

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **January 11, 2020 at 8:00 a.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 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 Patrick Giblin
Deputy Mayor Kathleen Prunty
Commissioner Thomas H. Hannen, Jr.
Commissioner Jean-Albert Maisonneuve
Commissioner Mary O'Connor

Absent: None

Public Comments

Mayor Giblin opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing no comments, Mayor Giblin closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Police

Police Chief Ryan Greco reviewed the Police Department Budget including the line items for the Police Department, Communications Officers and B&G (Building and Grounds) Parking System.

Chief Greco spoke about the increased budget request for Police Department purchase of equipment and briefly elaborated about fleet maintenance for hybrid cars. Commissioner Hannen inquired about the personnel plan for the expected retirement of an officer. Chief Greco spoke about the personnel costs associated with the Communications Officers. He noted that their holiday pay had been transitioned into their base salary and their use of "comp" time instead of being paid overtime wages. After Chief Greco reviewed the B&G Parking System budget, Commissioner Hannen inquired if the Police Department could "piggyback" onto the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) wireless system. Discussion ensued about security concerns. Administrator Jamie Cryan inquired about the fees associated with parking permits. Chief Greco noted that the Parking Committee had recently recommended a monthly permit fee increase.

Emergency Management

Police Chief Ryan Greco reviewed the Emergency Management Budget and spoke about the type of items which were included in the \$10,000 "Other Expenses" budget line. Mayor Giblin inquired about the stipend costs. Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson stated that the stipend amounts were located in the Fire Department "Salaries and Wages" line.

Park & Recreation

Mr. Steve Robertazzi reviewed the Park and Recreation Budget. Referring to the Salaries and Wages budget line, he spoke about minimum wage salary increases. Mr. Robertazzi also spoke about staffing salaries at 375 Centennial Avenue. He provided a previous-day update on a site visit to the Recreation Center in Edison.. Mr. Robertazzi noted that the operating expenses for the Recreation Center remained unchanged. Mr. Robertazzi reviewed and elaborated about the increased budget for Cranford West. Mr. Robertazzi attributed the increased Senior Bus budget line to the recent second bus addition to the department. Discussion ensued on uses of the first and second bus. He noted that the Public Events budget line had no change. Mr. Robertazzi spoke about the Building and Ground budget line increase. Referring to the Canoe Club, Mr. Robertazzi stated that the Club needed a new deck. Discussion ensued as to whether out-of-town user fees should be increased.

Mr. Robertazzi discussed the 375 Centennial Avenue Building and Grounds budget lines and expected expenses for a cleaning company and pest control. Commissioner Maisonneuve inquired about anticipated revenues for the 375 Centennial Avenue facility. Commissioner Hannen inquired whether pickle ball could be played there.

Swim Pool Utility

Mr. Steve Robertazzi reviewed the Swim Pool Utility Budget. He spoke about the increased operating expenses for maintenance and repair and chemical supplies. Mr. Robertazzi spoke about expected salary increases due to the mandated minimum wage increase. Mayor Giblin inquired why the health benefits budget line was taken out of the Swim Utility budget. Deputy Mayor Prunty inquired about the pool membership trends. Mr. Robertazzi stated that the municipal pool membership throughout Union County was declining. Mr. Robertazzi stated that the pool revenue declined by \$15,000 last year.

Fire Department

Chief Daniel Czeh reviewed the Fire Department budget. Chief Czeh spoke about the Salaries and Wages budget line and elaborated about expected 2020 salary increases of two (2) per cent for union employees and anticipated salary step increases for other employees. He then elaborated briefly about overtime controls as well as the utilization of Fire Department staff to cover Emergency Management Technician (EMT) staff shortages. Further discussion ensued regarding retiree payments, training, the Fire Call budget line and the maintenance and repair budget line. Commissioner Hannen inquired about reactivation of pagers in the event that an emergency caused the shut-down of cell phone service. Chief Czeh spoke about expenditures under the Fire Miscellaneous budget line. Chief Czeh and CFO Lavona Patterson spoke about the fire hydrants and expected and mandatory fee increases as well as issues pertaining to hydrants in the “right-of-way” area. Chief Czeh noted that the roof of the Fire House will eventually need to be replaced. Commissioner Hannen inquired about the air conditioning duct work in the Fire House. Chief Czeh stated that there could be an issue in the future with the Township’s diesel tanks as there was accumulated water.

Building Department

Mr. Rich Belluscio reviewed the Construction Code budget. He reviewed the revenue figures associated with the Construction Code department and the Salaries and Wages “Temporary/Seasonal” salary budget line. Discussion ensued.

Department of Public Works

Mr. Erik Hastrup reviewed the Department of Public Works Budget. Mr. Hastrup spoke about the Salaries and Wages budget line, noting that two (2) Driver/Laborers were expected to be hired in 2020. Commissioner

O'Connor inquired about the seasonal staff hourly pay. Mr. Hastrup stated that one staff retirement was expected in 2020. A brief discussion ensued regarding overtime pay.

Commissioner Hannen inquired about Right-to-Know training, trench safety training and confined space training.

Discussion ensued regarding needed construction at the Hillside Avenue Tunnel. Further discussion ensued regarding the cost of asphalt, the Conservation Center budget lines, the Outside Professional Expenses budget line, and the 2020 expenses and/or expected bid openings for Bulky Curbside Pick-up, Recycling and Garbage

Building and Grounds

Mr. Erik Hastrup reviewed the Building and Grounds Budget. Discussion ensued.

TV 35

Mr. Ed Davenport reviewed the Administration Budget. He spoke about moving data storage medium from tape to scanned disks. Mr. Davenport further elaborated about non-copy write practices and capital budget savings.

Health

Administrator Jamie Cryan stated that Mr. Fitzpatrick was not able to attend the meeting for personal reasons. Mr. Cryan noted that the Township now had an agreement for Public Health Shared Services with the Township of Bloomfield. Discussion ensued regarding the "Salaries and Wages" budget line, expected marketing of Health Department services in 2020 and animal control services.

At approximately 9:40 a.m., the Commissioners adjourned for a 5 (five) minute break and returned to Room 108 at 9:45 a.m.

Administration

Township Administrator Jamie Cryan reviewed the Administration Budget. Referring to the Salaries and Wages lines, Mr. Cryan stated that Deputy Mayor Prunty and he had discussed the hiring of a part-time person to assist with Communications work. Mr. Cryan discussed Professional Development monies to be used for 2020 training which may include education about the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Domestic Violence. Discussion ensued regarding the "outside professional expenses" line item and going out to bid in 2020 for website design services in order to upgrade the Township website. Commissioner Hannen inquired about utilization of escrow funds (i.e., for conflict situations.) Commissioner Hannen stated his concerns regarding the Township's gas tanks. Mr. Cryan responded that Statewide Insurance Fund also had concerns regarding the Township's gas tanks.

Municipal Court

Judge Mark Cassidy and Ms. Lori Powell reviewed the Municipal Court budget. Judge Cassidy spoke about the Salaries and Wages budget line and stated that the department had an open position. A brief discussion ensued. Judge Cassidy then discussed his concern about mold in the department. Discussion ensued about the duration of the problem, the mold test, bringing a humidifier to the area and the Construction Code Official's proposed solution.

Further discussion ensued regarding the purchase of a computer for the department utilizing “Driving While Intoxicated” funds. Commissioner Hannen inquired about the recent State Police employee and DWI testing scandal. Discussion ensued on how that situation would affect the Municipal Court. A brief discussion ensued regarding revenue associated with Municipal Court Fines.

Clerk’s Office

Township Clerk Patricia Donahue reviewed the Clerk’s Office budget. Discussion ensued regarding digitizing Township records. Commissioners Hannen and Maisonneuve spoke about the importance of obtaining offsite computer backup. Ms. Donahue spoke about the expected increase in election costs due to the required access of election materials in English and Spanish.

Finance

Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson reviewed the Finance Department’s budget. Referring to the Salaries and Wages, Part-time budget line, Ms. Patterson spoke about the need to fill a part-time employee position in the Department. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Hannen inquired about the decision to move to a new payroll vendor and leave ADP. Further discussion ensued regarding the “professional development” budget line.

Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson reviewed the Tax Collector budget. Commissioner Hannen spoke about a resident suggestion to move the Sewer bill one month forward. Discussion ensued. Ms. Patterson then suggested moving the sewer billing from a semi-annual cycle to an annual cycle. She elaborated about the sewer mailing costs, the dollar value of sewer delinquent bills, and eleven (11) “sister” municipalities who administer sewer billing on an annual basis. Discussion ensued.

Referring to the one-page sheet which summarized the Township’s insurance, liabilities and budgeted debt, Ms. Patterson provided a brief overview of the figures. Mayor Giblin inquired whether members of the Committee had questions or comments. Mayor Giblin inquired about pension costs. Ms. Patterson stated that the Fund Balance was the highest it has been for recent years. Mayor Giblin thanked Ms. Patterson for creating the summary sheet.

Engineering

Commissioner Hannen and Administrator Jamie Cryan reviewed the Engineering Department’s budget. Discussion ensued regarding the Township’s 2020 engineering services contract award to Maser Consulting and what that relationship provided to the Township. Discussion ensued regarding whether 1) the Maser relationship should be expanded, 2) whether the Township wanted to hire a full-time engineer or 3) whether there should be a hybrid of those two choices, i.e., relationship with a consulting engineering firm and employment of a full-time engineer. Mr. Cryan spoke about the importance of setting boundaries for a Township-employed engineer. Commissioner Hannen spoke about engineering services for Capital projects. Discussion ensued on next steps for solidifying engineering services for 2020.

Downtown Management Corporation

Mr. Gabe Bailer reviewed the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) budget. He spoke about the Salaries and Wages budget line. Discussion ensued regarding the provision of WIFI, the holiday mailing to the residents and surrounding towns, the possibility of seeking sponsorship for events and landscaping. Further discussion ensued regarding the Special Improvement District (SID) tax including whether residents should pay the SID tax.

Planning and Zoning

Mr. Jason Bottcher reviewed the Zoning and Planning budget. He spoke about the Salaries and Wages budget line, upcoming changes to the receipt process of Planning Board applications and training for the Board members. Further discussion ensued regarding current litigation and associated budget matters. Mr. Bottcher spoke about billing appropriate charges to escrow accounts. Mr. Bottcher suggested the hiring of a part-time employee and briefly elaborated. He spoke about Ms. Nicholas' professional training. Mr. Bottcher stated that a department computer needed to be replaced. Mr. Bottcher and Mr. Cryan discussed a flood insurance program which would provide discounts for flood insurance to residents.

Tax Assessor

Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson reviewed the Tax Assessor department Budget. Discussion ensued regarding the "legal advertising" budget line, the proposed purchase of two (2) new computers for the department and the number of added assessments.

Ms. Patterson noted that the next Township Committee Workshop Meeting would include a review of the proposed 2020 Library budget and Revenue figures.

Public Comments

Mayor Giblin opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing no comments, Mayor Giblin closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Reports

Mayor Giblin stated that the Budget Workshop Meeting had been conducted in a very professional manner and extended his thanks.

Deputy Mayor Prunty thanked the Township professionals who prepared for and administered the Budget Workshop Meeting.

Commissioner Hannen noted that Department of Public Works Superintendent interviews would be conducted that afternoon.

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Commissioner Maisonneuve and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Donahue
Township Clerk

Dated: January 11, 2020