

Mayor and Council Conference and Regular Meeting – July 19, 2022

The Conference and Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, July 19, 2022. The meeting began at 6:33pm at Borough Hall and was held simultaneously via tele/video-conference.

Mayor Alessi 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 Joseph H. Alessi, Council President Frank Astorino, Councilman Anthony Floria-Callori, Councilman Robert Kessler and Councilman Arthur Rees.

Absent: Councilman Matthew Atlas, Councilman Kenneth Tilton.

Also present were: Kevin O'Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Mark Semeraro, Borough Counsel; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Mayor Alessi asked Mr. Elliot Sommer to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Alessi announced the certification of property tax rates. He noted that Fourth Quarter 2022 bills will be mailed in late summer.

Mayor Alessi updated the public on a meeting held with Verona's administrator and police chief regarding public safety issues on White Rock Road. He noted the strong relationships with neighboring towns including Essex Fells for which continued shared services would be discussed later in the meeting.

Citizens to be Heard

Kay McCormack - 16 Four Seasons Drive

Ms. McCormack thanked the governing body for the prompt response regarding installation of permanent "no parking" signs on Hilltop Drive. On behalf of the Four Seasons Traffic and Safety Committee, she requested enforcement of no parking near the last two signs along the berm adjacent to the pond.

Elliot Sommer – 143 Four Seasons Drive

Mr. Sommer expressed appreciation for the attention to the traffic and safety issues affecting the Four Seasons community. He requested confirmation of the entity responsible for Elm Road (Essex County, North Caldwell or Caldwell) for the coordination of improved safety at the intersection of Elm Road and Mountain Avenue. Mayor Alessi stated that he contact Essex County but would follow up and contact Caldwell also. Potential solutions were discussed to increase visibility of vehicles traveling on Mountain Avenue from Bloomfield Avenue.

Greg Filosa – 22 Maple Drive

Mr. Filosa shared proposed plans for the annual North Caldwell Recreation Foundation 5K and Color Run event on September 10, 2022. The Council approved of the event details and signage placement plans.

John Zurlo - 16 Skyline Drive

Mr. Zurlo requested that Council meetings be scheduled to a later time to allow residents who work traditional full-time hours to attend the meetings. Mr. Zurlo asked about the decrease in property assessment for Green Brook Country Club. Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed the revaluation process and noted that a special assessment was conducted for the top five (5) highest valued properties in town as a verification of the revaluation process. Mr. Semeraro noted that property owner can appeal taxes during the first few months of each calendar year, but that the dispute timeframe for the revaluation had already concluded.

Dennis Weyrauch – 38 Hilltop Drive

Mr. Weyrauch requested the implementation of speed bumps on Hilltop Drive to slow speeding between Harvest Lane and Sagamore Road. He noted that there have been many dangerous situations with speeding vehicles in the neighborhood with many young children playing outside. He requested that action be taken with urgency to calm speeding.

Matt Kingham – 5 Hilltop Drive

Mr. Kingham echoed the Hilltop Drive safety concern presented by Mr. Weyrauch and noted the dangerous speeding as well as the limited visibility and blind spot caused by the slope of Hilltop Drive.

Items for Discussion

Plenary Retail Liquor License Bid Timeline – Mr. O'Sullivan offered the proposed bid schedule for the plenary retail distribution license. An authorizing resolution was prepared for consideration later in the

meeting. He noted that the 2021 bid process produced no bids. He anticipated that an award could be made as early as September.

Group Homes – Councilman Rees asked if public notice could be issued to nearby property owners for any future group home proposals. Mr. Semeraro noted that land use improvements would typically trigger public notices. He reminded the Council that group homes are permitted and governed by the State of New Jersey.

NCPD Headquarters Improvements Analysis - Mr. O’Sullivan updated the Council on the progress including the completion of a 3-D virtual scan of the Police Department building which will be used to create digital drawings of the existing structure and potential solutions. The solutions and cost estimates would be available at the end of September.

Dispatchers Compensation and Personnel Policy – Mr. O’Sullivan described the adjustment to compensation and personnel policies which was presented to the dispatchers by Chief Deuer. He noted that an amendment to the annual salary ordinance was required before the salary increases could be adopted. The ordinance would be introduced later in the meeting.

Health Department – Councilman Rees notified the Council that the interlocal agreement for health services with West Caldwell Health Department will expire at the end of the calendar year. He suggested that comparative costs be explored. He reminded all of the varied health services that are offered to North Caldwell residents by the West Caldwell Health Department staff.

Traffic Warrant Analysis – Mr. O’Sullivan provided an update on the traffic count analysis for the Gould Avenue/Mountain Avenue intersection. He indicated that additional counts would be taken after the summer when the school-related traffic is at a normal rate.

Speed Tables – Mr. O’Sullivan presented a proposal for three (3) speed tables to be installed on Smull Avenue. He highlighted the intention to provide speed tables at intervals along the nearly 1,000 foot stretch of road in North Caldwell in response to resident requests for speed calming measures. Mayor Alessi would contact West Caldwell and Caldwell to solicit placement of speed tables on Smull Avenue in those municipalities in conjunction with North Caldwell. Mr. O’Sullivan stated that the bordering municipalities and Smull Avenue residents would receive advance notice of the speed table and signage placement.

Elm Road/Mountain Avenue Intersection – This item was addressed earlier in the meeting during Citizens to be Heard.

White Rock Road/Hilltop Drive Intersection - This item was addressed earlier in the meeting during Citizens to be Heard.

2022 Road Paving – Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the estimated timeline during August for road paving and improvements on Wind Ridge Drive, Grandview Place, Fairview Drive, Angela Court, Birch Road, Rose Avenue, Pine Place and Vale Place and portions of Hamilton Drive East and Spruce Road. He noted that the bid package is available for the Glenview Road, Tanglewood Road and Park Place paving and improvements project which would be funded with the NJDOT grant. He announced that bids would be opened on August 11, 2022 with a potential award of contract at the August 16, 2022 Council meeting.

Stormwater Mapping and Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study Updates – Mr. O’Sullivan provided an update on the stormwater mapping project. He stated that the mapping is 60% complete with detention basins and swales yet to be mapped into the GIS database. He noted that the mapping will be an integral piece for the stormwater utility feasibility study.

Bulk Metal Collection Day – Councilman Kessler proposed a collection day for small bulk metal materials that would be free-of-charge for residents. He suggested the event be held in the fall. The Council was in favor of the idea.

Bergen County New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Alliance – Mr. O’Sullivan recommended the Borough join the Bergen County cooperative purchasing alliance. He noted that there was no cost to membership and added that vehicles needed by DPW are available through the coop. A resolution authorizing the Borough’s participation in the coop would be offered at the next meeting.

Firefighter Grant Program – Mr. O’Sullivan presented a grant opportunity for Fire Department self-contained breathing apparatus units that was available through the NJ Department of Community Affairs and the American Rescue Plan. He noted that a resolution would be offered later in the meeting for Council consideration.

Firemen's Field Improvements – Councilman Kessler updated the Council on the proposed turf Firemen's Field and reviewed the open items for consideration including turf color, outfield distances, soil excavation and acknowledgement of donations. He reviewed the anticipated timeline for design completion, stormwater design bid package creation, bid opening and award of a contract.

Municipal Pool Improvements – Councilman Kessler reviewed a rendering of the pool improvements project including ADA-compliant entry, re-decking, spray features, new ladders and a new diving board. He also asked for consideration of a conversion to a salt-water filtration system.

Walker's Property – Councilman Kessler announced that the Walker's Pond Conservancy obtained bona-fide non-profit status with 501C3 certification which will allow fundraising efforts to commence. He presented the Conservancy's suggestions for updates to the Walker's house including meeting rooms, a kitchen and ADA-compliant restrooms. Councilman Kessler provided an update on the NJDEP permit status for the walking paths and parking, noting that more information was being provided to the DEP regarding the areas of disturbance.

Senior Olympics – Mayor Alessi announced the Senior Olympics to be held in Woodbridge from September 9 through the 11th. He noted that some towns subsidize the cost of the registration for their residents. Councilman Kessler would analyze the municipal budget allocation for Senior Events to determine if a portion of residents' registration could be covered by the Borough.

NCRF 5K and Color Run - This item was addressed earlier in the meeting during Citizens to be Heard.

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Floria-Callori moved to accept the following minutes (without release of Executive Session minutes), seconded by Councilman Rees:

- Conference Meeting and Executive Session Minutes – June 14, 2022
- Regular Meeting and Executive Session Minutes – June 28, 2022

Council President Astorino and Councilman Kessler abstained from voting on the minutes from the Conference Meeting and Executive Session of June 14, 2022. Said motion was carried with three (3) affirmative votes from Councilman Floria-Callori, Councilman Rees and Mayor Alessi for the Conference Meeting and Executive Session of June 14, 2022 and with four (4) affirmative votes from Councilman Floria-Callori, Councilman Rees, Councilman Kessler and Council President Astorino for the Regular Meeting and Executive Session of June 28, 2022.

Committee Reports/Action to be Taken

Legal and Ordinance

Ordinance O-11-2022 – Council President Astorino moved to open the public hearing for Ordinance O-11-2022 An Ordinance to Provide for Various Capital Items as Enumerated Within for the Borough of North Caldwell, County of Essex and to Provide for the Funding Thereof. Said motion was seconded by Councilman Floria-Callori and carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

No one from the public came forward. Councilman Floria-Callori confirmed the use of a plastic type of material for the gaga pit instead of a wooden structure initially proposed.

Council President Astorino moved to close the public hearing and adopt Ordinance O-11-2022 An Ordinance to Provide for Various Capital Items as Enumerated Within for the Borough of North Caldwell, County of Essex and to Provide for the Funding Thereof. Said motion was seconded by Councilman Floria-Callori and was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

Ordinance O-12-2022 – Council President Astorino made a motion to introduce Ordinance O-12-2022 An Ordinance Amending Salaries of Dispatchers. He announced the public hearing scheduled for August 16, 2022 at 6:30pm. Said motion was seconded by Councilman Rees and was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

Resolution R-133-2022 - A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of Essex Fells for Enhanced 9-1-1 Services was read. Motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

Resolution R-134-2022 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of Essex Fells for Shared Municipal Court Services was read. Motion was made by Council

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President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

The following resolutions were read by and moved by Council President Astorino as a Consent Agenda:

- Resolution R-135-2022 A Resolution Authorizing the Grant Application to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for Firefighter SCBA Units
- Resolution R-136-2022 A Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Professional Services Contract Between the Borough of North Caldwell and Ferriero Engineering, Inc. for Engineering and Surveying Services for Firemen's Field Improvements
- Resolution R-137-2022 A Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of One New Plenary Retail Distribution License Within the Borough of North Caldwell Pursuant to the Public Bid Option Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 33:1-19.3

Said motion was seconded by Councilman Kessler and was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

Personnel and Technology

Committee Updates – Councilman Floria-Callori announced that a stormwater drainage reporting function would be forthcoming on the Borough website. He reviewed potential alternatives to cellular service tower construction that may help to secure cellular carriers. He encouraged residents with cell service issues to report concerns to the Borough and to their cell service providers.

Finance

Council President Astorino presented the Tax Collector's Report for June 2022.

The following resolutions were read by and moved by Council President Astorino as a Consent Agenda, seconded by Councilman Kessler:

- Resolution R-138-2022 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills
- Resolution R-139-2022 A Resolution Authorizing for Redemption and Cancellation of Record of Tax Lien – Block 1302, Lot 28

Said motion was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

Public Safety

Councilman Kessler presented the Police Department Public Safety and Detective Bureau Reports for June 2022 during which 758 calls were received by Dispatch and 45 summonses were issued. He reminded residents of the frequency of motor vehicle thefts and noted that key fobs should be secured inside residents' homes. He added that the newly installed license plate readers are helping to identify stolen cards driven through town. Councilman Kessler announced the North Caldwell Police Foundation golf outing fundraiser on October 3, 2022 at Green Brook Country Club.

Councilman Kessler presented the Fire Department Public Safety Report for June 2022 during which the department responded to 33 calls. He reminded residents of the 100th Anniversary Celebration events planned for September 24th.

Public Works

Councilman Rees reminded residents and contractors to call 311 before digging properties.

Councilman Rees presented the Public Works Monthly Report for June 2022. He noted that stormwater drainage repairs were made on Eton, Green Place, Oak Ridge and Longview and that a sewer line repair was completed on Grandview Avenue without disruption of service.

Councilman Rees presented the Construction Permit Activity Report for June 2022 during which 33 permits were issued for a total of 202 permits to date for 2022.

Councilman Rees presented the Animal Control Report for May and June 2022. He noted that there were five (5) calls in May and four (4) calls in June for which fees were charged for the first time in June according the revised Borough ordinance.

Recreation

Councilman Kessler presented the Recreation Director's Report for July/August 2022. He noted the success of the annual fireworks event in West Caldwell for the Fourth of July. He announced the men's softball champions, Team Cloverleaf, and noted that women's softball championship games were scheduled for that week.

Councilman Kessler reminded all that the municipal pool is open through Labor Day from 12pm – 7pm daily. He noted that there are 519 memberships of which 63% are North Caldwell residents. Councilman Kessler noted the success of the Summer Fun Camp season in which 274 children participated. He commended the Fighting Fish Swim Team on their undefeated season.

Councilman Kessler announced the upcoming registration for fall after school programs, the Town Picnic scheduled for September 10 and Soccerfest scheduled for September 17. He confirmed that the Borough directly pays umpires for each game worked in response to a question from the Council at a previous meeting.

The following resolutions were read by and moved by Councilman Kessler as a Consent Agenda, seconded by Council President Astorino:

- Resolution R-140-2022 A Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Additional Part-Time Seasonal Employees for the 2022 Municipal Pool Season
- Resolution R-141-2022 A Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Additional Part-Time Seasonal Employees for the 2022 Summer Fun Camp Season

Said motion was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

Executive Session


Resolution R-142-2022 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting for Certain Specified Purposes:

- A. Personnel: (1) Retiree Medical Benefits, (2) Pool Staff;
- B. Potential Litigation: (1) Falcon Point, (2) Hidden Ridge, (3) Pulte Homes;
- C. Contract Negotiations: (1) Trash Collection, (2) Essex Fells Water

was read. Motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Floria-Callori. Said motion was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by the Council, that this meeting be adjourned at 9:20pm. Said motion was carried unanimously with four (4) affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti, RMC
Borough Clerk