:00 a.m.. He took off that day and didn't get done until the evening; the Deputy Chief of the Fire Department was working aside and had 10 calls because he could not respond to fire calls because he didn't have a truck and there was no way he could get off of his street. In an emergency, we did have two fire calls that day and as soon as a fire or ambulance or police emergency, the plows on the radio go to that route so that people can get there. If they haven't got to it, there is a point where they have to concentrate on the mains and that is why my road and your road waited. There was no way he could get off of his street in his car. When it is coming down that hard, they have to do the mains and the county's but in an emergency they will get there.

Ms. Parisi said you have to call in outside people because your trucks are down. I'm paying more taxes than ever and your equipment is not working right, obviously there was not enough staff. It was an unusual winter but what are my taxes doing? Obviously it is not giving me the service I needed from where I was here 16 years ago. Why?

Council Member DeGise said 16 years ago we had 18 plows and DPW plowing. Unfortunately today we have six full-time guys and three supplemental. We did plan for extra snow service before this storm because we knew it was going to be a blizzard. He agreed with everything she said.

Ms. Parisi said she feels her services have gone down and the taxes have gone up and doesn't see any improvement. We have to have our leaves out at a certain point and the leaves were never picked up and then they are picked up on Saturday. Am I paying time and a half when they are not getting done during the week? She is very upset where her taxes are going and what is happening in this town. I'm here because I care, I love this town but I do not like the way it is going.

Administrator Witkowski said she has heard many complaints in the office, it is not just taxes, taxes are made up of a lot of portions, municipal part. Sometimes the frustration on your taxes need to go in a different direction, not just here.

Larry Beiman, 163 Windham Road

He moved into this area about 11 years ago and his property taxes have more than doubled and services have gone down. You are elected officials and what are you doing creatively to lower the tax burden on this town, because if something is not done, there will be an exodus out of this town. Something creatively has to be done to lower the overall tax burden. Alpine, New Jersey, one of the most affluent towns in this country, has significantly lower tax rates than this town. They have every service that we do if not better.

Mayor Arnowitz said over the years we have tried to be proactive. We tried to put a cell tower in the west side of town and the residents were against that would have generated \$80,000 or more. We tried doing dispatching and the residents were against that and that could have saved us a quarter million dollars. We did garbage which saved us \$350,000 but unfortunately a lot of people are complaining about that. They want the service but they don't want to pay the taxes. In the last four years with the 2% CAP, while he agrees with the CAP because it does make you become very observant of what you are spending, we control 18% of the budget. All the rest is the county, schools which are a big portion. Of the 18% about 12% are contractual things that we can't change so now you have smaller amounts. We have almost a 13 million dollar budget, the 2% CAP or the dollars we can increase spending is based upon 8 million dollars which is the taxes we collect. You don't get 2% of state funding and other things that make up our budget. Basically there is \$648,000 that we can increase spending. You get 12% increase in water fees, increase in gasoline which is 2%, electric and other utilities, you have contractual agreements and fortunately all our contracts are below 2%; in prior years the police were making almost 3.75% and all these have to be within the CAP. That is why you do something like one day per week garbage and changing the garbage schedule and people complain.

Mr. Beiman said 16 years ago you had 18 trucks in the DPW and more people.

Mayor Arnowitz said they were not all plowing, some were out collecting garbage. Our staff in the DPW has been reduced by three people since he has been here for 25 years. We did away with DPW picking up our garbage many years ago and that saved taxpayer dollars and it still saves us money based on the salaries today. There is not much you can cut; sharing services – we are looking at the cost and he was misquoted in the past election. He is willing to look at anything to see if it is the right thing for Hillsdale, I'm not saying we will do it and that is what was misquoted, but we have an obligation to the taxpayers to look at everything including the feasibility of merging with another town. He did not think it feasible, doesn't see us ever doing it, but we have an obligation to look at it and see the ramifications. DPW, Police, Dispatching – all those things should be researched and an educated decision for what is best for us. If you think the taxes are high now, wait, we just lost the appeal on the school funding for the high school. If that funding goes through, you can see your taxes go up at an average of \$1000 a year just on that. The Hillsdale residents, the River Vale residents have to join together. There will be a referendum against the withdrawal of Woodcliff Lake because it has to pass in Woodcliff Lake and the combined four towns.

Mr. Beiman said the only way to significantly lower the taxes of this town overall is to do more building.

Council Member Kelley said right now we have a project that will potentially bring in about \$400,000 a year, the Ell Woods Project, which is a significant number. It started in 1998, there are people still fighting it. We went to the Supreme Court once to get this project to go forward and we are still going with it, the Planning Board is still hearing it. The prospect of just going ahead and building it is not that simple.

Council Member Meyerson said 16 years ago is different than now and it is now almost impossible to compare. Things have changed so dramatically; we had a transfer station and we were a Host Community receiving millions of dollars which reduced taxes. Once that Host Community contract changed dramatically, we had to make that up with taxes because that was used for operating expenses. The operating expenses didn't go away yet the money went away. We had to make that up over time.

Mayor Arnowitz said we are trying our best. You should be going to the schools and the county, we all have to join together because if we don't do something about taxes, people are going to leave. If the school system changes and if Woodcliff Lake pulls out of the regional school system, it will affect education. First of all, our kids will not get the education they deserve; secondly, if we are not providing the education, our property values are going to go down and you are going to hope someone buys your house because another town has good education. There are a lot of bad things that will happen with this. The reason Woodcliff Lake is being totally unfair is we built the schools when they were farmland, they sold the farmland to become corporate rich. We chose a bedroom community. While I am for development, the Patterson Street project that Mr. Walsky wants to build, he wants to build apartments and put kids in the apartments now we have to educate them, so any tax revenue is decreased. The project on Ell Road is innovating, that brings in people and taxes with no expenses to the town. We will provide them with sewers, lighting and plowing, other than that, they provide the rest. There are no children and no impact on schools and that is the type of development we need. He had a proposal for apartments on Orchard Street which was denied by the Planning Board and he suggested to the property

owner have someone come in and look at mixed use, stores on the bottom, apartments on top. They turned down apartments because of the impact on schools, traffic.

Mr. Beiman said if you look at the Patterson Project for age 55 and over, has anybody looked at the capacities for schools. All the schools have received large, substantial additions.

Mayor Arnowitz said they are at the maximum now. There is room in Pascack Hills but we don't attend, Pascack Valley is at the maximum with the addition. We have one of the smallest Kindergarten classes coming in.

Mr. Beiman said we have a shrinking population.

Mayor Arnowitz would rather see commercial properties come in that generate taxes without any expenses.

Council Member Pizzella said what you are talking about is a problem that most towns are facing. A lot of towns in New Jersey are developing creative ways to economic development, not necessarily building. There are towns getting into business, towns that started schools and the money they make from these schools they subsidize their taxes and are creating revenue. We created a committee and we have a business affairs committee and we have a few residents that are willing to participate. Maybe you would be willing to participate, there are actually consultants that go to towns and look at their assets and advise them on how they can improve those assets so that the assets make money for them. He is very interested in this and hoped Mr. Beiman was interested and maybe he could join them. It is not just about building, it is about economic development in the downtown bringing in businesses, having the Chamber of Commerce, uniting your businesses and together making money.

John Ruocco, 25 Riverdale Street –

In his own mind, something is not holding together in terms of what he heard. In December he asked why the leaf program was running behind and the Mayor said trucks were broken down. Are these the same trucks that you are citing being broken and the reason we hired Downes?

Council Member DeGise said no, the leaf season we had a front loader down for five weeks but that is with the leaf season.

Mr. Ruocco said in December the Mayor said there were two or three trucks that were down.

Council Member Kelley said it was one of the most important vehicles.

Council Member DeGise said before it started to snow, we hired Downes to come into town knowing that we would require help. We lost the trucks during the snow storms, two blew transmissions and one blew a heater while plowing. When those went down, we replaced them on a two to one ratio from supplemental plowing. We lost three and brought in seven. Downes was lowest bidder and in his opinion, Downes did a phenomenal job coming in on a blizzard, learning our streets basically during a blizzard and helping bail us out. We had disciplinary action at DPW after the storm, DPW did not perform to its performance. We dropped the ball in that storm and some streets were the way they were.

Mr. Ruocco said I have heard you say that before, the ball was dropped. Why isn't the head of the DPW here to explain to the public what happened.

Council Member DeGise said it was dealt with in the administration in the proper channels where it was supposed to be dealt with.

Mr. Ruocco has lived in this town 33 years and have seen heads of departments come here regularly, you had a big event happening in town and yet I have not seen anyone from the DPW here to explain what was going on with the leaves; now after a couple of big storms, no one is here, why isn't that person here?

Council Member DeGise said we divided the functions two different ways, we had the interim Superintendent that we hired during administration and we had the Foreman controlling other roads.

Mr. Ruocco asked when the interim head hired.

Council Member DeGise said first week of November.

Mr. Ruocco asked why that person isn't here to explain what transpired.

Council Member DeGise said if desired, he can be here next week. The direct people in charge of the snow storm were called into the office and dealt with appropriately. He cannot discuss personnel. It was a poor job.

Mr. Ruocco said his taxes have gone up year after year and I see paying more and getting less. To hear you say what you said makes me angry.

Council Member DeGise said what happens is the borough gets away with for a period of time and the borough says they will put aside \$100,000 for snow removal, six men, we are not going to update our trucks, we get a

truck here and there. What happens is that carries along and all of a sudden you have a winter like we had this winter and it catches up to you. This year we injected another \$100,000 in this year's budget towards snow removal and did that because we realized we are going to need more help if we have another winter like this. We will need more things coming in, we are going to have to give a higher standard of service.

Mr. Ruocco said you are saying some of the equipment reached its use. Will the budget this year reflect an increase for that, purchasing new equipment?

Council Member DeGise said money was appropriated last year for a dump truck and we also put money in the budget more money for supplemental plowing outside.

Mr. Ruocco asked about the staff at the DPW.

Council Member DeGise said the staff at the DPW is going to stay the same at 6.

Mr. Ruocco said my taxes are rising and you are not sure the staff will be 6 or 7.

Mayor Arnowitz said after Irene the county put a program together where we got temporary people through the county that the county paid for and that carried after the three month period that they were supposed to work all the way through to Sandy. When Sandy happened, they carried it through until this past storm. The last person was let go a week ago Friday. The funding stopped and he asked for the budget is to plan to make that up. We will need temporary help for snow storms and opening the fields, that is where they are most valuable. He sent his comments to the Administrator. That is how we made up the staff of the retiree through the county program. We have to fund that which we haven't for the past two years or put on more people; he would rather fund that because then we don't have to pay benefits because benefits are \$15,000 to \$25,000 over and above salaries. Bringing in temporary people is the better fix and gives us the opportunity for more people. We have one full-time person or maybe five or six part-time people or an outside company during the problem times to supplement us without spending dollars on full-time positions.

Council Member DeGise said the staff at the DPW is 6 road men and the mechanic, total 7.

Council Member Frank said the workload isn't steady all year round. Leaves are huge, snow plowing huge and then it drops off and you want to keep a minimal staff and use temporary people or outside contractors and with the cost of public employees today, you have to look at it very carefully.

Mr. Ruocco said the police are the biggest expense the town has but the storm right now is on people's minds. The management issue and your funds for different demands, it is important that you have people that will manage the DPW properly.

Council Member DeGise said the Interim Borough Administrator, the Mayor and myself and the interim Superintendent were out for 38 hours making sure things were done.

Mr. Ruocco said it shouldn't be necessary for you to be doing that if you had a good staff at the DPW. It could be a management issue that you could look at in terms of supervision and management.

Mayor Arnowitz said over the years the town has evolved. We picked up our own garbage with four trucks, a staff of 12. We did away with cutting our own grass so that eliminated equipment and people. We don't do as many lines as we used to, we get the rubberized material, permanent, for lining the streets so we don't have to line every year. Different things have saved us from hiring more people. Each year we look at and I am sure we will look at it again and we do have a 2% CAP and we just spent a ton of money on snow removal and we have to pay that bill.

Mr. Ruocco said I am not saying hire more people but to look at your resources.

Mayor Arnowitz said we have and we will continue.

Mr. Ruocco said you can learn from what happened.

Council Member DeGise said he learned from this is for \$180/hour you have a \$120,000 vehicle that is not your responsibility if it breaks down. If it does break down, they send another one right away. If you need reinforcements, you get reinforcements within an hour; snow plowing might be the future where garbage was 16 years ago. We might not be doing snow plowing any more.

Mayor Arnowitz said so that the DPW doesn't think that they are losing something, that has not been discussed and if it going to be discussed, we will talk about it.

Council Member Meyerson said every \$90,000 that we spend is a percent of the taxes. In the scheme of things it doesn't seem that much, yet that is a percent in taxes and it builds up. When you have a full-time employee, we get increases in insurance, all kinds of benefits, which are a significant percentage of salaries. Every time insurance goes up, 15%, electricity goes up 10%, all of these fixed costs are not limited to 2%. When they go, that puts so much pressure and something else has to be cut. We are not in business to make money, this is a service industry, government, we provide services and when they go up and you are limited to a 2% CAP that

puts downward pressure on expenditures and they affect services. Yes taxes have gone up and it appears that services have decreased, this Council has done everything it can to increase services and not decrease them. Every person up here is in the same business of trying to increase business and decrease taxes.

With regard to the previous gentleman who said his taxes increased dramatically last year, that was a direct result of reassessment which we had to do. You have to reassess and forced by law to do so which has to be done every six to 10 years.

Council Member Frank said the total revaluation of Hillsdale after the reassessment was basically black.

Council Member Pizzella said the tax rate went up.

Council Member Meyerson said if your taxes went up, someone else's went down.

Mayor Arnowitz said no one has complained that their taxes went down.

Council Member Meyerson said in a year of reassessment you will get a number of tax appeals.

Council Member Looes said the two appeals were prior to the reassessment, from 2011 and 2012, and they are being settled now.

Martin Ward, 47 E. Liberty Avenue –

You had a perfect storm, changed leadership, leaves, and people with bad feelings going into storms and since he has lived here, Hillsdale has been the best in picking up snow always. Going into other towns, it is totally different and this is the exception to the rule. Given time, it will be fixed. He said the men at the DPW work very hard and it is not an easy job and they should be complimented for the work they do. He came to speak about the Environmental Commission and Beechwood Park. His wife walks every week on Saturdays with her friends, picking up garbage bags full of recycling and on a good week in the summer she can get five bags out of the park, all beer bottles and cans. Last year we found used syringes which were turned over to the police and there is something going on in that park and because where the wood is located, it is just moss. It is very slippery and better to let it go back to its natural state, wear boots.

Mayor Arnowitz said the police are aware of the problems that you addressed with that park. He has scheduled a cleanup to the town with the Environmental Commission but we usually don't get to Beechwood Park and are hoping to get them there this year. We hope to get the prisoners here and that is a great savings and they are hard working. What bothers him is he walks Hillsdale Avenue and every day and he picks up five to 15 bags of plastic bottles and cans. He has picked up material next to the recycling container in Veterans Park.

Mr. Ward said he saw a DPW worker picking up trash from the ground and some kids from the high school threw trash on the ground in front of him. He asked why they were doing this and they answered that they pay taxes and it's your job to clean it up. That is the attitude and that is why you see this.

Mayor Arnowitz said last year picked up trash all over town and around the stream and the fishing people clean up.

Mr. Ward asked when public input on the budget will be available.

Mayor Arnowitz said we will have a meeting on Thursday and decide on Thursday, probably next Tuesday we will have a budget hearing of the Council. The Council will have the opportunity of ask all their questions, it is not a time for the public to speak. At every meeting we have that is public, the public has the opportunity to speak. Then we will have a special meeting to introduce the budget and the public has the opportunity to come and then there will be another meeting after the state approves our budget for the final adoption of the budget. We will have a budget discussion probably next Tuesday, but he will find out Thursday. Then we will have an announced, publicized date for a budget meeting to introduce the budget.

Mr. Ward asked that the Council make every attempt to live within the budget.

Tom Galanti, 431 Piermont Avenue –

He talked to other parents around town to find out how much their homes have devalued and he was coming up with figures of \$150,000 and they said their homes are under water because of that. His assessment went down \$13,000 and lives in a 1100 sq. ft. house. This is the problem, you hired Realty Appraisal Group, the original people who messed up the first time with the assessment in 2006 that is where this town got in trouble. He did not think these people know what they are doing; they sent a letter to your house saying if you have a problem with your appraisal, come and they will talk to you. He did come and talk to a person and he blew me off and said this isn't a science, this is a professional opinion and if you have a problem with it, you have to spend \$500 to get your own appraisal and go to the county and go through the tax appeal. Why as a taxpayer I have to spend more money to prove that Realty Appraisal Group when one house is devalued \$150,000 and another devalued \$13,000.

Mayor Arnowitz cannot comment on that analogy and he did not know what predicated the reduction. He believed there are two companies in the State of New Jersey that can do reappraisals; they are a professional company that has licenses to do what they do. We work by bid, the low bidder gets the job and that is the unfortunate style in New Jersey. If you can come up with a company that can do a great job that is licensed by the state but will charge \$10,000 more than the other company, I had better have a good reason and to say they messed up last time without definitive proof is not a reason. He met with these people before, during and after and Council Member Frank did the same thing. They seem to do a very professional job, he sat in and observed from the doorway without them knowing. Various people came in to appeal or question their assessment because he encourages people to come down. Mistakes are made, they seem to be professional, they seem to be courteous, they answered people's questions but they are limited in what they can do. It is a science, they have parameters they work with based on what other values. You may not have done improvements on your house, other people do, so they were reassessed already and you haven't been. Those are all reasons for the difference. His assessment went down about \$100,000 but his taxes went up. That is the reason for reassessments, to make it even and everyone starts off at 100%. By the time the reval is introduced, we are probably down to 97% or 96%. We do reval for two reasons; one is that it is mandated by the county because they don't feel they are getting enough money and the second reason is why we did this assessment. We got so many appeals coming in, especially commercial property and we were losing every one and are trying to stem that. Reval is not cheap and we had to do a reval to stop the appeals. It is your legal right to appeal and he would encourage him if you feel your assessment is wrong and you can meet with the Tax Assessor and he would be more than happy to speak with you about your assessment.

Council Member Frank said on the town website you can access all the taxes for every address in town. If you think you are being unfairly appraised, that is one of your rights.

Mr. Galanti asked if \$1200 is not unreasonable to go up in one year, is that what you are saying.

Council Member Meyerson said in a revaluation, the town has to raise a certain number and have a rate and the rate is multiplied by the overall value of all values put together so when it is a revaluation, you have to raise a certain amount of money. Over the past six or seven years, all property values in the entire north Jersey and many other places in the country dropped down dramatically. We were getting these commercial appeals; when one person appeals it drops down in taxes dramatically and that affects the entire town. To make it fair, you have a revaluation for everybody. It actually drops the entire value of the town down a notch. We collect the same amount of money but it is revenue mutual. What typically happens, a third goes down, a third stays the same and a third goes up in a revaluation.

Council Member Frank said he came down and sat down with the people, found a mistake and his appraisal increased.

Council Member Pizzella said everyone up here is feeling the same thing you are feeling. His taxes went up as well.

Mr. Galanti said he likes all of the Council members, everyone is personable and appreciated what everyone does. He thanked everyone and did not want to give any grief.

Mayor Arnowitz closed the public portion of the meeting at this time.

PROFESSIONALS REPORT:

1. Borough Engineer – dated February 26, 2014

Greg Polyniak said he issued an engineer's report dated February 26 for tonight's meeting. An anticipated grant award that the borough will receive as it relates to DOT discretionary aid funding project. We mentioned in November we ran through each individual grants that we filed on behalf of Hillsdale and this was the first grant we anticipated getting action. This grant was filed the prior year by the prior engineer and also the prior Administrator, \$250,000 for Kent Road and Baylor Avenue. The borough was unsuccessful in acquiring those funds and we tutored the grant and supplied the information that the DOT would look at the grant favorably and we are proud to present that to the governing body.

Mayor Arnowitz said when the governor's office called him, he said we applied for \$350,000 and received \$250,000, does that mean one of the streets won't be done.

Gren Polyniak said we need to look at what the agreement says; there are two separate packages submitted to the state, one for Kent and one for Baylor, depending on the way they appropriate the funds. We would address it depending on the way the borough would want it, use capital funds to do the project, only utilize the grant funding, we would look at trimming down the project and looking at sections of the roadway.

Mayor Arnowitz said this is \$100,000 less than we anticipated.

Greg Polyniak said there are no matching funds required; typically with a municipal aid grant you would receive \$150,000, a grant that has funds that municipalities throughout the state of New Jersey don't utilize and we file for discretionary which is a pool of that fund. That is what this \$250,000 is for.

Another item he wanted to discuss was the safe routes to school grant; we made calls to DOT to review projects that could qualify and looked upon less favorably by the state. Prior the states permitted sidewalks that were safe, in disrepair or in poor condition to utilize this funding. We still could utilize that grant for that type of funding but it is ranked on a lesser scale when you file it. The state looks at the pool of money for school grants which is decreasing year after year, what they would like is to approve grants for new sidewalk locations. We looked around schools in the area for potentially the governing body could authorize sidewalks and one potential location would be the opposite side of Piermont Road close to Pascack Valley in the area of the church and in the area close to Meadowbrook and in that area. There is one side of the road that doesn't have any sidewalks.

Mayor Arnowitz said one of the places we have been trying to get something done but have been unsuccessful is around Beechwood Park between Everdell and Cedar, sidewalks just stopped. On Cedar we have sidewalks but we don't have anything on Hillsdale Avenue along that stretch.

Council Member Meyerson said this is a different grant from safe schools.

Greg Polyniak said it would be a separate grant and this program becomes effective in the summer around June. We haven't applied for anything yet. We filed in the summer of this past year, municipal aid grant for Saddle Wood Drive and we expect to hear by this summer.

Mayor Arnowitz said he heard that we got it.

Greg Polyniak hasn't heard from the state that we received anything that relates to Saddle Wood Drive.

Mayor Arnowitz said I guess he was incorrect.

Greg Polyniak said the other item that was discussed was the pool lift, the proposal we submitted. We recommended the governing body to authorize to proceed with the work even the tight timing constraints as it relates to the grant. The grant will expire the end of June and we want to make sure it moves ahead.

Mayor Arnowitz said the problem he has with that is that the Stonybrook Committee haven't discussed this. They will have to pay the engineering fees from their budget.

Council Member Looes said we did discuss it last month. They anticipate that this is going to be a requirement because we have the grant now; in two years when it becomes a requirement that all public pools have a permanent lift the grant money may not be there and they would still be responsible.

Mayor Arnowitz said he would go ahead with it.

Council Member Looes said we have discussed the lift but haven't discussed the engineering fees; we have a meeting Wednesday. She will reach out to the chairman.

Greg Polyniak said the final item in the engineer's report is a project that is going to occur by United Water which will be located in the borough and will occur on Knickerbocker Avenue, Queen Court and North Ramapo Lane. We attended a pre-application meeting with United Water, their engineering consultant, the Borough Administrator and Borough Police Chief and Captain to go over issues with respect that the project go forward.

Mayor Arnowitz asked the Borough Administrator to obtain the dates so that an email may be sent out to the residents.

Greg Polyniak said we issued a series of meetings to discuss the project. United Water has provided to the Administrator a notice that they intend to distribute to the residents. They will go door to door to distribute them.

Mayor Arnowitz is still in favor of posting something to that effect on our email.

Council Member DeGise met with the Council President to get a yearend review with Mike Neglia and in that review we picked up a couple of grants that may have been just sitting on the desk and asked if they were picked up from you.

Greg Polyniak said yes, we definitely did. We have moved forward with some of the grants that were listed which included the grant that is to expire as it relates to the ADA restroom. Bids went out with respect to architectural services which will be under review by both our office and Mr. Bernstein's office and subsequently the borough will have the ability to award that project. It involves a time frame as it relates to when it needs to be completed; the grant itself is to expire in June 2014. We had discussions with Community Development just

understanding where we are within the year to see if we have had any over runs as it related to time frames. They mentioned to us as long as we have a pre-construction meeting for the project, the project is going to be awarded and move forward at that point of time and it is completed by the end of August. It should be still in good condition with respect to the grant to the borough.

Council Member Frank said they ask for money back if you don't use the grant.

Mayor Arnowitz said you are aware that Church Road will start the 17th of March.

Greag Polyniak said he had the same message he received at the meeting he attended at United Water, that is actually one of the anticipated dates and they intend to give on the other project on Knickerbocker.

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

(The following correspondence on file in Borough Clerks Office)

Ambulance Corp-

Construction Department-January 2014

DPW-

Fire Department-

Board of Health-February 2014

Hillsdale Library-

Police Department-January 2014

Recreation/Stonybrook-

COUNCIL COMMENTARIES:

Council Member Meyerson said he is very reluctant to talk about litigation strategy, he wanted to share with the entire board that the decision, although preliminary, will take years before this comes to fruition. There is no statutory or regulatory reason to prohibit Woodcliff Lake from having its day in the sun by going out to referendum. All four towns must go out to referendum and it has to pass in all four towns which as many members of this Council has said in writing and in person that Woodcliff Lake knows they are not going to win this referendum and every person go out and vote against this. It is a bad idea, they know it is a bad idea, they are doing something to hurt, in my view, which is a top notch education in this area in our two high schools. My kids went to Pascack Valley and he sat on that board for years and he knows what those schools are capable of doing. Woodcliff Lake is attempting to hurt our school system and the education of our kids. In addition, it would be an unfair tax burden on Hillsdale and River Vale if anything like this would eventually pass over the next 10 years. Doug Frank has written a letter, Mayor also, and said all the Council Members should be writing letters to whomever or Trenton.

Council Member Frank said the most important part that people have to understand, and he didn't believe the people in Woodcliff Lake understand, \$700,000 or \$500,000 in Hillsdale, Woodcliff Lake, Montvale, River Vale, we are paying the same regional school taxes, no big difference. They instead of developing and adding students back when we were supporting Hills High School, they developed commercial properties which had a great cash base but no students. In decades, we were sending everyone west of Pascack Road going to Hills; George White split went to Hills and they went to Valley. We supported that school for all those years. The people in Woodcliff Lake are looking to pay less than the people of Hillsdale if they secede. Student cost has nothing to do with what the residents pay, it is all the commercial properties. This is a matter of greed and tax fairness is an oxymoron, they are looking for fairness, Pascack Valley has 50% more students than Pascack Hills, it is like a private school there, it is easy to get into the clubs, it is easy to get on the sports teams compared to Pascack Valley. They are looking for fairness only when it is for their benefit not fairness overall.

Council Member Meyerson said Council Member Frank is absolutely right. He sat on the board for years and it was absolutely essential by members of the board that the same education should be given at Valley as at Hills. Hills has significantly less students than Valley, they have both gone up over the past decade, have they gone up proportionately, but Hills has substantially less students which means that we provide the same education in Hills even if it meant less students per class in Hills because we are geared to the same education. It cost more at Hills to provide that same education as it does at Valley because a teacher with 10 students costs the same as a teacher with 22 students. It costs more per student because they have less students. The other part is something we testified to when we went there and spoke. If you have a house in Hillsdale that is assessed at \$725,000 or \$525,000 or \$69,000, it pays exactly the same to the high schools as a house assessed in Woodcliff Lake for \$469,000 or \$525,000 or \$750,000, whatever the case may be. Woodcliff Lake just happens to have more highly assessed homes than Hillsdale and Woodcliff Lake fails to understand that the minute you regionalize your school system you eliminate the lines that separate our towns. We have one town, Pascack Valley which consists of four regions if you will. If you draw an artificial circle around all the expensive homes which happen to be in Woodcliff Lake it looks like that group pays more taxes. The truth is they don't pay any more taxes than you or I do. No one basis their tax burden for schools on the number of students. Should the person with three kids pay more than a person with zero kids? That is the question you have to ask, but the rule was there was no regulatory reason why Woodcliff Lake shouldn't be given their opportunity to have a referendum.

Council Member Kelley said as long as Hillsdale alone knocks this referendum down, it is defeated. Why are we so worried, there is no chance to pass.

Council Member Meyerson said because it starts a process. The next process is to sue the district to change formulas. That is the goal here. This is a step in the process. If they had to build their school they wouldn't do it.

Council Member Frank said this is different than River Vale because this is two high schools and different demographics. River Vale is one high school for two towns.

Council Member Meyerson said we have two high schools with four towns. The judge ruled in their favor; the judge ruled in Oradell and the Oradell case is still waiting for an opinion from the Commissioner. The ALJ Commissioner of Law and Justice makes a decision and it is appealed to the Commissioner to make a final determination. That process takes years and now we are just beginning.

Council Member Frank said this is good for the lawyers, they are going to make a lot of money on this which comes out of taxpayers pockets. We have no choice other than fund the litigation.

Mayor Arnowitz said the attorney that represents Hillsdale and River Vale from DeCotiis attended River Vale's meeting last night and wanted to attend this meeting tonight. He wanted to wait and see what the referendum is and if we want her to come in.

Council Member Meyerson said he wanted DeCotiis to explain the litigation strategy in private and having a public hearing on this.

Mayor Arnowitz said he will invite her to one of our meetings and have her explain what she is doing, what they did and what she plans to do down the road. It does get confusing for the public; she asked that the public please write letters to the editor. He put a comment on his facebook page and suggested everyone do this, explaining the unfairness of this. One of the things no one mentioned is Hillsdale does host a school, Woodcliff Lake does not. They don't even have a library, they use ours. They pay ¼ of what every resident in this town to join our library but they don't want their own. This will affect education if it ever goes through. Is it going to go through tomorrow, no. Could it eventually go through, yes. He promised and River Vale has also committed but Councils change but didn't see anyone here on this Council change their opinion. We will fight this all the way to the Supreme Court which is a 10 year process. This started four years ago; the expense of additional taxes to the Hillsdale was approximately one million dollars a year and if we had gone along with this formula change, we would have spent four million dollars already. It is another 10 years to the Supreme Court and he told the Mayor of Woodcliff Lake why would he negotiate and spend 12 million dollars during the 12 year period. He would rather spend a million dollars between towns, and that is the estimated expense, over the 12 years. It is not retroactive, it would be foolish to do that. Woodcliff Lake is being unfair about this; they just made a settlement with BMW and sold off their farms. We were active in the purchase of farming rights at Demarest Farms so we would keep a farm in perpetuity. Woodcliff Lake and Montvale looked for the ratables.

Council Member Meyerson said this started when he was on the school board. This has been going on for a long time and will go on for a long time to come. This is just the first thing.

Mayor Arnowitz said your tax dollars will pay for the referendum through schools, no through our taxes. The referendum costs about \$30,000 to \$40,000 for a few thousand people to come out and say no in each town. The results will be the same result as last time but we have to mobilize.

Council Member Meyerson said last time 67 people voted yes. How can 70 people in River Vale vote yes on whether or not Woodcliff Lake should secede from the town. I guess they didn't read the referendum correctly. It is his goal when this referendum is done, it is unanimous in Hillsdale to vote no. We have the best high school district in the state. We spent money for that and we ought to be proud of what we have accomplished. Years ago we put lap tops in and there was controversy over that and we spent money on that. We were in the front page of the New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, we all over CNN over this because people look at us as a leader. Woodcliff Lake wants to mess with this, it makes no sense.

Council Member Looes said we recently had a house fire on Plymouth Avenue and she wanted to thank the two police officers that arrived on scene and their actions and further actions by the Fire Department that were able to contain the fire. Residents were displaced because of heat issues in the house and sustained much less damage than would have been if not for the quick actions. She thanked them for their great work.

She attended the Board of Ed meeting and they did discuss it and they said we are potentially the first high school in the state to ever have done it and nationally there are a handful of schools that have done it. This is the way of the future and they are looking to see where we are going with it. They are not looking to replace

teachers or change the way education is done but are using the tools they have to enhance schools educations and move it forward.

Council Member DeGise thanked the residents that came forward tonight and had educated discussion about snow removal for Hillsdale this year. The year to date we had 10 principal storms, we have had our problems, we haven't been fantastic in every storm but is when you don't do something right, you look at it again and learn from it and move forward and that is what this Council is doing, the Mayor is doing and the Administrator is doing.

Council Member Kelley thanked Timber Tree who came out with a piece of equipment they recently acquired for snow removal. He came out and helped us dig out hydrants as we had some buried. About eight firefighters donated their time to get this done. We never would have gotten that far if we weren't helped with this piece of equipment and thanked Timber Tree. On March 29, there is a Comedy Nights fund raiser for the Hose Company for the Fire Department and contact any member of the Fire Department.

Council Member Pizzella thanked everyone for supporting the Environmental Commission, it will take time but give them a chance to do their work. He was happy that someone came here and talked about economic development. We do plan to address that and we have a committee and look forward to getting residents involved. He is getting people in the industry that he knows to come up free gratis to talk to us about creating economic development in Hillsdale. He said Meadowbrook is having their Blue Jean Ball and will be held Friday and Comedy Night at the Smith School April 23. It is a great way to support the local schools.

Council Member Frank thanked residents for coming out, you need to challenge us and make a better Council. You can question what we do and make sure there is good justification for what we do. If you can't come, write a letter to the Mayor and Council and we will address it at Council meetings. We are here to serve the town and you and we need your feedback.

Mayor Arnowitz said he extended his condolences to the Town of Wallington Fire Department on the loss of their ex-Chief. It is traumatic to lose a firefighter but to lose a firefighter in the line of duty is more traumatic. He congratulated Hillsdale for their backup in that area during the funeral on Friday. His two sons were with him when he went down and is heartbreaking.

He also encouraged letters to the editor, do anything you can, speak to your friends in Woodcliff Lake about the unfairness of this high school situation.

Spring begins on April 20. We have leaves under the snow which have to be addressed. The D'Allessandro's picked April 4th as their dedication date for the memorial they are building in front of the RR station. He was asked by the Superintendent to allow him to hang a banner on the RR station as we have done in the past. He wasn't sure it was for that event.

Finally, the Church Road project will begin on March 17, an 18 month project. He has never seen anything done in the time frame they say but be prepared, it will affect travel if you live in that area. Church Road will be closed from the first day they put the shovel in the ground until they are done. The Police Chief will make arrangements for traffic; United Water was told that they will be paying for it but the Chief will decide what we need, not United Water. He is pleased that United Water agreed to the changes and requests he made four years ago for emergency services equipment which amounts to about \$65,000 in equipment. They have also agreed to the gates so we don't have to put out a standby crew to close that road and if there is water on the road, the police will be able to pull the gate down and just push it up. They also agreed to a camera that will be installed at the library that will monitor the stream so that the police can go on the internet and see the levels. There will be measurement device in the stream as we now have on Patterson. Be aware, OEM Bill Franklin and Jon Najarian will be handling the equipment end of it, the Police Chief will handle traffic control. He assured the residents that he has been reassured by the Fire Department and by Ambulance Corps that there will be no effect to us for emergency services during and after construction. Council Member Kelley will pass on to Jon the start date, but more importantly, they never provided a list of what they need. Perhaps we could slip that in if they need any type of equipment. What the Fire Department and Police Department asked for at the reservoir, United Water will be creating a ramp for kids to try and play on their skateboards. There is a long, flat run and his question is how we rescue them if they break their leg. That is the equipment we are looking for and he is sure the Ambulance Corps will need something and a plan of action will have to be set up how this is done.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION: @10:17 p.m.

R 14058 To provide for a meeting not open to the public in accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act N.J.S.A. 10:4-12~Personnel; litigation. It is necessary for the Borough Council of the Borough of Hillsdale to discuss in a session not open to the public certain matters relating to the item or items authorized by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12B, 7: matters relating to litigation, negotiations and Attorney Client privilege, Borough of Hillsdale vs. DeJoseph and matters relating to employment relationship personnel, Susan Witkowski.

Ms. Witkowski please state for the record that you are waiving your Rice Notice and the Assistant to the Tax Assessor.

Motion by Council Member Kelley, Second by Council Member Looes, and unanimously carried.

RECONVENE REGULAR MEETING: @11:16:04 PM

Motion to reconvene regular session by Council Member DeGise, Second by Council Member Kelley, and unanimously carried.

Borough Attorney Bernstein said let the record reflect all members of the governing body present for commencement of the executive session and are present for the recommencement of the open session as well as the Borough Clerk/Interim Borough Administrator and the Borough Attorney.

There was a discussion regarding the Wood litigation. The Borough Attorney has been given instructions to go back to the insurance fund with some questions that need to be answered so no formal action need to be taken. There was date relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Tax Assessor, the Administrator will get back to the governing body regarding such at a future date, no formal action needs to be taken. There was discussion to to authorize the Interim Borough Administrator to make an offer to an individual in the Borough to serve as Zoning Official/Code Enforcement Official at a compensation amount previously authorized. This requires formal action of the governing body.

Motion by Council Member DeGise, Second by Council Member Pizzella.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Council Members DeGise, Frank, Looes, Meyerson, Pizzella and Kelley

Nays: None

Borough Attorney Bernstein said with that action the Administrator will tape the discussion, there will no need to come back. We are done unless it doesn't work.

The last item is a discussion regarding compensation for the Interim Borough Administrator, Susan Witkowski, and discussion regarding such of which Ms. Witkowski participated and having waived her Rice Notice. It is my understanding the governing body is offering to her and she is willing to accept \$2000 a month to serve as Interim Borough Administrator retroactive to January 1, 2014, to be reexamined by the governing body on or before June 1, 2014.

Motion by Council Member Pizzella, Second by Council Member Frank.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Council Members DeGise, Frank, Looes, Meyerson, Pizzella

Nays: Council Member Kelley

ADJOURNMENT: @11:19 p.m.

Motion by Council Member Frank, Second by Council Member Looes, and unanimously carried.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL WILL BE
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014~BEGINNING AT 7:30 P.M.