

DRAFT MINUTES

These are the Draft Minutes of the Agenda Conference of the Borough Council of North Plainfield, New Jersey held on Monday, 22 February 2016.

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 Governing Body'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, **February 22, 2016** at 7:33 p.m. at the North Plainfield Council Chambers, 263 Somerset Street, North Plainfield, New Jersey.

PRESENT:

Council Members: Everett Merrill (absent – excused)
Keiona R. Miller (absent – excused)
Frank Righetti (absent – excused)
Wendy Schaefer
Douglas M. Singleterry
Frank “Skip” Stabile
Lawrence La Ronde, Council President

Also Present: Michael Giordano, Jr., Mayor
David E. Hollod, Business Administrator
Dominic DiYanni, Esq., Associate Borough Attorney
Richard K. Phoenix, RMC, Borough Clerk

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Mr. La Ronde.

Council President La Ronde requested a moment of silence for the men and women serving in our Armed Forces.

The Council President read the following Notice of Compliance:

"This is an Agenda Meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield, scheduled by resolution of the Council adopted on December 14, 2015. Adequate notice of this meeting was given pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.* by transmitting said notice to the *Courier News*, *The Star-Ledger*, *The Alternative Press* and *WKMB* Radio on December 15, 2015, by publication of the announcement in the *Courier News* of December 17, 2015 and by posting a copy of this notice on the bulletin boards in the Municipal Building and Memorial Library reserved for such purpose."

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Carlos Cobo, 7 Wilson Avenue, North Plainfield, shared his concerns with the Police Department contracting with a tow company located in South Plainfield.

Frank D'Amore, Sr., 40 Willow Avenue, North Plainfield, inquired as to why the council did not adopt a resolution commending the North Plainfield High School ROTC and school staff for their outstanding work in the Four Days of Valor at Gettysburg project as he had requested in January of 2015. As previously requested in February of 2015, the speaker urged for the incorporation of Borough e-mail addresses for all Council members to ensure transparency. As requested in April of 2015, Mr. D'Amore noted that the council had not conducted an investigation at 51-53 Willow Avenue for a violation of ordinance 22-122. He further noted that there had been no council investigation at 167 Sycamore Avenue for a violation of ordinance 22-122 as requested in August of 2015.

Francine Gargano, 57 Willow Avenue, North Plainfield, stressed her displeasure upon learning that the library had authorized the removal and destruction of numerous books, most notably the New Jersey Statutes Annotated series, which would cost upwards of \$5,000 to replace.

James McGarry, 347 Glendale Road, North Plainfield, commended the Department of Public Works for their efforts with the snow removal throughout town.

Diane Churchill, Friends of the Watchung Library, advised that tens of thousands of books and materials had been deleted from the Somerset County Library System without patron input.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Somerset County Library Personnel** – D.E.H. (Brian Auger, Lynn Hoffman and Jim McGarry were present). Mr. McGarry, Chairman of the Somerset County Library Commission, introduced Executive Director, Brian Auger and Director of Operations, Lynn Hoffman. Ms. Hoffman stressed that all print materials are not being eliminated and noted that the North Plainfield collection had grown by approximately four percent over the past five years. She reported on the structured review process of materials before elimination.

Voicing his concerns with the decrease in library materials in both 2014 and 2015, Mr. Stabile noted the increase in empty shelf space. Mr. Auger advised of a planned redesign to the upstairs adult reading section of the library and introduced Keith McCoy to further explain. Mr. McCoy explained the plans to renovate the adult space which would include quiet spaces as well as spaces where people can talk. Mr. Stabile reminded that library circulation is a bellwether of the economy.

Explaining that research materials may not be physically checked out of the library, Mr. Singleterry noted that this does not diminish their importance. Agreeing with the councilman,

Ms. Hoffman advised of the increased use of computers as reference tools. Mr. Stabile urged for a central location for printed reference materials.

2. **2016 Budget Presentation** – D.E.H. Chief Financial Officer Patrick DeBlasio was present for the discussion. Mr. DeBlasio announced a March 28 Budget adoption date. The Annual Financial Statement had been filed on January 31, he reported. Advising of a 98.35% tax collection rate, he reported that the average homeowner should expect a \$40.00 increase. Responding to Mr. Singleterry, Mr. DeBlasio confirmed that the 2016 Budget is approximately \$200,000 less than the 2015 Budget.

3. **Municipal Alliance Committee / Youth Services Commission** – L.L.R. Mr. La Ronde discussed the possibility of combining the Municipal Alliance Committee and the Youth Services Commission due to their individual difficulties with adequate numbers of volunteers.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Noise Ordinance(s)** – F.S.S. Reporting that the council had received the draft ordinance for review, Mr. Stabile noted that he was pleased with Chief Parenti's input. He advised that Mr. George would re-draft the ordinance to deal with festival permitting to have rules and regulations put into place. Mr. La Ronde anticipated a March 14 introduction.

REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS:

Mr. La Ronde reported that both the Municipal Alliance Committee and the Youth Services Commission would meet Tuesday, February 23.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Stabile, seconded by Ms. Schaefer and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Borough Clerk

Council President