

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **December 14, 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 Mary O'Connor  
Commissioner Robert D'Ambola  
Commissioner Patrick F. Giblin  
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. Hearing no comments, Mayor Kalnins closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

### **Review Official Meeting Agenda**

#### **Payment of Bills**

Commissioner Hannen discussed payments to Appraisal Associates. Stated that it was his understanding that the Tax Assessor would be handling appraisals and questioned the need for this service.

Township Administrator Wall explained that the Tax Assessor is conducting assessments but uses an outside service for certain appraisals. Also stated he would follow up to determine if there is an appeal in State court. If so, that would be another reason for using an outside appraiser.

Commissioner Hannen also questioned a payment for engineering services with respect to building review costs.

Township Engineer O'Brien explained that the initial cost pertained to an individual building review per application. These reviews have since been compiled and billed quarterly.

Commissioner Hannen questioned costs charged to the Buildings and Grounds account for the parking garage.

Township Administrator Wall stated that he would follow up.

Commissioner Hannen feels a determination should be made as to whether the developer should be responsible for a portion of the costs related to the parking garage.

Commissioner Hannen requested clarification of payments to Davie Shoring, Inc.

Township Attorney Dabulas confirmed that the payment should be made.

Township Administrator Wall discussed a payment to Paley Construction for services specific to de-silting of the Rahway River.

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed work associated with the cost to Paley Construction.

Commissioner Hannen feels the return of escrow to Needlepoint Homes should be held until the requirement for an affordable housing unit is met.

Chief Financial Officer Patterson explained that Planning and Zoning Director Hudak would make a determination as to whether requirements have been met before submitting a requisition for the return of escrow.

Commissioner Hannen feels the checklist for planning and zoning applications should include compliance with affordable housing requirements.

Discussion held.

Township Attorney Dabulas to follow up.

Resolution No. 2015-411:

Commissioner Hannen questioned Resolution No. 2015-411 which authorizes an amendment to Aton Computing, Inc. for Information Technology services.

Township Attorney Dabulas explained that an additional \$10,000 for this service is required, for a total cost of \$45,500. The language in the resolution indicates that an additional \$45,500 is needed, which is incorrect and should be amended.

Township Administrator Wall discussed the need for additional funds for Information Technology services.

Commissioner Hannen requested clarification as to the process in place in the Edmunds system to prevent the over-expenditure of contracts.

Chief Financial Officer Patterson discussed efforts to track costs and explained that they are being monitored monthly to determine if the actual cost is running close to the amount authorized.

Mayor Kalnins explained that contracts are over-expended when work is authorized without increasing the blanket purchase order or entering a requisition. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure sufficient funds remain in the contract before authorizing additional work.

Discussion held.

Commissioner Hannen recommended that Township Administrator Wall, Chief Financial Officer Patterson and Commissioner Giblin meet to discuss a strategy to prevent the over-expenditure of contracts.

Resolution No. 2015-401

Chief Financial Officer Patterson discussed the resolution authorizing the cancellation of receivables. Explained that all recommended cancellations were investigated and all pertain to grant awards that have been closed out or expired. Also explained that this action has been recommended by the Township's auditor.

Discussion held.

Commissioner Hannen suggested the Township Committee receive a report at the end of January as to balances remaining from 2015 grant awards in order to utilize those funds.

Chief Financial Officer Patterson to provide a report at the end of January.

**Ordinance No. 2015-37 – Ordinance to amend Land Development Ordinance as respects pipelines.**

Mayor Kalnins discussed the Planning Board's recommendation regarding Ordinance 2015-27.

Township Attorney Dabulas does not feel the recommended changes are substantive and would not require republication of the ordinance.

Ordinance No. 2015-37 to be amended as per the Planning Board's recommendation on December 15, 2015.

**Engineering update**North Avenue Station Pedestrian Improvement Project

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of the North Avenue Station Pedestrian Improvement Project and informed the Township Committee that the project is complete with the exception of punch list items. Also informed the Township Committee that the traffic signal was installed and became operational this morning.

MDTV Building

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the resolution to authorize a contract to Maser Consulting for NJDOT Driveway Access Permit Services in connection with the MDTV Building.

Orchard Brook

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed Maser Consulting's proposal with respect to the Orchard Brook Project.

Discussion held regarding previous survey work done and the new requirements for the project as per the Department of Protection.

### High Street & Maple Place Drainage Improvements

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the High Street & Maple Place Drainage Improvement Project. Informed the Township Committee that the project has been finalized and would be reviewed by the Township Administrator and the Department of Public Works for funding through the 2016 Capital Budget.

### 2016 Paving Project

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed roads that were recently completed and those next on the schedule, weather permitting, in connection with the 2015 Paving Project. Explained that once the weather changes and paving cannot continue, curbing and sanitary sewer work would be conducted.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor discussed the need for handicap access at Eastman Street by the underpass.

### Community Rating System

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of the Township's participation in the Community Rating System and the resolution authorizing a contract to Maser Consulting for services specific to the project.

### Elizabethtown Gas

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed roads to be paved by Elizabethtown Gas Company.

### De-Silting of the Rahway River

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed areas along the river he has recommended for de-silting. This would also include working with Union County to repair the dam.

### Twin Oaks

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the Twin Oaks development project and informed the Township Committee that he has received information from the developer's engineer. This information would be reviewed and a recommendation would be made to the Township Committee as to the next steps.

### Rehabilitation Plan-North Avenue from Centennial Avenue to Alden Street

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the MDTV property and the potential designation of the property as an area in need of rehabilitation.

Township Administrator Wall explained that now that the Township owns the property, a determination as to the use of the property is necessary.

### Municipal impervious surface reduction

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the parking lot near Roosevelt Park that could be converted to open space. If the Township Committee is agreeable, the Department of Public Works could handle this project. However if the Township Committee wants the property to remain as a parking lot and change the surface to a material that is pervious, a design would be necessary.

Mayor Kalnins feels the consensus is to continue to use the space as a parking lot and change the surface.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor discussed safety concerns with the use of this property as a parking lot because there is no crosswalk from the parking lot to Roosevelt Park. Feels the Township Committee should consider converting it to open space.

Discussion held.

Commissioner Giblin suggested the Roosevelt Park Committee be included in this decision. Also suggested that Township Engineer O'Brien review the area of Orange Avenue near Roosevelt Park for paving because this portion of the roadway has deteriorated.

The Township Committee was agreeable to Commissioner Giblin's suggestion and requested that he follow up with the Roosevelt Park Committee.

### Abandoned properties

Commissioner D'Ambola discussed the current list of abandoned properties in the Township and feels the Township Committee needs to be diligent with respect to property maintenance enforcement. Also discussed his suggestion for the issuance of a daily fine for those in violation of property maintenance regulations.

Discussion held.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor discussed abandoned properties that were not included on the list.

Commissioner D'Ambola to follow up with the Property Maintenance Enforcement Officer.

### **Minute approval – Closed Session Minutes of November 23 and 24, 2015**

On motion of Deputy Mayor O'Connor, seconded by Commissioner D'Ambola and passed, the Closed Session Minutes of November 23 and 24, 2015 were approved by indicated vote of the Township Committee.

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

## **ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

### **Township Administrator Wall**

- Discussed the completion of the North Avenue Pedestrian Improvement Project;
- Discussed the Community Rating System;
- Discussed the 2016 Municipal Budget and the need for the Township Committee to determine the upcoming budget process;
- Announced that the next staff meeting is December 16, 2015;
- Informed the Township Committee that he is meeting with each department to determine their goals and objectives for 2016.

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

### **Commissioner Hannen**

#### **Community Rating System**

Commissioner Hannen discussed the Community Rating System in connection with emergency notifications and requested clarification as to the entity that would be responsible for handling emergency notifications.

Township Administrator Wall explained that emergency notifications are being handled by his office and the Township Engineer.

#### **Water Main break**

Commissioner Hannen also discussed the water main break that occurred on Thanksgiving and asked for information regarding costs for overtime.

Mayor Kalnins explained that the water company would be responsible for the Township's overtime costs, but the homeowners who were flooded as a result of the water main break would need to file a claim against the water company in order to be reimbursed.

### **Mayor Kalnins**

#### **2016 Budget**

Mayor Kalnins discussed the 2016 Municipal Budget and referred to Township Administrator Wall's comments concerning the budget process. Feels department managers should attend Township Committee Workshop Meetings to present their budgets.

Further discussion concerning the 2016 Municipal Budget to be held January 25, 2016.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Barbara Krause, 20 Pittsfield Street, discussed the Tree Advisory Board and recommendations for a tree prevention and replacement ordinance. Listed various municipalities that have adopted this type of ordinance. Also discussed a recommendation to hire a part time Certified Tree Expert (CTE). Feels there is a need to identify the number of trees that are lost on private property and explained that this is done through the adoption of an ordinance. The Tree Advisory Board is requesting that funds for the salary of a CTE be included in 2016 Municipal Budget for the Department of Public Works. Informed the Township Committee of the recent removal of trees at a property located on North Avenue. Also discussed Trinity Church's application before the Zoning Board which includes the removal of trees as part of the project. Feels the church's plan to replace these trees is inadequate and a CTE could provide guidance on tree replacement.

Commissioner D'Ambola discussed his efforts and the efforts of the Tree Advisory Board concerning the adoption of a tree replacement ordinance. Stated that the latest version of the ordinance would be provided to the Township Clerk for distribution to the Township Committee. Also feels a CTE should be required to attend Planning Board and Zoning Board meetings.

Mrs. Krause thanked Commissioner D'Ambola for his efforts.

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

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

**Resolution No. 2015-105.39:**

**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:

**Personnel**

- Salary increases-various departments
- Downtown Business and Economic Development Office
- Office of Planning and Zoning
- 2016 appointments to committees, boards and commissions

**Contractual**

- MDTV Property
- 216 Professional Services

**Legal**

- CDA v. Township of Cranford
- Riverfront Developers v. Planning Board

**Minute Review**

- Closed Session Minutes of November 23 and 24, 2015

**Recorded vote:**

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

On motion of Commissioner D'Ambola seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Connor and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 12:55 PM.

On motion of Commissioner D'Ambola, seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Connor and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 12:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tara Rowley, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

Dated: December 14, 2015