

MINUTES of the Agenda Conference of the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield held on Monday, **March 12, 2018** at 7:36 p.m. at the North Plainfield Council Chambers, 263 Somerset Street, North Plainfield, New Jersey.

PRESENT:

Council Members: Everett Merrill
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
Phil George, Esq., Associate Borough Attorney
Richard K. Phoenix, RMC, Borough Clerk

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

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 November 27, 2017. 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 November 28, 2017, by publication of the announcement in the *Courier News* on December 1, 2017 and by posting a copy of this notice on the bulletin boards in the Municipal Building and Memorial Library reserved for such purpose."

Mayor Giordano presented the following Mayoral Proclamation to Bob Robitzski, representing the American Red Cross:

AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH 2018

WHEREAS, The American Red Cross saw a record-breaking year in 2017 of challenging domestic and international response efforts. Through the support of its volunteers, in just 45 days, the Red Cross responded to six of the largest and most complex disasters of 2017 including back-to-back hurricanes, the deadliest week of wildfires in California history, and the horrific mass shooting in Las Vegas. In addition, the Red Cross responded to nearly 50,000 home fires in 2017, providing casework assistance to help 76,000 families recover; and

WHEREAS, In New Jersey, the Red Cross has a long history of helping our neighbors in need. The American Red Cross New Jersey Region responded to more than 820 local disasters last year, assisting nearly 1,900 New Jersey families who were displaced by home fires. They installed 10,600 free smoke alarms and reached thousands with fire safety information through the Home Fire Campaign. In New Jersey, the Red Cross provides an average of 4,000 military family case services every year and collects an average of 90,000 units of blood from our generous blood donors; and

WHEREAS, March is American Red Cross Month, a special time to recognize and thank the Red Cross volunteers and donors who give of their time and resources to help members of the community. The Red Cross depends on these local heroes to deliver help and hope during a disaster. We applaud our heroes here in New Jersey who give of themselves to assist their neighbors when they need a helping hand; and

WHEREAS, Across the country and around the world, the American Red Cross responds to disasters big and small. It collects about 40 percent of the nation's blood supply; provides 24-hour support to military members, veterans and their families; teaches millions lifesaving skills such as lifeguarding and CPR; and through its Restoring Family Links program, connects family members separated by crisis, conflict or migration; and

WHEREAS, We dedicate the month of March to all those who support the American Red Cross mission to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies. Our community depends on the American Red Cross, which relies on donations of time, money and blood to fulfill its humanitarian mission.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Michael Giordano, Jr., Mayor of North Plainfield, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of North Plainfield and New Jersey, do hereby proclaim March 2018 as American Red Cross Month. I encourage all Americans to support this organization and its noble humanitarian mission.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Discussion of the 2018 Budget** – D.E.H. (Patrick DeBlasio, C.F.O. to be present). Mr. DeBlasio explained that the Budget would be adopted within the State established timeframe. The surplus at the end of 2017 was \$2,576,000, approximately \$430,000 more than last year. We will see a tax rate decrease to 1.277 as we continue to benefit from a better than 97% tax collection. Pension and debt services costs have increased. Responding to Mr. Stabile, Mr. DeBlasio confirmed that the high surplus positively affects the Borough's borrowing rates. Responding to Mr. Merrill's inquiry, Mr. Hollod confirmed that we have one of the higher rates in Somerset County. Looking at other towns with similar populations, we remain consistent and have had positive redevelopment. The Council President added that many of those towns have heavy industry while we do not.

2. **Land Development Ordinance B-3 Zone Revision** – D.E.H. Mr. Hollod explained that this ordinance allows for the development of consolidated businesses such as single-owner convenience stores with filling stations.
3. **Award of Public Works Yard Fueling Station Bid** – D.E.H. Mr. Hollod indicated that the bids remain under review and the award would be made at the next meeting.
4. **Mott MacDonald Sanitary Sewer Design Services Proposal** – D.E.H. Mr. Hollod explained the latitude of services offered by Mott MacDonald.

REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS:

Mr. Merrill reported that schools had been closed for three days last week due to the storm.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Borough Clerk

Council President