

The following notice appeared on the Township Committee's January 25, 2022 Workshop Agenda and was read by Mayor Miller Prunty at the start of the Meeting

**TOWNSHIP OF CRANFORD
SUNSHINE NOTICE
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
January 25, 2022**

Due to the ongoing public health emergency, and the Governor's Executive Orders related to the same, the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford will conduct the January 25, 2022 Township Committee Workshop Meeting remotely and by electronic means.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 (the "Open Public Meetings Act") and consistent with the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services guidelines, the Township Committee Meeting will be open to the public by electronic means.

Members of the public who wish to participate in the virtual meeting for purposes of making a public comment or to participate in any scheduled public hearing can access the videoconference at meet.google.com/efu-rqry-qoy or by telephone at 1-904-580-6156, with the access code (PIN): 921677998#

Members of the public may submit written comments in advance of a meeting, which will be read during the public portion of the meeting. Written public comments submitted prior to the meeting must identify the name and address of the commenter. No anonymous comments will be accepted. Written comments may be submitted via e-mail with the subject line "Public Comment-Township of Cranford Township Committee- Meeting Date of _____" to the Clerk of the Township Committee, Patricia Donahue at clerk@cranfordnj.org or by mail addressed to: Patricia Donahue, Municipal Clerk, Township of Cranford, 8 Springfield Avenue, Cranford, NJ 07016. E-mailed comments must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday, January 24th. Mailed comments must be received by 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 25th.

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on January 25, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. remotely and by electronic means.

THIS MEETING IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE "OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT" AS ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY E-MAILING THE ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS TO THE WESTFIELD LEADER, THE UNION COUNTY LOCAL SOURCE, THE STAR LEDGER, AND TAP INTO CRANFORD, BY POSTING SUCH ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE ON A BULLETIN BOARD IN THE TOWN HALL RESERVED FOR SUCH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THE FILING OF SAID NOTICE WITH THE TOWNSHIP CLERK OF CRANFORD. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING.

Present: Mayor Kathleen Miller Prunty
Deputy Mayor Jason Gareis
Commissioner Brian Andrews
Commissioner Gina Black
Commissioner Mary O'Connor

Absent: None

Administrator Jamie Cryan, Township Attorney Ryan Cooper, Township Consulting Redevelopment Attorney Wanda Monahan, Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann and Township Clerk Patricia Donahue were present virtually via videoteleconference.

Public Comments

Mayor Miller Prunty opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Mayor Miller Prunty asked Township Clerk Patricia Donahue if she had received public comments correspondence. Township Clerk Patricia Donahue stated that no public comments mail had arrived via the U.S. Post Service and no public comments had arrived via the Clerk's email address. Hearing no comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Closed Session

On motion of Deputy Mayor Gareis, seconded by Commissioner O'Connor and passed, the following resolution was adopted by roll call vote:

Resolution No. 2022-98.2

BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee will go into closed session to discuss the following, the minutes of which will be released at some time in the future at the discretion of the Township Committee:

Legal

- Legal Update
- South Street and Chestnut Avenue Redevelopment Plan
- Amended 750 Walnut Avenue Redevelopment Plan

Personnel

- Police Department
- Affordable Housing Liaison
- Collective Bargaining
- Salary Review

Minute Review

- Closed Session Minutes of November 22nd and November 23, 2021

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Andrews, Black & O'Connor

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

On motion of Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Black and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 6:57 p.m.

Engineering Update

Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann provided an update on the following matters:

- *Elm Street Area Drainage Improvement Project* – eighty-two (82) test pits were completed;
- *2022 Planning* – analysis and preparation work was conducted for the Capital Budget Meeting including the review of complaints and a rating system with fourteen (14) criteria. Discussion ensued regarding number of complaints received (Commissioner Black) and ARP funds (Chief Financial Officer Patterson and Ms. Dirmann);
- *A storm sewer resident matter* – expected Inflow and Infiltration project;
- *The crosswalk at Penn Road*;
- *Expected Elizabethtown Gas Company Shut-down of North Ave and South Avenue* – Discussion ensued regarding concern for the shut-down of streets for restaurants (Commissioner O'Connor), the expected hours and duration of the project (Ms. Dirmann) and the expected disruption and request to notify the residents (Commissioner Andrews).

South Street and Chestnut Avenue Redevelopment Plan

Mayor Miller Prunty spoke about not wanting the South Street and Chestnut Avenue Redevelopment Plan to make flooding matters worse. Township Consulting Redevelopment Attorney Wanda Chin Monahan spoke about the proposed Redevelopment Plan for the South Street and Chestnut Redevelopment Area (Area). She noted that the Redevelopment Plan would be considered for adoption by the Township Committee and if the Redevelopment Plan was adopted then the Redevelopment Agreement for the Area would then be considered by the Township Committee. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired about basement use. Ms. Monahan responded that the only basement use for the Area would be for utilities. Township Consulting Planner Annie Hindenlang spoke about the impervious coverage at South Avenue. Discussion ensued regarding an underground retention basin and flood storage. Township Attorney Ryan

Cooper inquired about the definition of impervious coverage. Ms. Hindenlang responded and spoke about 1) reducing the effects of a storm and 2) rain that cannot run off the surface. Commissioner Andrews inquired about the entry and exit locations of the proposed development. Commissioner O'Connor inquired if the effects of an 'one hundred (100) year storm' which now occurred every few years had been considered for the Area. Commissioner Black inquired about stormwater retention.

Cranford Area Chamber of Commerce 2022 Street Fairs

Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that the Cranford Area Chamber of Commerce planned to administer 2022 street fairs during the months of May, August and October.

Public Comments

Mayor Miller Prunty opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Barry Mazza of 205 Walnut Avenue – stated that he had viewed the Township Budget Meeting. He suggested that the Township move from administering three (3) pools to one (1) pool and briefly elaborated.

Mayor Miller Prunty responded stating the Swim Pool Utility Advisory Board was working on a marketing plan and were evaluating both increased pool fees and increased membership. She noted that the Township was seeking to open both outdoor pools.

Mr. Mazza then commented about traffic and spoke about a very bad accident which occurred in the Walnut Avenue and Chestnut Street area. He spoke about traffic during the hours of 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Deputy Mayor Gareis stated that the Police Department was working to address this situation.

Mr. Jason Stevens of 9 Richmond Avenue – spoke about New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) guidelines as well as the South Avenue and Chestnut Street area. He spoke about how to maintain new types of stormwater infrastructure through the use of drains, gardens and bioswales.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comments portion of the meeting.

On motion of Commissioner Black, seconded by Commissioner O'Connor and passed, the Township Committee moved to conduct the Official Meeting at 7:39 p.m.

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the Township Committee returned to the Workshop Meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Cranford Flood Prevention & Mitigation Advisory Committee – Mayor Kathleen Miller Prunty

Commissioner Black spoke about her experience on the Flood Committee and stated that it needed focus. Mayor Miller Prunty suggested that the Flood Committee matter should be discussed. Deputy Mayor Gareis stated that a “revamp” was necessary. Deputy Mayor Gareis suggested that the Flood Committee be divided into groups with three (3) different focuses: 1. Stormwater, including flash flood issues; 2. River flooding and 3. Elevation. He spoke about dividing the groups so that there was 1) a group to work on matters within Cranford, 2) a group to work on matters “bigger” than Cranford, and a 3) a group to work on raising homes. Commissioner O’Connor stated that it was a good idea to refocus the Flood Committee. She suggested that the Township Committee Commissioner liaison role to the Flood Committees rotate so that all members of the Township Committee were involved. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that she agreed with Commissioner O’Connor. Commissioner Black spoke about the importance of oversight of the proposed three (3) committees.

Mayor Miller Prunty requested that members of the Township Committee review her “Proposed Restructure of Flood Advisory Committee” memo (dated January 19, 2022) and send suggested edits to her. Commissioner Andrews spoke about professional support for the flood matters. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that professionals needed to sit on this/these committees. She requested that members of the Committee think about volunteers for the proposed flood committees and stated that this matter would be on the next set of Township Committee meetings.

Budget Workshop Meeting Follow-up

Referencing a question which had been raised at the January 22nd Budget Meeting, Administrator Jamie Cryan provided an update on the revenue increases which had been noted for the 2021 Board of Health fees and permits. He stated that the revenue increases were attributed to Remarkable Foods and the Wonder food delivery trucks. Deputy Mayor Gareis thanked CFO Patterson and Administrator Cryan for their work on the Budget Meeting.

Late Starter - In-Person Meetings

Referencing the ongoing public health emergency of Coronavirus, Mayor Miller Prunty inquired if the next set of Township Committee meetings should be conducted “remotely and by electronic means” (virtually) or in-person. Committee consensus was reached that the Township Committee Meetings should be conducted in person. Commissioner Andrews commented about the consequences of returning to in-person meetings. Commissioner Black stated that there was no reason to close the Municipal Building as there was a low rate of Coronavirus transmission. Deputy Mayor Gareis asked Mr. Cryan about returning to in-person work and meetings. Mr. Cryan stated that some people were nervous, suggested wearing masks and social distancing and stated that the Township could handle the re-opening of the Municipal Building. Deputy Mayor Gareis inquired if the re-open date should be February 1st. Committee consensus was reached that the Municipal Building should re-open on February 1st.

Budget Workshop Meeting Follow-up (continued)

CFO Patterson reviewed the Township Budget, specifically speaking about fund balance, 2021 revenue shortages, meeting the hurdles presented by Hurricane Ida and the Coronavirus, appropriations and reserves. She noted that Township's revenues were less than anticipated and the expected use of the Township's surplus. Ms. Patterson spoke about the 2022 tax rate for the average home. Ms. Patterson stated that some department heads sought to increase the fees pertaining to their department by introduction of a fee ordinance. She stated that the Township's pool membership fees were low compared to other towns.

Minute Approval - Closed Session Minutes of November 23, 2021

Commissioner Andrews made a motion to adopt the November 23, 2021 Closed Session Minutes. Commissioner O'Connor seconded the motion. Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Gareis and Commissioners Andrews, Black and O'Connor voted to approve the Closed Session minutes of November 23, 2021.

Township Clerk Patricia Donahue stated that the processing of Minutes would not be as timely as usual due to the Clerk's focus on other priorities. Mr. Cooper requested that the (adopted) March 9, 2021 Official Meeting Minutes be uploaded to the Township website.

Public Comments

Mayor Miller Prunty opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Ms. Rital LaBrutto of Arlington Road – inquired about the Township Pools' finances. She stated that she didn't believe the previous Township Pool update (of Fall 2021) presented the negative status of the Pool's finances. Ms. Patterson responded and then stated that \$1.7 million was needed to operate all three (3) of the Township's pools. Ms. LaBrutto stated that such message was not conveyed last fall. She stated that there needed to be more information about this matter. A brief discussion ensued. Ms. Patterson noted that all local revenues were down. Ms. LaBrutto responded that the Township should not give tax abatements.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comments portion of the meeting.

Closed Session

On motion of Deputy Mayor Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Andrews and passed, the following resolution was adopted by roll call vote:

Resolution No. 2022-98.2

BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee will go into closed session to discuss the following, the minutes of which will be released at some time in the future at the discretion of the Township Committee:

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Personnel

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- Affordable Housing Liaison
- Collective Bargaining
- Salary Review

Minute Review

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Recorded Vote:

Aye: Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Andrews, Black & O'Connor

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Commissioner Black and, passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 10:12 p.m.

On motion of Commissioner Black, seconded by Commissioner Andrews and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: January 25, 2022

Patricia Donahue
Township Clerk