

The Minutes of the Workshop Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **October 25, 2021** at **7:02 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 Brian Andrews  
Commissioner Jason Gareis  
Commissioner Thomas H. Hannen, Jr.\*  
Commissioner Mary O'Connor

Absent: None

\*Commissioner Hannen arrived to Room 108 at 7:09 p.m.

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper, Township Administrator Jamie Cryan 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. Hearing no comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comments portion of the meeting

### **Swim Pool Advisory Board Update**

Steve Robertazzi and Jenna Matousek of the Recreation Department were present.

Mr. Luke Paine, Swim Pool Utility Advisory Board Chair, was present.

Mayor Miller Prunty thanked members of the Swim Pool Utility Advisory Board for their work. She stated that the evening's presentation would be posted on the Township's website by the following morning.

Using the Conference Room 108's video system, Mr. Paine provided a "Swim Pool Utility Operation and Budget Overview" presentation. He reviewed swim pool membership since 2015, operating costs per year since 2015, revenue overview figures since 2015 (i.e., budget, revenue and expenses figures,) and projection figures utilizing 2020 membership fees and 2019 membership figures. Discussion ensued including whether corporations could sponsor the Pools' expenses, the number of memberships needed to open the three (3) pools, the use of the indoor pool and ways to increase its revenue, whether the School Board pays for the use of the indoor pool, recruiting other high schools to use the indoor pool and the expected membership incentive through the Splash Pad installation.

Commissioner Hannen suggested that the Swim Pool Utility increase its membership fees and seek sponsorships. Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson stated that the indoor pool needed to be painted and that task was expected to cost \$100,000. She then noted that the Swim Pool Utility no longer had a surplus. Mr. Paine stated that 85(eighty-five) per cent (%) of the pools' revenues came from the outdoor pool memberships. He stated that those residents who were opposed to the recent closing of the Centennial Avenue Pool must "level up" and join the pool as well as encourage others to join the pools. Further discussion ensued including discussion as to whether the indoor pool could be closed in the summer, recognition that in ten (10) years, the pools' membership had been halved (decreased by half,) how Cranford's experience compared with nearby municipalities, causes for declining membership (i.e., second home ownership, backyard pool ownership and children with more activities,) and providing a membership option for adults aged 35 years to 40 years (i.e., marketing to more than just families,) Mayor Miller

Prunty suggested that an analysis be constructed which showed membership fees with a static membership for the years 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025. A discussion ensued regarding a Pool membership marketing campaign.

Mr. Don Smith of 21 Oneida Place - inquired about the cost of bringing the Centennial Avenue Pool “up to speed.” Recreation Director Steve Robertazzi stated that he did not have the exact dollar figures but did have a checklist of needed upgrade items and briefly elaborated. He estimated such items could cost about \$50,000. Ms. Patterson spoke about the Pool Capital Fund. Mr. Smith inquired about the number of 2019 Centennial Avenue memberships.

Commissioner Gareis inquired whether the out-of-town membership fee increased as much as the in-town fee.

Ms. Barbara Bilger of 316 North Avenue East - inquired if members of the Township Committee belonged to the Pool. Mayor Miller Prunty, Commissioner Gareis and Deputy Mayor Andrews stated that they did belong to the Pool. Ms. Bilger spoke about marketing the pools.

Commissioner Gareis inquired about the number of memberships which came from the Birchwood development. Mr. Robertazzi responded that he believed about thirty (30) memberships were from Birchwood residents.

Ms. Loretta Smith of 21 Oneida Place - stated that she believed that residents of Kenilworth would join the Pool if the Pool was promoted to Kenilworth residents.

Ms. Rita LaBrutto of 104 Arlington Road - thanked Mr. Paine for putting the information together. She stated that there was no point in closing the Centennial Avenue Pool and stated that the Pool does a lot for the community. Ms. LaBrutto suggested that the Township not charge the School Board for the use of the indoor pool. Ms. LaBrutto commented about grants.

Ms. Chrissa Stulphin of 356 Retford Avenue - inquired about the maximum number of memberships. Mr. Robertazzi responded about the Township Code’s specifications regarding both Senior Citizens and residents.

Ms. Patterson stated the Township operates three (3) pools and no other municipality in Union County has this many municipal pools. Ms. Stulphin stated that marketing was key to the Pool situation.

Ms. Joanne St. Amand of 20 Sutton Place - commented about advertising and Centennial Avenue Pool entry.

Mr. Kent Lucas of 17 Beech Street - inquired why the indoor pool was expensive to operate. Mr. Robertazzi spoke about staff and energy costs. A brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Mary Sciarrillo of 16 Sutton Place - stated that marketing was key to the Pool matter. She commended the Swim Pool Utility Board for their work.

Mr. Jeffrey Pistol of 243 Hillside Avenue - inquired if the Fitness Center would close if the Centennial Avenue Pool closed. He asked if there should be a separate membership for the Fitness Center.

Mayor Miller Prunty provided contact information regarding Pool matters including [pool@cranfordnj.org](mailto:pool@cranfordnj.org).

The Township Committee took a ten (10) minute break and returned to the Workshop Meeting at 8:12 p.m. STOP

### **Renewable Government Energy Aggregate Program**

Ms. Loren Altshuler, Director of Energy Procurement of Gabel Associates, was present.

Deputy Mayor Andrews noted that the Environmental Commissioner briefed the Township Committee on Renewable Energy earlier this year. Ms. Altshuler stated that if the Township

passed an ordinance which adopted the Renewable Government Energy Aggregation Program, various action steps would occur including the preparation of energy bid documents and working with the Board of Public Utilities and Rate Counsel.

Ms. Altshuler provided an overview of Renewable Government Energy Aggregate Program (R-GEA). Mayor Miller Prunty inquired whether the Program would include multi-family and business customs. Ms. Altshuler responded that they could explore those types of customers but the Program was mostly intended for residential customers. Commissioner Hannen inquired about what was regarded as “renewable,” opting out of the Program and typical bid terms.

Commissioner Hannen inquired about the length of the bid terms. Ms. Altshuler responded that such bids have different terms. Commissioner Hannen inquired about qualifying a sustainable firm with business viability.

Mr. Kent Lucas of 17 Beech Street – commented about what was trying to be achieved with the R-GEA.

### **Engineering Services to Evaluate Local Flood Control Measures and Regional Flood Control Update**

Mayor Miller Prunty noted that the Township Committee had agreed at its last Meeting to hire an engineer for local issues. She suggested a Town Hall be held to allow for questions and answers regarding flood control. Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that he spoke to John Ruschke of Mott MacDonald and learned that the utilization of such professional services would cost \$25,000. Commissioner Hannen stated that he would like to review a proposal for this work. Township Attorney Ryan Cooper agreed and suggested a scope of work.

### **2021 Best Practices Inventory**

Administrator Jamie Cryan spoke about the State of New Jersey’s Best Practices Survey. He noted that the Township planned to send the Survey to Trenton with only one question not in the affirmative. Mr. Cryan credited the Department Heads and Ms. Patterson with such a positive survey response.

### **Late Starter - Storm Update**

Mayor Miller Prunty read a statement from Office of Emergency Management Coordinator Matt Lubin about the evening’s storm. Commissioner Hannen provided updates on parking and recycling.

### **Amended Personnel Policies and Personnel Manual**

Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that each of the Township Committee Commissioners and Department Heads had received the amended Personnel Policies and Personnel Manual. He stated that he would follow-up with the Commissioners and the Department Heads in the next few days regarding this matter.

### **Review Official Meeting Agenda**

Deputy Mayor Andrews inquired about the resolutions pertaining to the Police Department purchase of cars. Township Clerk Patricia Donahue responded that the resolutions pertained to the Police Department’s Cooperative Purchasing Program for administrative and police vehicles. Ms. Donahue provided an update on the following evening’s proposed resolution pertaining to the Alcoholic Beverage Control license transfer from O’Donovan’s Pub, Inc. to Remarkable Foods Hospitality, LLC.

### **Late Starter - Banners Commemorating St. Michael’s 150th Anniversary**

Commissioner Hannen suggested that the Township allow St. Michael Church to hang anniversary banners on the Victorian light poles near the Church. Mayor Miller Prunty noted that banners are not usually allowed to hang on the poles but an exception was made during the Coronavirus period to allow high school graduating senior banners to be hung on the poles.

Commissioner Hannen stated that the Township Committee should be able to decide this matter and offered to make a motion regarding this matter. Discussion ensued including discussion that the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) should be included in this decision, that the Township should have some policies regarding the hanging of banners on the Victorian light poles and that St. Michael Church be allowed to hang the banners near the Church (i.e., not throughout the downtown area.) Township Attorney Ryan Cooper stated that a Township policy regarding the hanging of banners on Victorian light poles would have to conform to the First Amendment (as opposed to the private sector which could determine such matter at their discretion.) Commissioner Hannen suggested that the Township institute a policy which would allow houses of worship to hang banners during anniversary periods. Commissioner Gareis inquired about churches which were not located in the downtown area. Further discussion ensued including discussion as to whether the banners could be hung on telephone poles, the DMC policy of only allowing DMC banners on the Victorian light poles. Deputy Mayor Andrews noted that Cranford's 150th Anniversary Committee asked for use of the Victorian light poles and was denied. He suggested that the policy not change. Commissioner Hannen stated that he didn't think the DMC should make these decisions. Commissioner Hannen made a motion to allow St. Michael Church to hang anniversary banners on the Victorian light poles outside of the Church. Commissioner O'Connor seconded the motion. Mayor Miller Prunty suggested that the matter be moved to the DMC Board. Discussion ensued. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that an inquiry should be made to the DMC Board regarding their policy on this matter.

### **Minute Approval - Closed Session Minutes of September 27, 2021**

Commissioner Hannen made a motion to adopt the September 27, 2021 Closed Session Minutes. Deputy Mayor Andrews seconded the motion. Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Andrews and Commissioners Gareis and Hannen voted to approve the Closed Session minutes of September 27, 2021. Commissioner O'Connor abstained from the vote on the Closed Session Minutes of September 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Public Comments**

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

Ms. Rita LaBrutto of 104 Arlington Road - provided comments on 1) a recent online Township survey seeking public input, 2) the DMC and a specific development's renderings and 3) Cranford Baseball.

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 O'Connor and passed, the following resolution was adopted by roll call vote:

### **Resolution No. 2021-98.28**

**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
- Elm Street Area Drainage Improvements Project
- Collective Bargaining

### **Personnel**

- Finance
- Building Department
- Public Works

### **Minute review**

- Closed Session Minutes of September 27, 2021

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Andrews, Commissioners Gareis, Hannen & O'Connor  
Nay: None  
Abstained: None  
Absent: None

On motion of Deputy Mayor Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Gareis and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 11:15 p.m.

On motion of Deputy Mayor Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Gareis and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 25, 2021

Patricia Donahue  
Township Clerk