

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **March 23, 2015** at 7:30 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 MAILING THE ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS TO THE CRANFORD CHRONICLE, THE UNION COUNTY LOCAL SOURCE, THE WESTFIELD LEADER, 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 WILL BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING.

Present: Mayor Andis Kalnins
Deputy Mayor Lisa M. Adubato
Commissioner Robert D'Ambola
Commissioner Mary O'Connor
Commissioner Thomas H. Hannen, Jr.

Absent: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Matthew Shaw, Woodbridge Township resident, discussed a proposal to establish a special needs baseball program in Cranford and informed the Township Committee that a Cranford school district employee suggested he submit a proposal to the Township.

Mayor Kalnins suggested Mr. Shaw speak to both the Recreation and Parks Department and the Cranford Baseball/Softball League. Also suggested Mr. Shaw contact the School Board Administrator.

Michael Norman, 12 Colby Lane, discussed the proposed sports field at Union County College. Informed the Township Committee that there are rumors that Union County College is considering a smaller field at a different location on the Cranford campus.

Mayor Kalnins informed Mr. Norman that the Township Committee has no new information regarding the field. Also stated that he recently spoke to President McMenamin and she indicated there were no plans for a field in Cranford, and that the only upcoming plans are construction at the Plainfield campus.

Commissioner O'Connor suggested the Township Committee request a status update from the Board of Chosen Freeholders as to the field at Oak Ridge.

Mr. Norman also informed the Township Committee that there are survey flags on Union County College's property.

Mayor Kalnins stated that he would follow up.

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

Review Official Meeting Agenda

Ordinance No. 2015-09:

Commissioner Hannen discussed Ordinance No. 2015-09 which authorizes the renewal of the franchise agreement with Comcast and requested clarification of the franchise fees to be paid to the Township.

Township Administrator Wall discussed the provision in the ordinance related to fees and explained that the Board of Public Utilities required that certain language be included. Stated that he would follow up with the Board of Public Utilities for more clarification.

Discussion was held concerning upgrades to be conducted by Comcast.

Commissioner Hannen discussed equipment located on utility poles in the Township which provides internet service to Comcast subscribers. Stated that a fee for this service is not included in the ordinance and feels the Township should be entitled to payment.

Township Administrator Wall stated that he would follow up with Comcast, but it is his understanding that the Township is not legally allowed to collect a fee for this type of equipment.

Ordinance Nos. 2015-10 and 2015-11:

Commissioner Hannen requested clarification of the proposed parking ordinances for North Avenue.

Lieutenant Davenport explained that these ordinances would allow for parking on North Avenue between the hours of 4:30 PM and 6:00 PM, which is currently prohibited. Explained that these ordinances relate to the North Avenue Station Pedestrian Improvement Project and would be subject to approval by the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Resolution No. 2015-157 and 2015-158:

Deputy Mayor Adubato discussed the proposed amendments to the contracts awarded to A&A Construction and Management Consultants and Millennium Strategies.

Township Administrator Wall discussed additional costs to be paid to Millennium Strategies and explained that they relate to the remainder of work being conducted on the project. Also discussed additional payments that must be authorized to A&A Construction and Management.

Resolution Nos. 2015-159 through 2015-2015-162:

Commissioner Hannen requested clarification of the proposed contracts to be awarded to Maser Consultants.

Township Administrator Wall explained that the proposed contracts and fee structures were derived from Maser Consultant's submission in response to the Township's Request for Proposals.

Commissioner Hannen also requested clarification as to the proposed realignment of the North Avenue and Springfield Avenue intersection.

Further discussion to be held during the Engineer's update.

Engineering Update*North Avenue Station Pedestrian Improvement project*

Township Engineer O'Brien provided an update of the North Avenue Station Pedestrian Improvement project. Discussed the potential to apply for discretionary aid for the project because the project cost has changed since the initial grant application.

Commissioner Hannen requested clarification as to the project's estimated cost.

Township Engineer O'Brien stated that the cost is approximately \$900,000. The grant award to the Township was in the amount of \$500,000, and the original cost estimate was \$650,000.

Commissioner O'Connor discussed the need to provide information/project updates to impacted businesses on a weekly basis, at a minimum. Also suggested broadcasts of project updates on TV35.

Commissioner Hannen discussed potential bid proposals for the project and whether the Township Committee should consider moving forward if the costs are too high. Feels the Township Committee might need to consider moving forward with the project in phases.

Commissioner D'Ambola feels the Township Committee cannot make a decision until bids are received.

2014 Paving Program

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of the 2014 Paving Program and informed the Township Committee that he would be meeting with the contractor tomorrow to discuss the schedule for roads that were not paved in 2014.

Deputy Mayor Adubato discussed telephone calls she received from residents who feel drainage has worsened since their roadway was paved.

Township Engineer O'Brien stated that three (3) or four (4) residents have also contacted him. Feels some areas may need to be reviewed and corrected, and suggested that infra-red technology be used to make those repairs. Also discussed the need for the contractor to make repairs at Winans Avenue and at Centennial Avenue where a water main break occurred.

Discussion held regarding a proposed ordinance to establish a moratorium for road repairs that are required as a result of utility work.

Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Program

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the Union County Community Development Block Grant Program and informed the Township Committee that the Township was awarded \$35,000 for handicap ramp improvements.

Township Engineer O'Brien also discussed the status of Municipal Aid and stated that he was informed that funding through this program has been frozen. Explained that there would be no impact to Cranford because Cranford has completed all projects funded through this program.

Northeast Quadrant Stormwater Management Plan

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed Phase 2B of the Northeast Quadrant Stormwater Management Project and informed the Township Committee that he would be following up with Hatch Mott MacDonald concerning the status of this phase of the project.

Community Rating System Program

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of the Community Rating System. Informed the Township Committee that he received a report from Bohler Engineering concerning the project, but had some comments and is awaiting a response from Bohler Engineering as to his comments.

Realignment of North Avenue and Springfield Avenue

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the proposed realignment of the intersection at North Avenue and Springfield Avenue. Explained that because work is needed in that area, a concept plan to realign the intersection was requested.

Mayor Kalnins discussed the Army Corps of Engineer study and explained that a concept plan for the proposed realignment of the intersection was suggested as part of regional flood control efforts.

Amendments to salary ordinance

Township Administrator Wall discussed proposed amendments to the salary ordinance, which include removing positions that are currently included in a separate salary ordinance, adding the newly established position of Special Law Enforcement Officer, and amending the salary range for Emergency Medical Technician and TV35 Station Manager.

Discussion held as to additional positions that could be removed from the ordinance

Mayor Kalnins suggested an increase in the salaries for Mayor and Township Committee members to \$6,000 and \$5,000 respectively.

Discussion held.

Mayor Kalnins and Deputy Mayor Adubato stated that they would support an increase in the salaries. Commissioners O'Connor, D'Ambola and Hannen stated that they were opposed to an increase.

Township Code

Township Attorney Dabulas discussed the Township Committee's decision to move forward with a recodification of the Township Code. Explained that she has been meeting with Department Managers and reviewing the code to determine which ordinances are no longer needed or require amendments. Discussed the ordinances recommended for introduction on March 24, 2015 and explained that they are related to the recodification process. Also explained that additional ordinances would be needed as the recodification process moves forward.

Commissioner Hannen discussed the proposed revisions to alarm regulations and feels the timeframe for payment before a lien is placed on the property should be extended.

The Township Committee was agreeable. The timeframe for payment would be extended to thirty (30) days.

Township Attorney Dabulas discussed proposed changes to the ordinances related to Alcoholic Beverage Control and personnel policies.

Discussion held regarding proposed amendments to the ordinance for peddling, canvassing and soliciting.

The Township Committee was agreeable to the introduction of all proposed ordinances on March 24, 2015.

Proposed crosswalk lighting project

Lieutenant Davenport discussed proposed crosswalk improvements at Walnut Avenue and South Union Avenue.

Discussion held as to the proposed cost for the improvements.

Discussion of cost proposals to be held in closed session because they relate to a potential contractual matter.

Late Starter – Army Corp of Engineer Study

Mayor Kalnins discussed a proposal submitted by Hatch Mott MacDonald for engineering services related to the Army Corps of Engineer Study.

The Township Committee was agreeable to funding in the amount of \$10,000.

Minute approval – Closed Session Minutes of March 9 and 10, 2015

On motion of Commissioner D'Ambola, seconded by Deputy Mayor Adubato and passed, the Closed Session Minutes of March 9 and 10, 2015 were approved by the indicated vote of the Township Committee.

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Kalnins, Deputy Mayor Adubato and Commissioners D'Ambola and O'Connor

Nay: None

Abstained: Commissioner Hannen

Absent: None

ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Township Administrator Wall

- Discussed the status of the 2015 Municipal Budget and Capital Budget;
- Informed the Township Committee that all performance reviews of Department Managers have been completed;
- Discussed the status of contracts for recycling services and custodial services at the parking garage;
- Discussed interviews being conducted for the vacant position in the Department of Public Works.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner O'Connor

- Announced that the Cranford Community Connection is partnering with the Municipal Alliance. Also announced that the Cranford Community Connection would be conducting a barbeque with the Police and Fire Departments.

Commissioner D'Ambola

- Discussed a summary he received from the Township's insurance company regarding the Pepperidge Tree. The insurance company feels the tree must be removed due to liability. Also informed the Township Committee of the Tree Advisory Board's position concerning the removal of the tree and stated that a majority of the Tree Advisory Board agreed that the tree should be removed. Discussed his concerns with the tree and feels it should be removed. Also feels the Township Committee needs to make a decision concerning this matter.

Tina Helmstetter, Tree Advisory Board, discussed reports provided by tree experts concerning the Pepperidge Tree. Stated that while all of the reports indicate that the tree would fail, explained that the term "fail" is used for all trees since they are living things. Stated that some experts have indicated that the Pepperidge Tree is low risk and discussed remediation options to reduce risk further, such as installing cables and braces. Stated that the only report that indicated that the Pepperidge Tree was high risk was the report provided by Maser Consulting. Explained that aesthetic defects do not mean the tree is structurally unsound. Discussed weather events this past winter which did not impact the tree. Feels the tree should not be removed. Also discussed the Tree Advisory Board's vote on the matter and feels most members do not have expertise on this subject because only one member has attended classes on trees.

Commissioner O'Connor discussed the report prepared by Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories concerning the Pepperidge Tree. The report indicated that while the risk might be low as to a potential failure of the tree, if a failure does occur, the consequences would be severe. The report also indicated that remediation is only temporary and would not guarantee that failure would not occur. Suggested the Township Committee conduct another review of this report before making a decision.

Township Administrator Wall discussed the potential for installing a fence around the tree until a decision is made.

Commissioner Hannen feels the tree should remain and suggested the installation of a black aluminum fence to protect the area around the tree. Feels the Department of Public Works could install the fence.

Deputy Mayor Adubato feels the tree should be removed and discussed her concerns with liability because of the tree's close proximity to a playground.

Mayor Kalnins feels the Township Committee should move forward with steps to remove the tree.

Deputy Mayor Adubato

- Discussed the 2015 Municipal Budget and thanked Chief Financial Officer Patterson for her efforts with the budget.

Mayor Kalnins

- Discussed his attendance at a meeting in Washington DC with members of the Rahway River Mayors Council to thank legislators for their support for flood control efforts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

On motion of Commissioner Hannen, seconded by Commissioner O'Connor and passed, the following resolution was adopted by roll call vote:

Resolution No. 2015-10:

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:

Contractual

- Shelter Agreement
- Oriental Pacific Maintenance Co.
- CWA Teamsters Local 469
- Engineering services

Real Estate

- Potential sale of Township property

Minute Review

- Review of Closed Session Minutes of March 9 and 10, 2015

Personnel

- Various Departments
- Fire Department

Recorded vote:

Aye: Mayor Kalnins, Deputy Mayor Adubato, Commissioners D'Ambola, O'Connor and Hannen

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

Mayor Kalnins and Commissioner Hannen departed the meeting at 11:05 PM due to potential conflicts of interest.

On motion of Commissioner D'Ambola seconded by Commissioner 'C and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 11:20 PM.

On motion of Commissioner D'Ambola, seconded by Commissioner O'Connor and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tara Rowley, RMC
Municipal Clerk

Dated: March 23, 2015