

Minutes of a Council Meeting of the Borough of Hillsdale held at 10:30 AM on Friday, April 3, 2020, via GO TO Meeting.

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

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT:

This is a meeting of the Hillsdale Borough Council on this 3RD day of April, 2020. Notice of the time and place of this meeting has been provided to The Ridgewood News and The Record; 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.

ROLL CALL:

Council Members DeRosa, Escobar, Council President Horvath, Lundy, Pizzella, Trochimiuk, Mayor Ruocco, (Borough Attorney Mark Madio, BA Christopher Tietjen, Borough Clerk Denise Kohan)

PUBLIC COMMENT (Time limited, new topics only, one topic per speaker):

Mayor Ruocco opened the Initial Public Comment Period at this time. Hearing no one, the Initial Public Comment Period was closed.

RESOLUTIONS:(Consent Agenda):

[R20074](#) Resolution to Cancel and Reschedule Hearing on the 2020 Budget and Tax Resolution

WHEREAS, the Borough of Hillsdale is canceling the Hearing on the 2020 Budget and Tax Resolution on April 7, 2020 and re-scheduling the Hearing to comply with LFN 2020-07; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough of Hillsdale does hereby re-schedule the 2020 Budget and Tax Resolution to April 14, 2020.

Motion by Council Member Lundy, Second by Council Member DeRosa.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Council Members Escobar, Council President Horvath, Lundy, Pizzella, Trochimiuk, DeRosa

Nays: None

COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilman DeRosa just wanted to remind people to go to the town website at www.hillsdalenj.org for updates regarding Covid-19. He also thanked all the first responders and the healthcare workers for what they do.

Mayor Ruocco also wanted to thank all the first responders and health care workers, our OEM, our Borough Administrator and our Clerk for what they have been doing in response to Covid-19 and in keeping the residents informed. I want to remind residents to support our local businesses. Some of them are closed but those that remain open I ask you to support them. They have been there to support our local sports teams so it is our turn to help them. I urge all residents to continue social distancing as stated in the Governor and County Executive Orders.

Secondly, I want to advise both the residents and the members of the governing body of my intent, as the head of the municipal government and presider over Council meetings, to follow the guidance that the NJ League of Municipalities, as well as the NJ Dept of Community Affairs and Division of Local Govt Services has given during this state of emergency.

That advice is that virtual meetings conducted using communications equipment must be limited, to the extent practical, to matters necessary for the continuing operations of government. This is wise guidance. It recognizes that local government must continue to operate, even during times of national and state emergency. It discourages making decisions that are not time-critical, as well as those that would affect the municipality significantly from a financial or strategic perspective. Saying more directly, we need to postpone making decisions that deserve the full attention and participation of the public.

This Council has been working on several matters of that sort: Redevelopment of our industrial area, the building of a new senior/community center, renovating Centennial Field, and the creation of a new Tree Ordinance, just to name a few. While we can continue to discuss such items in closed session when it qualifies for such confidential treatment under the law, any effort to bring these matters into open session for public comment & decision-making by the governing body needs to be restrained. To do less is an affront to our residents, whose attention is and should be directed to their own health and safety and that of their families.

I know that is where my attention is, as members of my own family are fighting right now to regain their health after testing positive for the virus. Holding sessions of the governing body using online meeting platforms, such as we are doing now, is an imperfect substitute and stop-gap measure for direct involvement and public commentary. I expect all Council members will want to adhere to this sound advice from Trenton.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn by Council Member Lundy, Second by Council Member Escobar, and unanimously carried.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL WILL BE

TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2020 7:30 pm

Denise Kohan, Municipal Clerk

APPROVED AS PRESENTED