

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **August 8, 2022** at **7:17 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

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper, Administrator Jamie Cryan, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Lavona Patterson, Police Lieutenant Matt Nazzaro, Township Consulting Architect Jeffrey Curry, Recreation Director Steve Robertazzi and Township Clerk Patricia Donahue were present.

### **Public Comments**

Mayor Miller Prunty opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Referring to the Board of Health Meeting’s discussion, Mr. Thilly of 22 Bloomingdale Avenue suggested that the Health Department call residents who do not pay animal license fees. Mr. Cryan responded that the Health Department does make such calls. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comments portion of the meeting.

### **Proposed Pay-to-Play Ordinance**

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper spoke about the updated draft of the proposed pay-to-play ordinance. He spoke about the proposed ordinance and 1) the Township’s existing “anti-nepotism provisions” and 2) the use of Maplewood’s current pay-to-play ordinance wording. Commissioner Andrews inquired about page 3 of the proposed ordinance. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired about other municipalities who had adopted a pay-to-play ordinance. Mr. Cooper responded that Belmar had adopted a pay-to-play ordinance.

### **Proposed Salary Ordinance**

Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that Township Attorney Ryan Cooper and Township Consulting Labor Attorney Peter Perla had provided comments to the proposed salary ordinance. Mr. Cryan stated that there were currently three (3) salary review periods for

employees during the periods of summer, fall and November. He stated that the summer salary review periods would occur now. Mr. Cryan then spoke about the proposed ordinance which would specify that employees receive a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) increase in January as well as be eligible for an additional performance-based increase (referred to as a “kicker” increase). Commissioner O’Connor requested that that employee COLA increase and a performance kicker increase be included in the ordinance. She asked for confirmation that the performance kicker increase was included in the ordinance for employees who were not at the top of their salary range. Commissioner O’Connor inquired if the salary ranges were consistent with other municipalities. CFO Patterson stated that the ranges were consistent and noted that the ranges were compared to six (6) other municipalities. Commissioner O’Connor, Mr. Cryan and Ms. Patterson spoke about the desire to keep employees working in Cranford. Commissioner Andrews asked for clarification regarding the handling of employees who were at the top of their salary range. Ms. Patterson and Mr. Cryan responded that the proposed salary ranges should hold for two (2) years. Commissioner Andrews inquired if any employees would be out of their salary range. Ms. Patterson responded that the salary ranges would have to be updated at the end of December 2023. Discussion ensued. Mr. Cooper noted that the current salary ordinance had been in effect since 2016. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired about the full-time position salaries in the proposed salary ordinance, specifically the Assistant to the Tax Assessor and the Land Use Administrator. She noted that both positions were currently part-time positions. Discussion ensued. Further discussion ensued regarding the proposed salary ordinance’s hourly wage information.

### **Proposed Compost Ordinance**

Mayor Miller Prunty stated that the Compost Ordinance had been discussed at the earlier Board of Health Meeting.

### **Proposed “No Smoking” Ordinance**

Police Lieutenant Matt Nazzaro spoke about a proposed “no smoking” ordinance. He stated that people were congregating in municipal lots including the parking lot decks. Commissioner Andrews inquired about what was considered municipal property. Mr. Cooper responded that municipal property entailed parking lots and the Municipal Building but not streets and sidewalks. Discussion ensued including discussion about congregating in places such as ball fields and Eastman Plaza. Lieutenant Nazzaro stated that the objective of the ordinance was not punitive. He noted that the ordinance would allow people to go to parks and not have to explain to young children about smoking and drug use.

### **Bulk Waste Collection Program**

Administrator Jamie Cryan noted that the municipality of Plainfield had cancelled their Bulk Waste pickup program. He spoke about the Township’s Bulk Waste bid opening which was scheduled for the following day noting that ten (10) vendors had picked up the bid specifications. Mr. Cryan spoke about options which the Township could pursue if there were no bid responses received, specifically the 1) Township could go out to bid again and 2) there could be drop-off at the Conservation Center a few times a year. Mr. Cryan stated that the Township did not have the

proper equipment to pick up residents' bulk waste on a door-to-door basis. Mr. Cryan stated that the municipality of Scotch Plains used a Westfield facility for their bulk waste needs. Mr. Cryan stated that approximately 241 residents utilized the Bulk Waste program in 2021 and approximately 450 residents utilized the Bulk Waste program in 2020. He suggested that residents could make arrangements on their own for their bulk waste pickup or could potentially utilize the Conservation Center at Westfield. Commissioner O'Connor inquired if the Township would need an agreement with Westfield for such arrangement. Mr. Cryan stated an agreement with Westfield would be needed and that he had already spoken to the Westfield Administrator.

### **Cranford Recreation Facility at 375 Centennial Avenue Renovation and Programming Update**

Township Consulting Architect Jeffrey Curry spoke about the recent meeting with the Cranford Recreation Facility's (Facility) contractor which included a punch list review. Mr. Curry spoke about two issues, specifically 1) delays in the arrival of needed netting (expected to arrive in ten to twelve weeks), and 2) the scoreboard arrivals. Commissioner Andrews inquired when the Recreation Facility would open. Mr. Curry stated that the Facility could open now for events such as conferences and yoga but it was not yet ready for events that included balls. Recreation Director Steve Robertazzi stated that he agreed with Mr. Curry's assessment and briefly elaborated. Mr. Curry spoke about the need for HVAC (Heat, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) training. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired if the bathrooms were running. Commissioner Andrews inquired if inspections had occurred. Mr. Curry responded that a temporary Certificate of Occupancy had been obtained but the Certificate of Occupancy wouldn't be obtained until the scoreboards had been installed.

Discussion then ensued regarding hiring a manager and part-time staff to administer the Facility. Mr. Cryan noted that the Recreation Facility would not be advertised as a pickle ball center. He noted that it would be advertised for other sports. Mr. Cryan noted that some leagues had expressed interest in using the Facility and spoke about getting "anchor" tenants "locked in." Mayor Miller Prunty requested that Mr. Cryan work to get such tenants "locked in" as the Township waited ten (10) to twelve (12) weeks for nets.

CFO Patterson noted that the soft opening of the Facility would cost money. She spoke about the need for an ordinance with Facility fees. Ms. Patterson suggested that the Township's Fall Bulletin contain Facility information. Ms. Patterson stated that all Facility revenues would go to the "Enrichment Trust Account", as referenced in Ordinance No. 2020-12. Ms. Patterson stated that in the future, Facility revenue would go back to the Township. Deputy Mayor Gareis inquired about the fees. Mr. Robertazzi stated that the Township's form had to be updated. Commissioner Andrews inquired if there were fees. Mr. Robertazzi stated that the use of a half court would cost \$150 and use of a full court would cost \$300. Mayor Miller Prunty requested clarification about the Facility revenue being applied to the "Enrichment Trust Account". Ms. Patterson stated that during 2022, the "Enrichment Trust Account" would receive the Facility's revenues but that would change during 2023, when the Township would receive the Facility's revenues. Mayor Miller Prunty requested that work be done to get organizations interested in using the Facility and requested that Facility staffing begin. Commissioner Andrews requested that the plan for the Facility's soft opening occur. Mr. Cryan spoke about the Building

Department's approval of the Facility. He suggested that the soft opening occur after Labor Day. Further discussion ensued regarding the Facility's soft opening. Commissioner Black inquired if there was an update on the Rain Garden at the Facility. Deputy Mayor Gareis responded that he would follow up with the Environmental Commission on this matter.

### **2021 Township Annual Audit**

CFO Lavona Patterson presented an overview of the Township's annual audit for the past nine (9) years. Ms. Patterson stated that there were two (2) Corrective Action Plan recommendations this year pertaining to 1) confirming purchase orders and 2) Health Department timely deposit of monies. Commissioner Black inquired about the implications of these two (2) Corrective Action Plan recommendations. Discussion ensued. Mr. Cryan stated that the Township auditors were very complimentary of CFO Patterson.

Ms. Patterson then reviewed a handout titled "Surplus Net Debt Analysis 2013 -2021" and provided information about the Township's surplus and net debt.

### **Review Official Meeting Agenda**

Township Clerk Patricia Donahue stated that consideration of the Salary Ordinance had been pulled from the following evening's Official Meeting Agenda. She stated that there were two new ordinances for consideration at the following evening's Official Meeting pertaining to fire permit fees and composting. Ms. Donahue provided an update on resolution changes pertaining to following evening's Official Meeting Agenda.

### **Minute Approval - Closed Session Minutes of February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, March 8<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup>, and July 7, 2022**

Commissioner O'Connor stated that she had some comments about the consideration of the proposed adoption of the Closed Session Minutes. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that the Township Committee would hear those comments in Closed Session.

### **Professional Comments**

Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that the Cranford Public Library (Library) was considering moving some of the services administered by the Township to a situation in which the Library would administer such services in-house. He stated that CFO Patterson, Commissioner O'Connor and he had met with members of the Library regarding this matter about two weeks prior and the Library was now considering next steps.

### **Public Comments**

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

Mr. Don Smith of 21 Oneida Place - referring to the proposed “no smoking” ordinance, Mr. Smith inquired how the proposed “no smoking” ordinance would relate to County properties. Police Lieutenant Nazzaro responded that the Cranford Police would stabilize the scene and then call the County. Mr. Smith inquired how the “no smoking” ordinance would relate to the proposed basketball court at 750 Walnut Avenue. Discussion ensued regarding privately-owned public spaces. Mr. Smith then inquired about 1) balancing the use of the 375 Centennial Avenue Recreational Facility for “League” use and “open to the public” use, and 2) the proposed Open House associated with the 375 Centennial Avenue Recreation Facility.

Ms. Loretta Smith of 21 Oneida Place - inquired about proposed Resolution No. 2022-298 which pertained to a change order associated with the renovation work at the 375 Centennial Avenue Recreation Facility. CFO Patterson and Ms. Smith discussed change orders and overages. Ms. Smith inquired about the purchases of netting and clocks for the facility and whether funding was available. CFO Patterson responded that funding was available

Mr. William Thilly of 22 Bloomingdale Avenue - inquired about the proposed “no smoking” ordinance and arrestable offenses. Lieutenant Nazzaro responded. Mr. Thilly inquired about the total expenditures for the 375 Centennial Avenue Recreational Facility. Ms. Patterson responded that approximately \$1.3 million had been expended for renovations and approximately \$2 million had been expended for the purchase of the facility. Commissioner Black responded that under \$4 million had been expended for the facility. Mr. Thilly inquired about the intention of the facility. Mr. Cryan responded that the intention of the facility was to provide a recreation facility for Cranford residents. Discussion ensued.

Referring to an earlier discussion, Mr. Thilly inquired about a “flaky” vendor. Mr. Cryan responded. Mr. Thilly then requested permission to use a hand-held microphone at the Official Meetings. Discussion ensued. Mr. Cryan responded that Mr. Thilly could not use a hand-held microphone.

Ms. Natalia Knapp of 504 Riverside Drive – inquired about updates. She spoke about an article in *NJ.com* which stated that Cranford had been awarded \$3.7 million. Discussion then ensued between Ms. Knapp and Administrator Cryan regarding the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, grants, letter writing, the (approximate) \$700,000 contract award to NPD Construction, LLC. Further discussion ensued. Mayor Miller Prunty suggested that Mr. Cryan and Ms. Knapp set up a meeting to further discuss Ms. Knapp’s concerns. Ms. Knapp stated that at least eight (8) people had not moved back in to their homes.

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

### **Closed Session**

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

### **Resolution No. 2022-98.16**

**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

**Personnel**

- Township Social Media Policy

**Contractual**

- PILOT Discussion - 750 Walnut Avenue and 201 Chestnut Street
- Police Department
- Westfield YMCA and Cranford Pool & Fitness Center

**Minute Review**

- Closed Session Minutes of February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, March 8<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup> and July 7, 2022

**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 Andrews and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 11:13 p.m.

**Minute Approval - Closed Session Minutes of February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, March 8<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup>, and July 7, 2022**

Commissioner O'Connor made a motion to adopt the February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, March 8<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup>, and July 7, 2022 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 February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, March 8<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup>, and July 7, 2022.

On motion of Commissioner Black, seconded by Commissioner O'Connor and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Donahue  
Township Clerk

Dated: August 8, 2022