

## Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – March 8, 2022

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022. The meeting began at 6:30pm 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; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

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

### **Citizens to be Heard**

Paul O'Neill, Assistant Fire Chief, announced the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the North Caldwell Fire Department. He proposed a block-party style fundraising celebration to be held on September 24<sup>th</sup> on Gould Avenue that would include food, beverages, a 50/50 raffle and sponsorships. He also announced the return of the Annual Pancake Breakfast on June 5<sup>th</sup> at Firemen's Community Center.

Michael Arango – 75 Veranda Avenue

Mr. Arango described neighborhood conditions resulting from a property next door from which loud noise, garbage in the street, and foul language late at night was common. He requested the Borough's assistance as the home borders both North Caldwell and Little Falls. Fire Chief Tim Peterson reiterated the conditions described by Mr. Arango. Chief Deuer noted that the NCPD has visited the property and responded to complaints. He confirmed that the driveway is in North Caldwell and house is in Little Falls; therefore, enforcement lies with Little Falls. Mr. O'Sullivan stated that he contacted Little Falls' administration to convey the situation and request a response.

Maureen Zurlo – 19 Glenview Road

Ms. Zurlo requested an update on Essex County's response to a study of the Glenview Road culvert. Councilman Floria-Callori summarized a recent meeting with County officials during which it was determined that the NJDEP would not allow changes that would increase downstream flow. He stated that the County would consider participating in a funding solution if the Borough obtained DEP permits for improvements. Borough Engineer Paul Ferriero would draft a proposal for DEP permitting.

### **Items for Discussion**

#### **Juneteenth Holiday**

Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed the Federal and State holiday recognizing Juneteenth. The Council was in agreement that the holiday be recognized in the Borough. Adding the holiday as a thirteenth Borough holiday or replacing it for another currently recognized holiday would be further considered in light of collective bargaining agreements.

#### **Noise Ordinance**

Mayor Alessi reviewed a concern of residents regarding noise emanating from leaf blowers. Mr. Semeraro noted that decibel levels are limited by the State and/or County and must be adhered to by landscapers.

#### **2022 Municipal Budget**

Mr. Mondelli presented a memo summarizing the 2022 Operating Budget discussion. He noted the proposed increase of 20 tax points which would result in a property tax increase of \$158 for a property with an average assessment of \$790,000. The Council agreed to introduce the budget at the next meeting.

Mr. Mondelli presented a memo summarizing the 2022 Capital Budget discussion. He noted an additional request for the replacement of a DPW dump truck. The option to lease a truck would be explored.

A water rate increase from \$6.75 to \$6.85 per thousand gallons, effective April 1, 2022, would be presented in a resolution at the next meeting.

#### **Property Revaluation**

Councilman Rees stated that he reviewed the contract between the Borough and Professional Property Appraisers. He noted his concern in a memo to Tax Assessor George Librizzi. He stated that he filed a

complaint with the Attorney General as he questioned if certain elements of the contract were completed. Mr. O'Sullivan would follow up to address Councilman Rees' questions.

#### **NCPD Dispatch**

Mr. O'Sullivan stated that there was an open position within the Dispatch Department due to the resignation of an employee. A replacement would be posted and sought expeditiously.

#### **NCFD 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

This item was already discussed during Citizens to be Heard.

#### **DPW Staffing**

Mr. O'Sullivan stated that a resolution would be presented at the next meeting to replace a DPW Maintenance Worker who resigned in January.

#### **Animal Control - Shelter Agreement, Fee Amendment, Rabies Clinic**

Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed a proposal to recalibrate fees associated with Animal Control services. He noted the revision of existing fees and the addition of new fees to recuperate costs that the Borough currently incurs. Mr. O'Sullivan noted that options for sheltering services are being explored. He reviewed the costs associated with the annual rabies clinic and noted the need for additional staffing required for future clinics. The Council suggested that the rabies vaccination services be handled by the West Orange Animal Shelter in the future.

#### **Trash Collection**

Mayor Alessi noted that residents with Monday/Thursday trash collection encounter several holidays that fall on Mondays, resulting in only one collection for the week. The Council determined that no further action was required as there were only three such dates in 2022.

#### **Walker's Property Improvements**

Mr. O'Sullivan summarized a timeline from Borough Engineer Paul Ferriero regarding Walker's Property improvements. He noted that a 120-day window was anticipated between permit application submission and permit receipt. He was hopeful for approval of permits in August or September of 2022. Mr. O'Sullivan added that construction bid documents could be drafted before the permits are in hand so that construction could potentially begin in the fall, dependent on weather and DEP-imposed timing restrictions.

#### **Part-Time Recreation Department CivicRec Assistant**

Councilman Kessler reviewed the need to hire a temporary employee within the Recreation Department to implement the CivicRec software. He noted that the maximum cost would be \$5,000.

#### **Municipal Pool Staff**

Councilman Kessler reviewed a proposed amendment to the Employee Salary Ordinance to allow for the hiring of an Assistant Pool Manager to work on evenings and weekends. The ordinance would be introduced at the next meeting. He added that a lifeguard salary scale was proposed to assist in retention of returning lifeguards and to recognize lifeguards with experience.

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

Resolution R-58-2022 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills was read. Council President Astorino made a motion, seconded by Councilman Atlas. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Council President Astorino reminded the Council to review the Strategic Five-Year Plans for their departments.

#### **Executive Session**

Resolution R-59-2022 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) Municipal Court, (2) Recreation Administrative Assistant, (3) Police Department Administrative Assistant, (4) Sub-Code Official;
- B. Contract Negotiations: (1) Essex Fells Water, (2) Joint Municipal Court, (3) Caldwell Sewer Utility, (4) Police Dispatch;
- C. Real Property: (1) Property Transfer

was read. Motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Atlas. Said motion was carried with six affirmative votes.

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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 8:45pm. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti, RMC  
Borough Clerk