

The Special Budget Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024. The meeting began at 5:33p.m. at Borough Hall and virtually 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 (joined at 6:07pm), Councilman Matthew Atlas, Councilman Robert Kessler, Councilman Stephen Weinstein.

Absent: Councilman Arthur Rees, Councilman Kenneth Tilton.

Also present were: Glenn Domenick, Borough Administrator; Richard Mondelli, Chief Financial Officer; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Citizens to be Heard

On a motion by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Councilman Weinstein, 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.

Items for Discussion - Department Operating and Capital Budgets

Recreation Operating Budget

Councilman Weinstein reviewed budget line items already reduced for 2024 including Summer Fun, DPW overtime, special programs, dues and facility improvements. Bill Maranz, Recreation Director, requested additional funding for Seniors Club programs. Mayor Raymond asked that the program be enhanced.

Pool Utility Operating Budget

Mr. Mondelli noted that the Pool Utility budget is not balanced, and therefore, requires budget decreases or revenue increases. Councilman Weinstein suggested that the efficiencies at the Community Pool could better benefit the community and increase revenues. The potential impacts of an "Early Bird Registration" for residents were discussed. Improved management of pool chemicals were anticipated for a cost savings. Professional vs. in-house services for season opening and closing, including removal and reinstallation of the pool cover, were discussed. A shed for pool cover storage was anticipated.

The pool snack bar loss was attributed to the cost salaries and supplies. Snack services for 2024 were discussed with vending machines and vendor services as options. Increases in guest fees were presented as an option.

Recreation Capital Budget

Mr. Maranz requested resurfacing of the two existing batting cages and the addition of a third cage. Donations for resurfacing were anticipated. Adding a third cage was not approved for the current location as they would be relocated in Phase 2 of the Gould Recreation Complex Improvement Plan.

Mr. Maranz requested safety netting for the turf field backstop and dugouts and fencing repairs. He suggested that a fixed amount be allocated each year for improvements and repairs. Mr. Maranz stated that netting is required at the Mountain Avenue Field for lacrosse. The netting will be deferred pending the success of lacrosse at that field. Magnusson Field would be primarily used for soccer and rented to other entities when not in use by the Borough.

Mr. Maranz recommended that the restrooms at Liberty Field be replaced with unisex restrooms. The estimated cost of the restroom renovations and less costly alternative options were discussed. Mr. Maranz anticipated donations and grants that would help defer some of the cost. Mr. Maranz stated that grants would be sought for new playground equipment as part of Phase 3 of the Gould Recreation Complex improvements.

Pool Utility Capital Budget

Mr. Maranz requested consideration of a mini-golf course at the Community Pool. Council President Floria-Callori acknowledged the need to enhance the pool but suggested fire pits, ring-toss and corn hole games which would have greater impact for a lower cost.

Mr. Maranz described the stormwater drainage issue at the pool building entrance. He suggested the entrance from the parking lot be re-routed to solve the puddling of water and to implement ADA accessibility. He requested that the concrete walkway around the pool be repaired/replaced in stages

over the next several years to address safety issues. The Council recommended that an estimate be obtained to replace the slabs in greatest need of repair for the upcoming season.

Mr. Maranz requested replacement of the sound system at the pool for the purpose of playing music and making announcements. He would obtain an estimate for further consideration.

Public Works

Director of Public Works, Bill Stickles, provided an overview of the dog regulation budget. He noted a decrease in the DPW staff which reduced the salary and wages line item for 2024. He reviewed the anticipated signage to be replaced during the year. Mayor Raymond noted the need for consistency in the lettering of street signs. Mr. Stickles presented the cost for required Borough tree maintenance and removal. Mr. Stickles presented savings in snow removal, trash removal and leaf collection.

Mr. Stickles reviewed the budget allocations for Buildings and Grounds maintenance, stormwater detention maintenance sewer pump station repairs and street sweeping.

Water Utility

Mr. Stickles presented the cost for water meter remote reading software and provided an update on the meter installation project. Mr. Mondelli presented the principal payment on the note for the meters.

Public Works Capital Budget

Mr. Stickles presented recommendations for Building and Grounds repairs including the DPW restroom, Fire Department electrical panel upgrade and a roof for the Police Department to include the relocation of antennae equipment. He noted the requirement to replace the retaining wall at Mountain Avenue Field. Mr. Stickles noted the NJDEP required water main replacement plan and reviewed the water main condition under East Greenbrook Road which would be undergoing repaving in the coming year. He presented cost estimates for the repaving and recommended that the water main replacement be funded prior to the paving project.

Mr. Stickles presented roads for Borough-funded paving including Estella Avenue, Knollwood Drive, Barnsdale Road, Highfield Terrace, Shenandoah Drive, and a portion of Sunset Drive. He noted that Maywood Court, Woodmere Court and Edgewood Court were also scheduled to be paved through a cost-sharing agreement with PSE&G. The progress of NJDOT-funded road paving projects including Beachmont Terrace, Oak Place, Jasmine Place, Fox Run and Sleepy Hollow Court were discussed.

Mr. Stickles reviewed the department's need for vehicles, radio equipment for vehicles, a mason truck with a plow and salter, a backhoe, a sewer jet and a new garage/department headquarters.

A date for an additional Budget Meeting was set for Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 5:30pm.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Council President Floria-Callori, seconded by Councilman Weinstein, that this meeting be adjourned at 8:12p.m. This motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti, RMC
Borough Clerk