

The Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold was held on Monday, March 19, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building.

Mayor Higgins stated that the notice of the time, date and location of the meeting had been provided pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 231 of the Laws of 1975 (Open Public Meetings Act).

Councilman DiBenedetto opened the meeting with the Salute to the Flag, followed by a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT	MAYOR J. NOLAN HIGGINS
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DIBENEDETTO
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN RONALD GRIFFITHS
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN KEVIN KANE
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN GEORGE SCHNURR
PRESENT	COUNCILWOMAN SHARON SHUTZER
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN JAYE SIMS

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 4 on the Agenda as follows:

“Approval of Minutes: Council Meetings March 5, 2018.”

Councilman Sims offered a motion to accept the minutes and was seconded by Councilwoman Shutzer:

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins announced Item No. 5 on the Agenda will be held as the recipient is not present. He stated it will be presented at a future meeting.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 6 on the Agenda as follows:

“Second Reading and Public Hearing: Ordinance #2018/1 Amending and Supplementing Chapter 18 (Zoning), of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey.”

Mayor Higgins opened the meeting to the public.

There were no comments.

Councilman Sims offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto:

RESOLUTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Councilman Schnurr offered the following Resolution and moved it adoption, seconded by Councilman Sims:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that an Ordinance entitled “ORDINANCE #2018/1 AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 18 (ZONING), OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY” be, and same is hereby approved on second reading.

Councilman Schnurr stated that after comparing the regulations with other municipalities, changes were made to the required building and lot coverage. This will eliminate the need for residents to appear before the Planning Board and incur a large a expense.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 7 on the Agenda as follows:

“Second Reading and Public Hearing: Bond Ordinance #2018/2 Providing for the Construction of a New Water Treatment Plant, Appropriating \$500,000 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$475,000 Bonds and Notes to Finance a Portion of the Costs Thereof, Authorized in and by the Borough of Freehold, in the County of Monmouth, New Jersey.”

Mayor Higgins opened the meeting to the public.

There were no comments.

Councilman Sims offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Griffiths:

RESOLUTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Councilman Kane offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Sims:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that an Ordinance entitled “BOND ORDINANCE #2018/2 PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW WATER TREATMENT PLANT, APPROPRIATING \$500,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$475,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE A PORTION OF THE COSTS THEREOF, AUTHORIZED IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOD, IN THE COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, NEW JERSEY” be, and same is hereby approved on second reading.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 8 on the Agenda as follows:

“Second Reading and Public Hearing : Ordinance #2018/3 of the Borough of Freehold Establishing a Restricted Parking Zone in Front of a Residence (39 Reid Way).”

Mayor Higgins opened the meeting to the public.

There were no comments.

Councilman Sims offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Griffiths:

RESOLUTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Councilman Schnurr offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Sims:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that an Ordinance entitled “ORDINANCE #2018/3 OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD ESTABLISHING A RESTRICTED PARKING ZONE IN FRONT OF A RESIDENCE (39 REID WAY)” be, and same is hereby approved on second reading.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 9 on the Agenda as follows:

“Second Reading and Public Hearing: Ordinance #2018/4 to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14).”

Mayor Higgins opened the meeting to the public.

There were no comments.

Councilman Griffiths offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Sims:

RESOLUTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Councilman Kane offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Griffiths:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that an Ordinance entitled “ORDINANCE #2018/4 TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)” be, and same is hereby approved on second reading.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 10 on the Agenda as follows:

“Introduction of the 2018 Municipal Budget Notice of Freehold, Establishing the Date for Public Hearing and Authorizing Publication of Required Notices.”

Councilman Kane offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Griffiths:

INTRODUCTION OF THE 2018 MUNICIPAL BUDGET NOTICE OF FREEHOLD, ESTABLISHING THE DATE FOR PUBLIC HEARING AND AUTHORIZING PUBLICATION OF REQUIRED NOTICES.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Councilman Kane reported the Public Hearing is set for May 7th.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 11 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution of the Borough of Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, Amending Temporary Appropriations for 2018.”

Councilman Giffiths offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Sims:

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD, COUNTY OF
MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING TEMPORARY
APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2018.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 12 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Authorizing a Professional Engineering Services Change Order with Abbington Engineering for the Phyllis Road Improvement Project.”

Councilman DiBenedetto offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Sims:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES
CHANGE ORDER WITH ABBINGTON ENGINEERING FOR THE PHYLLIS
ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

Councilman DiBenedetto explained the mentioned intersection requires more work than originally thought and this provides engineering services for intersection improvements.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 13 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Authorizing Payment of Length of Service Award Program Benefits. (Freehold Fire Department).”

Councilman Griffiths offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilwoman Shutzer:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF LENGTH OF SERVICE
AWARD PROGRAM BENEFITS. (FREEHOLD FIRE DEPARTMENT).

Councilman DiBenedetto announced he is a member of the Fire Department and will be abstaining.

Councilman Sims stated he would be doing the same.

On roll call Council Members, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr and Shutzer and voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain DiBenedetto and Sims; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 14 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Authorizing Payment of Length of Service Award Program Benefits. (Freehold First Aid and Emergency Squad).”

Councilwoman Shutzer offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Griffiths:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD
PROGRAM BENEFITS. (FREEHOLD FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY SQUAD.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 15 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Memorializing the Mayor’s Appointment to the Freehold Borough Planning Board:

- a. Paul Ceppi – Alternate Number 1 – Term expires December 31, 2019. Fills a current vacancy.”**

Councilman Schnurr offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilwoman Shutzer:

RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING THE MAYOR’S APPOINTMENT TO THE
FREEHOLD BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD: PAUL CEPPI – ALTERNATE
NUMBER 1 – TERM EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2019. FILLS A CURRENT
VACANCY.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 16 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Confirming Personnel Appointments/Actions:

- a. **Resignation of Eric Bacany as Special Law Enforcement Officer, Class II, effective March 13, 2018.**
- b. **Appointment of Joseph Lubrano-Lavadera as a probationary member of the Freehold Fire Department, Richardson Engine Company No. 2, effective March 20, 2018.**
- c. **Termination of Daniel Xavier as a member of the Freehold Fire Department, Richardson Engine Co. #2, effective March 20, 2018.**
- d. **Termination of John Dib as a member of the Freehold Fire Department, Engine & Hose Company #1, effective March 20, 2018.”**

Councilwoman Shutzer offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Griffiths:

RESOLUTION CONFIRMING PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS/ACTIONS: 16A-16D.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 17 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Approving the Following Applications:

- a. **Raffle License #13-18, St. Rose of Lima Church, On Premise nightly 50/50, 6/26/18 through 6/30/18, 16 McLean Street.**
- b. **Raffle License #14-18, St. Rose of Lima Church, Carnival Games, 6/26/18 through 6/30/18, 16 McLean Street.**
- c. **Raffle License #15-18, Columbian Club of Freehold, Off Premise 50/50, 10/13/18, 70 East Main Street.**
- d. **Raffle License #16-18, Order of the Evergreen, Merchandise Raffle, 5/2/18, 618 Park Avenue.**
- e. **Precious Metal/Second Hand Dealer, M&L Cash Exchange, LLC, 145 South Street.**
- f. **Juke Box License, American Legion Post 54, 62 West Main Street.**
- g. **Canning License, Knights of Columbus, East Main St./Center St./Spring St. and Broadway, 4/14/18, rain date: 4/21/18, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.**
- h. **Canning License, BPO Elks Lodge #1454, 5/5/18, East Main St./Center St./Spring St. and Broadway, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.**
- i. **African Diaspora Arts Festival, 8/25/18, 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Lafayette Street Parking Lot behind the Hall of Records. c/o Adrienne Nesby**
- j. **Sidwalk Café License, Oyako Tso’s Restaurant, 6 West Main Street.**
- k. **Sidwalk Café License, Aarzu Modern Indian Bistro, 30 East Main Street.**
- l. **Sidwalk Café License, Federici’s Restaurant, 14 East Main Street.**

- m. Sidewalk Café License, A Little Bit of Cuba Dos, 2 East Main Street.
- n. Temporary Taxi Driver License, Maxima Phillips, Freehold.
- o. Temporary Taxi Driver License, Gustavo Trujillo, Farmingdale.
- p. Temporary Taxi Driver License, Maycol Mayta, Freehold.
- q. Temporary Taxi Driver License, Carlos Ruiz, Freehold.
- r. Temporary Taxi Driver License, Nancy b. Mauricio Vizarrrete, Freehold.
- s. Permanent Taxi Driver License, Michael Nwachukwu, Freehold
- t. Permanent Taxi Driver License, Jahswill Obinna, Freehold.
- u. Permanent Taxi Driver License, Jhonathan Quinto, Freehold.
- v. Permanent Taxi Driver License, Angel Cruz, Freehold.
- w. Permanent Taxi Driver License, Hector Tello, Freehold.
- x. Permanent Taxi Driver License, Miguel Pantoja, Jackson.
- y. Permanent Taxi Driver License, Jacqueline Koleshnick, Freehold.”

Councilman Sims offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilwoman Shutzer:

RESOLUTION APPROVING APPLICATIONS: 17A – 17Y.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 18 on the Agenda as follows:

“Approval of Bills.”

Councilman Kane offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Griffiths:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that the bills on the attached lists in the amount of \$526,628.30 be paid as presented.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 24 on the Agenda as follows:

“Clerk – Late Communications.”

There were none.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 20 on the Agenda as follows:

“Items for Discussion:

a. Core Redevelopment Flow Chart.”

Councilman Schnurr referred to the flow chart provided and detailed the process of how applications proceed for properties located in the Core Redevelopment Area. Councilman Schnurr gave examples of how the applications are approved, ordinances are amended or a matter gets referred to the Land Use Committee. Councilman Schnurr explained how Council is the Redevelopment Entity which makes the final decisions.

Borough Administrator, Joseph Bellina reported a new application was recently received and it is currently with the Engineer for review.

Councilman Schnurr stated the Engineer will write a report stating if the application does or does not comply. He stated council will then decide to change the ordinance or not. Councilman Schnurr stated there are extensive minutes from every Land Use meeting to keep everyone informed.

Mr. Bellina stated if Board approval is needed, all of this proceeds the normal Land Use requirements. He explained a use variance, bulk variance or simple site plan approval, the steps on the chart will have been done first.

Borough Attorney, Kerry Higgins stated following these steps also informs the applicants of the procedure so they know what to expect.

Councilman Sims asked if this flow chart is attached to the applications.

Mr. Bellina stated that has been talked about. He said the application and fee structure are being looked into.

Mayor Higgins stated he believes it is helpful to have it represented graphically.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 21 on the Agenda as follows:

“Public Comments”

Mr. William Madden, Vrendenburgh Ave. stated there should be some kind of ordinance to assess property owners who receive Fire, First Aid and Police services but make no donations. Mr. Madden explained letters are sent to 14,000 households and 10,000 of them have not donated in five years. He added it is putting a burden on the First Aid and there should be some way that landlords can be assessed and have them contribute.

Councilman Schnurr stated suggestions could be made to the applicants during the discussion phase. He added it is not currently a requirement via ordinance.

Councilman Sims made a motion to close Public Comments, seconded by Councilwoman Shutzer.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 21 on the Agenda as follows:

“Council Comments.”

Councilman Sims stated “The allergies got me tonight Mr. Mayor. I have nothing to report. Sorry.”

Councilman DiBenedetto stated “Thank you all for coming out tonight. Due to upcoming weather in our near future, it doesn’t feel like the cafes are getting their licenses tonight, but spring will be here soon. All be safe. Thank you.”

Councilman Schnurr stated “Yes. I know people at that end of the table are not going to like this, but I am going to continue on with my discussion in regards to last week. OK? I’m pissed off with the way things have been handled, alright? And last week was just a little taste, OK? I believe that one of the ways we get good government is by shining a spotlight on what’s bad. The hiring process for the disputed Engineering Aide position was done in a vacuum. Even council members on the Personnel Committee did not know who submitted applications, what the responsibilities are or what the salary was going to be and they still don’t. I’ve seen three different Engineering Aide responsibilities; one came from the Mayor, Mike gave me one, I saw one on line. It seemed like every time someone questions what was going on the responsibilities for that position seemed to change. The same week, the same week our Engineering Aide resigned we also hired an employee for the office. That office employee was added because we were told that we needed to plan for another employee’s retirement. That employee has not retired yet. So from an employee head count perspective we were head count neutral. For the last five months the Engineering Aide’s responsibilities were farmed out to a number of individuals and the job got done. Much to my surprise. Much to my surprise we even got compliments from our residents on how our employees interacted with them.”

“In February there was a big push from Personnel Committee Chairperson Shutzer to fill the position. She called me on February 9th to lobby my support for her position. I thought this at best was a part time position and relayed that to her. You know, we need to be careful when we’re adding payroll, which is Freehold Borough’s biggest expense. Sharon was insistent on hiring this person that she has known for a long time. And I gotta tell ya Sharon, at times you treat this like your own employment agency. It’s wrong. Unfortunately for the other job applicants the FIX was in from the beginning. The previous Engineering Aide’s last day was October 20th. Ok, keep that in mind, October 20th. The person who ultimately was hired was going to training seminars that Freehold Borough paid for at the New Jersey League of Municipalities in Atlantic City which was November 14th -16th, well before all the resumes were in and all the interviewing was completed. That is absolute nonsense. There was a questioning of the position itself and if this was a full or part time position from Councilman Sims, DiBenedetto and myself. Councilman Sims even suggested

that we could enter into a recycling agreement with Freehold Township that could save a number of hours a week. He was never contacted regarding this proposal. It was never given any merit. Why? 'Cause the fix was in. Now this is the part, this is the part and this is the reason why I am angry about this. Once Shutzer knew that there was pushback on this whole thing, she devised a scheme to place this on the council agenda for February 20th when she knew I would be on a business trip to California, after she told me she would wait for me to come back so we could discuss this as a group. Imagine my surprise, while flying over the state of Arizona, I opened up my packet after I read my Time Magazine, so I could see what the council would be up to and what they would be voting on while I was in California. Much to my surprise, this is the second time in 18 months that this has happened. This is not the way government is supposed to work. Wait. Wait until a person who questions something is on vacation or on business travel and then place that topic on the Council Agenda. This is local politics at its worst and it needs to stop. In the words of Ricky Ricardo to Lucille Ball on the I Love Lucy sitcom, "You got some 'splaining to do!" Needless to say, that did not go over well not only with me, but also with other council members and the February 20th meeting never took place. People who apply for jobs in Freehold Borough should not have their names announced at a public meeting. According to Shutzer, Reggie Sims, Jaye's brother and Mike DiBenedetto applied for this position. These names were released by Shutzer when she was being questioned about the hiring process. Shutzer should not have released Executive Session and Personnel information at a public meeting. Shouldn't happen. Shouldn't happen. She attempted to deflect attention from herself to others in, all I could imagine, a blatantly political move. As a responsible employer, which is what we should be, Freehold Borough needs to have responsible people in positions of responsibility. As far as personnel goes, we don't have that. We don't have that. The situation has been horribly mishandled. We've had a number of employees and volunteers apply for this position. I love our employees and volunteers. I have never been as upset about anything as I am over this and the way it's been mishandled. Last meeting, I asked for Sharon to resign as a member of the Personnel Committee. I ask that again tonight. Last meeting Sharon complained that I questioned her integrity. She only got it half right. I'm also questioning her competence after releasing executive session and personnel information at a public meeting. Now as far as resigning from a committee, there is precedence for us as a governing body to make this happen, to remove someone from a committee or position. When Sharon was one of the two Fire Commissioners, the Fire Chief wrote a letter, asking us to do something and she was removed as the Fire Commissioner as a result. So we've done this before. Last meeting Sharon said that she spent a lifetime standing up to bullies, implying that that was happening to her now. I've seen her in action many times so I guess it takes one to know one."

"You know we're all politicians up here. When we do something right, we get the praise and the accolades. When we do something wrong, the opposite happens. Male, female, young, old, black, white; it doesn't matter. All politicians, it comes with the territory. Everything that I told you, every single thing that I've told you is 100% true. I am willing to undergo a lie detector test and pay for it. Everything I told you is 100% true. While I've been talking about the Engineering Aide position and what transpired, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the lack of leadership shown by Mayor Higgins. This dust up would never have happened if Mike Wilson was Mayor. Never! If he saw a divided council, he would have hit the reset button and try to come to some sort of compromise. Mike Wilson would have had us

talk together and work it out. Instead we got lies and deception, while Mayor Higgins played the role of the enabler. We got the Engineering Aide position shoved down our throats. And I gotta tell you, the problem with this approach is that some day it might be somebody else's turn to open up. It's much better to try and work things out, especially when this is the alternative. You got council members that can't believe what has happened and I am one of them. Now that is all I've got to say tonight, but I tell you what, I am absolutely, totally disgusted with the way this whole thing has been handled. Totally disgusted."

Councilman Kane asked Councilman Schnurr, "You're not gonna stick around and listen?"

Councilman Schnurr responded "NO!"

Councilman Schnurr walked out of the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Councilman Kane stated "It'll be in the minutes. Are we in Washington or Freehold? You're all familiar with the term grandstanding right? It's pretty much what you just witnessed. Again, I apologize to the public. Thank you for coming out tonight. I am sorry you had to sit and listen through that however many minutes of crap that just was dispensed out of Councilman Schnurr. Sharon, again I am sorry you had to endure him, but I am going to let you speak for yourself. Pretty brave man to get up there and trash everybody and then get up and walk out so he can't hear any rebuttal. Very, very good. That's too much TV out of Washington. Watching too much Trump. He sounds just like Trump."

"Anyway, I want to thank Joe, Ricky and Kathy for putting together a fiscally responsible budget again for the year of 2018. If you can please pass that on to everybody involved that we really appreciate your effort. I want to formally, on record request that Sharon Shutzer absolutely does not resign as Chairperson of the Personnel Committee. She does an outstanding job and it would be a sin if you even thought about that. So please do not resign from that position. I'm not gonna give him any more credit. So thank you for coming out tonight. This is totally ridiculous. If we keep having meetings like this, Bill maybe you could talk to the people from the First Aid and we could sell tickets to these meetings or something for the theatrics that goes on. Pretty ridiculous. Thanks for coming out."

Councilman Griffiths stated "I'll go through the easy stuff first. Reminder that the Beautification Program is in its second year, that the Human Relations Committee is running and all the information on the rules are on the Borough's website. Also on the website there is a link for pot hole reporting. It currently is the number one thing, in the center of the website and the last thing is the Beautification Program. Basically take a picture before and after you do something to improve your property on the outside of the ground or the house. Then submit it and there is a prize structure of three prizes; an outdoor grill donated by Home Depot with a \$50 Home Depot Gift Certificate for First Prize. The Second Prize an outdoor grill sponsored by Home Depot and the Third Prize a Ceramic Bird Bath courtesy of Brock Farms. I want to thank the sponsors for their generosity. I'll remind you also the second cycle of Participatory Budgeting will be beginning soon and last year's winning projects are getting close to shovel ready and you will be seeing some progress as we get through the bad

weather and get into decent weather as we go through all of the hoops that we must with permits, DEP, The County, Local, etc. I also wanted to let you know, I've told Bill this before, but the HRC is also beginning to work with Freehold Township to do a fund raiser on behalf of the First Aid. It's in it's infancy at the moment. I think you will be seeing something coming out on this in the near future."

"Now to the theatrics. At the last meeting Councilman Schnurr made a lot of allegations about Council President Sharon Shutzer. He alleged in 2012 the Borough came close to losing a portion of State Aide because we had only an 82 score for Best Practices Program that the state mandated. He blamed the Council President because she headed the Personnel Committee and most of the deficiencies were within the personnel category. I objected to his generalizations and lack of specificity. A review of the Best Practices since then by myself, clearly shows the majority of the alleged deficiencies were actually contractual matters that had been negotiated with the labor unions and that had been negotiated many years earlier. They had to do with length of service things, payment went out on workman's compensation and these were relatively new to the state mandating that you respond to these questions. So those were not things that the Council President could control as the Personnel Chair. These matters could not have been remediated by her. You also George, sorry empty seat George, made the unsupported and malicious statement about any problem in Freehold. You did an analogy about a burning building and when the dust clears you find Councilwoman Shutzer holding the matches. Ridiculous rhetoric based on nothing but your imagination. If anything is owed here it is an apology to Sharon Shutzer who has always served with integrity. By next week, doing some more research, we can probably refute most of what you heard this evening from George. I think it's absurd that someone apparently has an agenda and that agenda has nothing to do with the good work of Freehold Borough. Thank you Mayor for allowing my comments."

Council President Shutzer stated "I guess I'm in good company because now the Mayor is on the block as well. And might I just say, that I don't have to say what we all think about the Mayor. The Mayor is a gentleman, he loves Freehold Borough and he has done nothing but give his heart and soul to this town. This is the depth of the desperation, apparently felt by Councilman Schnurr. We seem to be being picked off one at a time. Somebody else had a turn a couple of years ago and now I guess it's my turn and now the Mayor's turn. I am wondering who will be next. I do have a prepared statement that I wrote before I heard tonight, so I am going to proceed with that."

"At our last council meeting, I was dumbfounded when I was lambasted with a vitriolic diatribe the goal of which seemed to be to teach me that I should not EVER question the actions and the wisdom of Councilman George Schnurr. In all of my years of being on council, I have never witnessed anything like this and certainly I have never been a victim of such a tirade. I have worked with Republicans and Democrats, and we have ALWAYS worked as a team to do what is best for our residents. Of course, there have been disagreements, but we always settled those disagreements in the back room or better still, one on one. I am humiliated that this stewing and spewing boiled over into the public and that I have been forced to address it in public. However, I have been pushed into a corner, and there are no circumstances under which I will not defend my name and my integrity. I do not mind

defending what I say and do, but I will not let sleeping dogs lie when it comes to defending someone's interpretation of what I say and do."

"First, this rant started, and excuse me, the first rant two weeks ago, started in the back room when Councilman Schnurr called me a liar which, by the way, he has done before. Although he has not spoken to me personally about it, the tirade seems to be about the fact that I, according to Councilman Schnurr, put an item he opposed on the agenda to push it through because I knew that he would not be at the meeting. He reiterated that tonight. I did not put anything on the agenda and I am certain that Mayor Higgins and Administrator Bellina will attest to that. It might come as a surprise to Councilman Schnurr that he is not a threat to me, and he flatters himself in believing that Councilwoman Shutzer, or tonight's name: Shutzer, gives a rat's behind whether or not he is at any given meeting."

"Second, the Best Practices issue he purported to interpret by blaming me for personnel issues is ludicrous. Our rating on personnel issues had to do with our inability to break or our desire by the way, to break negotiated contracts which locked us in to issues addressed by Councilman Griffiths as well as longevity issues the state wanted us to do differently. I had ONE VOTE on those contracts just like Councilman Schnurr did, and BOTH of us voted FOR those contracts. The police director candidate who Councilman Schnurr alleges hired strippers was given an interview like all of the other candidates were. He was not hired. For Councilman Schnurr to link me with that alleged stripper hiring candidate is so absurd that I find it pathetic. It proves that he is grasping at straws in order to discredit me."

"Third, Councilman Schnurr said he was tired of hiring my friends. A point which he again reiterated tonight. To this I say, if he were here, NAME ONE! In 1998 I was a reference for one of my daughter's friends. She was not hired. In 2000, my nephew by marriage asked if he could use my name on his application to become a cop. I said, "You may, if you want, but you first have to decide whether you want to get the job because you used my name or you want to get the job because you are a good candidate." He chose not to use my name and I spoke to no one on his behalf. More recently, a young barista whom I know casually from being a customer, used my name on his application to become a special cop in the Borough. When he told me this, I immediately went to the police station and told the Captain who was doing the hiring, the interviewing that I knew nothing about this young man except that he seems to be a nice kid. I told him that my name on his application, and please get this right. I went from this young man telling me as I was ordering a cup of iced tea to the police station, I was so worried about it. I told him that my name on his application meant nothing and that it was not to be considered as an endorsement. Again, I say to Councilman Schnurr, name one!"

"Fourth, Councilman Schnurr called for my resignation from the Personnel Committee. To this I say, when pigs fly!"

"Fifth Councilman Schnurr said that when the fire is out, Councilwoman Shutzer will be there to start another one with a match. If my understanding of his thinking is correct, he is absolutely right about this one. I believe that this analogy has a hidden meaning. If he means

that I am going to fight for what I think is right for Freehold Borough even though it might be contrary to his thinking, he is absolutely right. If he means that I am going to fight to put down some of the issues he stirs up, he is absolutely right. If he means that I am audacious enough to stand up against the bully and speak back to him, he is right. And I'll have a little addendum to this as well. He is absolutely right in what he said tonight. Sometimes it takes a bully to deal with a bully. And the best thing for Freehold Borough is for me to continue doing exactly that. In speaking about another political situation, a New York Times writer named Charles M. Blow said, "This is about the defamation of, silencing of and the shouting down of women." I find it very sad that this matter would have to be aired in public and I am embarrassed and humiliated. But rest assured Councilman Schnurr, that this woman will not be defamed, silenced or shut down."

"In closing, let me say that everything I have addressed was said in public at the last meeting and some tonight. What the public did not hear was what Councilman Schnurr said to me at the end of the meeting as we were leaving the dais. Lest I again be called a liar, let me just say that there was a witness to his veiled threat. He looked me in the face and he said, "Well, I guess you won't try that again!" To that comment, I say to Councilman Schnurr, perhaps you should take your own advice. I am forwarding a copy of this, by hand to the News Transcript. Included is also a copy of the last meeting's minutes. I am forwarding a copy to the Clerk, Traci DiBenedetto and a copy to the Monmouth County Democrats will be hand delivered. Thank you."

Mayor Higgins stated "First, my apologies to those who attend our meetings, our regular attendees. To sit and have to listen to a rant like that, at two meetings is uncomfortable at a minimum and certainly very disturbing and unprofessional from the governing body. We don't all agree, but my colleagues and I only want to serve Freehold Borough. It's upsetting and disturbing to have to go through that, but I guess that is part of public service so we put up with it. To our professionals, the inference that Freehold Borough is not managed properly is even more upsetting to me because I deal with the three professionals that are here on a daily basis and they are nothing, and our chief and our clerk, they are nothing but professional and only serve the interest of this community. When we go to seminars and various events and introduce and say we are from Freehold Borough, one of the first things that we hear is, "You know guys are really lucky to have the Administrator that you have and the staff that you have." It makes us very proud to be from Freehold. Joe, thank you."

Mayor Higgins stated "With that we will entertain a motion to adjourn."

Mr. Madden asked if he could speak again.

Mr. Bill Madden stated "I've been to many, many meetings and believe me I have never experienced what we just heard. But to you congratulations for the way you do. And to Sharon, you couldn't do a better job. But you get someone that is so divided as he is, is there a way to get him off council?"

Mayor Higgins stated "He is an elected person."

Mr. Madden stated “It is a shame that we have to put up with that nonsense.”

Councilman Sims stated “My allergies are bothering me tonight, but you know the sad part about this is, Mr. Sockol I understand you have a job to do, but a month ago we honored a family in this town that put six men in the military and nobody was here from the press. You’ve been here now the second week in row. I understand you have a job to do, but that was service amplified to this town for an exemplary family and you have a job to do, I understand, but we are covering this garbage tonight. I get choked up talking about it because this is ridiculous. Not what I signed up for 12 years ago. I’ll say being the youngest person up here Councilwoman Shutzer has been a source of advice for me at times and wow. That is all I got to say.”

Councilman DiBenedetto stated “It’s not my style, that’s all I’m gonna say. I think we all work for the town of Freehold and we’re elected to do a job and I think we all have our heart in the game.”

Councilman Sims made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Griffiths.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent Schnurr. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

TRACI L. DIBENEDETTO, RMC
BOROUGH CLERK

TLD:lc