

**CRANFORD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES – JANUARY 21, 2022**

Present:

Brian Andrews/Commissioner/Liaison
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
Kendall O'Brien/Resident
Steve Oliveira/Property owner
Doreen Sayegh/Property owner
Caren Demyen/Director
Michelle Stavrou/Social Media Coordinator

Kathleen Miller Prunty/Mayor

Absent:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Motion to approve December 2021 minutes by Mr. Durante. Mr. Andrews seconded. Minutes were approved, with Mr. Concha and Ms. O'Brien abstaining.

MAYOR REMARKS – Mayor Kathleen Miller Prunty

- Mayor Prunty thanked the Board for their service and welcomed the new members.
- Mayor Prunty provided updates relating to the town. There will be road work by the gas company on North and South Avenue, starting in February. Ms. Demyen will be updated as it relates to the downtown area.
- There is a meeting planned with neighbors in the immediate vicinity of South Ave. and Chestnut area. This meeting is for those who will be most impacted by the construction. Invitations will be sent to residents, organizations, and businesses in the area.
- Mayor Prunty and Commissioner Andrews met with Monsignor of St. Michael's to discuss street banners. The policy of the DMC is that the light pole banners are only for Downtown Cranford events and promoting the Downtown. Mayor Prunty believes the meeting went well.
- The town's website will be redone and the Mayor appreciates any feedback or comments.
- Information about the Township Pools will be coming from the town shortly.

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONER REMARKS – Commissioner Brian Andrews

- Comm. Andrews had 5 areas he highlighted that he'd like to work with the DMC Board on:
 - Maintenance
 - How to do more regarding pedestrian spaces
 - Development – important for DMC and DMC Board to have a voice in this
 - Arts & Beautification
 - Build up to October events and make Cranford the Halloween capital
- Regarding the Downtown banners, Comm. Andrews was happy that they were able to sit down with the Monsignor to explain the policy and appreciated his understanding.

CHAIRWOMAN REMARKS – Kristen Mider

- Ms. Mider welcomed the new Board members.
- Motion to make Mr. Durante Vice Chair. Seconded by Mr. Concha and Mr. Colangelo. All in favor.

- Motion to make Mr. Colangelo Finance Chair. Mr. Durante seconded, all in favor.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Caren Demyen

- Continuing to work with UCEDC on one-on-one sessions and other opportunities.
- Ms. Demyen has a meeting with other local Directors next week.
- Cranford was featured in NJ Business Monthly.
- Ms. Stavrou provided a social media update, which shows continued growth.
- Ms. Demyen provided an update on website traffic and the Downtown Wi-Fi.
- A recap was provided on past and upcoming ribbon cuttings, as well as additional general business updates. There are potential openings on the horizon.
- In regards to the gift card, Ms. Demyen reiterated that there is a flat \$3.50 shipping fee when ordered online, but if ordered in the office it's \$2.50 a card. There is a new rep at the gift card company and December was free of charge due to issues with the launch of the program.
 - In December, over \$20k of gift cards were sold. Only about \$2,000 has been put back in the Downtown so far and we're looking forward to seeing that grow.
- Upcoming events include this weekend's Souperhero Stroll, as well as Fire & Ice, Story Walk, Black History Month, Spring Hop, and more.
- Maintenance
 - New garbage can lids are on.
 - There is an issue with the trash behind Old City, which is in the process of being resolved.
- Projects
 - Making progress on the Victorian lights but process is still ongoing.
- Finance
 - Ms. Demyen will be presenting the budget to the Township Committee this Saturday.
 - There is a 2022 wish list, and on the list is a Capital Improvement Plan. The Plan would cost \$50,000 and would take 2-4 months. Ms. Demyen believes it would be extremely beneficial as the plan would cover streetscape, plants, updating electric and lighting, paving, and more. It would be the first step towards real improvements and help with getting grants.
 - Mr. Durante asked about the money that was previously approved for a parking study prior to Covid and if that could be used for something else. Mayor Prunty said it depends on how the ordinance was written.
- Ms. Demyen said that while the Downtown community was fortunate during the pandemic, she does think there will be some closures in 2022.

NEW BUSINESS

- Last year the parklets were designed in a uniform way and the businesses paid for the parking spaces. Ms. Demyen asked for feedback from the Board regarding the parklets. Mr. Durante said that if the businesses want it, they should have the option. Ms. Mider agreed but said that the businesses need to maintain them. The Board was in agreement about recommending parklets to the Township Committee.
- Sub-Committees were appointed
 - Maintenance: Paul LaCorte (Chair), Anthony Durante, and Paul Gallo
 - Finance: Joe Colangelo (Chair), Steve Oliveira, Kendall O'Brien
 - Business & Economic Development: Dennis Concha (Chair), Tammie Crispino
 - Marketing: Kristen Mider (Chair), Tammie Crispino, Doreen Sayegh
 - Commissioner Andrews spoke about the Redevelopment Committee. He would like to get the DMC more involved in redevelopment projects. Mr. Durante will work on a mission statement and is asking those who are interested to volunteer for the committee. Mr. LaCorte volunteered to chair the committee, and Mr. Gallo, Mr. Durante, and Mr. Colangelo volunteered for the Redevelopment Committee.
- Ms. Demyen brought up 2022 goals and asked Board members to think of any they would like to see accomplished.

Motion by Ms. Mider to go into closed session at 9:30. Seconded by Mr. Durante, all in favor.

Returned to open session at 9:48.

Motion to adjourn at 9:49 am by Ms. Mider. Seconded by Mr. Durante. All were in favor.

Respectively submitted,
Michelle Stavrou, Social Media Coordinator