

Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – February 14, 2023

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, February 14, 2023. The meeting began at 6:31 p.m. at Borough Hall and was held simultaneously 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 Robert Kessler, Councilman Kenneth Tilton, Councilman Stephen Weinstein.

Absent: Councilman Arthur Rees.

Also present were: Kevin O'Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Jarrod Kantor, Borough Counsel; Rich Mondelli, CFO; Karl Strodthoff, Police Captain; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Mayor Raymond asked Captain Karl Strodthoff to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Raymond wished all a Happy Valentine's Day and announced a Black History Month celebration planned for February 24th organized by the North Caldwell Multicultural Society. He announced the recent passing of former Fire Chief Kenneth Bechtold and resident Paul Scagnelli. Mayor Raymond welcomed all residents to attend a Town Hall meeting scheduled for February 25, 2023. He announced the opening of a new pizzeria in town on Main Street and wished the owners much success.

Citizens to be Heard

John Chiaia, 34 Grandview Place – Mr. Chiaia encouraged the governing body to maintain the five-lot subdivision at Walker's Park for potential future sale. He stated that the significant value of the parcels outweighs the need for the proposed walking paths and bridges on the property. He added that revenue from selling the one-acre lots could pay for several other improvements in town. Mr. Chiaia noted that his comments were not made on behalf of the Walker's Pond Conservancy.

Greg Filosa, 22 Maple Drive – Mr. Filosa, President of the North Caldwell Recreation Foundation, presented two proposals for Firemen's Field bleachers. He noted that the bleachers would be funded by donations made for the Firemen's Field improvement project. The bleacher design, height and color were discussed. Quotes for aluminum vs. galvanized steel frames would be obtained. The Council agreed to the proposed bleacher placement, center aisle design, color and size.

Elliott Sommer, 143 Four Seasons Drive – Mr. Sommer asked the Council to consider potential uses of Walker's Park and the cost of associated improvements before deciding on the lot consolidation.

Items for Discussion

Furniture Donation – Mayor Raymond thanked Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi, PC for the donation of furniture for use in Borough offices.

PSEG Improvements on Mountain Avenue – Mr. O'Sullivan provided an update on the gas line installation project. PSE&G estimated the completion pipe installation by mid-March and reopening of Mountain Avenue in April. Paving would be done in the summer.

FEMA Grant Agreement for Hazard Mitigation Generator – Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed the grant awarded by FEMA through New Jersey Office of Emergency Management hazard mitigation program for the installation of a generator at the Skyline Drive water tower. He noted that approval of the hazard mitigation sub-grant agreement was required by resolution which would be prepared for the next meeting.

Cell Tower Bid – Council President Floria-Callori stated that the cellular infrastructure improvement bids for Mountain Avenue and Skyline Drive were issued with a 60-day response window. The successful bidder would construct a tower with a potential for the Borough to generate lease revenue.

Soder Road Development – Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed the construction of a property on Soder Road which was re-categorized as a major development as the area of disturbance was found to be over the threshold requiring stormwater mitigation design.

COLA Ordinance – Mr. Mondelli reviewed the 2-1/2% State cap on operating budget appropriations and the associated ordinance that would permit the Borough to exceed the cap by an additional 1%. The annual ordinance would be prepared for introduction at the next meeting.

2022 Budget Transfers to Trusts – Mr. Mondelli proposed the transfer of remaining funds from the 2022 Budget into the Snow Trust and Sick/Vacation Trust. Resolutions would be prepared for the next meeting.

Disabled Veteran Property Tax Reimbursement – Mr. Mondelli presented an application from a resident received approval for property tax reimbursement by the State and the Municipal Tax Assessor. A resolution would be prepared to refund the amount of property taxes paid since the application date.

NCPD Promotions – Mayor Raymond announced the Council's recommendations for promotion of Karl Strodthoff to Police Chief, Michael Credico to Police Captain and John Herbert to Police Sergeant. Formal action and an installation ceremony would be held on February 28, 2023.

NJOEM/FEMA Memorandum of Understanding – Mr. O'Sullivan presented a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the NJ State Police for emergency management. A resolution authorizing the MOU would be prepared for the next meeting.

Water Meter Replacement – Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed the bid process for the water meter replacement and installation project. He noted that residents would be notified of the project and the requirement to allow installers into their homes to replace the meters. Residents would be offered the option to pay for the new meters in installments upon request.

Firemen's Field – Mr. O'Sullivan provided an update on the Firemen's Field turf installation and improvements. The infill compaction test, fence modifications, ADA compliant sidewalks and landscaping were being finalized. Field size dimensions and placement of bases were confirmed to be compliant with original design plans.

Walker's Park Conservation Easements/Subdivision Consolidation – Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed two considerations for action by the governing body at the next meeting: (1) execution of a conservation easement around the pond and (2) consolidation of the subdivided lots to alleviate the need for a conservation easement on the entire 17 acre parcel. Ordinances for both items would be prepared for introduction at the next meeting. Councilman Floria-Callori requested confirmation from NJDEP that the lot consolidation would reduce the totality of conservation easements and facilitate permitting for the proposed improvements on the property.

Walker's Park Request for Expression of Interest – Mayor Raymond reviewed four (4) responses to the RFEI which would be further reviewed by the governing body.

Extraordinary Unspecified Contracts for Recreation Programs – Councilman Kessler presented five (5) proposed contracts for spring recreation clinics. Resolutions awarding the contracts would be prepared for the next meeting.

Recreation Basketball Instructors/Trainers – Councilman Kessler presented additional staffing for which a resolution would be prepared for the next meeting.

Recreation Program Referees/Umpires - Councilman Kessler presented additional staffing for which a resolution would be prepared for the next meeting.

Action to be Taken

Resolution R-42-2023 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills was read. Motion was made by Councilman Weinstein and seconded by Councilman Atlas. Said motion was carried unanimously with five (5) affirmative votes.

Executive Session

Resolution R-43-2023 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting

- A. Contract Negotiations: (1) Green Brook Country Club, (2) NCBOE School Security, (3) Mountain Avenue and Gould Avenue Traffic Signal;
- B. Potential Contract Negotiations: (1) Shared Municipal Court, (2) HOA Reimbursements;
- C. Potential Litigation: (1) Hidden Ridge Performance Bond;
- D. Personnel: (1) NCPD;
- E. Attorney/Client Privilege: (1) Walker's Park

was read. Motion was made by Council President Floria-Callori and seconded by Councilman Atlas. Before a full roll call was completed, Council President Floria-Callori made a motion to table the action. Said motion was approved unanimously. Councilman Weinstein made a motion to amend and approve the proposed Executive Session resolution to include a Contract Negotiations discussion regarding the Water Meter Replacement project. Said motion was seconded by Councilman Tilton. Said motion was carried 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 Council President Floria-Callori, seconded by Councilman Atlas, that this meeting be adjourned at 7:30pm. Said motion was carried unanimously with five (5) affirmative votes. Mayor Raymond announced that the governing body would not return to the public meeting after Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Tami Michelotti, RMC
Borough Clerk