

# **DRAFT MINUTES**

***These are the Draft Minutes of the Agenda Conference of the North Plainfield Borough Council held on Monday, 27 January 2020.***

***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, **January 27, 2020** at 7:38 p.m. at the North Plainfield Council Chambers, 263 Somerset Street, North Plainfield, New Jersey.

**PRESENT:**

Council Members: Aimee Corzo  
Lawrence La Ronde  
Everett Merrill  
Keiona R. Miller  
Wendy Schaefer  
Douglas M. Singleterry  
Frank "Skip" Stabile, Council President

Also Present: Michael Giordano, Jr., Mayor  
David Hollod, Business Administrator  
Eric M. Bernstein, Esq., Borough Attorney  
Richard K. Phoenix, RMC, Borough Clerk  
Stephanie Sherwood, RMC, CMR, Deputy Clerk

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Ms. Miller.

Council President Stabile 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 November 18, 2019. 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*, *WJLP-TV* and *WKMB* Radio on November 19, 2019,

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:**

Frank D'Amore, Sr., 40 Willow Avenue, North Plainfield, commented on the Vacant Property Ordinance, calling to question its intended use. Citing 120 Sycamore Avenue as an example, the speaker shared his concerns with the property's deterioration. He asked that the vacant property registration fees be used for repairs after which a lien may be placed against the property.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Vacant Property Ordinance** – W.S. Ms. Schaefer advised that the update to the ordinance would allow for easier enforcement by property maintenance. Houses with for sale and/or for rent signs would no longer be exempt from registering, she concluded.
2. **OPRA Study Commission** – F.S.S. Mr. Phoenix explained that the 2002 Open Public Records Act allows for public access to government records. Although the original intent of OPRA was transparency in government, it has morphed into an unfunded state mandate. With each new court decision rendered, municipal clerks must adhere to new guidelines concerning their responses to the requests. Due to the increased volume of requests, certain municipalities have hired and assigned an individual with the sole task of handling OPRA requests. The Municipal Clerks' Association of New Jersey has requested an OPRA study commission to better define the parameters of the existing statute. Mr. Merrill inquired after the amount of time allowed for a response; Mr. Bernstein confirmed it to be seven business days. Mr. Phoenix noted that the statute allows for a written extension of time with which to respond to requests.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS:**

Mr. Merrill reported that the Recreation Department will sponsor a basketball game between the Harlem Wizards and the North Plainfield Canucks on Saturday, February 22 at 5:30 p.m. to benefit Project Graduation. The Recreation Department entered into a pilot agreement with a firm to help them advertise certain events throughout the year, he concluded.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. La Ronde, seconded by Ms. Miller and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

---

Borough Clerk

---

Council President