

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION  
BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES – FEBRUARY 17, 2023**

**Present:**

Joe Colangelo/Business owner  
Dennis Concha/Business owner  
Tammie Crispino/Business owner  
Anthony Durante/Resident  
Paul Gallo/Resident  
Paul LaCorte/Property owner  
Kristen Mider (Chairwoman)/Resident  
Kathleen Miller Prunty/Commissioner/Liaison  
Kendall O'Brien/Resident  
Steve Oliveira/Property Owner  
Doreen Sayegh/Property Owner

Caren Demyen/Director  
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

Brian Andrews /Mayor  
Michael Ash/Redevelopment Township Attorney  
Ryan Cooper/Township Attorney  
Ryan Greco/Police Chief/Interim Administrator  
Laura Kreiser/Reporter for The Westfield Leader

**Absent:**

Ms. Demyen called the meeting to order at 8:30am. Announcement made that the meeting was posted as required by law.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Motion to approve January 2023 minutes by Ms. Mider. Mr. LaCorte seconded. Minutes were approved.

**MAYOR REMARKS** – Mayor Brian Andrews

- Mayor Andrews said that it is going to be a difficult budget year. There are increases in 4 areas: healthcare costs, pension payments, servicing debt, and wastewater charges. The Township Committee met with the Township CFO to work on ways to keep tax increases lower. Mayor Andrews complimented DMC on advancing a responsible and steady budget.

**TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS** – Commissioner Kathleen Miller Prunty

- Commissioner Prunty mentioned how DMC has been working with a budget that has been virtually unchanged in almost 20 years. The Township Committee authorized entering into a contract for the parking study. A resolution was also passed that said the Iron Ore South Avenue phase was consistent with the redevelopment plan. It will now move on to the Planning Board. The Township Committee, along with Chief Greco, have started the search for a new Township Administrator.

**CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS** – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider thanked the sub-committees for their hard work in the past month. Ms. Mider made a motion to appoint Mr. Durante as Vice-Chair. Motion was approved.

Mr. Durante made a motion to go into closed session. Ms. Mider seconded. All approved.

**CLOSED SESSION**

## OPEN SESSION

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Caren Demyen

- Office Updates
  - Held a business and property owner meeting last month with an employee from Meta who spoke about Instagram.
  - One on one sessions with UCEDC continue.
  - Ms. Demyen spoke recently at the St. Michael's Rosary Committee meeting. The meeting brought up the question about how to communicate with people who are not on social media.
  - Congratulated Ms. Sayegh for the Cranford Theater screening of Maybe I Do.
  - Next month Ms. Demyen will be taking a seminar so Cranford can be designated as "film ready."
  - Social media update. Growth in website traffic, thanks to Winter Restaurant Week.
  - Thanked those who attended the ribbon cutting for Spectacular Eye Care. Upcoming ribbon cuttings include Poke House, Lokal Coffee, and Witch Baby Home. There are also new business owners at F45, Nail Plaza, and Agave.
- Capital budget update
  - Parking Study contract is being finalized.
  - Mr. Durante gave an update on the streetscape study. The consultant is making good progress and is doing a more localized focus on Post Office Plaza and Eastman Plaza as a way to maximize the spaces. They have also identified smaller spaces that can be used for seating. They will be meeting next week with the steering committee and then they plan to brief the Board, possibly next month.
- Maintenance
  - Email was sent out to remind business and property owners not to use township garbage cans for work trash.
  - Eastman clock will be restored in the spring/summer.
- Gift Card Update – continues to go well.
- Events
  - Restaurant Week received great feedback.
  - Held events for Valentine's Day and Black History Month.
  - Fire & Ice will be taking place at the end of the month. 16 restaurants are signed up to participate in King of the Wing and there will be ice carvers, fire breathers, and more.
  - Events with Cranford Theater are planned.
  - Upcoming events include Super Mario Day, Sip & Shop, Spring Hop, School's Out for Summer, and more.
- Potential Art Project
  - Idea of getting fiberglass figures that can be painted and placed downtown. Question of how they would be paid for, what the figure would be, and how they would be maintained.
- Parklets
  - Recommendation on parklets needs to be given to Township Committee. Ms. Demyen doesn't feel that they should come back as there's no fair process for the restaurants and other business owners feel it hurts them.
  - Ms. Mider backs up Ms. Demyen as she's the one who has to deal with any issues that arise.
  - Mr. Colangelo said he sees the Venue 104/Playa Bowls parklet as a good example of how to do it. Ms. Mider said many restaurants did a good job, but the headaches caused by them isn't worth it. The point of the Streetscape study is to find spaces that can be used as gathering spots for the public.
  - Chief Greco said that a drunk driver hit a parklet in the middle of the night last year. He views the parklets as a safety issue. In addition, there is constant double parking downtown from delivery drivers.
  - Mr. Colangelo made a motion to discontinue the parklet program. Ms. Mider seconded and the motion passed with all in agreement.

- Ms. O'Brien said she would like the Board to look at other temporary spaces that can be used as public spaces and would like to discuss ideas at the next meeting.
  - The Board's recommendation regarding parklets will be relayed to the Township Committee.
- Mr. Colangelo asked about the issues with tween and teen behavior downtown. Chief Greco said that they have seen an uptick in poor behavior downtown and at other locations in Cranford. Cranford Police have brought back walking posts to keep an eye on things.
- Ms. Crispino asked about the possibility of a crosswalk by Fire Me Up as she constantly sees children and adults crossing in the middle of the street. Chief Greco said that a mid-street crosswalk is extremely hard to do.

***Motion to adjourn at 10:05 am by Mr. LaCorte. Seconded by Mr. Colangelo, all in favor.***

Respectively submitted,  
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator