

DRAFT MINUTES

These are the Draft Minutes of the Agenda Conference of the North Plainfield Borough Council held on Monday, 28 March 2022.

Every attempt has been made to make these as comprehensive and conclusive as possible. However, as it is a draft document, it is not to be construed as a formal depiction of the official conduct of business and is subject to revision up to and following the Council's actual approval of same. If changes are necessary, revised minutes will be posted to the website.

MINUTES of the Agenda Conference of the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield held on Monday, **March 28, 2022** at 7:38 p.m. at the North Plainfield Community Center, 614 Greenbrook Road, North Plainfield, New Jersey.

PRESENT:

Council Members: Aimee Corzo
Suzette Given
Steven McIntyre
Everett Merrill, Council Vice President
Keiona R. Miller
Wendy Schaefer (absent – excused)
Frank “Skip” Stabile, Council President

Also Present: Lawrence La Ronde, Mayor
David Hollod, Business Administrator
Phil George, Esq., Associate Borough Attorney
Richard K. Phoenix, RMC, Borough Clerk
Stephanie Sherwood, RMC, CMR, Deputy Clerk

Council President Stabile read the following Notice of Compliance:

"This meeting is being held in compliance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. Adequate notice of this meeting was provided by transmitting notice to the official newspapers of the Borough, The Courier News, WKMB Radio, WJLP-TV, the Alternative Press and also to the Star Ledger on December 15, 2021 and by posting a copy of this notice on the bulletin boards in the Municipal Building and the Memorial Library reserved for such purpose."

The Pledge to the Flag was led by Mayor La Ronde.

All then joined in a moment of silence for the men and women serving in our Armed Forces. Mayor La Ronde asked for a moment of silence in honor of Richard Benson, a member of the Shade Tree Advisory Board since 2007, who recently passed away.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Parks and Recreation Department Briefing** – Dennis Jackson and Jenn DeJesso to be present – L.L. Dennis Jackson, Recreation Director, introduced himself to the Council members. He advised that he has been a North Plainfield resident for twenty-one years, spending twenty of those years as a coach or site supervisor for Recreation under Dennis Passe. Jenn DeJesso, Recreation Co-Director, introduced herself to the Council members. She advised that she began her career with Recreation as a camp counselor, eventually running the summer camp program and working as a site supervisor.

Mr. Jackson reported on the loss of Passe field due to Hurricane Ida, indicating that work would begin as soon as the weather allows. The Director spoke of the challenges ahead coming out of the pandemic, noting that kids have been somewhat idle for the last two years. Although turnout had been lower than they hoped, they were able to increase baseball sign-ups from 45 to 255 by going to the schools and engaging with the kids. He shared his plans to eventually add high school recreation programs.

Ms. DeJesso reported that summer camp registrations at this time last year stood at twenty, while seventy-six had been submitted this year already. Parents are quite satisfied with the program as every effort is made to ensure there are learning sessions as well as field trips. A slight increase in cost was implemented, although the program remains the most affordable option available for Borough families. She also noted that nearly ninety percent of the summer camp counselors were once camp participants.

Responding to Mr. McIntyre's inquiry, Mr. Jackson explained that after reaching out to Dr. Aquino, Superintendent of Schools, he met with the athletic director. They shared ideas relative to teaching specific skills to the kids at grade school level so that they may excel in middle school and high school. Mr. Merrill fondly referred to the Recreation Department as the "face of the Borough" and thanked them for a seamless transition. Mr. Jackson confirmed that they both work out of the Recreation building, probably spending more time there than home. He thanked the Department of Public Works for their assistance with the parks and Joe Asprocolas for his assistance with generating stronger wifi in the Community Center.

Council President Stabile inquired after an expansion in the summer camp program. Ms. DeJesso favored incorporating some form of learning for the kids, especially when field trips are planned. She stressed their efforts to keep the camp programs as varied as possible, particularly in back-to-back seasons. Responding to Ms. Miller's inquiry regarding background checks for coaches, Mr. Jackson confirmed that they are conducted every four years and the Rutgers safety class is required.

2. **National Poison Prevention Week** – K.R.M. Ms. Miller shared details regarding poison prevention efforts including information related to radon and the need to test for its presence.

According to data published by the National Safety Council "deaths from preventable poisoning numbered 87,404 in 2020, the most current data year. The death rate per 100,000

population was 26.5. Males are at greatest risk, with a death rate of 38.3 compared to 15.1 for females. Total poisoning deaths increased 32%, from 65,773 in 2019, and well over seven times the 1999 total.

"Carbon monoxide poisoning totaled 481 deaths in 2020, a decrease of 8% from 2019."

OLD BUSINESS: None.

REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS:

Mr. Merrill reported on the Board of Education's announcement that the field renovation project had come in about three million over budget and would need to be shelved for now.

Mr. McIntyre reported that he had joined the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership with their Green Brook Cleanup to keep garbage from flowing into the Atlantic. He thanked Mayor La Ronde for arranging for the removal of the trash.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. Given and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Borough Clerk

Council President