

BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS

**320 Boulevard
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ**

And via livestream <https://www.aaliveevents.com/events>

WORK SESSION MINUTES

February 14, 2023

A Work Session Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights was held on February 14, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at 320 Boulevard.

Mayor DeLorenzo declared the meeting in Session and Acting Borough Clerk Anne Michelle Sery stated that the meeting complied with the Sunshine Law, Adequate notice of this meeting has been made to all members of the Council on December 30, 2022, and transmitted to The Record and The Herald News on January 4, 2023, in accordance with the provisions of the "Open Public Meetings Act", Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor John DeLorenzo, Councilman Michael Sickels, Councilman Robert Bing, Councilwoman Susan McGuire, Councilman Ron Kistner, Councilman Thomas Meli, Councilman Christopher Hillmann

SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor DeLorenzo led in the Salute to the Flag and Pledge of Allegiance.

Engineers Report:

1. 2023 Municipal Road Program

Our office has coordinated with the Borough Administrator and Borough DPW Superintendent and determined that the following roadways will be included in this year’s municipal road program:

Base Bid		
Street Name	Between Street 1	Between Street 2
Field Avenue	Passaic Avenue	Franklin Avenue
Passaic Avenue	Burr Place	Dead End
Division Avenue	Burr Place	Oldfield Avenue
Alternate Bids		
Street Name	Between Street 1	Between Street 2
Oldfield Avenue	Passaic Avenue	Franklin Avenue
Garrison Avenue	Washington Place	Madison Avenue
Burr Place	Passaic Avenue	Cul-De-Sac

Our office was authorized to proceed with the preparation of bid documents for this project and has commenced field survey work accordingly. We anticipate that the project documents will be available

for public bidding within 6-8 weeks. We will continue to provide updates regarding the status of this project, as necessary.

2. Woodside Avenue Roadway Improvements – Phase 1 (FY 2022 CDBG Funded)

As per Resolution No. 224, approved on December 14, 2021, the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights authorized a grant agreement with the County of Bergen regarding a 2022 Bergen County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). A grant was subsequently awarded to the Borough in the amount of \$122,300.00. The scope of work for this project consists of asphalt milling, resurfacing, spot curb/sidewalk reconstruction, ADA curb ramp improvements, and drainage improvements on Woodside Avenue, between Hamilton Avenue to the western dead-end Cul-De-Sac. Our office was authorized to proceed with the preparation of bid documents for this project and the project is currently in the design phase. We anticipate this project will be ready for Bergen County review and approval within the next 3-4 weeks.

3. 2023 NJDOT Municipal Aid Grant Application

On June 30, 2022, our office successfully submitted a New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) FY2023 Municipal Aid grant application regarding roadway improvements to Kipp Avenue (between Woodside Avenue and Oldfield Avenue). The proposed improvements include but are not limited to, milling, repaving, partial curbing, drainage improvements, and ADA curb ramp reconstruction within the project limits. The total requested funds for this grant application were approximately \$1.3 million which is the estimated cost for this project. The estimated cost includes costs associated with construction, engineering design, construction inspection, and material testing. On November 23, 2022, NJDOT provided our office with notification of a grant award in the amount of \$248,240.00 for the above-referenced application. Our office will provide a proposal for professional services to the Borough for this project upon finalizing the 2023 Municipal Road Program.

4. 2023 NJ DCA Local Recreation Improvement Grant Application

Neglia was recently informed that the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs is accepting applications for the Local Recreation Improvement Grant program. The Local Recreation Improvement Grant (LRIG) is a competitive grant that supports the improvement and repair of public recreation facilities including local parks, municipal recreation centers, and local stadiums. Neglia has reviewed this grant opportunity with Borough officials and the Borough has determined it most appropriate to request funds for improvements to Miers Playground located within the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights. The proposed improvements will consist of the removal of existing playground equipment and the installation of new state-of-the-art playground equipment. Our office has begun working on completing all required documents associated with this grant application and estimates this project will cost approximately \$121,900.00 to construct. Our office successfully submitted a grant application prior to the submission deadline on January 20, 2023. Our office will continue to provide updates on this grant, as necessary.

5. 2022 Municipal Road Program

The Contractor successfully completed paving operations on LaSalle Avenue, MacArthur Avenue, and Longworth Avenue during the week of December 11, 2022. In addition, the contractor successfully

restriped the crosswalks located at the intersection of Henry Street and Oldfield Avenue. Milling and paving operations are anticipated to resume during Spring 2023 on Railroad Avenue and Plant Road once the cleanup of the drainage ditch located along Railroad Avenue is completed. It is our understanding that the Borough DPW and Port Authority have performed cleanups to better facilitate flow within the drainage ditch. The cleanups performed to date have improved the conditions within the roadway however additional cleanups will likely be required before the drainage catch basins within the roadway can be properly reconstructed. Our office will continue to provide updates on the status of this project as appropriate.

6. Woodland Park Pavilion Improvements (Bergen County Open Space Funded)

On December 7, 2022, our office was authorized to proceed with the design of the Woodland Park Pavilion Improvement project as funded by the Bergen County Open Space program. The scope of work of this project includes the installation of new rain gutters and light fixtures at the pavilion structure located at Woodland Park. Additionally, the proposed improvements include the partial reconstruction of select asphalt pathways within Woodland Park. Our office is currently finalizing the project bid documents and anticipates that this project will be issued for public bidding within the next 1-2 weeks.

7. Paterson Avenue Roadway Improvements (NJDOT Funded)

On June 22, 2022, our office was authorized to proceed with surveying, engineering design, and construction management services for the Paterson Avenue Roadway Improvements project. This project is funded by a FY2022 NJDOT Municipal Aid grant and received funding in the amount of \$201,000.00. The planned improvements for this project include but are not limited to, full curb-to-curb milling and paving, spot repairs for concrete curbs, ADA ramp reconstruction, and installation of traffic stripes, on Paterson Avenue, between Terrace Avenue and Oak Grove Avenue. Our office has received NJDOT approval to issue this project for public bidding and will coordinate appropriate bid dates with the Borough upon the final determination of the 2023 Municipal Road Program.

8. 2022 PSEG Roadway Restoration Program

Please see below for updates regarding the anticipated start dates for roadway restoration work as well as completed roadway restorations based on the most recent information provided by PSE&G:

Street	Between Street 1	Between Street 2	Milling Date	Paving Date
Burton Ave	Williams Ave (CR-40)	Myers Ave	April (TBD)	April (TBD)
Burton Ave	Charlton Ave	Pasadena Ave	April (TBD)	April (TBD)
Myers Ave	Boulevard (CR-57)	Burton Ave	April (TBD)	April (TBD)
Pasadena Ave	Boulevard (CR-57)	Terrace Ave (CR-55)	April (TBD)	April (TBD)
Boulevard (CR-57)	Henry St	Ottawa Ave	April (TBD)	April (TBD)
Boulevard (CR-57)	Paterson Ave	Stanley Ave	April (TBD)	April (TBD)
Williams Ave (CR-40)	Boulevard (CR-57)	Hasbrouck Ave	April (TBD)	April (TBD)
Passaic Ave (CR-38)	Old Terrace Ave	Terrace Ave	April (TBD)	April (TBD)

Mayor DeLorenzo advised Norberto to confirm that all work would be complete before paving began as to not run into the issue of roads being paved and finding out they forgot to do the work on a particular street. Councilman Sickels brought up the concern about the basin on Franklin Avenue across from the Starbucks not draining. Mayor DeLorenzo advised that the Borough sent a letter to Senator Lagana's office around November/December 2022 with this concern and that no response has been received as of yet. Mayor DeLorenzo asked the Acting Borough Clerk to follow up with Senator Lagana's office for a status.

Finance Report:

The Current Fund cash balance at January 31st is \$4,605,998 and at December 31st was \$4,721,757 which represents a decrease of \$115,759. The entire balance was invested and earning 4.25%.

Cash receipts for the month of January totaled \$4,113,548 consisting of:

- \$3,725,327 for current 2022 taxes
- \$81,148 in franchise fees from Cablevision
- \$68,263 in franchise fees from Verizon FIOS
- \$68,193 for 2022 taxes
- \$35,595 in hotel fees
- \$33,660 in one-time Liquor License
- \$31,210 in interest earned
- \$27,479 for fees/permits & miscellaneous other revenues
- \$21,958 in construction code fees
- \$10,544 in municipal court fines
- \$6,099 in interest on delinquent taxes
- \$2,822 in BCCLS Technology Aid
- \$1,250 in Alcohol Beverage Licenses

Cash disbursements for the month of January totaled \$4,229,307 of which \$2,669,357 was for local School taxes (63%), \$775,686 was for salaries (18%), \$29,221 for refunded overpaid taxes (1%) and \$755,043 was for other budgeted expenses (18%).

Other Items/Projects:

- We filed for and received \$116,482 of Community Development Block Grant proceeds for the Baldwin Avenue Paving Project.
- CFO discovered, filed for and received NJ Unclaimed Funds totaling \$2,830 pertaining to the Mary B. Quigg Scholarship Fund. While not the Borough's funds, we are entrusted with the safeguarding, upkeep and disbursement of the scholarship fund.

- Preparation of the 2023 budget continues. Alternate sources of revenue continue to be researched. Departments have till the end of the week to submit their requests and the CFO anticipates meetings with the Finance Committee to begin in several weeks. Introduction of the budget must be made by March 31st or the next regularly scheduled meeting of the governing body.
- The CFO prepared the 2022 annual UCC report and presented it to the Construction Code Official for review and signature prior to filing. Report was filed prior to the due date of 2/10/23.
- Cash balances have significantly increased as the 1st quarter tax bills were due 2/1/23.

Land Use/Building Update:

Mayor DeLorenzo invited Gino Tessaro to give the Land Use/Building update. Mr. Tessaro stated that due to the very mild winter, everyone has been working instead of losing time. The school of aeronautics has opened and facilitates about 450 people. Restaurants are benefitting due to the school having no cafeteria. There are a couple of decent size projects that will be presented to the board that should bring in revenue and there have been a lot of permit requests. Residential and commercial work is picking up after covid hampered a lot of projects. Mayor DeLorenzo acknowledged the professionalism and success of the aeronautic school and encouraged the Council to visit for a tour. He also stated how the school is a good idea for anyone that is thinking about a trade education and Mr. Tessaro agreed that it is an asset to the Borough.

Police Update:

Councilman Sickels gave the Police Department update. The Police Committee has had their first meeting of the year. Dispatchers are now working 24 hours. Each dispatcher has been assigned to a Squad. Sergeants now have the freedom to leave Headquarters making this Supervisor an additional Officer on the road, scenes and available to serve the residents. Lieutenants are now providing supervision on nights and weekends. Ptl. Olivo has joined the Police Department list of L.E.A.D. instructors. In addition to the mandated training, Officers have been attending more specialized training to have them better equipped for certain situations. Some of the training courses are Arrest Search and Seizure, Policing Skills and Tactics, and Cyber Online Security. The Detective Bureau is conducting a full evidence audit. The Firearms Unit is in the process of updating, repairing and replacing equipment and duty weapons that are now approaching roughly 15 years old. Body cameras are now being worn and the official training period will be from February 13th through February 28th. The first full live day will be on March 1st where policy, procedures and guidelines will be in effect. Councilman Bing inquired more about the body cameras. Councilman Sickels advised that they will now be OPRA-able opening up the need to redact anything that is not part of the field vision. This will require the need to dedicate an editor or acquire an outside firm to go through timeless footage. Mayor DeLorenzo acknowledged that all these costs are mandatory AG/State costs that are out of our control jurisdiction and just adding to an already increasing budget.

Land Use/Building Update – Cont.:

Councilman Sickels added to the Land Use report given by Mr. Tessaro that the Land Use Board meeting, which was supposed to be February 1st, was rescheduled to February 21st at 7:00pm and that all business scheduled for February 1st will be heard at that meeting.

Councilman Bing then provided the update on Property Maintenance and their presence in enforcing the beautification laws of the borough. Between January 1st and February 13th, there have been 15 complaints all of which was responded to. There was one summons issued and 23 warnings. Four contractors were advised they needed permits for work being done. Homeowners and Business owners have been notified of maintenance of their properties.

Recreation Update:

Councilman Bing gave the Recreation update as well. He advised that it is now down to the last stretch for the winter sports season. We have 36 basketball teams all of which are highly performing. Wrestling is in full swing. We just hosted annual wrestling tournament with over 250 wrestlers with a lot of placements. We will be hosting Districts the upcoming weekend. The Senior Center is open daily, and the schedule is being continually enhanced. Registration for spring track and softball will open this week. Councilman Bing acknowledged the accomplishment of Gina Minichiello achieving her 1,000 points in basketball and will be recognized at the following month's regular session council meeting. He also recognized all the special and talented athletes we have in town and how strong our Recreation program is. Councilman Bing advised the concern of the work being done at the athletic field and acknowledged that the athletic field is not owned by the Borough and that it is owned by the Board of Education. It has been brought to his attention that the hearsay is that the Mayor and Council has been delaying the work being done. Mayor DeLorenzo confirmed that there is no delay from the Mayor and Council and other than knowing that the state issued work permits, he is also unaware what is happening with the project. Mr. Tessaro also confirmed that he does not have any delay issues on the Building Department end. Councilman Bing shared that Administrator Rob Brady held a meeting with the new Grant Writers and all the heads of each department. Each department came with a wish list and hopefully we can maximize any and all grants that are available to the Borough.

Social Services Update:

Councilwoman McGuire shared the social services update. There was a total of 141 visitors to the Food Pantry between December 5th, 2022, through January 23rd, 2023, which is an average of 18 patrons per week. A big appreciative thank you to the Food Pantry volunteers for organizing and stocking shelves, as well as packing bags and distributing the food on Monday mornings. Thank you also to the residents and various organizations who continue to donate food and gift cards. Hasbrouck Heights is a strong community, and it is comforting to know that we can count on our fellow residents for support during these uncertain times. Donations are always needed – from non-perishable foods to paper and reusable bags.

Public Works Department Update:

Councilman Kistner started the DPW update with thanking and commending Superintendent Masucci with the idea and implementation of the wooden hearts on the circle to commemorate Valentine's Day. The idea was very well received by all residents. There was a demonstration of the new street sweeper and Councilman Kistner acknowledged that Jeff Seidel has been doing a great job with his attention to detail with the new street sweeper and the cleaning of the Borough streets. He also mentioned that he has taken a tour of the DPW facility and encouraged the rest of the council to also do so. He confirmed the immediate need for a new facility detailing that the salt shed is dilapidated and needs to be rebuilt and relocated. The canopy over the gas pumps is also nearing collapse and needs to be replaced. Councilman Kastner requested meeting with the engineer and getting architect bids for preliminary planning on the new facility. Mayor DeLorenzo agreed that the DPW facility needs to be fully replaced. It was built about 100 years ago and nothing has been done to upgrade anything. The most recent upgrade was the building that garages the tree truck and even that was done in 1999. We need to make sure that there are no violations that will be incurred from the outdated facility.

Fire Department Update:

For the Fire Department update, Councilman Kistner listed various incidents that the Fire Department responded. He shared that a letter was received from the Lodi Fire Chief thanking for the assist that our department had given. He commended Fire Chief Greco and the great job he is doing with his new team by boosting morale, leading by example and still maintaining the high standards of keeping the Borough residents safe.

Councilman Kistner mentioned that he and Councilwoman McGuire attended a League of Municipalities convention for newly elected officials which was very educational for both of them.

Health Department Update:

Council Meli gave the Health Department update. He read a mandatory covid letter from Mid-Bergen Regional Health. It stated that from March 1st, 2020, through December 31st, 2022, there were 40 confirmed Covid-19 deaths in Hasbrouck Heights. The ages ranged from 46 – 101 years of age with the average age being 77 years old. As of January 9th, 2023, 19% of Hasbrouck Heights residents have received the bivalent vaccine. From January 1st, 2022, through December 31st, 2022, there have been 1201 Covid cases, 138 Influenza cases, 8 Food Borne Illnesses; 3 Lyme Disease, 2 Hepatitis C cases and 2 Pertussis cases. In New Jersey, the covid rate is low as is the RSV and influenza. The Health Department will be holding a free rabies clinic on Saturday, February 25th from 10am-1pm. It will be held at the Borough Senior Center and open to Hasbrouck Heights residents only and by appointment only as well.

The library is looking at having a locker system but will circle back around after the Library Board meets and discusses it further.

Councilman Meli acknowledged the passing of long-time resident Anne Ciavaglia on January 20th, 2023. Anne was born with muscular dystrophy and rose above her special needs and dedicated her life to serving the community as well as holding other prestigious positions. Anne and her family ran the MDA telethon for over 40 years at the VFW in Hasbrouck Heights. Councilman Meli proposed that a portion of Oldfield Avenue be dedicated to Anne Ciavaglia. Mayor DeLorenzo agreed and acknowledged how much the Ciavaglia Family was respected in town, and we would look into the process of getting that done. Brendan McMahon who is Anne's husband was present at the meeting and publicly thanked the Mayor and Council for considering the dedication and that it shouldn't be just limited to Anne but to the whole Ciavaglia Family. This was his Valentine present to Anne.

Transportation Update:

Councilman Hillmann stated that there was a State Safe Route to School program and that they have now developed one for municipalities. There are programs for public and pedestrian safety. He will share them with Councilwoman McGuire as she is the education liaison. Councilman Hillmann also thanked Lisa Castellano for helping set up the Access for All Committee Meeting(s). Mayor DeLorenzo inquired if Police Chief Rinke was also looped in on these programs and Councilman Hillmann confirmed that he is aware, and it is already an ongoing program. Lincoln School has already even won the Silver Award for one of the programs.

Councilman Kistner advised he had a meeting with Administrator Rob Brady, Superintendent Lenny Masucci and Engineer Norberto Hernandez regarding the traffic on the county roads and understanding the process. Councilman Bing added that there also should be personal accountability instead of just quick blame on so-called lack of police presence or placing blame on the borough. Councilman Sickels also reiterated that the changes he mentioned in his earlier police update was to assist in the safety of the residents of the Borough.

Mayor DeLorenzo asked for a motion to open up the meeting to the public which was made by Councilman Bing and seconded by Councilman Sickels and unanimously carried.

Joe Samperi, residing at 255 Kipp Avenue came forward with concerns about the Board of Education projects specifically athletic field bleacher project and how it will be affecting the seniors and tax dollars. He understood that the Mayor and Council have no relation to what is happening but still would like to know how that does/doesn't affect the budget as the BOE is about 68%. He questioned how no one knows who the project manager is or who has accountability. He questioned the hearsay that \$500,000 was not coming from taxpayer dollars but from a 'reserve'. How does that get replenished, and will that affect future tax dollars? Mayor DeLorenzo again reiterated that he has no idea of any of the plans nor do we have any say or control of the BOE budget. When the meeting was held with the building officials and the Borough engineer, the concern was the integrity of the hill and how it was going to be addressed. He advised that all Mr. Samperi's questions should be directed to the Board of Education at their next meeting which is scheduled for February 15th, 2023.

Mayor DeLorenzo asked if there was anyone else who would like to come forward for comment and seeing that there was none, he asked for a motion to close the public portion of the meeting which was made by Councilman Bing and seconded by Councilman Kistner and unanimously carried.

Mayor DeLorenzo then advised that the Mayor and Council need to go into closed executive session and upon return did not anticipate any action be taken. He asked the Acting Borough Clerk to read Resolution No. 44 and asked for a motion to enter into closed executive session which was made by Councilman Sickels and seconded by Councilman Bing and unanimously carried.

**BOROUGH OF HASBROUCK HEIGHTS
RESOLUTION NO.: 44
Authorizing Executive Session
Date: February 14, 2023**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 allows for a public body to go into closed session during a public meeting, and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights has deemed it necessary to go into closed session to discuss certain matters which are exempted from the public, and

WHEREAS, the regular meeting of this committee will reconvene,

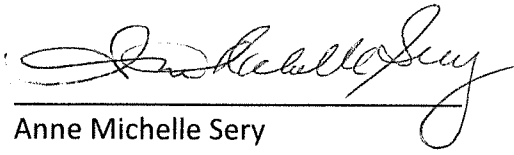
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights will go into closed session for the following reason as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12:

- Any matter which, by express provision of Federal Law or State Statute or Rule of Court shall be rendered confidential.
- Any matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the Government of the United States.
- Any matter the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy.
- Any collective bargaining agreement.
- Any matter involving the purchase, lease, sale or acquisition of real property with public funds.
- Any tactics and techniques utilized in protecting safety and property of the public.
- Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation.
- Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, disciplinary action unless individual requests a public meeting.
- Any deliberations of a public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a special civic penalty.

Minutes will be kept and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the above no longer requires that confidentiality, the minutes can be made public.

Upon returning from closed executive session, Mayor DeLorenzo requested a motion to return to regular meeting which was made by Councilman Bing, seconded by Councilman Sickels and unanimously carried.

Mayor DeLorenzo then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was made by Councilman Bing, seconded by Councilman Kistner and unanimously carried.



Anne Michelle Sery
Acting Borough Clerk