

The Minutes of the **Official Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **April 18, 2023** at 7:35 p.m. in Council Chambers.

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 Municipal Building reserved for such announcements and the filing of said notice with the Township Clerk of Cranford. Formal Action will be taken at this meeting.

PRESENT: Mayor Brian Andrews
Deputy Mayor Jason Gareis
Commissioner Terrence Curran
Commissioner Kathleen Miller Prunty
Commissioner Gina Black

ABSENT: None

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

The invocation was led by Deputy Mayor Gareis, who recited words from Rabbi Kerbel of Temple Beth-El Mevor Chayim, followed by the flag salute.

MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Andrews spoke about the upcoming twelfth (12th) Annual Cranford Community Holocaust Day of Remembrance on April 26, 2023 at Orange Avenue School and elaborated about remembering the Holocaust.

Mayor Andrews read the Mayor’s Proclamations:

Holocaust Remembrance

WHEREAS, the Holocaust was the systematic persecution and annihilation of six million Jews, and millions of others including Roma, Poles, people with physical disabilities, homosexuals, communists, socialists and dissenting clergy by the Nazi regime and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945; and **WHEREAS**, our global family, regardless of race, religion, political affiliation, or identity should actively rededicate ourselves to the principles of individual freedom and moral responsibility in a just society; and

WHEREAS, we the people of the Township of Cranford should always remember the terrible events of the Holocaust and remain vigilant against hatred, persecution, and tyranny; and

WHEREAS, the Cranford Clergy Council, Cranford Interfaith Human Relations Committee, Cranford Public Schools, & Saint Michaels School will host the 12th Annual Cranford Community Holocaust Day of Remembrance on Wednesday, April 26, at Orange Avenue School; and

WHEREAS, as a community, we have a responsibility to directly challenge and combat acts of injustice, bias, inequity, and hate; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Brian Andrews, Mayor of the Township of Cranford, pursuant to an Act of Congress (Public Law 96-388, October 7, 1980), do hereby honor the victims of the Holocaust and the survivors as well as the rescuers and liberators, and further proclaim that we, as a community, should strive to overcome hate, intolerance and indifference through education, remembrance, and action.

Mayor Andrews invited members of the Cranford Library Board of Trustees to the podium.

Cranford Public Library Recognition – National Library Week

Whereas, today’s libraries are more about what they can do with and for their communities, and not just about what they have on the shelves; and

Whereas, libraries have long served as trusted institutions, often the heart of their cities, towns, schools, and academic campuses; and

Whereas, libraries serve people of all ages, interests and backgrounds providing the resources and space to engage in life-long learning; and

Whereas, libraries offer equipment and professional staff support to utilize technology, programs and services; and

Whereas, libraries are a resource for all - regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic status; and

Whereas, we recognize librarians as information professionals who provide expertise, services and guidance for patrons to access credible sources and material, making their own informed decisions about the world today; and

Whereas, libraries provide access to and display a wide range of information not just a majority opinion or single perspective; and

Whereas, America is celebrating National Library Week including April 25th as National Library Workers' Day, recognizing the immeasurable contributions made by library workers; April 26th as National Outreach Day showing library services are not limited to their physical location; and April 27th as Take Action for Libraries Day encouraging community support for libraries;

Now, Therefore, I, Brian Andrews, Mayor of the Township of Cranford, proclaim National Library Week, April 23-29, 2023. During this week, we encourage all residents to visit our library, and explore all that it offers.

The President of the Cranford Library Board of Trustees, Patricia Pavlak, provided comments on the important roles that libraries have in local communities and the nation as a whole. She thanked Mayor Andrews and the members of the Township Committee for their support of the Cranford Public Library.

MAYORAL REMARKS

Mayor Andrews discussed the adoption of the Municipal Budget (Budget) and the Introduction of the Capital Budget Ordinance. He highlighted some key Budget points including the allocation of funds for pedestrian improvements and Cranford Public Library maintenance. He announced that Kathryn Cannarozzi would be the new Director of the Cranford Public Library and thanked Assistant Library Director Judy Klimowicz for serving as Interim Library Director.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Curran – Finance

- Discussed the adoption of the Municipal Budget and the expected 2023 increase in the Township's property taxes;
- Congratulated Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Lavona Patterson and Interim Township Administrator Ryan Greco for their hard work with the Budget;
- Spoke about the introduction of the Capital Budget Ordinance;
- Spoke about the Swim Pool Utility Budget; stated that there was a lifeguard shortage and encouraged members of the public to apply for the Township's lifeguard positions.

Commissioner Miller Prunty – Engineering & Public Works

- Spoke about meeting which was held on the previous day with residents in the area of Kensington Avenue and Edgar Avenue to discuss upcoming project work; spoke about drainage and road pavement work;
- Provided an update on the upcoming Dike Repair Project along Riverside Drive;
- Directed members of the public to visit cranfordnj.org/engineering to view the scheduled road projects;
- Stated that Mott MacDonald had provided preliminary information about Orchard Brook;
- Stated that Mott MacDonald was scheduled to provide a preliminary report regarding the North East Quadrant within the next few weeks;
- Discussed the Capital Budget as it pertained to Department of Public Works and Engineering matters;
- Stated that the Township had been contacted by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) regarding the paving of North Avenue;
- Spoke about the various events that would be taking place throughout the Township over the upcoming weekend including the Jaycee's Annual Rahway River Cleanup, the Second (2nd) Annual Downtown Cranford Arts Day and the Townwide Garage Sale.

Deputy Mayor Gareis – Public Safety

- Discussed the potential acquisition of a new Rescue Truck for the Fire Department;

Commissioner Black – Public Affairs

- Stated that the Recreation and Parks Department was beginning to "gear up" for the Summer season;
- Informed members of the public that clean-up had begun at the Cranford Canoe Club and Memorial Park;
- Announced that the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee had started planning for the July Fourth (4th) Celebration;

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Tom O'Brien, 30 Springfield Avenue – stated that air traffic in the area had increased. He spoke about the Township's Request for Proposals (RFP's) pertaining to a Comprehensive Parking Study which occurred

in September 2022 and in November 2022 and his dissatisfaction with the process and selected vendor. Mr. O'Brien expressed his dissatisfaction about parking throughout the Township and traffic.

Don Smith, 21 Oneida Place – spoke about a lawsuit being brought by various municipalities against Governor Murphy pertaining to the New Jersey's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). Mr. Smith spoke about existing housing developments in Cranford and expressed concerns over the rising cost of rent. Township Attorney Ryan Cooper provided clarification pertaining to the pending litigation regarding the New Jersey's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH).

Loretta Smith, 21 Oneida Place – requested an explanation of the 375 Centennial Avenue Recreation Facility budget. She inquired 1) about an opening date for the outdoor pools and 2) whether the Township would be hosting a Memorial Day Parade.

Deirdre Koczur, 207 Edgar Avenue – spoke about the Township's various road paving and drainage projects. Ms. Koczur discussed a recent meeting with residents in the area of Kensington Avenue and Edgar Avenue as well as an upcoming meeting with the Army Corp of Engineers and suggested that the timing of the meetings be changed so that they were not occurring while most residents were at work.

Jim Carvalho, 9 Orange Avenue – spoke about his dissatisfaction with the Official Meeting Agenda format and elaborated. He then expressed his frustration with reports given by the Township Committee at a previous meeting and elaborated.

Rita LaBrutto, 104 Arlington Road - thanked Commissioner Curran for his work on the Municipal Budget and provided suggestions on how the Township could save money. She also expressed her discontent with Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) programs and tax abatements for developers.

William Thilly, 22 Bloomingdale Avenue – provided suggestions on how to make Township Committee meetings more enjoyable and less serious.

Tom Hannen, 94 Belmont Avenue –discussed the Repair and Restoration of the Nomahegan Dike along Riverside Drive Project; inquired if there was any thought given to using a stronger material than soil and fill for the proposed elevation. Mr. Hannen inquired about the connection and size of the storm sewer for the Kensington Avenue and Edgar Avenue Drainage Improvements Project. Mr. Hannen inquired how the meeting time was chosen for these project meetings.

Greg Carey, 25 Locust Drive – provided a summary of his concerns regarding 5G Cell Towers and asked the Township Committee to address them.

Tom O'Brien, 30 Springfield Avenue – spoke about redevelopment and how it relates to the Township's Master Plan.

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

MINUTE APPROVAL

On motion of Commissioner Black, seconded by Commissioner Miller Prunty and passed, the minutes of the Official Meeting of October 11, 2022 and the Official Meeting of November 14, 2022 were approved by indicated vote of the Township Committee:

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Miller Prunty and Black

Nay: None

Abstained: Commissioner Curran

Absent: None

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Commissioner Curran, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the Bill List dated April 18, 2023, totaling \$581,134.77 was approved for payment by indicated vote of the Township Committee and is on file in the Office of the Township Clerk:

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Curran, Miller Prunty and Black

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

ORDINANCES – Final Reading and Public Hearing

Ordinance No. 2023-03:

The Township Clerk read by title only Ordinance No. 2023-03 entitled, "CALENDER YEAR 2023 ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)

Said ordinance having been advertised and posted in accordance with law, Commissioner Curran opened the public hearing.

Tom O'Brien, 30 Springfield Avenue – asked for a definition of the term “Cap Bank”. Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson provided an explanation of “Cap Bank”. Discussion ensued.

Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Curran closed the public hearing.

On motion of Commissioner Curran, seconded by Commissioner Miller Prunty and passed, said ordinance was adopted by indicated vote of the Township Committee:

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Curran, Miller Prunty and Black

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

2023 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING ON 2023 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Commissioner Curran opened the public hearing on the 2023 Municipal Budget and the 2023 User-Friendly Budget and asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

Tom O'Brien, 30 Springfield Avenue – spoke about the Township’s Capital Budget and expressed his concerns about debt. He inquired about the Township’s “financial policy” for managing surplus and how the Township could reduce taxes. Discussion ensued between Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson and Mr. O'Brien.

William Thilly, 22 Bloomingdale Avenue – spoke about Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payments.

Rita LaBrutto, 104 Arlington Road – asked for clarification on a Budget matter; discussed the Board of Education Budget and the Township’s payment to the Board of Education. Discussion ensued.

Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Curran closed the public hearing on the 2023 Municipal Budget and the 2023 User-Friendly Budget.

ADOPTION OF THE 2023 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

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

Resolution No. 2023-166A:

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Township of Cranford to prepare an annual budget identifying all of the anticipated appropriations and revenues to support governmental operations for 2023; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A, 40A:4-5 provides for the adoption of the annual Municipal Budget and the annual User Friendly Budget; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on April 18, 2023; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford that in accordance with the aforementioned statute:

1. The Township Committee approves the adoption of the 2023 Municipal Budget and the 2023 User Friendly Budget.

(See 2023 Municipal Budget insert – Resolution No. 2023-166B)

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Curran, Miller Prunty and Black

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

2023 DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (DMC) BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING ON 2023 DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT CORPORATION BUDGET

Commissioner Curran opened the public hearing on the 2023 DMC Budget and asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

Tom O’Brien, 30 Springfield Avenue – inquired about the surplus for the 2023 Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) Budget. Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson responded.

Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Curran closed the public hearing on the 2023 DMC Budget.

ADOPTION OF THE 2023 DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT CORPORATION BUDGET

On motion of Commissioner Curran, seconded by Commissioner Miller Prunty and passed, the following resolution was adopted by roll call vote:

Resolution No. 2023-167:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, in the County of Union that the Special Improvement District Budget herein before set forth is hereby adopted and shall constitute an appropriation for the purposes stated of the sums therein set forth as appropriations, and authorization of the amount of

\$ 180,745.00 FOR SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT PURPOSES

Summary of Revenues

Miscellaneous Revenue	
Amount to be raised by Special Improvement District tax	<u>\$180,745.00</u>
Total Revenue	\$180,745.00

Summary of Appropriations

Operating	<u>\$180,745.00</u>
Total Appropriations	\$180,745.00

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Curran, Miller Prunty and Black
Nay: None
Abstained: None
Absent: None

ORDINANCE – Introduction

Ordinance No. 2023-06:

The Township Clerk read by title only Ordinance No. 2023-06 entitled, “BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAKING OF VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND THE ACQUISITION OF NEW ADDITIONAL OR REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY, NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT AND A NEW FIRE TRUCK, INCLUDING ORIGINAL APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT, IN, BY AND FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF CRANFORD, IN THE COUNTY OF UNION, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$6,490,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO APPROPRIATE VARIOUS GRANTS AND A DEVELOPER’S CONTRIBUTION, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS.”

Said ordinance was introduced and approved on first reading on motion of Commissioner Curran, seconded by Commissioner Black, and passed by the indicated vote of the Township Committee:

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Curran, Miller Prunty and Black
Nay: None
Abstained: None
Absent: None

Final Reading and Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 2023-06 to be held May 16, 2023 and the publication will take place in the Westfield Leader on April 27, 2023.

RESOLUTIONS – By Consent Agenda

On motion of Commissioner Black, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the following resolutions were adopted by consent agenda:

Resolution No. 2023-168: Removed from Agenda

Resolution No. 2023-169:

AUTHORIZING AN INTER-LOCAL AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF UNION FOR DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERT CALLOUT PROGRAM

WHEREAS the County of Union through the Union County Police Department is responsible for administering the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety Drug Recognition Expert Callout Grant Program on behalf of local and county agencies; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 2022-727, the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders authorized the County Manager to apply for, accept, and expend the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (hereinafter referred to as the “NJDHTS”) Drug Recognition Expert Callout Grant Program to assist law enforcement agencies in reducing drug-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities in an amount of \$73,950.00 for the grant period of October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023 (hereinafter referred to as the “Program”); and

WHEREAS this Agreement shall memorial the expression of intent among the County and the Township of Cranford to cooperate with each other in implementing and operating a callout procedure for certified Drug Recognition Experts to respond to and conduct evaluations when drug use is suspected during a motor vehicle stop. The participants recognize that such cooperation assists in enabling communities to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities associated with drugged driving on County roadways; and

WHEREAS, the NJDHTS has issued a grant to the County of Union to administrate and provide call out through the Union County Police Department’s Dispatch Center for participating municipal police departments’ Drug Recognition Experts (hereinafter referred to as “DRE”). Pursuant to the grant, the County of Union will receive funds for administration costs. The grant provides overtime costs for DRE’s callouts, as well as court appearances related to expert testimony. Funding is also provided for equipment purchases and training related to the DRE program; and

WHEREAS, the County and the Township of Cranford have determined it to be in their mutual interest for the Cranford Police Department to designate certain DREs to be assigned to the Program; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Cranford wishes to enter into this Agreement with the County of Union for the purpose of setting forth the terms and conditions regarding the assignment of DREs employed by the Municipality to the Program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, in the County of Union, New Jersey, that the Township Administrator and the Township Clerk are hereby authorized to enter into a Drug Recognition Expert Callout Program Agreement with the County of Union, Union County Administration Building, 10 Elizabethtown Plaza, Elizabeth, New Jersey 07207, for the purpose of providing the Township with access to and funding for Drug Recognition Experts in order to reduce drug-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

Resolution No. 2023-170:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, at a meeting held on April 18, 2023, that the Township Committee hereby accepts, with regrets, the retirement of Stephen DiPaolo, a Lieutenant within the Cranford Fire Department, effective May 1, 2023.

Resolution No. 2023-171:

WHEREAS, Sandanna Jones, a Communications Officer within the Cranford Police Department, is qualified for a leave of absence pursuant to the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA) and the New Jersey Paid Family Leave Act (NJPFLA) for the care of her mother.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township of Committee of the Township of Cranford that Sandanna Jones is approved for a FMLA/NJFLA/NJPFLA leave of absence beginning on April 3, 2023, using accumulated time as available as employee so elects;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Sandanna Jones shall comply with all provisions of law during the FMLA/NJFLA/NJPLA leave of absence, including providing all required medical proofs.

Resolution No. 2023-172:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford on the 18th day of April, 2023 that the following check(s) will be refunded by the Tax Collector to the lien holder according to statutory requirements:

Redemption of Certificate# 19-00005

217 Prospect Ave Apt 8-3B
Block 493 Lot 2 C083B
Christiana T C/F CE1/Firsttrust
PO Box 5021
Philadelphia, PA 19111-5021

Refund: \$22,900.75
(3-01-55-000-010-029)

Premium: \$ 2,800.00
(T-15-00-000-106-000)

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners Curran, Miller Prunty and Black
Nay: None
Abstained: None
Absent: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gina Black

- Thanked Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson, Interim Township Administrator Ryan Greco and Department Heads for their work with the 2023 Municipal Budget;
- Discussed the cost and funding of the 375 Centennial Avenue Recreation Facility;
- Acknowledged resident Greg Carey's inquiry and stated that she would follow up with him;
- Wished Fire Lieutenant Stephen DiPaolo a happy retirement.

Commissioner Terrence Curran

- Echoed Commissioner Black's comments regarding Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson, Interim Administrator Ryan Greco and the Departments Heads' work with the 2023 Municipal Budget;
- Spoke about the State Health Benefits Program;
- Spoke about the Capital Budget and expressed his confidence in its content.

Commissioner Kathleen Miller Prunty

- Discussed the Township's Comprehensive Parking Study Consultant, Enovate Consulting, LLC (Enovate) and provided access information to Enovate's projects and experience;
- Agreed with resident Rita LaBrutto's comments regarding the past neglect of various Township facilities (i.e. the Cranford Public Library's roof) and stated that such matters were now being addressed;
- Spoke about great pride pertaining to the contributions of Township Committee volunteers;
- Discussed recent project management meetings;
- Addressed comments regarding the materials being used for the Nomahegan Dike Project;
- Spoke about an upcoming meeting with the Army Corp of Engineers; spoke about the Township's prior experience with lobbyists;
- Spoke about the Holocaust Day of Remembrance Proclamation as well as the dangers of anti-Semitism; read aloud a quote by Holocaust Survivor Simon Wiesenthal.

Deputy Mayor Jason Gareis

- Congratulated Fire Lieutenant Stephen DiPaolo on his retirement;
- Thanked Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson, Interim Township Administrator Ryan Greco and Department Heads for their work with the Municipal Budget.

Mayor Brian Andrews

- Commended Commissioner Curran for his work, both as the Commissioner of Finance and for his efforts with the 2023 Municipal Budget;
- Congratulated Commissioner Miller Prunty for her work with flood mitigation matters and elaborated.

On motion of Commissioner Curran, seconded by Commissioner Miller Prunty and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Donahue, RMC
Township Clerk

Date: April 18, 2023