

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **June 27, 2016** 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 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 AUCTION MAY BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING.

Present: Mayor Andis Kalnins
Deputy Mayor Mary O'Connor
Commissioner John Mallon
Commissioner Patrick F. Giblin
*Commissioner Thomas H. Hannen, Jr.

Absent: None

*Commissioner Hannen arrived at 7:35 PM.

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

Ordinance No. 2016-17:

Commissioner Mallon requested clarification of Ordinance No. 2016-17 which authorizes funding for improvements to Orange Avenue and Centennial Avenue Pools.

Commissioner Hannen explained that improvements are intended for Centennial Avenue Pool only, and they are based upon a five-year plan.

Mayor Kalnins discussed a bond ordinance adopted in 2015 for improvements to Centennial Avenue Pool and explained that the debt authorized through these bond ordinances are paid through the Swim Pool Utility.

Resolution No. 2016-238:

Commissioner Giblin requested clarification of Resolution No. 2016-238 which authorizes an award of contract for engineering services for field improvements.

Mayor Kalnins explained that the contract pertains to improvements to Memorial Field.

Payment of Bills:

Commissioner Hannen requested clarification of an item on the bills list related to the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH).

Township Administrator Wall to follow up.

Pedestrian Safety Presentation

Thomas O'Brien, DMC Chairperson, discussed the presentation to be made involving long-term objectives for Downtown Cranford and introduced DMC member Anthony Durante, who would discuss these goals, specifically pertaining to pedestrian improvements and safety.

Anthony Durante presented an agenda for Downtown Cranford which focuses on pedestrian safety and improvements. Discussed areas for improvement, such as pedestrian safety, access and aesthetics and ways to address these issues. Feels the next step would be to consider funding for planning. Discussed the timeframe and feels the planning phase would require two (2) to three (3) years, and discussed funding opportunities through certain programs. Feels the timeframe for engineering would be approximately one (1) to two (2) years, and two (2) to five (5) years for construction, for a total of approximately five (5) to ten (10) years for a complete project. Requested that the Township Committee support these efforts, consider pilot projects that are available, and act on land use by designating appropriate properties as areas in need of rehabilitation and/or redevelopment.

Mayor Kalnins stated that he would support long-term efforts but feels short-term goals also need to be considered, such as paver repair and tree replacement.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor discussed the potential for realigning the striping at the intersection of North Avenue and North Union Avenue to improve pedestrian safety. Also discussed pedestrian improvements scheduled for Walnut Avenue.

Commissioner Hannen feels the biggest complaint from residents is getting across town. Also discussed county and state highways that cross through Downtown Cranford and asked how pedestrian safety is balanced with traffic flow.

Mr. Durante feels traffic timing would not change, but the intersections are larger than necessary for cars to make turns. In addition, large intersections and wide roadways provide vehicles with the ability to travel at higher speeds, which is not appropriate for a downtown area. Feels narrowing roadways and intersections would allow for improved pedestrian crossing, and would have little impact on traffic flow.

Commissioner Giblin requested clarification as to the next step in this process.

Mr. Durante discussed planning workshops that would be needed and an application that would ultimately be required for submission to the NJ Transportation Planning Authority (TPA).

Business and Economic Development Director Prunty discussed the workshop program and explained that Township Committee support is required in order to participate in the workshops.

Mr. O'Brien feels this is an ambitious, bi-partisan project. Stated that if the DMC is to be involved in this initiative, the Township Committee should adopt a resolution outlining the DMC's role. Feels it is necessary to have a historical record of the DMC's role.

Mayor Kalnins stated that he agrees with Mr. O'Brien and basic standards should be determined.

The Township Committee was agreeable to the DMC's participation in the planning workshops. Mr. Durante to draft a resolution to be considered by the Township Committee at a future meeting.

Engineering update

Orchard Brook

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of the Orchard Brook project and the outreach meeting that took place with impacted residents on June 15, 2016. Explained that the next step is to hold a pre-application meeting with DEP. Feels this would occur within the next few weeks.

Commissioner Hannen requested a copy of design information for the upcoming Flood Advisory Board Meeting.

NJDOT Municipal Aid Grant Application-FY 2015-Lincoln Avenue East, Section 4

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of improvements to Lincoln Avenue East, Section 4, and informed the Township Committee that milling is currently underway and paving would be completed on Friday.

Discussion was held as to the time of day that roadwork is conducted.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor expressed concern with the impact paving would have to traffic flow in the morning.

Commissioner Giblin suggested a message be sent out through Nixle the night before work is scheduled to begin.

NJDEP/NJEIT – Fiscal Year 2016 Clean Water and Drinking Water (Environmental Infrastructure)

Township Engineer O'Brien informed the Township Committee that information was provided to bond counsel for preparation of a bond ordinance for funding of Phase 2B of the Northeast Quadrant Storm Water Management Project.

High Street and Maple Place Drainage concerns

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed drainage improvements at High Street and Maple Place and informed the Township Committee that construction began today.

2015 Paving Program

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of the 2015 Paving Program and informed the Township Committee that the area under the trestle at Walnut Avenue is the final roadway to be completed in this program. Explained that work would occur during the evening and should be complete after the 4th of July. Further explained that coordination with the electrical contractor is needed before the start date for work can be confirmed.

Elizabethtown Gas Company Utility Upgrades

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed utility upgrades to be conducted by Elizabethtown Gas and informed the Township Committee of roadways that were paved. A new list of roadways is currently being coordinated with Elizabethtown Gas.

Twin Oaks

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the status of the Twin Oaks development project and informed the Township Committee that the Homeowners Association has some concerns with some outstanding items. Explained that some of the concerns expressed by the Homeowners Association are not the responsibility of the developer and he is attempting to resolve all issues.

Late Starter – Clark Street

Commissioner Giblin discussed an issue on Clark Street in connection with paving that occurred over sump pumps.

Township Engineer O'Brien stated that he is aware of the issue and he is working on a solution with the Elizabethtown Gas Company and the contractor.

2016 Paving Project

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the 2016 Paving Program and informed the Township Committee that a resolution for engineering design services is included on the Official Meeting agenda for the Township Committee's consideration.

Commissioner Giblin discussed the schedule for paving of Orange Avenue and requested that the work be expedited to avoid construction when school is in session.

Township Engineer O'Brien does not feel paving will be completed before September, but feels it could be scheduled when school is closed for holidays.

Discussion was held regarding the scheduling of construction during the hours between drop-off and pickup of students.

Township Administrator Wall discussed the award of contract for the 2016 Paving Program, Lincoln Avenue (Section 5) improvements and field improvements and the fact that approval of these contracts is subject to the expiration of the estoppel period.

Commissioner Mallon requested input from Township Engineer O'Brien as to the timeframe needed for approval of the capital budget that would allow work on paving and other projects to begin earlier in the year.

Township Engineer O'Brien feels the Township Committee should target for adoption of its capital budget in February, which would allow paving and other projects to begin in the spring.

Mayor Kalnins feels clarification is needed as to whether a bond ordinance could be adopted prior to the adoption of the municipal budget.

Township Administrator Wall to follow up with bond counsel.

Update re: US Army Corps of Engineers Tentatively Selected Planning Meeting

Township Engineer O'Brien discussed the plan recommended by the US Army Corps of Engineers for flood control in Cranford. Explained that the proposed project would address a twenty-five (25) year storm and would allow many residents to be removed from the flood zone. Also discussed channel modifications being considered to the Orange Reservoir and the timeline for this project. In addition, Township Engineer O'Brien discussed a project being considered by the Army Corps of Engineers for the City of Rahway.

Commissioner Hannen discussed options that were considered by the Army Corps of Engineers and explained that the channel modifications to the Orange Reservoir that are proposed would not be considered until March of 2018, and are not as beneficial to Cranford as other options, such as improvements to the Lenape Basin. Feels the Township Committee needs to carefully consider its endorsement of these projects. Also suggested that the Township Committee work with Union County to discuss the potential for improvements to Lenape Basin.

Maureen Strazdon, Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB) member, informed the Township Committee that she was contacted by a representative of the Army Corps of Engineers who requested HPAB's assistance with identifying historical properties that might be impacted by these projects. There was also a request that HPAB consider an agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers for this work, and requested direction from the Township Committee.

Commissioner Hannen discussed an issue with Sperry Park and believes this issue might be why the Army Corps of Engineers contacted HPAB.

Mayor Kalnins feels the identification of historical properties could be conducted by HPAB, but does not feel an agreement should be signed without consultation with appropriate Township officials.

Proposed amendment to ordinance re: hours of operation for businesses

Deputy Mayor O'Connor discussed a proposal to amend the ordinance regulating the hours of operation for businesses. Feels discussion should be carried because Planning and Zoning Director Hudak was not available to attend tonight's meeting.

Township Attorney Dabulas feels there are legal ramifications related to an amendment of the ordinance and suggested that further discussion be held in closed session.

Proposed ordinance to amend Construction Code fees

Mayor Kalnins discussed the ordinance to amend construction code fees. Informed the Township Committee that he is not comfortable with the proposal and requested input from other members of the Township Committee.

Commissioner Mallon discussed the need for input by the DMC with respect to the proposed amendments.

Discussion was held.

Township Administrator Wall to forward proposed ordinance to the DMC for review and input.

Proposal to remove Cranford West cabins

Commissioner Giblin discussed a proposal to remove the cabins from Cranford West.

Department of Public Works Superintendent Steven Wardell stated that he visited the site to determine if the Department of Public Works (DPW) could do the work. Feels it could be done by DPW and would take approximately one (1) week. Also informed the Township Committee that an agreement with Warren County would be needed to move forward with removal of the cabins.

Discussion was held.

Mayor Kalnins discussed the fact that the Cranford West Committee supports the removal of the cabins.

Discussion was held.

Parks and Recreation Director Stephen Robertazzi to provide a written plan for removal of the cabins.

Commissioner Mallon suggested an announcement be made in case there is an organization interested in restoring the cabins.

Commissioner Giblin feels the Cranford West Committee is the most appropriate group to handle this matter.

Mayor Kalnins feels Parks and Recreation Director Robertazzi could also be involved and the information could be posted on the Township's website.

Late Starter – Cranford Conservation Center

Department of Public Works Superintendent Steven Wardell discussed improvements needed to the entrance road to the Cranford Conservation Center. Feels the project could be funded through the Recycling Trust account.

The Township Committee was agreeable to the request

Commissioner Mallon discussed a proposal to change the hours for the Conservation Center to make them more consistent year round.

Department of Public Works Superintendent Steven Wardell feels the current hours are confusing to residents and discussed the proposed hours and financial impact.

The Township Committee was agreeable to the proposal.

Department of Public Works Superintendent Steven Wardell also discussed a request for additional personnel that would be needed to cover the new hours.

The Township Committee was agreeable.

Minute approval – Closed Session Minutes of June 13, 2016

On motion of Commissioner Hannen, seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Connor and passed, the Closed Session Minutes of June 13, 2016 were approved by indicated vote of the Township Committee.

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Hannen

Commissioner Hannen informed the Township Committee that the Board of Education would be discussing the turf field at a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 29, 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, provided an update on behalf of the Union County Air Traffic Noise Committee. Discussed notification for those wishing to submit complaints about airplane noise that was included on TV35 and the Township's website and discussed complaints that were submitted by residents. Also discussed other impacted municipalities. Informed the Township Committee that there is a plan to address the issue but it would not occur for approximately two (2) years and would not help with the current situation. Feels the issue impacting Cranford relates to the altitude of planes. Requested that the Township Committee submit a letter to Congressman Lance, Assemblyman Bramnick, the Port Authority and the Federal Aviation Administration concerning this issue.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor stated that she contacted Assemblyman Bramnick, Assemblywoman Munoz, Senator Kean and Freeholder Kowalski and forwarded Freeholder Kowalski the complaints that were submitted to the Township.

Maureen Strazdon, Historic Preservation Advisory Board, thanked the Township Committee for contacting them for input regarding the request by Cranford Florist to rent a room and renovate the Coal House. Explained that the Coal House is related to the Round House, which is historically significant because it is one of last round houses existing in the State of New Jersey. Requested an opportunity for the HPAB to work with Cranford Florist as to a design that is appropriate to Cranford and to the history of the building.

The Township Committee was agreeable to the request.

Township Administrator Wall to contact Cranford Florist.

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

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

Resolution No. 2016-98.14:

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

- MDTV Building

Personnel

- Various Departments
- Finance Department
- Municipal Court
- Police Department

Legal

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

Contractual (continued)

- Request to vacate sidewalk

Minute Review

- Closed Session Minutes of June 13, 2016

Recorded vote:

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

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

On motion of Deputy Mayor O'Connor seconded by Commissioner Hannen and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 11:40 PM.

On motion of Deputy Mayor O'Connor, seconded by Commissioner Hannen and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 27, 2016

Tara Rowley, RMC
Municipal Clerk