

The Minutes of the **Official Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **March 19, 2024** at 8:11 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 Terrence Curran
Commissioner Paul A. Gallo
Commissioner Kathleen Miller Prunty
Commissioner Gina Black

ABSENT: None

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

The invocation was led by Deputy Mayor Curran. The flag salute was led by members of Cranford Girl Scout Troop 40079.

MAYORAL PROCLAMATIONS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Andrews recognized March as Women’s History Month; spoke about the Township’s female Administrator, Business Administrator/CFO Lavona Patterson and complimented her work; spoke about the women in Cranford’s Municipal Government who continuously overperform for members of the public. Mayor Andrews spoke about the mission of the Girl Scouts as well as their role in building future women leaders; thanked Girl Scout Troop 40079 for their recent work with the installation of planters at the entrance to the Riverwalk (at South Avenue and Centennial Avenue).

Mayor Andrews spoke about the recognition of March as *Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month*; noted that a member of the community had passed, Ms. Amy Saccone, from this disease last year. Mayor Andrews invited Richard Saccone and Dr. Christopher Lenza to the dais and read the Mayor’s Proclamation:

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

WHEREAS, the second leading cause of cancer death among men and woman in the United States today is colorectal cancer; and

WHEREAS, every year over 150,000 people in our country are diagnosed with this disease, and sadly over 50,000 Americans die from it; and

WHEREAS, colorectal cancer is one of the most highly treatable forms of cancer because regular screening tests can detect cancer early, when treatment is most likely successful; and

WHEREAS, colorectal cancer rates have been increasing in people younger than 50 years of age; and

WHEREAS, educational efforts can help provide information to the public of methods of prevention and screening for early detection; and

WHEREAS, during National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, we honor all Americans we have lost to this disease, those currently surviving it, and the loved ones who support them.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Brian Andrews, Mayor of the Township of Cranford, on behalf of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, Proclaim March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month and encourage all citizens to increase awareness and prevention of this disease.

Dr. Christopher Lenza provided comments about colorectal cancer, the importance of screening for the disease and recommended that persons over the age of 45 (forty-five) years get screened for colorectal cancer. Mr. Saccone thanked the Mayor for the proclamation and thanked the members of Township Committee for the opportunity to speak. Mr. Saccone spoke about awareness, action and better outcomes for colorectal cancer; noted that younger Americans should be tested and elaborated; spoke about his wife’s experience with colorectal cancer; spoke about his hope that his wife’s struggle would not be “for naught”.

Mayor Andrews stated that the Cranford Clergy Council, the Cranford Interfaith Human Relations Committee, Cranford Public Schools and Saint Michael School would be hosting the 13th Annual Cranford Community Holocaust Day of Remembrance on March 27th at Hillside Avenue School. He then read the Mayor’s Proclamation:

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**, the attacks in Israel on October 7, 2023, represent the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust and Hamas continues to unjustly hold hostages who were abducted that day; 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 Michael School will host the 13th Annual Cranford Community Holocaust Day of Remembrance on Wednesday, March 27, at Hillside Avenue School; and **WHEREAS**, as a community, we have a responsibility through the power of education and our actions 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, the Cranford community, should strive to overcome hate, intolerance and indifference through education, remembrance, and action.

MAYORAL REMARKS

Mayor Andrews stated that the Township's Operating Budget and Capital Budget would be considered for introduction that evening; stated that the Budget reflected the Township Committee's values and aspirations and elaborated about the Township's expected investments. Mayor Andrews stated that the New Jersey State Senate had approved a bill which would create a new regulatory framework for Affordable Housing commitments in New Jersey; stated that this bill was not the right solution for the State of New Jersey; stated that the Bill would dissolve the Council on Affordable Housing; spoke about Affordable Housing requirements and the lack of acknowledgement of building in flood areas. Mayor Andrews spoke about comments received from residents during the evening's Workshop Meeting pertaining to their concerns regarding 1) 750 Walnut Avenue and 2) flooding at Casino Avenue.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Deputy Mayor Curran – Recreation & Parks

- Encouraged residents to join the Outdoor Pools; provided a year-to-date Outdoor Pool membership sign-up update;
- Stated that the Cranford Recreation website was operational; noted that it was more user-friendly;
- Commended Richard Saccone and Dr. Christopher Lenza for their remarks about Colorectal Cancer screenings; recommended Colorectal Cancer screenings and elaborated about their importance;
- Spoke about the resident feedback received at the evening's Workshop Meeting regarding the 750 Walnut Avenue construction area; spoke about an upcoming planned on-site meeting with representatives from Hartz Mountain Industries (Hartz) and concerns pertaining to dust, mounds (of dirt), traffic mitigation and tree plantings.

Commissioner Miller Prunty – Engineering & Public Works

- Spoke about the introduction of the Municipal Budget and the Downtown District Management Corporation (DMC) Budget which would occur that evening; noted that the DMC assessment for the Downtown property owners would increase for the first time since 2013; spoke about the work of the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC);
- Provided an update on upcoming road repair work;
- Invited members of the public to attend the Clean & Green Cranford Committee's Annual River Cleanup on April 20th;
- Stated that she was pleased to announce that Construction Code Official Gary Junkroft and Technical Assistant Hillary Barboza had begun work in the Building Department and briefly elaborated.

Commissioner Gallo – Public Safety

- Noted that it was Women's History Month and recognized several members of the Cranford Police Department, Cranford Fire Department and Cranford First Aid Squad;
- Congratulated Christopher Polito on his promotion to the rank of Police Captain;
- Welcomed Probationary Patrol Officers Matthew Richel and Quinn Haddad to the Cranford Police Department;
- Congratulated Walter Berg on his re-appointment as a Special Law Enforcement Officer;
- Announced that the Cranford Fire Department had been awarded a \$40,000 (forty thousand dollars) American Rescue Plan Firefighter grant; thanked Fire Chief Dan Czeh and Battalion Chief Matt Lubin for their grant work;
- Reminded residents that the "burning of yard waste" and other materials is prohibited; provided Fire Department contact information.

Commissioner Black – Finance

- Spoke about the Municipal Budget process and described the challenges to the Township’s finances (i.e., utility increases, insurance increases, terminal pay costs, pension costs and RVSA (Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority) increases); spoke about the Township Surplus and the Capital Budget; spoke about the expected Municipal portion of the Tax Levy; stated that the Budget would be published in the Westfield Leader; noted that the Budget would be considered for adoption at the end of April; encouraged residents to bring forth questions about the Budget.
- Described Ordinance No. 2024-09 (pertaining to the establishment of a CAP Bank).

PROFESSIONAL COMMENTS

Township Clerk Patricia Donahue

- Spoke about two (2) polling location changes which would become effective on Primary Election Day (specifically District 3 is scheduled to move from the Municipal Building to Bloomingdale Avenue School and District 6 is scheduled to move from the Municipal Building to Cranford High School):
- Congratulated Christopher Polito on his promotion to Police Captain and elaborated;

Business Administrator/CFO Lavona Patterson

- Complimented Commission Black on her presentation of the Municipal Budget;
- Discussed the 2024 Municipal Budget and specifically spoke about the Township’s 1) Debt Ratio, 2) Surplus, 3) Net Valuation, 4) Tax Rate and 5) increased expenses;
- Congratulated Christopher Polito on his promotion to the rank of Police Captain and elaborated;
- Welcomed Police Probationary Patrol Officers Matthew Richel and Quinn Haddad;
- Congratulated Walter Berg on his re-appointment as a Special Law Enforcement Officer;
- Congratulated Gary Junkroft on his appointment to the position of Construction Code Official;
- Congratulated Hillary Barboza on her appointment to the position of Technical Assistant to the Construction Official (TACO);
- Wished her mother a “Happy 91st Birthday”.

Mayor Brian Andrews

- Complimented Business Administrator/CFO Lavona Patterson on her work with the 2024 Municipal Budget.

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper

Noted that he meets monthly with the Township’s Affordable Housing Counsel and Affordable Housing Planner to discuss the changes in legislation as well as the Township’s future obligations and plans; stated he expected that plans and concepts would be presented to the Township Committee and residents in the future months.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Don Smith, 21 Oneida Place – referenced pending Affordable Housing legislation and suggested that the Township Committee brief residents on the Township’s current and future Affordable Housing obligations and elaborated.

William Thilly, Cranford – stated that he would be running as an independent candidate for Township Committee in the upcoming General Election and elaborated about 1) how he would conduct himself as a member of the Township Committee, 2) developers and 3) Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. statements.

Sherry Lange, 222 Arbor Street – spoke about a recent email she sent to the Township Committee which requested the display of the Christian Flag on the flagpole in front of the Municipal Building for the month of April; provided a Supreme Court ruling reference regarding this request.

George Collins, 5 Behnert Place – noted that he was a member of the Environmental Commission; spoke about the idling of trucks on Walnut Avenue and requested that Commissioner Gallo follow-up with the Cranford Police Department regarding carbon emission signage for Walnut Avenue. Mr. Collins then read a letter from the daughter (Carol Kennedy) of his elderly neighbors (Mary and Aldo Ramondelli of 729 Walnut Avenue) which described the negative impact of the construction activity at 750 Walnut Avenue (i.e., noise, traffic, debris and dust) and provided suggestions on how the Township Committee could assist (i.e., dust suppression techniques and noise reduction strategies). Mr. Collins spoke about the negative consequences associated with the construction activity at 750 Walnut Avenue (i.e., pervasive dust and associated cough); requested that the Township Committee continue to hold Hartz (Hartz

Mountain Industries) accountable; spoke about the hazardous effects of the increased traffic on Behnert Place; requested the conversion of Behnert Place to a dead-end street.

Angela Leary, 4 Behnert Place – thanked the Township Committee for 1) their work and 2) keeping the residents informed about the progress at 750 Walnut Avenue; requested that Commissioner Gallo work with traffic matters at 750 Walnut Avenue, specifically a speed sign on Walnut Avenue and the development of a traffic plan; spoke about truck traffic on Lexington Avenue and needed signage; inquired whether separate ordinances pertaining to the prohibition of truck traffic were needed for various streets around 750 Walnut Avenue; requested an update pertaining to a 25 (twenty-five) miles per hour speed limit on Walnut Avenue.

Christine Esposito, 11 Behnert Place – spoke about truck traffic on Walnut Avenue, specifically during the early morning hours; requested a greater Police presence during the morning hours.

Delia Collins, 72 Georgia Street (Clark) – discussed the need for additional pedestrian crossing signage at the intersection of Walnut Avenue and Chester Lang Place, specifically for drivers coming from Clark.

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

Mayor Andrews, Deputy Mayor Curran, Commissioner Miller Prunty and Commissioner Gallo provided responses to the evening’s public comments.

MINUTE APPROVAL

On motion of Deputy Mayor Curran, seconded by Commissioner Miller Prunty and passed, the minutes of the Workshop Meeting of March 4, 2024, the Conference Meeting of March 5, 2024 and the Official Meeting of February 20, 2024 were approved by indicated vote of the Township Committee:

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Commissioner Black, seconded by Commissioner Gallo and passed, the Bill List dated March 19, 2024, totaling \$2,349,719.88, 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 Curran, Commissioners Gallo, Miller Prunty and Black

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESOLUTION – By Roll Call Vote

On motion of Commissioner Gallo, seconded by Commissioner Black and passed, the following resolution was adopted by **roll call vote**:

Resolution No. 2024-153

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, at a meeting held March 19, 2024, that Christopher Polito be, and hereby is, advanced to the rank of Captain within the Cranford Police Department, effective March 20, 2024.

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

ORDINANCE – Introduction

Ordinance No. 2024-09:

The Township Clerk read by title only Ordinance No. 2024-09 entitled “CALENDAR YEAR 2024 ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)”

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

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

Final Reading and Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 2024-09 to be held April 23, 2024 and the publication will take place in the Westfield Leader on March 28, 2024.

RESOLUTION – By Roll Call Vote

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

Resolution No. 2024-154:

BE IT RESOLVED, that anticipated Township 2024 revenues, which amount to \$46,735,768.50, as indicated on Sheet 11 on the Introduced Township Budget;

BE IT RESOLVED, that anticipated Township 2024 appropriations, which amount to \$46,735,768.50, as indicated on Sheet 30 on the Introduced Township Budget;

BE IT RESOLVED, that anticipated Township Dedicated Swim Pool Utility 2024 revenues, which amount to \$1,658,627.40 as indicated on Sheet 31 on the Introduced Township Budget;

BE IT RESOLVED, that anticipated Township Dedicated Swim Pool Utility 2024 appropriations, which amount to \$1,658,627.40 as indicated on Sheet 33 on the Introduced Township Budget;

BE IT RESOLVED, that these indicated statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the municipal budget for year 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the governing body of the Township of Cranford does hereby approve the attached Township Budget for the year 2024;

Notice is hereby given that the Cranford Municipal Budget was approved by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, on March 19, 2024. A hearing on said Budget will be held at the Cranford Municipal Building on April 23, 2024 at 8:00 p.m. at which time and place objections to said Budget for the year 2024 may be presented by Township of Cranford taxpayers or other interested persons.

It is hereby certified that the foregoing Budget is a true copy of the Budget approved by resolution of the governing body on this 19th day of March 2024 and that the public advertisement will be made in accordance with the provision of N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-6 and N.J.A.C. 5:30-4.4(d).

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

RESOLUTION – By Roll Call Vote

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

Resolution No. 2024-155:

**DOWNTOWN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
BUDGET NOTICE**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Downtown District Management Corporation Budget for the year 2024:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said Budget be published in the Westfield Leader in the issue of March 28, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the governing body of the Township of Cranford does hereby approve the following as the Downtown District Management Corporation Budget for the year 2024:

APPROPRIATIONS

<u>Appropriations</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Operating		
Salaries & Wages	\$106,000.00	\$86,000.00
Other Expenses	<u>160,815.00</u>	<u>94,745.00</u>
Total Appropriations	\$266,815.00	\$180,745.00

ANTICIPATED REVENUES

<u>Revenues</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Amount to be raised by Special Improvement District Tax	<u>\$266,815.00</u>	<u>\$180,745.00</u>
Total Revenues	\$266,815.00	\$180,745.00

Notice is hereby given that the Downtown District Management Corporation Budget was approved by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, on March 19, 2024. A hearing on said Budget will be held at the Cranford Municipal Building on April 23, 2024 at 8:00 p.m. at which time and place objections to said Budget for the year 2024 may be presented by Downtown Special Improvement District taxpayers or other interested persons.

It is hereby certified that the foregoing Budget is a true copy of the Budget approved by resolution of the governing body on this 19th day of March 2024 and that the public advertisement will be made in accordance with the provision of N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-6 and N.J.A.C. 5:30-4.4(d).

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

RESOLUTIONS – By Consent Agenda

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

Resolution No. 2024-156:**RESOLUTION FOR CONDUCTING ANNUAL BUDGET EXAMINATION**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-78b has authorized the Local Finance Board to adopt rules that permit municipalities in sound fiscal condition to assume the responsibility, normally granted to the Director of the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services, of conducting the annual budget examination, and **WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C. 5:30-7 was adopted by the Local Finance Board on February 11, 1997, and **WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.2 through 7.5 the Township of Cranford has been declared eligible to participate in the program by the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services, and the Chief Financial Officer has determined that the Township meets the necessary conditions to participate in the program for the 2024 budget year.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the governing body of the Township of Cranford that in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.6a & 7.6b and based upon the Chief Financial Officer's certification, the governing body has found the budget has met the following requirements:

1. That with reference to the following items, the amounts have been calculated pursuant to law and appropriated as such in the budget:
 - a. Payment of interest and debt redemption charges
 - b. Deferred charges and statutory expenditures
 - c. Cash deficit of preceding year
 - d. Reserve for uncollected taxes
 - e. Other reserves and non-disbursement items
 - f. Any inclusions of amounts required for school purposes
2. That the provisions relating to limitation on increases of appropriations pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.2 and appropriations for exceptions to limits on appropriations found at 40A:4-45.3 et seq. are fully met (complies with the "CAP" law).
3. That the budget is in such form arrangement, and content as required by the Local Budget Law and N.J.A.C. 5:30-4 and 5:30-5.
4. That pursuant to the Local Budget Law:
 - a. All estimates of revenue are reasonable, accurate, and correctly stated
 - b. Items of appropriation are properly set forth
 - c. In itemization, form, arrangement, and content the budget will permit the exercise of the comptroller function within the municipality.
5. The budget and associated amendments have been introduced, publicly advertised, and

adopted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Budget Law, except that failure to meet the deadlines of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5 shall not prevent such certification.

6. That all other applicable statutory requirements have been fulfilled.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Director of the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services upon adoption.

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVED BUDGET

It is hereby certified that the Approved Budget complies with the requirements of law and approval is given pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-78(b) and N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.

It is further certified that the municipality has met the eligibility requirements of N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.4 and 7.5, and that I, as Chief Financial Officer, have completed the local examination in compliance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.6.

Dated: _____ By: _____
Chief Financial Officer

This certification form and resolution of the governing body executing such certification should be annexed to the adopted budget (N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.6(e))

Resolution No. 2024-157:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 FOR THE DENMAN ROAD SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 2024-113, the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford authorized and approved an award of contract to Messercola Excavating Inc., 549 E. 3rd Street, Plainfield, New Jersey, 07060 for a total project price of \$15,900.00; and

WHEREAS, the construction project required Police Officer coverage which was not anticipated in the original contract; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer has reviewed and approved the items outlined in Change Order No. 1 which included Police Officer coverage as per the memo dated March 6, 2024 from the Township Consulting Engineer to the Business Administrator/CFO, a copy of which is on file in the Clerk’s Office; and

WHEREAS, Change Order No. 1 reflects an increase in the work utilized in the amount not to exceed \$2,000.00 (12.6% increase); and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that sufficient funds are available for this Change Order and that said contract amount shall be charged to Account No. C-04-17-005-000-212.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, Union County, New Jersey that the above referenced Change Order No. 1 for the Denman Road Sidewalk Improvements Project is awarded to Messercola Excavating Inc. with an amended contract amount of \$17,900.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

I, Patricia Donahue, Township Clerk of the Township of Cranford, in the County of Union, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the forgoing is true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey at a regular meeting of said Committee held on March 5, 2024.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Township of Cranford in the County of Union and State of New Jersey this fifth (5th) day of March 2024.

Resolution No. 2024-158:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford on the 19th day of March 2024 that the Tax Collector be, and hereby, is authorized to refund tax and sewer overpayments for the reason noted:

CBJ Added Assessment

Tax Overpayment

Block 473 Lot 19: 42 Union Ave S.
Berger, Sharon & Curry, Taryn
42 Union Avenue S.
Cranford, NJ 07016

Refund \$ 2,813.58
(4-01-55-000-010-025)

New Owner Overpaid 2024

Sewer Overpayment

Sewer Acct No.7800-0, 3 Hayes Street

Refund \$ 46.50
(4-01-55-000-010-026)

Deluxe Services Group LLC
424 Johnston Drive
Watchung, NJ 07069

Resolution No. 2024-159:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, at a meeting held March 19, 2024, that Matthew V. Richel be, and hereby is, appointed as a Probationary Patrol Officer within the Police Department, effective April 1, 2024.

Resolution No. 2024-160:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, at a meeting held March 19, 2024, that Quinn Haddad be, and hereby is, appointed as a Probationary Patrol Officer within the Police Department, effective April 1, 2024.

Resolution No. 2024-161:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, at a meeting held on March 19, 2024, that Gary Junkroft be, and hereby is, appointed as Construction Code Official/Building Subcode Official, for a four (4) year term, from March 19, 2024 to March 18, 2028.

Resolution No. 2024-162:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, at a meeting held March 19, 2024, that Hillary Barboza be, and hereby is, appointed as the Technical Assistant to the Construction Official (TACO) in the Building Department, effective March 19, 2024.

Resolution No. 2024-163:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, at a meeting held March 19, 2024, that Walter Berg be, and hereby is, re-appointed as a Special Law Enforcement Officer II within the Cranford Police Department, effective April 1, 2024.

Resolution No. 2024-164:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, that Calvary Nursery School and Child Care of 108 Eastman Street, Cranford New Jersey, 07016, be, and hereby is, authorized to close and utilize Holly Street, between Eastman Street and Alden Street in connection with their annual "Week of the Young Child Party and Ice Cream Social" event to be held on Wednesday, April 10, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cranford Police Department and Cranford Fire Department will be on-site during the street closure with emergency vehicles and apparatus to assist with the event.

Resolution No. 2024-165:

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CONVERTING EXISTING BUT UNDERUTILIZED RAIL TRACK WITHIN THE CENTRAL RAILROAD (CRR)/NEW JERSEY TRANSIT (NJT) RIGHT OF WAY (ROW) INTO PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE TRAILS AND CONNECTING ALL PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE TRAILS IN UNION COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford wishes to show continued support for the use and expansion of alternate modes of transportation in order to reduce vehicular traffic on our roads, provide safe means of off-road travel, increase usable greenways and open space and provide connectivity of communities of place via off-road trails throughout Union County; and

WHEREAS, on July 13, 2021, the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford adopted Resolution No. 2021-269 which expressed support for the 'Rails to Trails Union County' advocacy group in their pursuit of the transformation of unutilized railroad lines into walking and bicycle trails connecting the Township of Cranford and all other municipalities with unutilized railroad lines in the County of Union; and

WHEREAS, the 'Rails to Trails' group has transformed into 'Union County Connects', a group with the larger vision of creating and connecting all pedestrian and bicycle trails in Union County, and **WHEREAS**, Union County Connects (UCC) has the support of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, and

WHEREAS, in February 2023, Union County was awarded a \$700,000 (seven hundred thousand dollars) in Federal Safe Streets and Roads funding for all grant portions of what will be used in association with Union County Connects, and

WHEREAS, in June 2023, Union County was awarded \$ 1,500,000 (one and half million dollars) in NJDOT (New Jersey Department of Transportation) funding for the conversion of the Rahway Valley Line from an abandoned railway line to a bicycle/pedestrian trail, and

WHEREAS, in September 2023, Union County received a \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) award for the design and construction of a new pedestrian/bicycle way through the Borough of Roselle, connecting with the East Coast Greenway in Cranford, which then connects with the Goethals Bridge, and the CRR/NJT line, and

WHEREAS, all Union County municipalities along the former CRR New Jersey ROW from Elizabeth, through Roselle/Roselle Park, Cranford, Garwood, Westfield, Fanwood, Scotch Plains and Plainfield are

experiencing exponential growth of mixed use residential/commercial development with the potential for increased vehicular traffic on North and South Avenues (also known as SR 28 and UC 610) which parallel the CRR line as main east-west routes of travel; and

WHEREAS, it is apparent that the joint conversion of the 3.8 (three and eight-tenths) mile defunct section of CRR ROW (Elizabeth-Cranford), and a shared usage of the 8 (eight) mile section of operating NJT ROW (Cranford- Plainfield) could be converted via Rail-to-Trails and Trails within Rails (Massachusetts Central Rail Trail) into a 12 (twelve) mile off-road bicycle/pedestrian trail that would provide a new travel way potentially reducing traffic on our roadways, changing modal travel to unite our municipalities for pleasure, social and business travel and potential economic benefits, with the provision of a new Union County destination connecting all municipalities via bicycle and pedestrian travel.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey, hereby expresses support for “Union County Connects” in its pursuit of connecting all underutilized railroad ROWs, bicycle and walking trails and parks in the County of Union.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Union County Board of County Commissioners and appropriate New Jersey Transit representatives.

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gina Black

- Congratulated Police Captain Christopher Polito;
- Welcomed Probationary Officers Matthew Richel and Quinn Haddad to the Cranford Police Department;
- Congratulated Walter Berg on his re-appointment as Special Law Enforcement Officer;
- Welcomed Construction Code Official Gary Junkroft and Technical Assistant to the Construction Official (TACO) Hillary Barboza;
- Spoke about her disappointment pertaining to (recent) Affordable Housing legislation which “went through”; spoke about the difficulty that flood-prone communities have with Affordable Housing obligations;
- Spoke about her frustration pertaining to the construction activity at 750 Walnut Avenue; suggested that Hartz (Hartz Mountain Industries) was not acting in good faith; spoke about how Hartz’ actions should relate to the Township’s financial agreement with Hartz;
- Stated that bunnies were “up” in Centennial Village; stated that the Chamber of Commerce would host photos with the Easter Bunny in two (2) locations on the upcoming Saturday; wished everyone a “Happy Easter”.

Commissioner Paul Gallo

- Wished Mayor Andrews a “Happy Birthday”;
- Spoke about Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month; thanked Richard Saccone and Dr. Christopher Lenza for their efforts to educate residents about screenings;
- Welcomed Gary Junkroft and Hillary Barboza to the Building Department;
- Discussed the upcoming retirement of Principal Michael Klimko of Brookside Place School; spoke about members of the community respect and regard for Mr. Klimko.

Commissioner Kathleen Miller Prunty

- Congratulated Christopher Polito on his promotion to Captain;
- Welcomed Probationary Police Officers Matthew Richel and Quinn Haddad;
- Spoke about the residents’ comments pertaining to construction activity at 750 Walnut Avenue; stated that the Members of the Township Committee were united and spoke about their frustration and anger regarding this matter;
- Spoke about the upcoming Holocaust Day of Remembrance; read aloud comments by Simon Wiesenthal.

Deputy Mayor Terrence Curran

- Congratulated Police Captain Christopher Polito on his promotion and elaborated;
- Welcomed Construction Code Official Gary Junkroft and Technical Assistant to the Construction

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Official (TACO) Hillary Barboza to the Building Department;

- Welcomed Probationary Police Officers Matthew Richel and Quinn Haddad;
- Complimented the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) and (DMC Director) Caren Demyen for their administration of the recent St. Patrick's Day celebration.

Mayor Brian Andrews

- Congratulated Police Captain Christopher Polito;
- Welcomed Probationary Police Officers Matthew Richel and Quinn Haddad to the Cranford Police Department;
- Congratulated Special Law Enforcement Officer Walter Berg on his re-appointment;
- Welcomed Construction Code Official Gary Junkroft and Technical Assistant to the Construction Official (TACO) Hillary Barboza;
- Spoke about Resolution No 2024-165 pertaining to the Township's continued support of "Union County Connects" and their work in transitioning underutilized railroad tracks into bicycle and walking paths.

On motion of Commissioner Miller Prunty, seconded by Deputy Mayor Curran and passed, the Township Committee adjourned and returned to the Workshop Meeting at 9:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Donahue
Township Clerk

Dated: March 19, 2024