

**The following notice appeared on the Township Committee's May 26, 2020 Workshop Meeting Agenda**

**TOWNSHIP OF CRANFORD  
SUNSHINE NOTICE  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 26, 2020**

Due to the ongoing public health emergency, and the Governor's Executive Orders related to the same, the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford will conduct all meetings remotely and by electronic means for the foreseeable future. The Township Committee will continue to meet on their regularly scheduled meeting dates and times.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 (the "Open Public Meetings Act") and consistent with the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services guidelines, the Township Committee Meetings will be open to the public by electronic means. Residents can view the meetings on TV-35, and via livestream on [TV-35's Facebook Page](#).

Residents who wish to participate in the virtual meeting for purposes of making a public comment or to participate in any scheduled public hearing should follow the instructions and complete the registration form available at the Township of Cranford's website at <https://www.cranfordnj.org/minutes-and-agendas>.

The Minutes of the Workshop Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **May 26, 2020** at **6:30** 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 Patrick Giblin  
Deputy Mayor Kathleen Prunty  
Commissioner Thomas H. Hannen, Jr.\*  
Commissioner Jean-Albert Maisonneuve  
Commissioner Mary O'Connor

Absent: None

The Township Committee held the Workshop Meeting by telephone conference (as per the public notice, remotely and by electronic means.)

Administrator Jamie Cryan, Township Attorneys Ryan Cooper and Francine Kaplan, Downtown Management Corporation Director Gabe Bailer and Township Clerk Patricia Donahue were present.

Mr. Gabe Bailer, Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) Director, was present.

\*Commissioner Hannen arrived to the Workshop Meeting at 6:45 p.m.

### **Public Comments**

Mayor Giblin opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Ms. Katie Tierney of Home Power Yoga joined the Workshop Meeting, remotely and by electronic means at 6:33 p.m. Ms. Tierney stated that she was looking for more information regarding the Township's proposal to close down Eastman Street from Thursday at 5 p.m. to Monday at 8 a.m. She noted that her business opened up to the street. Ms. Tierney inquired how long this would occur. She stated that she heard that grass would grow on the street. Ms. Tierney stated this would hurt her business. Mayor Giblin responded that he had not heard about a grass proposal for the area and he had not heard that the proposal would be for an indefinite period of time. Commissioner Maisonneuve stated that the proposal included a start date for the first week of June and that the proposal was not for an indefinite period of time. He noted that planters were in the proposal, not grass. Ms.

Tierney inquired about the end date of the initiative. Mayor Giblin suggested that Ms. Tierney stay on the video/teleconference as the first Workshop Agenda item pertained to Outdoor Public Places. Mayor Giblin requested that DMC Director Gabe Bailer present the Outdoor Public Plazas proposal.

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper stated that no further email requests to join the Workshop Meeting had been received from members of the public. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Giblin closed the public comments portion of the meeting.

### **Outdoor Public Plazas**

Mr. Gabe Bailer presented an Outdoor Public Plaza proposal. He stated that the proposal would support Cranford businesses and elaborated about the proposed Public Plaza areas including Eastman Street from North Union to Miln and Alden Street to Miln. Mr. Bailer stated the proposed street shut-down would occur from Thursdays at 3 p.m. until Mondays at 8 a.m. Discussion ensued regarding whether barricades would be installed, whether the tables installed on the Street would be Township or business-provided and who would be responsible for the clean-up of the tables, Commissioner Maisonneuve stated that he viewed the table set-ups differently, i.e., members of the public would clean up after themselves. Commissioner Maisonneuve inquired whether the Township could mitigate outside businesses from operating in the public space. Commissioner Hannen inquired if the businesses had been polled. Mr. Bailer replied that the businesses had been polled. He noted that while North Union Avenue had been considered for the Public Plaza proposal, the Fire Department advised against it. Commissioner Hannen stated that two (2) businesses he spoke to were opposed to the proposal. Commissioner Hannen requested a list of the restaurants who supported the idea. He inquired if the Fire and Police Departments had approved both street proposals. Commissioner Hannen stated that pickup and takeout business would be made more difficult by this proposal. Mayor Giblin asked Commissioner Hannen the location of the two (2) businesses who opposed the proposal.

Mayor Giblin stated that the expectation was that the Public Plaza proposal would help the Downtown area. He suggested that the Township consider a trial period for this proposal for one street, specifically, on Alden Street up to and including the parking lot. Commissioner Maisonneuve stated that the proposal would not be successful if the Township agreed to only open one street and elaborated. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Giblin asked the members of the Township Committee their view on the Public Plazas proposal. Commissioner O'Connor suggested a Friday to Monday closure instead of a Thursday to Monday closure. Commissioner Hannen stated that he was in favor of the proposal only if the businesses were in favor of it. Commissioner Maisonneuve stated that he was not in favor of the revised proposal. He was not interested in restaurant seating per se but was interested in a Public Plaza. Deputy Mayor Prunty stated that she was in favor of trying the Outdoor Public Plaza proposal for Alden Street and elaborated. Mayor Giblin stated that he was in favor of the proposal for Alden Street. He spoke about the responsibilities of the restaurants.

Mayor Giblin addressed Ms. Tierney and stated that they would hold off on closing Eastman Street. Ms. Tierney thanked Mayor Giblin. She requested that she be kept informed. Mayor Giblin stated that she would be informed. He encouraged the business owners to talk to each other.

### **Proposed Ordinance for the Temporary Easing of Site Plan Review Requirements for the Expansion of Outdoor Dining Services**

Mayor Giblin spoke about the proposed ordinance on the Official Meeting Agenda (Ordinance 2020-09) which pertained to a temporary Code Review Committee to approve an expansion of outdoor seating in light of the public health crisis, COVID-19. Mayor Giblin inquired if there were any questions. Commissioner Hannen inquired if this ordinance allowed business to move out to sidewalks. Township Attorney Ryan Cooper responded it did not. He stated that the proposed ordinance pertained to outdoor property owned by the property owner. Mayor Giblin inquired whether adjoining preopties would have a voice. He noted that this is a fast track process that would eventually have to go before the Planning Board. Commissioner Hannen inquired if there was a sunset provision. Mr. Cooper stated that sunset provision was to occur in December 2020. Commissioner Hannen inquired whether we would have a problem with preexisting conditions. Mr. Cooper responded. He then noted that the ordinance pertained to restaurants and the space they owned. Mayor Giblin noted this ordinance would be considered at the Official Meeting as an “introduced” ordinance

### **Downtown Parking**

Deputy Mayor Prunty stated that parking in the Downtown area would now be enforced (as enforcement had been lifted during the Coronavirus period) and elaborated. Commissioner O'Connor inquired about parking spaces for business curbside pickup.

Deputy Mayor Prunty stated that the Police Department would be sending out new (renewal) permit information for nine (9) and twelve (12) hour commuter parking on the following day. Commissioner Hannen warned that if residents did not renew their parking permits, they would be put on a Township parking permit wait list if they later came back to the Township and requested a parking permit. Deputy Mayor Prunty noted that a number of companies purchased the parking permits.

### **CARES Act COVID-19 Expenses Reimbursement**

Mayor Giblin spoke about Union County's receipt of the CARES Act funding. He stated that the Township learned that COVID-19 expenses are 100 per cent eligible for reimbursement. Mayor Giblin stated that Township Attorney Ryan Cooper had conducted a review of the Township's proposed expenses reimbursement. Mr. Cooper elaborated briefly. Administrator Jamie Cryan noted that the Township had incurred approximately \$100,000 in COVID-19-related costs.

### **Municipal Pools**

Recreation and Parks Director Steve Robertazzi stated that the Township was awaiting guidance from the State regarding the pool opening in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. The Mayor inquired how long should we expect between receiving the State guidance to a Cranford pool opening date. Mr. Robertazzi stated that his department would probably need about a month's preparation. Discussion ensued on accelerating the pool open process. Mayor Giblin noted that the opening (and operation) of each pool cost between \$350,000 to \$400,000. Mr. Robertazzi suggested that due to Coronavirus tracing requirements, the pool open for Cranford residents only. Deputy Mayor Prunty

stated that the Swim Pool Utility agreed with that recommendation. Commissioner Hannen inquired about social distancing at the pools. Deputy Mayor Prunty stated that a survey was sent out that day to the residents regarding their interest in the pool for this summer. Mayor Giblin noted that other pool operation suggestions included 1) members to bring their own chairs and 2) the snack shack would probably not open. Mayor Giblin stated that he would like a pool to open as it would serve as an outlet for the Township children. He stated that opening the pool(s) meant that we could be operating at a loss. Mayor Giblin stated that the Township Committee needed to give Mr. Robertazzi some guidance and the Township needed to be ready to open the pool(s) on short notice. Further discussion ensued regarding the membership options, the cost of opening one pool versus two pools, whether Centennial Avenue or Orange Avenue would be the first pool to open, needed steps to open the pool, the cost to paint both pools, opening both pools to (physically) space out the patrons and the possibility of an emergency Township Committee meeting once the State guidance is received.

Mayor Giblin stated that the Pools' financial figures would be affected by loss of revenue from no guest passes, no out-of-town members and no snack shack. He noted that the taxpayer would be paying for the pool(s) operation. Commissioner Maisonneuve inquired about the percentage of out-of-town members. Mr. Robertazzi stated that the in-town residents comprised seventy (70) to seventy-five (75) per cent of the membership base.

Mayor Giblin asked who was in favor of opening the Township Pools. He stated that he was. Commissioner Maisonneuve, Commissioner Hannen and Commissioner O'Connor each stated that they were in favor of opening the Township Pools. Deputy Mayor Prunty stated that she had great concerns regarding the finances associated with opening the pools but was in favor of opening the pools. Mayor Giblin stated that opening the pools would "blow open a hole in the Budget." Mayor Giblin suggested that the Township open one pool. Deputy Mayor Prunty inquired about the pool cleaning. Mr. Robertazzi noted that last year their office had received about 3,000 membership applications. He noted that they had received 230 membership applications thus far, this year. Deputy Mayor Prunty suggested that the Township prepare for one pool opening. Mayor Giblin inquired who was in favor of prepping two (2) outdoor pools. Commissioner O'Connor, Commissioner Hannen and Commissioner Maisonneuve stated that they were in favor of opening both outdoor pools. Mayor Giblin inquired if the maintenance of the indoor pool was satisfactory. Mr. Robertazzi stated the indoor pool was in good shape.

### **Cranford West**

Mayor Giblin spoke about the camp facility at Cranford West. He noted there were twelve (12) campsites there. In light of residents' cancelled vacations due to the Coronavirus public health crisis, Mayor Giblin suggested opening Cranford West during the week to give Cranford families more vacation options.

Discussion ensued on the duties, fee and training of a Camp Director. Each member of the Township Committee stated they were in favor of opening Cranford West.

### **Cranford Summer Camp Programs**

Recreation and Parks Director Steve Robertazzi stated that the Township was awaiting guidance from the State regarding the Summer Camp opening in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. He elaborated about the playground camp, camp locations and the number of children who attended last summer (625 campers.) Mr. Robertazzi spoke about keeping the children safe. He stated that the Program would need plenty of supplies. Commissioner Hannen suggested hiring more staff and charging more for the Program. Members of the Committee stated they were in favor with moving forward with opening the Summer Camp Program. Mr. Robertazzi noted that camp openings around the State were part of the State's Phase 3 reopening program and thus, they had not yet received State authorization to open the Summer Camp Program.

Mayor Giblin inquired about the Township Committee's guidance to Recreation and Parks Director Steve Robertazzi. The Mayor stated that if he had heard correctly, the Township Committee 1) was in favor of opening the Summer Camp program, 2) with higher fees, 3) with more staff and 4) would await the State's guidance on the Summer Camp opening.

### **Late Starter – Recreation and Parks Department Update**

Recreation and Parks Director Steve Robertazzi stated that the Cranford Canoe Club was "on track" to open on the upcoming Saturday. He then stated that the County of Union announced that day, the cancellation of the summer's Firework Displays.

### **Municipal Pools Follow-up**

Commissioner Hannen stated that if the pools are filled, "they will come." Mayor Giblin stated that we were committed to opening the Pool(s) but he wanted to be very transparent, specifically, that the pool would be opened at a loss. He asked Mr. Robertazzi to move immediately on the Pool(s) opening.

### **Cranford Theater – Temporary Use of Municipal Parking Lot for Drive-In Movies**

Mayor Giblin provided a brief overview of Cranford Theatre's request to utilize the parking lot of Orange Avenue Pool as a drive-in movie venue. Commissioner Hannen inquired about the payment of police personnel for the drive-in movie theatre. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Maisonneuve, Commissioner O'Connor, Mayor Giblin and Deputy Mayor Prunty stated they were in favor of the request. Commissioner Hannen stated that the initiative should only be open to Cranford residents. Mayor Giblin spoke about the importance of providing opportunities for residents in light of the mental health issues associated with the Coronavirus (residence-in-place order.) Committee consensus was reached to add the authorization of Cranford Theatre's utilization of the Orange Avenue Pool parking lot as a late starter resolution for the evening's Official Meeting agenda.

### **COVID-19 Public Health Crisis Effect on Municipal Budget**

Mayor Giblin noted that the May 1<sup>st</sup> Property Tax collection percentage was approximately ninety (90) per cent and elaborated. Deputy Mayor Prunty noted that there was more concern for the August 1<sup>st</sup> Property Tax collection percentage rate. Mayor Giblin spoke about the expected decline in Township

revenues for parking, pools and camps. He noted the Township's submission of \$100,000 COVID-19 expenses reimbursement request to the County. Commissioner Hannen inquired if June 1<sup>st</sup> was the last day to submit May 1<sup>st</sup> taxes (without penalty) or was there a 10-day grace period. Mayor Giblin stated that the final due date was June 1<sup>st</sup> for the May 1<sup>st</sup> property tax deadline.

### **Rahway River Mayors Council**

Mayor Giblin spoke about the City of Orange's participation in the Rahway River Mayors Council. He then briefly elaborated about dredging issues at the Rahway River.

### **Review Official Meeting Agenda**

Mayor Giblin inquired whether there were any questions regarding the following evening's Official Meeting Agenda. Members of the Township Committee had no feedback.

### **Minute Approval – Closed Session Minutes of May 11<sup>th</sup>**

Commissioner O'Connor made a motion to adopt the May 11<sup>th</sup> Closed Session Minutes. Commissioner Hannen seconded the motion. Mayor Giblin, Deputy Mayor Prunty, Commissioners Hannen, Maisonneuve and O'Connor voted to approve the Closed Session minutes of May 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **Commissioner Reports**

Mayor Giblin made remarks about the great Memorial Day events held in Cranford on the previous day. He thanked the organizers of the various tributes including the residents involved with the Cranford86 group.

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Deputy Mayor Prunty and passed, the Township Committee moved to conduct the Official Meeting at 8:30 p.m. (as per the public notice, remotely and by electronic means.)

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Donahue  
Township Clerk

Dated: May 26, 2020