

The Minutes of the **Shade Tree Commission** of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **February 19, 2024** at 7:05 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: Denise Alvarez  
Mylissa Bauman  
Ben Cohen  
Deputy Mayor Terrance Curran  
Superintendent Erik Hastrup  
Eileen Martines  
Michael Venditti  
Patricia Vogler  
John Zebrowski

Absent: Gail M. Rodney

Other: Jim Nichnadowicz arrived at 7:30 p.m.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Election of Chairperson – John Zebrowski volunteered after hearing no further volunteers.

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Alvarez,Bauman,Cohen,Deputy Mayor Curran,Superintendent Hastrup,Martines,Venditti,Vogler,Zebrowski

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Nichnadowicz,Rodney

Election of Secretary – Superintendent Erik Hastrup volunteered

Aye: Alvarez,Bauman,Cohen,Deputy Mayor Curran, Superintendent Hastrup,Martines, Venditti,Vogler,Zebrowski

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Nichnadowicz,Rodney

Quorum- As part of a self organization,the Commission agreed that the 7 full & 2 alternate members have voting privileges, and a simple majority of 5, will be considered a quorum.

Tree Nursery Creation - Superintendent Hastrup spoke about a 50’ X 50’ Section at the Cranford Conservation Center, with a fence installation and a stone path for access. Also mentioned purchasing a water tank for watering trees at the nursery and elsewhere. A sub committee was formed consisting of Superintendent Erik Hastrup, Mylissa Bauman,and Jim Nichnadowicz. The committee will report back at the March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting about specifications,scope and objective for the nursery.

Tree Stump Removal – Superintendent Hastrup spoke about roughly 15-20 stumps throughout town, that had been called into 811 for markouts, so that the Cranford DPW can start the grinding process. Discussion continued about how to keep track of the stumps, and when they are completed.

Ash Trees - Discussion took place regarding the Ash trees that are located throughout the town. Question of how many Ash trees does the town have? Superintendent Hastrup indicated the 2017 tree survey will show what trees were inventoried. Denise Alvarez said she could summarize the amount of Ash trees, once she receives the 2017 Inventory. Superintendent Hastrup to distribute to the Commission members, the Inventory.

Tree of the Month/Web page Design/E-Mail Address - Superintendent Hastrup talked about the creation of a NEW email address : [shadetreecommission@cranfordnj.org](mailto:shadetreecommission@cranfordnj.org) and a NEW web page on the Cranford Township Website. He indicated that a new employee was hired to be the towns Public Information Officer, and he had worked with her on creating the new web page. He also mentioned the idea of TREE OF THE MONTH, so that residents could be educated on some of the trees that line our Cranford streets. A decision was made by the commission, to make March 2024, Ash Trees as the tree of the month, based on earlier discussion. A sub committee was formed consisting of Pat Vogler, and Denise Alvarez called Electronic Communications. Superintendent Hastrup said he would put those 2 in contact with the new Public Information Officer.

Budget Discussion- Members inquired about the amount the Commission has to spend for 2024. Superintendent Hastrup indicated that at the February 10<sup>th</sup> Budget meeting, that \$47,700 is the budget, with another \$10,000 for the purchase of trees that is currently in the DPW budget. He mentioned that when a crane is needed for a large tree removal, that expense would come out of the \$47,700, the cost each time is \$1600.00. A sub committee was formed consisting of Deputy Mayor Curran, and Michael Venditti. The commission requested that a monthly report of expenses/budget, be presented at future meetings.

Tree Replacement – Spring 2024 - Superintendent Hastrup indicated that he had spoken to John Richart at Dreyers farm in Cranford, about getting some trees to plant around town. He said in past years, the town would get about 30 or so trees to plant, where trees had come down, or were requested through the DPW. Questions were asked as to what kind of trees would be purchased. A sub committee was formed consisting of Pat Vogler, Ben Cohen, Denise Alvarez, Eileen Martines and Jim Nichnadowicz. This group will be called Tree Sourcing Considerations, and outline short/long term objectives, pailed, bare root, or ball and burlapped trees for future planting.

Core Training of Commission Members – Training for Commission members that had yet to be Core trained, was talked about. Mylissa Bauman, John Zebrowski and Deputy Mayor Curran indicated that they would be taking the course being offered online starting March 1<sup>st</sup>. Another option is to attend the one day seminar in Atlantic City in October 2024 to do the Core training. Deputy Mayor Curran said if members had trouble with scheduling Core training this year, they could try for 2025.

2024 Shade Tree Commission Scheduled Meetings- Superintendent Hastrup brought up the proposed 2024 future meeting dates for Cranford STC meetings. An email had been sent to all commission members in early January about what day and time worked best for everyone. The consensus was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. All members agreed that this worked for them. The subject was brought up by Michael Venditti, that in the future we should not meet on Holidays. Denise Alvarez spoke about looking at 2025 future meeting dates, sometime this Fall, to make sure there aren't any Holiday conflicts.

Tree Replacement for 750 Walnut Ave- Deputy Mayor Curran informed the commission that approximately 150 or so trees were removed along the railroad track berm by the contractor. The town is in the process of asking for an updated landscaping plan. The commission will be monitoring this situation further, as work continues. The types and sizes of trees that will replace the ones removed will be talked about at future meetings.

## **PROFESSIONAL COMMENTS**

Jim Nichnadowicz mentioned Schichtels Nursey Inc. from Springville, New York as good place to purchase trees from. He distributed a price guide to everyone.

Superintendent Erik Hastrup mentioned the importance of Arbor Day recognition on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

Deputy Mayor Terrance Curran reminded everyone that the Township Meeting was the next night, and that if anyone wanted to speak about the trees removed at 750 Walnut Ave.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Brenda Flahault of 17 Omaha Drive- talked about the importance of this commission, and that she would try to promote it, at Floraphile Garden Club of Cranford at its next meeting. She mentioned that they have a Facebook and Instagram page that they could promote the commission as well.

Mr. Michael Astone of 23 Berkeley Place- Expressed his interest in helping the commission out as a licensed tree expert and Arborist, bucket operator and former tree forman for Roselle Park DPW, for 15 years. Has been in contact with Deputy Mayor Curran and Superintendent Hastrup about the new Ordinance and Commission.

Mr. Michael Bauman of 515 Gallows Hill Road- Talked about reading over the new Ordinance, and found it vague, needed to be more stable.

#### **ADJORN**

On motion of Chair Zebrowski, seconded by Michael Venditti and passed, the Shade Tree Commission adjourned at 8:40 p.m.