

Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – January 11, 2022

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022. The meeting began at 6:35pm 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 Francis Astorino, Councilman Matthew Atlas, Councilman Anthony Floria-Callori, Councilman Robert Kessler, Councilman Arthur Rees, Councilman Kenneth Tilton.

Also present were: Kevin O'Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Mark Semeraro, Borough Counsel; Rich Mondelli, Chief Financial Officer; Paul Ferriero, Borough Engineer; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Mayor Alessi asked Councilman Rees to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Executive Session – Part I

Resolution R-32-2022 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 – NCFD was read. A motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Atlas. Said motion was carried with six affirmative votes.

The Governing Body returned to the public session at 7:17pm.

Items for Discussion

The Council recognized some meeting attendees who were present regarding the Firemen's Field Improvements discussion.

Firemen's Field Improvements

Recreation Director Bill Maranz reviewed the improvements needed at Firemen's Field to improve drainage, level the playing surface between the infield and outfield, replace the backstop fencing and convert the field size for multiple uses and age-levels. He noted that a donation from a family in town was offered toward the field improvements. Mr. Maranz presented the options before the Council including:

- Sod the infield to replace the clay, leave the outfield as grass, maintain same size field
- Turf the infield, enlarge the field for other sports
- Turf the entire field and perform dugout, fencing and drainage improvements

Kevin Cordovan, resident at 28 Cambridge Drive, stated that his family wished to make a donation to improve the conditions of Firemen's Field where his children play baseball and softball. He recommended turfing the infield and leaving the outfield as natural grass. Greg Filosa, resident at 22 Maple Drive and member of the North Caldwell Recreation Foundation, offered a donation to fund the improvements also. He added that a 2021 survey of 180 residents showed public support for improving Firemen's Field.

Councilman Kessler thanked the Cordovano family and the NCRF for their ideas and financial support. The Council would consider the options, the cost of improvements and the timing of funding, bidding and construction for prioritization among other Borough projects.

Citizens to be Heard

No one from the public came forward.

Items for Discussion (continued)

Water Quality Notice

Mr. O'Sullivan stated that Essex Fells distributed an updated PFOA notification letter to its water customers and, in turn, North Caldwell was required to do the same. He explained the decrease in PFOA levels vs. the four-quarter average upon which the notifications are based. He anticipated a similar notice to be issued in the first and second quarters of 2022 as well.

Drainage Improvements Update

Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed the recent drainage improvements, most notably the clearing of vegetation from the Wind Ridge detention basin which was responsible for decreasing storage capacity and obstructing the flow of water. He stated that the water level upstream has dropped 1 to 1-1/2 feet and that ongoing maintenance plans would be established.

Pulte Homes Performance Bond Release Request

Councilman Atlas reviewed a written request submitted by Pulte Homes for the release of the performance bond for The Reserve at North Caldwell. He stated that Pulte submitted confirmation that all improvements are complete. Mr. O'Sullivan noted that the performance bond could be released after a maintenance bond is posted. He added that the Borough will need to adopt the roads by ordinance at which time "no parking" and stop signs could be installed. Mr. Ferriero stated that he would prepare a report with his analysis of completion after he performs a final inspection.

Ordinance Amendments: Water, Grading Permits

Councilman Atlas reviewed the water ordinance and fee ordinance that require amendments in preparation for a water meter replacement project. He stated that the ordinance amendments would be introduced at the next meeting with public hearings scheduled in February. He noted that the new meters would prove for more efficient meter readings and cost savings.

Mr. O'Sullivan stated that the grading ordinance also required an amendment to include fees for grading inspections performed by the Borough's professionals.

Approved Uses in Residential Zones

Councilman Atlas acknowledged the intended use of a residential home in town as a group home. Mr. Semeraro confirmed that the State allows for such a use in a residential zone with no need for approvals from the Borough. He added that the home is for residential use and that no medical services would be provided on the site.

Five Year Plans

Mayor Alessi thanked Council President Astorino for his efforts to create a strategic plan for the Borough which would allow for a process for prioritizing large projects.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed the State law regarding electric vehicle charging stations which provides the opportunity for local government to set policies regarding stations placed on Borough property. He reviewed grant opportunities for funding of the stations and installation costs. Councilman Floria-Callori supported the initiative but cautioned to place the stations where they would not be upset by future improvements on Borough properties.

PD/FD/DPW Facilities and Improvements

Mayor Alessi communicated the need for a new police department building. Estimates would be sought for a mixed-use facility within the main Borough property complex. Councilman Rees noted the need for the Fire Department to be directly on the main roadway for ease of egress.

Municipal Pool Improvements

Councilman Kessler reviewed the pool house improvements that were completed last season and noted that additional repairs and improvements are needed. Mr. Ferriero presented a quote for the critical repairs and recommended a timeline for the bidding and construction. Mr. Mondelli summarized the financial strength of the pool utility and provided some membership revenue estimates. Mr. Ferriero would obtain some additional quotes for more extensive improvements that could potentially generate more revenue.

Recreation Re-Branding – Municipal Pool, Tennis/Pickle Ball

Councilman Kessler presented re-branding concepts for the pool and tennis/pickle ball courts. He stated that the branding would follow the implementation of proposed improvements of the facilities.

Recreation Program Fees

Councilman Kessler reviewed proposed pricing changes for some of the recreation programs for the upcoming spring and summer seasons. A resolution would be offered for consideration at the next meeting.

Recreation Basketball Personnel – Trainers, Scorekeepers

Councilman Kessler stated that additional part-time personnel was needed for the 2021-2022 basketball season for which resolutions would be presented at the next meeting for council consideration.

Action to be Taken

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

- Resolution R-33-2022 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills
- Resolution R-34-2022 A Resolution Authorizing Salary for Municipal Court Judge

Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Executive Session Part II

Councilman Atlas made a motion to add the following items to the Executive Session discussion:

- Attorney/Client Privilege: Pulte Performance Bond, Caldwell Sewer Utility
- Contract Negotiations: Essex Fells Water

and to re-enter Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Council President Astorino. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Atlas, seconded by the Council, that this meeting be adjourned at 9:36pm. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Tami Michelotti".

Tami Michelotti, RMC
Borough Clerk