

## Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – February 13, 2024

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024. The meeting began at 6:30p.m. at Borough Hall and via tele/video-conference.

Mayor Raymond called the meeting to order announcing that notice was provided in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 231, P.L. 1975. He provided a statement regarding the conduct of the teleconference which would allow members of the public to participate and be heard during public comment.

Roll Call indicated the following:

Present: Mayor Joshua H. Raymond, Council President Anthony Floria-Callori, Councilman Matthew Atlas, Councilman Arthur Rees, Councilman Kenneth Tilton, Councilman Stephen Weinstein.

Absent: Councilman Robert Kessler.

Also present were: Glenn Domenick, Borough Administrator; Jarriid Kantor, Borough Counsel; Karl Strodthoff, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Mayor Raymond asked Gabe from the West Essex Cowboys Championship B Team to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Raymond announced the passing of his former colleague, Edward McManimon III who was known for his desire to help others and his service to the community. The Mayor thanked the Public Works department for keeping the Borough roads clear of snow during recent weather events. He wished all a Happy Valentine's Day, especially to his wife who supports him as he serves the town.

### West Essex Cowboys Football Championship Recognition

Mayor Raymond, the Borough Council and team coaches presented certificates to the championship team and extended appreciation to the coaches for their volunteerism.

### Citizens to be Heard – Agenda Items Only

On a motion by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Council President Floria-Callori, public comment was opened. Said motion was unanimously approved.

No one from the public came forward.

On a motion by Council President Floria-Callori, seconded by Councilman Weinstein, public comment was closed. Said motion was unanimously approved.

### Items for Discussion

**Multicultural Society Event/Black History Month** – Mayor Raymond announced an event on February 25, 2024 at Firemen's Community Center hosted by the Multicultural Society in celebration of Black History Month.

**Cell Tower Construction Special Meeting** – Mayor Raymond reminded the public of the Special Meeting at which the Borough's cellular consultant would be present to provide information and answer questions regarding the two cell tower installations planned in the Borough.

**PSE&G License Agreement** – Mr. Domenick reviewed the proposed agreement for which an ordinance would be drafted for introduction at the next meeting. Mr. Kantor reviewed the revision to the limited notice to terminate clause.

**Construction Code Fees and Zoning Permit Fee Amendments** – Mr. Domenick presented a proposed increase in zoning permit fees from \$35 to \$70 which is comparable to surrounding towns. He announced that a zoning review process is now in place and would go live through the Borough website as of March 1, 2024. He reviewed proposed revisions to the construction code fees for Certificates of Occupancy which had not been updated since 2015: an increase from \$0.50 to \$0.60 per cubic foot for existing structures and the implementation of a new category for new structures at \$0.50 per cubic foot. Penalties and added assessments for improvements completed without permits were discussed for future revision.

**Police Lieutenant Position** – Chief Strodthoff referred to a memo from July 2023 in which a two-level review of certain incidents is required by the Attorney General. He recommended that the Lieutenant position be added back to the Borough Code to delineate administrative reviews to become compliant with A.G. guidelines. Chief Strodthoff indicated that the additional level would replace one (1) sergeant position through a promotion. A revision to the Borough Ordinance would be the next step.

**NCPD Property Buyback Program** – Chief Strodthoff reviewed past practice by which officers could purchase their outdated firearms at fair market value from the Borough. He noted that an officer would like to purchase three such guns for which a resolution would be prepared for the next meeting.

**Municipal Alliance and Youth Leadership Grants** – Mr. Domenick presented the annual Municipal Alliance grant for the fiscal year from Essex County for which a resolution would be prepared for the next meeting. Mayor Raymond stated that the Movies at the Pool events should be reinstated with the grant funding.

**Walker's Park House** - Mayor Raymond requested Council suggestions regarding use of the structure at Walker's Park. Councilman Rees stated that the rendering offered by Woodmont properties depicted several smaller rooms. He suggested that alterations be made to accommodate larger gatherings and include a kitchen for catering much like the Firemen's Community Center. He was in favor of an outdoor patio with fire pits. Council President Floria-Callori agreed with making improvements for functional party and event rental space. Councilman Atlas was in favor of a library room, ADA compliant restrooms and an outdoor patio area. Preserving the historical integrity of the structure vs. starting with a new structure was discussed. Councilman Weinstein recommended a meeting room for clubs, a large interior main space, and expanding the deck for indoor and outdoor events. He noted that a facility manager may be needed.

Council President Floria-Callori reviewed the requests for input, guidance and suggestions from the public regarding potential uses of the Walker's home. He noted that the structure as a new recreational facility would be an asset to the community. Councilman Tilton noted the architectural significance of the structure which was designed by James Timpson who influenced Cape Cod style architecture. He suggested the building be used for educational and environmental programs. Councilman Rees suggested that the interior of the structure be opened up and evaluated architecturally.

**Athletic Courts Improvements Schedule** – Mr. Domenick announced that bids for improvements to the athletic courts would be opened on April 3, 2024. He anticipated a start date around Memorial Day with a minimum 75-day construction period. Council President Floria-Callori acknowledged the conflict between the construction timeline and the peak tennis season, noting that curing of the courts was required to be completed within certain temperature ranges.

**Recreation EUS Contracts: Kiddie T-Ball, Flag Football, Petite Soccer** – Mr. Domenick presented proposed contracts with vendors to conduct after-school clinics. He confirmed that the service providers complete background checks on their employees

**2024 Recreation Program Fees** – Councilman Weinstein reviewed the revisions in program fees for the upcoming year and suggested an "Early Bird" pool membership registration discount for North Caldwell residents. He noted that in-town membership had decreased last season. Council President Floria-Callori suggested that the resident discount and increase in community events may increase membership.

**Recreation Part-Time Seasonal Personnel** – Mr. Domenick presented additional staffing for the 2023-2024 Recreation Basketball season.

#### **Ordinances for Introduction**

**Bond Ordinance BO-1-2024:** On a motion by Council President Floria-Callori, seconded by Councilman Atlas, Bond Ordinance BO-1-2024 A Bond Ordinance Amending Bond Ordinance #BO-2-2023 Finally Adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of North Caldwell on May 23, 2023 (regarding Tennis, Pickleball, All-Purpose Courts), was introduced. Said motion was carried unanimously with five (5) affirmative votes. A public hearing was set for Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 6:30pm. Councilman Weinstein noted that the ordinance would supplement the bond ordinance for the athletic courts improvements. He added that \$750,000 would be paid back by Woodmont Properties.

**Ordinance O-1-2024:** On a motion by Councilman Weinstein, seconded by Councilman Atlas, Ordinance O-1-2024 An Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank for Calendar Year 2024 was introduced. Said motion was carried unanimously with five (5) affirmative votes. A public hearing was set for Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 6:30pm.

#### **Action to be Taken**

Council President Floria-Callori made a motion, seconded by Councilman Atlas, to approve all items listed below as consent agenda. Said motion was carried unanimously with five (5) affirmative votes.

- Resolution R-38-2024 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills
- Resolution R-39-2024 A Resolution Authorizing for Redemption and Cancellation of Record of Tax Lien – Block 1104, Lot 4
- Resolution R-40-2024 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Interlocal Agreement with the Township of West Orange for Animal Facility Sheltering Services
- Resolution R-41-2024 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Employment Agreement with the Borough of North Caldwell and Glenn Domenick as Borough Administrator
- Resolution R-42-2024 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Employment Agreement with the Borough of North Caldwell and William Maranz as North Caldwell Recreation Director

- Raffle License RA-1-2024 West Essex Cheerleading Booster Club 50/50 on March 24, 2024
- Raffle License RA-2-2024 West Essex Cheerleading Booster Club Tricky Tray on March 24, 2024

**Citizens to be Heard - Any Subject Matter**

On a motion by Councilman Weinstein, seconded by Councilman Atlas, public comment was opened. Said motion was carried unanimously.

**Mostafa Khalil, 2 Henry Avenue** – Mr. Khalil requested a six (6) month waiver for on-street parking. He stated that his garage was needed for a family member who is recovering from a health issue. Chief Strodthoff reviewed the Borough Ordinance regarding exceptions to parking regulations. Mayor Raymond requested a written request from Mr. Khalil for further review.

**Janice Alvarez, 15 Knollwood Drive** – Ms. Alvarez offered her assistance with exploring options for the Walker's Park property and structure such as implementing concert events. She offered to send a proposal to Mayor Raymond and the Borough Administrator.

**James Bennet, 75 Mountain Avenue** – Mr. Bennett disagreed with the concept of running the use of the Walker's home as a business. He stated that the property should be community-focused with input from a non-profit organization. He agreed with Councilman Tilton's suggestions.

Mr. Bennett stated that the minutes from Council meetings are lacking information and are not representative of what speakers say at meetings. He asked for greater transparency and posting of audio/video recordings on the website. Mayor Raymond stated that the Council would consider posting the recordings but offered that they are available at any time via submission of an OPRA request.

On a motion by Council President Floria-Callori, seconded by Councilman Weinstein, public comment was closed. Said motion was carried unanimously.

**Council Commentary**

Councilman Rees asked for an update on the repairs to the stone wall at Walker's Pond that was damaged by a motor vehicle collision. Mr. Domenick stated that Essex County had made the repairs quickly.

Councilman Weinstein stated that he had received several emails regarding the ongoing hostage crisis in Gaza and was requested to raise awareness to bring home the hostages. Mayor Raymond stated that he received similar requests. He noted his limitations as a mayor, but called for the immediate return of the hostages.

Mayor Raymond announced the grand opening of Grande Buddha restaurant on Bloomfield Avenue and wished the best of luck to the owner, North Caldwell resident Allen Perchonok.

**Executive Session**

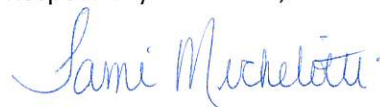
On a motion by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Councilman Weinstein, Resolution R-43-2024 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting:

- Attorney/Client Privilege: (1) Woodmont Properties-Green Brook Country Club;
- Contract Negotiations: (1) Police (PBA) Collective Bargaining Memorandum of Agreement, (2) Police Dispatch Collective Bargaining;
- Potential Contract Negotiations: (1) Farmstead Road/Mountain Avenue;
- Personnel: (1) Department of Public Works (added during meeting)

was approved unanimously with five (5) affirmative votes.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Weinstein, seconded by Council President Floria-Callori, that this meeting be adjourned at 8:22p.m. Said motion was carried unanimously with five (5) affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti, RMC  
Borough Clerk