



**BOROUGH OF NORTH HALEDON**  
**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

Mayor George read the OPMA statement into the record:

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting of February 15, 2018, was emailed to the HERALD NEWS and the HAWTHORNE PRESS on February 5, 2018, and was advertised in said newspapers on February 8, 2018. Said notice was posted on the bulletin board on the same date and has remained continuously posted as the required notices under the Statute. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

Proper notice having been given, the meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and the Clerk is directed to include this statement in the minutes of this meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Present:

Mayor Randy George

Council Members: Rocco Luisi, Donna Puglisi, George Pomianek, Heather Sparano, and Keith Salviano

Deputy Municipal Clerk, Dena Ploch

Municipal Clerk, Renate Elatab

CFO/Treasurer, Chris Battaglia

Assistant Treasurer, Antoinette Muccio

Borough Auditors, Chuck Ferraioli and Dave Bottge

Absent

Councilman Raymond Melone

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Motion by Council Member Puglisi, second by Council Member Luisi, to open the floor to the public. Upon roll call, all members present voted in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Seeing as no one from the public was present, motion by Council Member Puglisi, second by Council Member Sparano, to close the floor to the public. Upon roll call, all members present voted in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Mayor George advised that the meeting had been scheduled for this evening to allow members of the public to attend, and he couldn't believe that no one had shown up. The meeting had been scheduled to disprove claims that the members of the Governing Body did whatever they want. The members of the Governing Body go through the budget line by line, and take the advice of the department heads.

Mayor George praised the Department of Public Works, and stated that thanks to them the Borough had the best snow plowing. He praised the Police Department, and its officers who are all EMT trained. He stated that the Fire Department is second to none. He reasserted that the number one priority of the members of the Governing Body is the safety of the residents.

Mayor George stated that the new CFO, Chris Battaglia, has made the budget process so much easier because of his computer skills. He also stated that that thanks to the Borough Auditor, Chuck Ferraioli, the Borough is in great financial shape.

Mayor George advised that the budgets of the more important departments were being discussed at the public meeting, and invited Fire Chief A. J. Ricciardi to discuss the Fire Department's budget requests. (He allowed him to come first because he is a volunteer). Mayor George explained why the 38 year-old fire apparatus was being replaced, and advised that the Borough would be giving the Fire Department \$100,000 towards an addition, just as the Borough had given former fire company no. 1 approximately \$300,000 to build a new fire house to store a fire engine that they had purchased. He stated that despite the claim of one resident, that the Borough did not have to replace the old fire truck, and could have Paterson respond, the Borough could not depend on Paterson having a fire truck available when North Haledon called for one, and the DCA had just voided Paterson's mutual aid plan. Mayor George stated that the fire department located on High Mountain Road was a real fire house, and not just a garage (like former fire company no. 1), and that the Fire Chief needed his equipment in a central location. The Fire Chief went through his budget requests, which will be discussed in detail before the municipal budget is introduced at the Council Meeting on February 21.

The Borough Auditor stated that he could not give a precise tax rate because the numbers from the schools and the County would not be available for some time. He did not have the amount for deferred school taxes, and did not know what the local school board planned to do with its excess surplus. He projected that with the Redevelopment Plan, the Borough could continue to anticipate a higher income for various UCC permits. He stated that there would be no impact on the budget from pre-payments of 2018 property taxes. He also stated that the Borough had collected \$280,103.25 for police "road work," which has helped the Borough increase its surplus. Mr. Ferraioli advised that some funding may become available through the Federal Infrastructure Trust, payable over 30 years, with 75% interest free, and 25% at a AAA rating interest (lower than the interest on the Borough's bond ordinance), and the Borough should plan to have some projects shovel-ready for submission.

The Superintendent of Public Works, William Graham, discussed his budget requests for 2018, which will be discussed in detail before the municipal budget is introduced at the Council Meeting on February 21

Police Chief, Robert Bracco, discussed his budget requests for 2018, which will be discussed in detail before the municipal budget is introduced at the Council Meeting on February 21.

There will be a budget meeting on Monday, February 19, at 1:30 p.m. to continue discussions on the budget.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Council Member Luisi, second by Council Member Sparano, to adjourn. Upon roll call, all members present voted in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Mayor George declared the meeting duly adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Renate Elatab, Municipal Clerk

Approved at Council Meeting of February 21, 2018