

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **June 13, 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 MUNICIPAL BUILDING 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

*Commissioner Brian Andrews joined the Workshop Meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Lavona Patterson, Deputy Township Clerk Ashley Kurbanoglu, Fire Chief Daniel Czeh and Police Chief Ryan Greco were present.

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.

Ghost Gun Violence

Chief Greco addressed the rising threat of ghost gun violence. He spoke about two (2) incidents within the past couple of weeks in which ghost guns were recovered and explained that both incidents involved domestic disputes and individuals who suffer from mental health issues. Chief Greco stated that he drafted a letter to a number of State representatives including Congressman Donald Payne Jr. expressing concerns over high power and high-capacity rifles that his officers could be confronted with on the streets. He also stated that he wanted to bring attention to the problem of illegal ghost guns. Discussion ensued regarding how ghost guns are obtained and assembled. Mayor Miller Prunty proposed (and asked for and received consensus from the Township Committee) that Deputy Mayor Gareis draft a similar letter supporting Chief Greco to send to State representatives. Further discussion took place regarding efforts that are being taken to mitigate the threat of ghost gun violence.

Municipal Pools Update

Director of Parks and Recreation Steve Robertazzi provided an update on the Splash Pad pump at the Orange Avenue Pool. He explained that the Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann require certain criteria to be met prior to installation of the pump. Mayor Miller Prunty asked about steps taken by the contractor regarding permits. Discussion ensued. Mr. Cryan stated that the Building Inspector had provided a list of what was needed from the contractor in order to complete the project. Mr. Robertazzi stated that he would be obtaining needed quotes. Further discussion ensued regarding how the equipment was procured and when the installation of the pump was expected to take place.

Township Administrator Jamie Cryan provided a timeline of events that occurred surrounding the Centennial Avenue Pool pump. He stated that due to supply chain issues, the pump's delivery date was delayed multiple times and a group effort was being made to locate a replacement pump. Ms. Dirmann stated that there was an option to acquire a rental pump and Mr. Cryan distributed quotes. Commissioner O' Connor asked about the logistics of swapping out the rental pump once the permanent pump arrives. Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson provided an overview of the funding for the project as well as anticipated revenue.

Cranford Recreation Facility at 375 Centennial Avenue Renovation and Programming Update

Jeffery Curry of DMR Architects provided an update of the 375 Centennial Avenue Project. He said that the lights, backboards and blockers were installed. He also stated that the floor installation was complete. Mr. Curry stated that the estimated opening date would be in early August. Mr. Cryan provided an update of the exterior of the building. A brief discussion ensued regarding staffing, marketing and ways to generate revenue. Ms. Lavona Patterson stated that an Ordinance would need to be passed in order for the Township to collect money to use the facility. Mayor Miller Prunty suggested holding weekly meetings to ensure that everything was on track for the opening of the facility.

Carpenter Place Repair of I & I (Inflow and Infiltration)

Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann stated that the Assistant Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, Brandon Metz, met with contractors to seal the leak at Carpenter Place. Ms. Lavona Patterson stated that the cost would be covered by the Township. On motion of Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, Township Committee consensus was reached to moved forward with the Inflow and Infiltration repair at Carpenter Place for \$16,000.

750 Walnut Avenue and Hartz Mountain Industries Redevelopment Agreement

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper provided a brief update of the 750 Walnut Avenue Redevelopment Project. James Rhatican of Hartz Mountain Industries provided further information about the proposed 750 Walnut Avenue Redevelopment Project. He also provided specifics about the project and stated that the commercial side of the project would include flex space buildings. He stated that the buildings would total roughly 241,000 square feet and the residential project would encompass 250 units and would include an affordable housing component. He stated that the project would include open space and public areas.

Michael Ash of Carlin, Ward, Ash & Heiart LLC provided information pertaining to the recent traffic study that was conducted by the Townships Traffic Engineer, Maurice Rached. Mr. Ash also said that Mr. Rached had reviewed the traffic study that was conducted by Hartz Mountain and compiled a list which included traffic mitigation design and controls. Mr. Ash spoke about speed humps and the placement of driveway openings. Commissioner Andrews asked for a timeline of completion and James Rhatican responded that the commercial portion of the project would be completed first and the expectation was to build the residential portion “on the heels” of the commercial portion. Commissioner Black asked for clarification regarding the redevelopment agreements. Township Attorney Ryan Cooper explained that the difference between the two agreements. Commissioner Black inquired about the effective date of the escrow agreement as well as the reason for two separate agreements and one resolution. Commissioner O’Connor asked how resident concerns would be incorporated into the redevelopment agreements. Discussion ensued.

Township Request to RVSA (Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority) for Metered Location Reports

Mayor Miller Prunty spoke about a recent RVSA (Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority) fee increase and requested a meter report in light of the massive fee hike. She inquired as to whether or not RVSA produces meter reports and inquired why the Township was not notified of the dramatic increase. Mayor Miller Prunty spoke about her interest in the number of Cranford meters and the location of Cranford meters. Township Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that meter reports had been requested to the chairperson of RVSA and also suggested obtaining guidance from surrounding communities. CFO Lavona Patterson provided an overview of the cost analysis associated with RVSA over the last few years, Commissioner Andrews asked about different factors that may have gone into the increase in flow. Discussion ensued.

New Jersey State Senate Bill S2103 – Municipal Planning Boards to authorize conversion of certain office parks and retail centers to mixed-use developments

Mayor Miller Prunty stated that Senate Bill S2103 would require local Planning Boards to approve plans for mixed use development in Business Parks and suggested that the Township Committee memorialize their opposition to this Bill. Township Attorney Ryan Cooper gave a brief legislative overview on this matter and stated that he would circulate a draft resolution opposing New Jersey Senate Bill 2103. Such Bill would preempt local zoning regulations.

Township Curbing Policy

Commissioner Andrews provided a brief summary of the Township’s curbing policy and discussed the importance of the maintenance and repair of curbs throughout the Township. Deputy Mayor Gareis asked about the cost to fix and replace broken curbs. Commissioner Black spoke about implementing a clear policy to put in place and CFO Lavona Patterson outlined options for funding. Township Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann spoke about 2020 Capital Road Improvements project. Further discussion ensued, including discussion about the parameters of a curbing policy. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that she would like the curbing policy added to the July 7th Township Committee Meeting.

Late Starter - Orchard Brook

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper stated that there was a resolution on the Official Meeting Agenda pertaining to the authorization of the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Township of Cranford and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) New Jersey to participate in the Floodplain Easement Program for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP-FPE) (pertaining to Orchard Brook). Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann explained that the Natural Resources Conservation Service had an easements program which purchases properties within a floodplain area and had identified an area in Orchard Brook which qualified. Township Attorney Ryan Cooper explained that the Federal Government would give the Township funds to purchase residential homes that are in the Orchard Brook Floodway. He explained that the Township would own the property and would grant the Federal Government an easement. He said this land would not be able to be built upon for permanent structures and would only be able to be used for passive recreation.

Bulk Waste Bid Process Update

Township Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that the Request for Proposals for Bulk Waste Collection had been posted to the website and the bid opening would be held on August 9th. Mr. Cryan explained that surrounding communities don't have the man power to do bulk waste collection themselves and briefly elaborated. He also stated that there had been discussions held about having an alternate plan which would allow for drop-offs to the Conservation Center.

Review Official Meeting Agenda

No discussion took place

Minute Approval - Closed Session Minutes of May 24, 2022

Commissioner Black made a motion to adopt the May 24th Closed Session Minutes. Deputy Mayor Gareis seconded the motion. Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Gareis and Commissioners Andrews, Black and O'Connor voted to approve the Closed Session minutes of May 24, 2022.

Public Comments

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

Frank Capece of 115 Ridge Street - Mr. Capece suggested that the Township find out the location of the meters. He suggested that the Township work with RVSA. He stated the usage of the Business Park had gone down significantly since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and spoke about the changing demographics of the Township.

William Thilly of 22 Bloomingdale Avenue - Mr. Thilly asked about the process for hiring contractors. He asked who responsible for vetting and recommending the contractors and suggested tweaking the process of hiring outside entities to do work in the Township. Mr. Thilly spoke about the Splash Pad Pump at Orange Avenue Pool and asked for clarification on the Centennial Avenue Pool Pump. He spoke about the planning process of Affordable Housing

projects as well as the partnership with RVSA (Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority). He also asked about Senate Bill 2103.

Chrissa Stulpin of 356 Retford Avenue – Ms. Stulpin asked for clarification regarding the traffic study for 750 Walnut Avenue. Discussion ensued.

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

CLOSED SESSION

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

Resolution No. 2022-98.12

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
- Mona Bia – 111-115 North Union Avenue

Personnel

- Collective Bargaining
- Salary Ordinance
- Building Department
- Fire Department
- Board of Health

Contractual

- Westfield YMCA and Cranford Pool & Fitness Center
- Municipal Pools

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 O'Connor and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 11:57 p.m.

On motion of Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 13, 2022

Ashley Kurbanoglu
Deputy Township Clerk