

The Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold was held on Tuesday, February 19, 2019 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).

Councilwoman Shutzer opened the meeting with the Salute to the Flag, followed by a moment of silence for Captain Stuart Burnton who served in the Police Department for over 30 years and was a WWII veteran. Councilman DiBenedetto asked that Mike Dolly of Dolly Printing on Elm Street be remembered as well.

#### ROLL CALL

PRESENT	MAYOR J. NOLAN HIGGINS
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DIBENEDETTO
PRESENT	COUNCILWOMAN ANNETTE JORDAN
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN KEVIN KANE
PRESENT	COUNCILWOMAN MARGARET ROGERS
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN GEORGE SCHNURR
PRESENT	COUNCILWOMAN SHARON SHUTZER

Mayor Higgins announced Item No. 6 on the Agenda, Second Reading and Public Hearing: Bond Ordinance #2019/2 Providing for the Purchase and Installation of Parking Meter Pay Stations, the governing body has been asked by members of the Downtown Freehold Board and others to table this item to allow continued discussions with them and other stakeholders. Mayor Higgins stated while this ordinance only provides a financing tool to have available should the paid parking system proceed; it does not put a system into place. He stated Mayor and Council is certainly willing to continue discussions with Downtown Freehold and any stakeholders. Mayor Higgins stated at the appropriate time on the agenda, Councilman Kevin Kane will move to table Item 6.

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

**“Approval of Minutes: Reorganization Meeting January 6, 2019; Supplemental Minutes January 23, 2019; Executive Session February 4, 2019.”**

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

On roll call Council Members Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain DiBenedetto (January 23, 2018); absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 5 on the Agenda as follows:

**“Second Reading and Public Hearing: Ordinance #2019/1 to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14). Resolution Adopting Ordinance #2019/1 and Authorization of Publication.”**

Mayor Higgins opened the meeting to the public.

There were no comments.

Councilwoman Shutzer offered the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Kane:

**RESOLUTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION.**

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

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

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that an Ordinance entitled “ORDINANCE #2019/1 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, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer voted its adoption; opposed none; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

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

**“Second Reading and Public Hearing: Bond Ordinance #2019/2 Providing for the Purchase and Installation of Parking Meter Pay Stations in Municipal Owned Parking Lots, Appropriating \$150,000 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$142,500 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. Resolution Adopting Bond Ordinance #2019/2 and Authorization of Publication.**

Councilman Kane made a motion to table the item, seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto:

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

Borough Attorney, Kerry Higgins stated the item will be re-advertised and noticed when it will be placed on the agenda. She clarified the Bond Ordinance does not have to be introduced again. She stated depending on how long it takes to get on the agenda, notice will be published again.

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

**“Introduction of and Authorization to Publish Bond Ordinance #2019/3 Providing for the Purchase and Installation of Lights at the Little League Fields and Installation of a New Roof at the Firehouse, Appropriating \$250,000 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$237,500 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.”**

Councilman Kane offered the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that an Ordinance entitled “BOND ORDINANCE #2019/3 PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF LIGHTS AT THE LITTLE LEAGUE FIELDS AND INSTALLATION OF A NEW ROOF AT THE FIREHOUSE, APPROPRIATING \$250,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$237,500 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.” be, and same is hereby approved on first reading; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk be and she is hereby authorized to publish said Ordinance in the Asbury Park Press and that shall be further considered for final passage after public hearing at a meeting held on March 4, 2019 at 7:00 PM and that during the week of said meeting copies of the Ordinance shall be made available at the Clerk’s office to members of the general public who shall request same.

Councilman Kane reported these projects are a result of the Participatory Budget Program.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated it is a great exercise in democracy.

Councilman Schnurr stated there is excitement about getting lights at the Little League Field and the families are looking forward to this.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer 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:

**“Introduction of and Authorization to Publish Ordinance No. 2019/4 Amending Chapter 18.07.010, the Freehold Center Core Redevelopment Plan.”**

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

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that an Ordinance entitled “ORDINANCE NO. 2019/4 AMENDING CHAPTER 18.07.010, THE FREEHOLD CENTER CORE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN.” be, and same is hereby approved on first reading; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk be and she is hereby authorized to publish said Ordinance in the Asbury Park Press and that shall be further considered for final passage after public hearing at a meeting held on March 4, 2019 at 7:00 PM and that during the week of said meeting copies of the Ordinance shall be made available at the Clerk’s office to members of the general public who shall request same.

Councilman Schnurr noted there is a minor change to be made.

Borough Attorney Kerry Higgins explained on Item #1, the fence description will be changed to “a minimum 6 ft. high solid opaque fence” meaning it cannot be see through.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer 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:

**“Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Shared Services Agreement for the Western Monmouth Active Shooter Training Group.”**

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR THE WESTERN MONMOUTH ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING GROUP.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer 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:

**“Resolution of the Borough of Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, Approving Participation with the State of New Jersey Federal Grant Program**

**Administered by the Division of Criminal Justice, Department of Law and Public Safety, Safe and Secure Communities Program.”**

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

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, APPROVING PARTICIPATION WITH THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY, SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM.

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

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

**“Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of One (1) Utility Body Truck per the New Jersey State Contract.”**

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF ONE (1) UTILITY BODY TRUCK PER THE NEW JERSEY STATE CONTRACT.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer 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 of the Borough of Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, Authorizing Compensation Payment to Barbara Greenberg Upon her Retirement.”**

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

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING COMPENSATION PAYMENT TO BARBARA GREENBERG UPON HER RETIREMENT.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer 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 Confirming Personnel Appointments/Actions:**

- a. **Appointment of Craig W. Dispenza as Chief of Police, effective March 1, 2019.**
- b. **Appointment of Lori Annetta as a member of the Historic Preservation Commission to fill an unexpired term to December 31, 2019.**
- c. **Appointment of Michael McCabe as a member of the Planning Board, Class IV, fulfilling a term expiring December 31, 2020 (replacing Jamie Bennett who resigned December 23, 2018).**
- d. **Appointment of Eric Correia as a member of the Freehold Fire Department, Monmouth Hose Company, effective February 19, 2019.**
- e. **Appointment of Daniel Graboski as a member of the Freehold Fire Department, Monmouth Hose Company, effective February 19, 2019.”**

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

**RESOLUTION CONFIRMING PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS/ACTIONS:  
13A-13E.**

Councilman DiBenedetto welcomed the new firefighters and stated they were previously members of the Fire Department’s Junior Program. He encouraged any youth interested in joining to contact the Fire House.

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

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

**“Resolution Approving the Following Applications:**

- a. **Raffle License #10-19, St. Rose of Lima PTA, Off Premise Merchandise Raffle, 3/11/2019, 2:00 PM, 51 Lincoln Place.**
- b. **Raffle License #11-19, St. Rose of Lima PTA, Year Round Pull Tab, 4/1/2019 to 3/31/2020, 51 Lincoln Place.**
- c. **Taxi Owner License, Maxima Phillips, Eagle Taxi, (4 Cars).**
- d. **Taxi Owner License, Guadalupe Hinojosa, Omega Taxi (1 Car).**
- e. **Permanent Taxi License, Jose Caldera Acosta, Freehold.**
- f. **Permanent Taxi License, Maxima Phillips, Freehold.**
- g. **Permanent Taxi License, Ronald Phillips, Freehold.**
- h. **Permanent Taxi License, Michael Nwachukwu, Freehold.**

- i. **Permanent Taxi License, Juan Gonzalez, Freehold.**
- j. **Permanent Taxi License, Angel A. Cruz, Freehold.**
- k. **Permanent Taxi License, Jahswill Obinna Okorom, Freehold.**
- l. **Temporary Taxi License, Davi Lavy, Morganville.**
- m. **Temporary Taxi License, Antonio Benitez-Cuautle, Freehold.**
- n. **Massage Therapist License, Joann Kostyk, JMK Holistic Therapies, 90 West Main Street.”**

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

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS: 14A – 14N.**

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer 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:

**“Approval of Bills.”**

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that the bills on the attached list in the amount of \$1,021,454.95 be paid as presented.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Jordan, Kane, Rogers, Schnurr and Shutzer 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:

**“Clerk – Late Communications.”**

There were none.

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

**“Redevelopment Presentation – 23 West Main Street; Block 36, Lot 26 Kyu S. Lee (Head QT).”**

Borough Attorney Kerry Higgins summarized the proposed project and explained the second floor was previously changed to a mixture of retail and business use and Mr. Lee is requesting to change the second floor back to residential use, one unit with one bedroom and one unit with two bedrooms. Ms. Higgins reported it is a permitted use in the zone and will reduce

the parking demand by three spaces. Ms. Higgins asked the owner provide historical information on the building. She stated any exterior site features that will be changed should go to Historic Preservation Committee for approval.

Mr. Kyu Lee stated he had to close the Head Quarters store after Nike pulled it distribution. Mr. Lee changed the model of the business on the first floor and he has been struggling. He stated he would like to make residential units on the second floor so he can move into the building.

Borough Engineer, William Wentzien stated the use is permitted and parking is reduced by three spaces. He stated if supplemental building information is obtained, the grandfathering number of spaces can be put on the record and be considered for any future changes to the building.

Councilman Schnurr questioned the difference in square footage between the application and the engineering report.

Mr. Wentzien stated his calculation is based on the length and width on the floor plan. He stated he could not answer how the sq. footage on the application is calculated.

Councilman Schnurr made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Councilwoman Shutzer.

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

Mayor Higgins recognized Police Chief Roberts, who was in attendance for his last meeting before retiring.

Chief Glenn Roberts highlighted his 25 years of service with the Freehold Borough Police Department and thanked everyone for their assistance. Chief Roberts stated he will miss interacting with the public, businesses and residents. He stated it has been an honor and privilege to serve Freehold Borough and he stated he will always be available to assist in any way he can. Chief Roberts added he will always have a special place in his heart for Freehold Borough.

Mayor Higgins stated on behalf of everyone, best wishes, much success and good health are wished in his retirement. Mayor Higgins thanked him for his service.

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

**“Public Comments”**

Ms. Muriel Smith, 21 Monument Street, congratulated Chief Roberts and stated Freehold Borough has one of the best police departments in New Jersey. She thanked the Mayor and Council Members for attending the ceremony which brought the Civil War Medal of Honor back

to Freehold. She stated it could not have been done without the support of the Mayor and Borough Historian Kevin Coyne and thanked them for their assistance. Ms. Smith thanked the governing body for tabling the hearing on the parking meters and asked how the figure in the ordinance was derived.

Borough Administrator, Joseph Bellina explained it was based on an estimate received from a vendor which researched what was needed in each lot.

Ms. Smith asked if the item was tabled so conversations could be had with Downtown Freehold members.

Mayor Higgins stated there have been ongoing discussions with Downtown Freehold and a number of groups. Mayor Higgins stated about four years ago Urban Land Institute came in to evaluate the parking and other downtown issues. He reported the parking issue is two-fold, the physicality's of the lots and managing the lots. He explained all the studies concluded that parking management is the issue and the use of a parking system was the recommended way to increase turnover and manage the parking issues.

Ms. Smith asked if the various groups offered recommendations, specifically for parking meters.

Mayor Higgins stated it was recommended some type of paid system be implemented as meters are not generally used anymore. He stated every group that has evaluated Freehold all recommended some type of paid parking structure.

Ms. Smith asked what has happened between the time of the first reading of the ordinance and now.

Mayor Higgins explained Downtown Freehold has asked it be tabled to allow for continued discussion which the governing body is agreeable to.

Ms. Smith asked if a committee will be appointed to meet with Downtown Freehold.

Mayor Higgins responded meetings started with Land Use Committee and then Finance Committee and the discussions have been ongoing.

Ms. Smith asked what is the process now and will the meetings be with Council.

Mayor Higgins stated if the meetings are with Mayor and Council, they will be public meetings and will be noticed.

Ms. Smith again asked the process and the timeframe for a solution.

Mayor Higgins stated if the governing body meets, it is a noticed, public meeting which everyone is aware of. He stated it is a possibility a working committee meet with representatives from Downtown Freehold. Mayor Higgins stated he expects there will be a time for public

comment, which has been said to the Downtown Freehold Board. Mayor Higgins reiterated their opinion is wanted and encouraged.

Councilman Kane stated it has been said from the very beginning that input from the stakeholders, the residents and everyone involved is needed to make this work. Councilman Kane stated the timeline and plan will be developed and put it out there to get everyone involved.

Ms. Smith stated she thought the plan would be in place first, before the Bond Ordinance was offered. She stated that seemed logical. She asked if a timeframe could be given as to when the second reading of the Bond Ordinance would be.

Borough Attorney, Kerry Higgins responded no.

Councilwoman Shutzer explained it depends on the length of time that has passed between introduction and the second reading.

Ms. Smith asked what that time frame is before the item had to be renoticed.

Ms. Higgins stated if it has to be re-advertised, it will be. She stated either way there will be notice to the public when it is on the agenda. Ms. Higgins stated that can't be predicted as the meetings have not yet taken place with the stakeholders as they requested.

Mayor Higgins stated action on this is being held to hear the concerns of Downtown Freehold and the stakeholders.

Ms. Smith said she commended Mayor and Council on doing that.

Joseph Boguslawski, 57 Throckmorton Street stated he found out about the parking proposal two days ago while on Facebook and is completely against paid parking and avoids any town that charges to park. He stated it's an inconvenience and is not worth the aggravation of looking for a kiosk. Mr. Boguslawski stated he would rather shop at the mall or free standing stores that do not charge. He stated the problem with parking in Freehold should be addressed. Mr. Boguslawski stated in 1977 he recommended a five story parking garage be built. He said residents should not be penalized by having to pay to park which would be additional taxation and added enough are paid in taxes.

Anthony Braica, 16A West Main Street, stated he has owned a business since 1987 and has never been to a Council Meeting. He stated he feels this issue is going down a slippery slope. Mr. Braica stated charging for parking spaces will not address the fact there is not enough parking. He stated many patrons come to town to spend money, many leave angry because there is no parking; now the ones that do get spots will be angry for having to pay. Mr. Braica stated he is for paid parking, if bonded to pay for a parking structure or to buy land to build a community. He stated as a business owner, his business is maxed out and loses 5-10% on holidays and Friday and Saturday evening because there is nowhere to park. Mr. Braica stated he knows other restaurant owners have locations growing in other towns, while their Freehold location is stagnant. Mr. Braica stated he loves Freehold, but business owners may decide to

leave for a different location. He stated a solution for parking needs to be found, but paying for inadequate spots is not the solution. Mr. Braica stated he would hate to see Freehold be at the point where it could grow, but makes poor decisions and have no businesses downtown. Mr. Braica stated bringing people into town is good and everyone flourishes.

Marvin Harris, 11 Tudor Road, stated he owns a property in Freehold Borough and stated he has always been against paid parking. He stated he did not know about this subject until today and asked if property owners were notified.

Councilman Kane stated contact is made with the Freehold Center Partnership.

Borough Attorney, Kerry Higgins stated there was just a Bond Ordinance on this agenda and meetings to discuss the parking details would be for future meetings. She anticipated notices would go out.

Mr. Harris stated he heard the money from the parking would be used for general fund. Mr. Harris stated money from paid parking should be dedicated to parking.

Mayor Higgins stated that is false. A Parking Utility was created where the funds will be dedicated for parking.

Mr. Harris asked if there was any other way to do this without paid parking. He stated he envisions if this is done incorrectly, within two years there will be fair amount of empty stores downtown. He added he hopes that does not happen. Mr. Harris stated Freehold cannot compare itself to Red Bank, which has also had a lot of empty stores. Mr. Harris asked that a lot of thought be given, he will speak to Downtown to ensure property owners are notified and he asked that he be made aware of this matter every time it comes up. Mr. Harris wished Mayor and Council good luck with everything.

Barry Fisher, property owner in Freehold, stated 30 years ago a parking garage with town-wide metered parking was introduced and rejected. He stated in other towns CAM costs are collected to maintain the parking lots. Mr. Fisher stated he does know if its right to have the residents assume the costs to maintain the lots. Mr. Fisher stated he understands what the merchants go through and is frustrated when the merchants' vehicles and employees are using spaces in the lots which mean customers can't find parking. Mr. Fisher stated he's proud of this Mayor and Council for addressing this issue, even though details still have not been worked out. Mr. Fisher stated he also was not notified and asked to receive notification in the future.

Ms. Onita Luisi, Chips Salon at 21 West Main Street, stated she is new to the town and she lost some customers when she moved from Marlboro to Freehold because parking is difficult and there were concerns to bring expensive vehicles into town. She stated clients are upset about the possibility of paid parking. Ms. Luisi asked that she be notified of the procedure of expressing her feelings and receiving notifications of upcoming discussions. She stated the merchants are concerned about what is happening and how it's happening.

Mr. Colton Braun, 22 East Main Street Apt. 4 expressed concern with the lack of notification and explained he heard about the meeting on Facebook. He stated it is unfair that he has parking spots in a private lot, that are often taken by non-tenants and he is forced to find parking in the Market Yard. He asked if he will be charged by hour to park in the Market Yard to go to his apartment. Mr. Braun stated paid parking will also effect the residents. He asked how the residents will be identified as opposed to visitors attending restaurants, Freehold Idol, Summer Concerts, etc.

Mayor Higgins explained some of the systems are sophisticated enough to differentiate between residents and visitors. He stated those details have not been decided but could be part of the system.

Mr. Braun stated he assumed he would be charged for a residential parking pass.

Mayor Higgins stated he did not say that.

Mr. Braun stated he emailed the Mayor and every Councilmember and no one got back to him. He also noted the website is out of date and asked if there were financial reasons why the site was not accurate.

Mayor Higgins stated the point was well taken and it will be discussed with the Administrator.

Mr. Braun thanked the Mayor and stated he appreciate his time.

Councilwoman Jordan stated she did not receive an email from Mr. Braun and explained to him there are committees that he could serve on and provide input regarding digital communications.

Mr. Braun asked how he would receive that information.

Councilwoman Jordan stated she will send it to him if he provided his email.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated she did receive his email, read it and took notes on it and will have a response to it. She encouraged him to stay for Council Comments. Councilwoman Shutzer stated Facebook seems to have more answers than the governing body. She advised Mr. Braun to inform his landlord regarding unauthorized people using his private parking lot.

Mr. Jeff Friedman, Executive Director of Freehold Center Management Corp, thanked Chief Roberts for his time and efforts. He announced the St. Patrick's Day Parade and Irish Week events. Mr. Friedman encouraged everyone to participate.

Ms. Jean Holtz, 107 Broad Street, stated she is very involved in town and she is ashamed that there are people at the meeting that have no idea what's going on in town and have never been to a Council Meeting. She stated Mr. Friedman has knocked on everyone's door all the time for input. She stated information is a two-way street; noting agendas are posted prior to the

meetings, Administrator Bellina is happy to speak with anyone and the Mayor is walking up and down Main Street every day. Ms. Holtz thanked Councilwoman Jordan for letting Mr. Braun know committee members are needed and residents are encouraged to participate. Ms. Holtz reported she and others have been beating down doors to discuss parking and none of the people in the room tonight have been at any of those meetings. Ms. Holtz applauded the governing body for holding this issue and wished the people that are in attendance will reach out to Mr. Friedman, the Mayor or herself and come and discuss what is going on. She stated there is too much misinformation out there and people should find out the facts of what they are talking about.

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

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 19 on the Agenda as follows:

**“Council Comments.”**

Councilman Schnurr stated Chief Roberts is leaving the Police Department better than when he started and noted the crime rate was cut less than half between 1998 and 2016. He thanked Chief Roberts and everyone at the Police Department. Councilman Schnurr explained the facts in reference to the costs of maintaining the municipal parking lots. He reported the costs will be approximately \$2.4 million dollars and without some kind of paid parking, it is paid for by the property owners, mostly residents. Councilman Schnurr stated he does not feel that is right. He stated he is open to any recommendations that anyone has.

Councilwoman Rogers thanked Chief Roberts for serving the community for so long. Councilwoman Rogers stated she has seen changes, especially in the way the police interact with the community and appreciates it. Councilwoman Rogers stated Council Meetings are held every first and third Monday at 7:00 PM for anyone that would like to get more informed and will ensure the website is accurate.

Councilwoman Shutzer congratulated Chief Roberts on his retirement and wished him and his family well. Councilwoman Shutzer stated she agrees with Councilman Schnurr regarding the cost of maintenance on the parking lots. She stated there have been several serious studies on this issue going back four or five years and every study that was done, including the one that welcomed resident’s opinions, has said the town is not lacking parking space rather the management of the spaces is inadequate. Councilwoman Shutzer stated the people that use the parking lots need to contribute to the upkeep of those lots. She stated there is parking available, but people don’t want to walk any distance. Councilwoman Shutzer stated what has happened over the parking issue, which has been repeatedly discussed in public, the nastiness on social media and through email, has become unbelievable. She stated individuals were wrongly quoting decisions and items that were never discussed. She stated she resented the rumors on social media, perpetuated by people who think they know what they are talking about when they don’t.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated there is no excuse or need for personal attacks such as the one's she received via email. She stated her hand is neither cold, nor dying, nor grabbing at money in Freehold Borough. She added she does not live in a prime real estate home unless a small home, on a highway across the street from a race track is considered prime. Councilwoman Shutzer reported that is what she was charged with and she wasn't the only one. She refuted the allegation her Council is a "cushy" position and remarked when figured out, she makes about \$.18 per hour, for which she works very hard, as do her fellow Council members. Councilwoman Shutzer stated there are no back door politics and the facts have been obscured. She stated she loves this town with all her heart and has a clear conscious about what has been done and what might be done. She added she knows exactly what hasn't been done. Councilwoman Shutzer advised the audience to come to a meeting and get the facts, as opposed to getting information on an anonymous source.

Councilman DiBenedetto invited everyone to the St. Patrick's Day Parade. He thanked Chief Roberts for his time and added he will be missed. Councilman DiBenedetto thanked Ms. Smith for her assistance in returning the Medal of Honor to Freehold. Councilman DiBenedetto stated having a parking problem is not a bad thing and he agreed that employees should not be using close parking spaces, adding if the businesses don't have customers, employee are not needed. Councilman DiBenedetto invited everyone to provide input and brought up some of the questions that surround a parking garage, such as how will it be paid for, how will business survive if the lot is shut down for six months during construction, etc. He stressed the community is on the minds of everyone on Council and the decisions are made based on what is best for the town. Councilman DiBenedetto stated the parking issue needs to be worked on together and not be divided. He encouraged everyone to come to meetings.

Councilwoman Jordan thanked Chief Roberts for his service and wished him luck. Councilwoman Jordan stated there is not a parking problem there is a parking management problem. She is appreciative everyone came to the meeting and is looking forward to working with everyone and moving forward on the issue.

Councilman Kane wished Chief Roberts a happy retirement and thanked him for everything. Councilman Kane thanked everyone for attending the meeting and voicing their concerns and added it would be great to have a large crowd at every council meeting. He agreed there are issues including, the cost of maintaining the municipal lots. Councilman Kane stated the Council is monetizing an asset to reduce capital expenses for the tax payers and shifting the burden to the users. Councilman Kane stated unfortunately on Facebook, issues take on a life of their own and things are blown out of proportion and the perceived distrust is the bigger problem. He invited everyone to come to the meetings and find out the facts for themselves. Councilman Kane stated the governing body is trying to get more residents involved and sited the two projects that were approved through Participatory Budgeting, which he added, is a civic engagement strategy to get people involved. Councilman Kane stated officials are elected to represent the residents and be fiscally responsible and that is what Council is doing on this matter. Councilman Kane stated he appreciated the people that came out and voiced their concerns. He wished everyone a great night.

Mayor Higgins stated he wished Chief Roberts well and good luck in retirement. Mayor Higgins explained the efforts Ms. Muriel Smith took to bring the Civil War Medal back to Freehold and thanked her for her hard work. Mayor Higgins announced he is available on Thursdays from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM for open office hours and he is readily available if anyone has an issue they wish to discuss.

Councilwoman Shutzer offered a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Rogers.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



TRACI L. DIBENEDETTO, RMC  
BOROUGH CLERK

TLD:lc