

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE CITY OF GARFIELD MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
AND GARFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**March 16, 2022**

**7:00P.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Joint Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield and Garfield Board of Education was called to order on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 7:15PM in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 111 Outwater Lane, Garfield, New Jersey. On Roll Call present members were: Councilman Maslag, Councilman Herrera, Councilwoman Banch, Deputy Mayor Delaney, and Mayor Rigoglioso. Also present were City Manager/City Clerk Delaney.

**2. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE:**

Whereas, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey requires at the commencement of every meeting a Statement of Compliance be read.

Now, Therefore Be Advised, that the meeting requirements for this meeting have been met by publishing a special meeting notice in The Record and Herald News and by posting such notice in the office of the City Clerk as well as in a public place within the Municipal Building, and by notifying interested citizens. Said notice was published on March 8, 2022 and additionally transmitted and posted for the change of location on March 14, 2022.

**3. GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STADIUM DISCUSSION**

Board President Garnto thanked the Mayor and Council for meeting to discuss the athletic field and addressed the history of issues with the stadium. He noted that he would like to see the stadium improvements happen and Ms. Sciacca noted that it is in desperate need of improvements. Board Vice-President Breonte and Facilities Director Lio said that former athletes are expressing concerns on the condition of the field and they would like to see the project move forward.

Mayor Rigoglioso noted that the Mayor and Council wants to help the school district and inquired as to what the next steps should be.

Deputy Mayor Delaney suggested that the Board work with the City to apply for grants to get the project done such as Green Acres and Bergen County Open Space. City Manager/City Clerk Delaney advised that Bergen County Open Space will not approve of project improvements that are due to neglect and improper maintenance of facilities. Dr. Cusmano advised that he would look into grant opportunities, connections, and potential grant writers.

Dr. Cusmano suggested that perhaps the project be put out to referendum of which Board President Garnto and Board Members Barckett and Grzywnowicz-Muniz felt if the proper effort was put in it could get passed on referendum. Deputy Mayor Delaney disagreed and felt that it would not get passed.

Councilwoman Banch noted that she is an advocate for kids and stated that she sees a lot of discussion taking place but no solutions. Board Member Focarino suggested that both entities' buildings and grounds committees should get together to discuss next steps of which Councilwoman Banch agreed.

Mayor Rigoglioso mentioned bonding the stadium and noted that ownership of the land would then be transmitted to the City if they were to bond. Board Member Derrig requested that Dr. Cusmano delve into how much the district can afford to pay on a yearly basis as he feels the tax payers should not be stuck with the full bill.

City Manager/City Clerk Delaney raised concerns that not a single dollar has been put aside for the stadium and there has been no effort to even fundraise money, even though she set up a Dedication by Rider for the City to solicit donations several years ago when she sat on the council. Ms. Sciacca stated that due to COVID they were unable to do so and that the district had to prioritize repaving their lots due to hazardous conditions. She shared her disappointment that this was not a priority for Ms. Delaney. Ms. Delaney shared that like the school district had to prioritize paving of their lots due to hazardous conditions she, too, has to prioritize City projects that are hazardous to City employees and residents such as the condition of the DPW building, water improvements to meet new State guidelines, lead line replacements, conditions of firehouses, etc.

Members from the audience, Mr. Frank Calandriello and Mr. Dennis Malicki, requested that developers be considered to fund a portion of the stadium as they have received PILOTs from the City. Mr. Calandriello noted that Green Acres funding was previously on the table but was pulled by the school district. He also shared that there was previously \$3 million dollars set aside by the board in 2012 and that the board should have budgeted a little at a time as now the cost of the stadium has significantly increased.

#### **4. RECESS**

A motion was made by Mayor Rigoglioso and seconded by Deputy Mayor Delaney to have a recess. The motions carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Maslag and seconded by Councilman Herrera to reopen the meeting. The motions carried unanimously.

#### **5. GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STADIUM DISCUSSION CONTINUED**

Mayor Rigoglioso announced that he is open to the City bonding for the project but that he would like to City to evaluate their finances with the auditor so that the City bond rating is not affected.

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Banch and seconded by Councilman Herrera to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC  
City Manager/City Clerk

*These meeting minutes were approved at the April 26, 2022 Regular meeting of the Mayor & Council.*