

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **February 7, 2022** at **7:00 p.m.** in Room 108.

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 Prunty
Deputy Mayor Jason Gareis
Commissioner Brian Andrews
Commissioner Gina Black
Commissioner Mary O'Connor

Absent: None

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper, Administrator Jamie Cryan, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Lavona Patterson and Township Clerk Patricia Donahue were present.

Fire Chief Dan Czeh, Recreation Director Steve Robertazzi, Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann, Township Consulting Architect Jeffrey Curry and Safeer Quraishi and colleagues from Elizabethtown Gas were present via video teleconference.

Public Comments

Mayor Miller Prunty opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing no comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comments portion of the meeting.

Inflow and Infiltration (I & I) Upgrades

Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann was present virtually.

Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann spoke about proposed upgrades to the Township's Inflow and Infiltration infrastructure. She suggested that the Township approach the upgrades as one (1) large project (as opposed to phase work) and recommended that Cranford move forward with necessary survey and design work and then go out to bid for this work in the summer of 2022. Discussion ensued about whether the permitting referred to was in relation to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) (Commissioner O'Connor), grants and financing of the work (Commissioner Andrews) and whether ARPI funds could be used for the upgrades (CFO Patterson).

Expected Elizabethtown Gas Company Shut-down of North Ave and South Ave

Representatives from Elizabethtown Gas Company were present virtually (including Safeer Quraishi, George Visconti, Michael Scacifero and Mariana Maldonado)

Referring to pipeline replacement, the Elizabethtown Gas Company representatives spoke about expected work on North Avenue and South Avenue. The representatives stated that service work notices would be sent to affected North Avenue addresses on January 18th. They noted that the South Avenue work was expected to occur between April 8th and June 2nd. Discussion ensued regarding notification methods (i.e., a project hotline and letters to affected addresses), coping with pedestrians and restaurants with a need to cook (Mayor Miller Prunty), the expected extent of disruption to the affected addresses (Commissioner Andrews), the work zone extent (Commissioner Black) and whether emergency vehicles would be able to pass the expected construction work (Fire Chief Dan Czeh). Commissioner Andrews stated that an emphasis on notification to the affected addresses would be appreciated.

Historic Preservation Element to the Master Plan

Mr. Steve Saltzman, Chair, Historic Preservation Advisory Board was present.

Mr. Saltzman spoke about the distributed Historic Preservation Element document. He stated that the Historic Preservation Element work had started over two and half years ago, noting its consideration by the Planning Board in October 2019. Mayor Miller Prunty asked Mr. Saltzman to “walk” the Township Committee through the Historic Preservation Element document. Mr. Saltzman spoke about certification of eligibility status and Cranford landmarks. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired about the next steps to include the Historic Preservation Element Plan in the Master Plan. Township Attorney Ryan Cooper responded that there was no further action needed by the Township Committee. He stated that the matter should be considered at a Planning Board public hearing.

Proposed Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Transport Fees Ordinance

Fire Chief Dan Czeh was present virtually.

Fire Chief Dan Czeh spoke about the proposed EMS (Emergency Medical Services) fee increase ordinance (Ordinance No. 2022-04). Chief Czeh stated that the EMS fee would increase from \$550 a transport to \$850 a transport. He reviewed the other fee changes in the proposed ordinance. Administrator Cryan inquired if the fee increases were aligned with other agencies. CFO Patterson stated that the EMS fees had not been changed since 2011. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that the residents would not be affected by the EMS fee increase.

375 Centennial Avenue Update and Capital Budget Request

Mr. Jeffrey Curry, Township Consulting Architect of DMR Architects and Recreation Director Steve Robertazzi were present virtually.

Mr. Curry stated that fifty-five (55) per cent of the construction work at Cranford’s Recreation Facility at 375 Centennial Avenue was completed. He elaborated about the delay in the

facility's sports court flooring installation, needed netting inside of the facility, the facility's HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning and cooling) needs, painting the outside of the facility and upgrading the parking lot. Mr. Curry spoke about lacrosse team interest in the facility as well as the expected use of the facility for basketball and pickle ball. Further discussion ensued regarding needed basketball backboards (Mr. Curry), the expected timeline of the completion of the facility (Commissioner Andrews), the supply issues deterring the uncertainty of the timeline (Mr. Curry), protecting the facility's heating system with netting, the cost of the air conditioning units and temperature control (Commissioner Black), the need for revenue projections for the facility (Mayor Miller Prunty), the cost of purchasing the facility and use of previous-year ordinance financing (CFO Patterson), the real dollar amounts associated with heating and air conditioning system installation and going out to bid for such work (Commissioner O'Connor), expected netting and painting costs (Mr. Curry), expected fee structure for use of the facility and expected revenues for the facility, (\$259,000 for the period of November through April, and \$129,000 for the period of May through October) (Mr. Robertazzi) and an expected expenses inquiry (CFO Patterson). Discussion then ensued regarding next steps for the renovation of 375 Centennial Avenue, specifically the costs of creating a HVAC bid, netting costs and painting costs.

Proposed Board of Education and Turf Field Shared Services

Mr. Kurt Petschow, member of the Cranford Board of Education, was present.

Mr. Petschow spoke about the proposed turf and track upgrade at Memorial Field. He stated that the School Board planned the upgrades at Memorial Field to begin the day after High School graduation, with completion expected by the beginning of football season or shortly after the beginning of football season. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired about the proposed bonding process between the Township and the Board of Education. CFO Patterson responded that the Township would hold the bond and that no debt would be held by the Township. Discussion ensued as to whether there could be an acceptable place for graduation other than Memorial Field (Commissioner O'Connor), engineering services associated with this endeavor (Commissioner Andrews), the proposed turf installation would be fully funded by the Board of Education and the timing of the funds availability (May 2022) (CFO Patterson). Committee consensus was reached to move forward with the Shared Services Turf Field proposal.

Cranford Flood Prevention & Mitigation Advisory Committee

Mayor Miller Prunty asked members of the Township Committee if they had suggestions about the proposed Cranford Flood Prevention & Mitigation Advisory Committee. A brief discussion ensued regarding staff involvement, proposed Committee liaisons and anticipated receipt of proposed Committee member names at a later date.

Budget Workshop Meeting Follow-up

CFO Patterson inquired if the Township Committee had specific questions about the proposed Township Budget. Referring to a distributed handout, Ms. Patterson stated that the Township's net debt percentage was very good. She stated that the expected revenues would be an issue for the Township in 2022 and elaborated about rising Library, RVSA, insurance and pension expenses. Ms. Patterson stated that revenues could offset the large municipal expenses. CFO Patterson spoke about the expected use of the Township's surplus and the need to increase Township's revenues. She inquired about the current state of Collective Bargaining negotiations. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired if meetings were being held with Department Heads regarding these matters. Ms. Patterson spoke briefly about the positive effect of low interest rates on the Township's debt. Discussion ensued on the need to be careful with Capital Budget expenses, the average tax increase expected for the residents (Commissioner O'Connor) and the expected use of surplus (Administrator Cryan and Commissioner O'Connor).

Township Website Update

Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that Mayor Miller Prunty, Commissioner Black and he had met to discuss the Website's upgrade and noted that a new website mockup was expected by the upcoming Wednesday. Mr. Cryan stated that department heads were making sure that department information was current and would also work to train their staff on website editing. Commissioner Andrews inquired who was creating the website upgrade and Mr. Cryan stated that it was the company, CivicPlus. Commissioner Andrews inquired if the Township should look elsewhere for a vendor. Mr. Cryan responded that the Township Committee had decided to move forward with CivicPlus two (2) years ago. Commissioner Andrews inquired whether one (1) person or various department representatives should manage the website. He stated that a website that allowed for "interactivity" would be preferred, e.g., a website that would allow a resident to report a pothole. Further discussion ensued regarding viewing the website from residents' perspectives (Commissioner Black) and a website app (Commissioner O'Connor and Deputy Mayor Gareis).

Review Official Meeting Agenda

Mayor Miller Prunty stated that Official Meeting Agenda item number nine (9), Resolution No. 2022-132, pertaining to the purchase of a Splash Pad for the Orange Avenue Pool, should be removed from the Official Meeting Agenda.

Proposed Affordable Housing Liaison Ordinance

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper spoke about proposed Ordinance No. 2022-05 pertaining to the designation of the Township's Assistant Zoning Officer as the Municipal Housing Liaison. Administrator Cryan stated that Office of Planning and Zoning employees Kathleen Nemeth and Ruth Nicholas were expected to attend pertinent training in March.

Public Comments

Mayor Miller Prunty opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Ms. Jennifer Glackin of TAPinto Cranford inquired when residents would see the new website. Administrator Cryan stated that the new website would be available

in six (6) to eight (8) weeks. Hearing no comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comments portion of the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

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

Resolution No. 2022-98.3

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
- Proposed Affordable Housing Liaison Ordinance

Personnel

- Collective Bargaining
- Salary Reviews
- Fire Department

Minute Review

- Closed Session Minutes of November 22, 2021

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Commissioner Andrews and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 11:27 p.m.

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Commissioner Andrews and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Donahue
Township Clerk

Dated: February 7, 2022