

# ***DRAFT MINUTES***

*These are the Draft Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
of the North Plainfield Borough Council held on Monday, 25 April 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 Regular Meeting of the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield held on Monday, **April 25, 2022** at 9:05 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  
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."

Mayor La Ronde acknowledged the following Mayoral appointments:

**APPOINTMENTS BY MAYOR NOT REQUIRING COUNCIL CONFIRMATION:**

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE:**

04/25/22

Fredeswinda Sepulveda

Unexpired three-year term

APPOINTMENTS BY MAYOR REQUIRING COUNCIL CONFIRMATION:

RECYCLING COORDINATOR:

Stephanie Sherwood

Unexpired one-year term

The Clerk had submitted copies of the minutes of the Agenda Conference and Regular Meeting of March 28, 2022.

The Council President called for a roll call on the minutes:

Aye: Corzo, Given, McIntyre, Merrill, Miller, Stabile

Abstain: Schaefer

Mr. Merrill presented the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-01** BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of North Plainfield that an Ordinance numbered 22-03 be read by its title by the Borough Clerk and be passed on its first reading and advertised as required by statute, fixing May 9, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, as the time and the North Plainfield Community Center, 614 Greenbrook Road, North Plainfield, New Jersey as the place for hearing and final adoption.

Seconded by Ms. Miller and on roll call carried unanimously.

The Clerk read the ordinance by its title:

**ORDINANCE NO. 22-03** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND, REVISE AND SUPPLEMENT CHAPTER 7A OF THE BOROUGH CODE, ENTITLED "TRAFFIC SCHEDULES," MOST NOTABLY: SECTION 7A-25, ENTITLED "SECTION 7A-25 SCHEDULE XXV: ON-STREET PARKING RESERVED FOR POLICE VEHICLES"

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Council President Stabile stated that all matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine in nature and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If any discussion is desired by Council, that particular item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Ms. Schaefer presented the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-02** BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield that resolutions numbered

04-25-22-02 a, b, c, d, e, f

having been placed on the Consent Agenda and there having been no objection thereto, the same are hereby approved.

Seconded by Mr. Merrill and on roll call carried unanimously.

**APPROVED CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-02a** RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND BOROUGH CLERK TO ACCEPT A PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY FAI-GON ELECTRIC IN RESPONSE TO BID SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE SOMERSET STREET SIGNALIZATION IMPROVEMENT RELATED TO THE 2021 CAPITAL ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Borough of North Plainfield is in need of certain improvements to roadways throughout the Borough as part of the Borough's 2021 Capital Road Improvement Program; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough of North Plainfield retained Grotto Engineering Associates, LLC to prepare and publish public bid design documents for said road improvements, as well as providing bid support and construction administration/observation services related to the project; and,

WHEREAS, bid responses were received by the Borough of North Plainfield on March 10, 2022; and,

WHEREAS, Fai-Gon Electric Inc., 140 11<sup>th</sup> Street Piscataway, NJ 08854, has submitted the lowest responsible bid in the amount of \$418,211.88; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer, David Testa of Grotto Engineering Associates, LLC, as well as the Law Office of Eric M. Bernstein & Associates, Borough Attorney, have reviewed the bid responses and recommend that the project be awarded to Fai-Gon Electric Inc. as the lowest responsible bidder in the amount of \$418,211.88; and,

WHEREAS, the award of contract must be made within sixty (60) calendar days from the date of bid opening in accordance with Local Public Contracts Law; and,

WHEREAS, a copy of the bid response including bid tabulation documentation is attached hereto and made part of this Resolution; and,

WHEREAS, following the award of contract, Grotto Engineering will prepare contract documents, after review by the Director of Law and conduct a pre-construction meeting with the successful contractor, all appropriate Borough personnel and any affected utility companies. During the course of construction, Grotto will further provide construction observation and administrative services to ensure that the contractor is performing all construction in full accordance with the contract documents; and,

WHEREAS, Grotto Engineering will review and approve all payment applications submitted by the contractor before they are presented to the Borough for payment. As the project approaches completion, Grotto Engineering will provide the contractor with a detailed punch list of any and all items requiring repair and/or correction. Grotto Engineering will also prepare the final payment and closeout documents; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of North Plainfield, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey that the Borough Council hereby accepts the proposal submitted by Fai – Gon Electric Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$418,211.88 for services related to the 2021 Capital improvement Program for the Somerset Street Signalization Improvement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Council hereby authorizes the Mayor and the Borough Clerk to sign and/or execute a contract and all other necessary documents to engage the services of Fai – Gon Electric Inc.; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the award of this contract shall be subject to the certification of the Borough’s Chief Financial Officer as to the availability of funds for payment for same; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the award and the contract and its performance shall be consistent with all applicable laws, the Borough’s bid documents and the bid proposal of Fai – Gon Electric Inc., dated March 10, 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-02b** Resolution Supporting the 2022 UDrive. UText. UPay. Distracted Driving Crackdown April 1 - 30, 2022

Whereas, distracted driving is a serious, life-threatening practice that is preventable; and

Whereas, distracted driving can result in injuries and deaths to all road users (motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists); and

Whereas, distracted driving occurs when drivers divert their attention away from the task of driving to focus on another activity instead; and

Whereas, in 2018 alone distracted driving-related crashes resulted in 2,841 deaths and 400,000 injuries on our nation’s roads; and

Whereas, in New Jersey distracted driving was listed as a contributing circumstance in 50-percent of all motor vehicle crashes in 2018; and

Whereas, the State of New Jersey will participate in the nationwide *Distracted Driving 2022 Crackdown* from April 1 - 30, 2022 in an effort to raise awareness and decrease driver distraction through a combination of enforcement and education; and

Whereas, the national slogan for the campaign is UDrive. UText. UPay; and

Whereas, a reduction in distracted driving in New Jersey will save lives on our roadways;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Borough of North Plainfield declares its support for the *Distracted Driving 2022 Crackdown* both locally and nationally from April 1 - 30, 2022 and pledges to increase awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-02c** BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized and directed to create duplicate tax sale certificate(s) as follows:

Block 85 Lot 19 33 Pearl Street # 13-00136 issued 12/04/13

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-02d** REQUESTING APPROVAL OF INSERTION OF \$2,000.00 FOR THE 2022 BUDGET REVENUE AVAILABLE FROM THE STATE OF NJ-RADON AWARENESS PROGRAM GRANT

WHEREAS, N.J.S. 40:4-87 provides that the Director of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount thereof was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget, and

WHEREAS, said Director may also approve the insertion of any item of appropriation for equal amount.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Borough of North Plainfield hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget of the year 2022 in the sum of \$2,000.00 which item is now available as a revenue from the State of NJ-Radon Awareness Program Grant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a like sum of \$2,000.00 be and the same is hereby appropriated under the caption of:

State of NJ-Radon Awareness Program Grant

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-02e** BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield that STEPHANIE SHERWOOD be and hereby is appointed as RECYCLING COORDINATOR of this Borough to serve for the balance of an unexpired term expiring on December 31, 2022 and until her successor shall have been appointed and qualified.

**RESOLUTION NO. 04-25-22-02f** BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield that the attached bills of the accounts named and for the amounts stated, having been duly audited and found to be correct as of this 25<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2022 the same be paid; and that the Mayor and Chief Financial Officer are hereby authorized to sign and deliver warrants for the same.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

NJ League of Municipalities Trenton, NJ	Various Newsletters and Communications
Somerset County Bd. of Commissioners Somerville	Various Newsletters and Communications
Plainfield Area Humane Society Plainfield, NJ	Invoice and Reports
Somerset County Parks, Somerville	Spring Newsletter
NJ American Water Co., Voorhees, NJ	Newsdrop Newsletter
Somerset County Bd. Of Commissioners Somerville	Executed 2022 Tonnage Report Agreement
NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection Trenton	EMobility Incentive Bulletin
FEMA, Washington, DC	Newsletter
Office of State Comptroller, Trenton	Newsletter
Sam Redlich Law, LLC, Franklin Park, NJ	Request for Hearing and Reso.
Richard K. Phoenix, RMC – Borough Clerk Chief Operator, WPQJ970	Financial Disclosure Power Point Plenary Retail Renewal Power Point
North Plainfield	Borough Hall Open Announcement
NJ Office of Faith-Based Initiatives, Trenton	Women’s History Month Spotlight
Betsy G. Ramos, Esq.	NJ Public Entity
Capehart & Scatchard, Esqs., Mt. Laurel	Law Monthly
Tina Totten, North Plainfield	Green Brook Flood Control meeting notice
NJ Transit, Newark	Full Service restored to rail lines
NJ Local Technical Assistance Program New Brunswick	NJ Public Works Expo
NJ Office of Attorney General, Trenton	Renewal Conventions for ABC Licenses
Edward Zimmerman, Somerset County Governing Officials, Somerville	April Meeting, Governing Officials
Maureen Coxwell, Deputy County Clerk Somerville	Draft Primary Ballots, Updated Congressional District Map

### **REQUESTS FOR AGENDA ITEMS:**

Ms. Miller requested a resolution recognizing May as mental health awareness month and a resolution to be sent to the New Jersey Department of Transportation detailing the traffic concerns at the traffic light at Route 22 and Mountain Avenue. Mr. Stabile replied that he had been in touch with the Police Chief and NJ Dept. of Transportation on the topic.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ed Tobias, 125 Hardenburg Lane, East Brunswick NJ, indicated his interest in bringing a cannabis business to the Borough. Mr. George replied as to the appropriate steps involved in the process.

### **COMMENTS BY MAYOR, ADMINISTRATOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Mayor La Ronde commented on the recent Easter egg hunt. Over 200 (two hundred) eggs had been set out, which the children had captured in less than a couple of minutes. He toasted the success of the recent fishing derby with 75 (seventy-five) sign-ups, Recognizing the plastic shopping bag ban coming into effect on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the Mayor advised that permanent shopping bags would be given away free of charge by the Borough at future events as part of a grant. The Girl Scouts are also providing bags as a fundraiser. He reminded of Clean Community Day coming on May 7<sup>th</sup> and the Stigma-Free mental health program at the Community Center on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

The Council President remarked that Recreation and the Lions were looking for a source for a new barbeque grill.

Ms. Schaefer called for action on the Route 22/Mountain Avenue interchange. Mr. Stabile replied that there were more accidents on the Watchung side of the intersection, and that improvements would need to involve Watchung, North Plainfield and the State Dept. of Transportation.

Mr. Stabile expressed his satisfaction with tonight's presentation by Chief Parenti, and Ms. Miller noted how very much she was pleased to hear that the Department is taking a proactive stance. She was particularly impressed that the Chief had clearly outlined 20 (twenty) key areas of training and programs supported by the police.

Ms. Given reminded of National Poem in Your Pocket Day being celebrated on Friday of this week.

Ms. Corzo thanked Ms. Sherwood for the pleasure of working with her for her years as Deputy Clerk. The Councilwoman indicated how rewarding it was to hear consistent positive resident feedback about the police. She concluded by expressing her excitement at the new economic opportunities being offered by the cannabis business.

The Council President concluded by conveying his appreciation for Deputy Clerk Sherwood's efforts over the years, and offered congratulations on her promotion to Registrar of Vital Statistics.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

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Borough Clerk

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Council President