

## Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – March 14, 2023

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. The meeting began at 6:34 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 Arthur Rees, Councilman Kenneth Tilton, Councilman Stephen Weinstein.

Also present were: Kevin O'Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Jarrid Kantor, Borough Counsel; Rich Mondelli, Chief Financial Officer; Karl Strodthoff, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Mayor Raymond asked Chief Strodthoff to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Items for Discussion**

#### **2023 Municipal Budget**

Mr. Mondelli reviewed budget discussions from the March 4, 2023 Special Budget Meeting, resulting in a 0% tax rate increase. Councilman Kessler announced the proposed increase in sewer fees of \$25.00 per residential property and \$50.00 per tax-exempt property. He cautioned that the sewer fees not be increased annually. Mr. O'Sullivan confirmed recent increases in sewer fee invoices from Caldwell Sewer Utility. An ordinance amending the rates would be prepared for introduction at the next meeting.

### **Citizens to be Heard**

Jeff Sutherlin, West Essex First Aid Squad Captain – Mr. Sutherlin provided an review of the services provided by the West Essex First Aid Squad, the costs associated with operations and the grants secured to operate the squad. He requested an increase in the annual donation from \$5,000 to \$15,000. Fund drive information would be distributed by the Borough to residents in an effort to supplement donations.

Mr. Mondelli departed the meeting at 6:53pm.

Greg Filosa, 22 Maple Drive – Mr. Filosa, on behalf of the North Caldwell Recreation Foundation, requested approval for the proposed monument at Firemen's Field to recognize the donors of the turf field. He noted that the proposed monument would match the one currently in place. He added that a new scoreboard may be a future appurtenance which may provide the opportunity to further recognize donors. The governing body agreed to the monument proposal.

Ted Roth, 17 Wind Ridge Drive – Mr. Roth stated that Planning Board minutes for the past two (2) years were not available to the public. He added that the prior two (2) Planning Board meetings had been cancelled. He described past charges filed against the Planning Board attorney. He asked that the Board Attorney and Board Chairman be asked by the Mayor and Council to step down from their positions. Mr. Kantor noted that the Mayor and Council does not appoint the Planning Board Attorney or the Chairman. He noted that an RFQ process was followed through which the attorney was appointed by the Board. He recommended that the remainder of the issues be addressed in Executive Session. Mayor Raymond confirmed that minutes were drafted and were awaiting approval before being posted on the Borough website.

Hearing no further comment from the public, Mayor Raymond closed public comment.

Councilman Rees made a motion to add Mountain Avenue to the Items for Discussion. Councilman Atlas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved with six (6) affirmative votes.

### **Items for Discussion**

Salary Ordinance – Mr. O'Sullivan presented the annual salary ordinance that is adjusted to expand the upper limits of salary ranges as needed. He noted the addition of a part-time administrative assistant category.

DLGS Petty Cash Custodian Amendment – Ms. Michelotti reviewed the requirement by the Division of Local Government Services to update the Petty Cash owners and amounts. Resolutions would be prepared for the next meeting.

## Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – March 14, 2023

Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption – Mr. O’Sullivan presented an application from a resident who was granted permanent disability status and the resulting reimbursement of property taxes paid since the approval. A resolution would be prepared for the next meeting.

Shared Court – Mayor Raymond provided an update on the negotiations to form a Shared Court among North Caldwell, Essex Fells and Verona. He anticipated a contract and associated resolution at the next meeting. He added that the agreement would provide a cost savings to all three municipalities.

Water Meter Replacement Re-Bid – Mr. O’Sullivan stated that a revised bid for water meter installation was in progress with a bid submission date of April 19, 2023. He anticipated awarding a contract at the April 25, 2023 meeting by resolution.

Mowing and Trimming Bid – Mr. O’Sullivan anticipated an award of a contract at the March Regular Meeting after the bid opening was held for mowing and trimming services of Borough facilities.

Household Solid Waste Bid – Mr. O’Sullivan stated that the current trash collection contract expires at the end of July 2023. He noted that bids are due on May 24, 2023 after which an award of contract would follow in June or July. Alternative collection methods including curbside collection were included in the bid specs due to the anticipated significant increase in collection cost.

Pool Improvements Bid – Mr. O’Sullivan announced the bid opening scheduled for May 24, 2023 for the updated pool improvements design. He reminded the Council that no bids were received last year.

Beachmont Terrace/Oak Place 2021 NJDOT Local Aid Grant Road Paving Proposals – Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed proposals received for design of the roadway improvements projects for which a grant was awarded by the NJDOT. A resolution awarding a contract would be prepared for the next meeting.

Smull Avenue Speed Tables – Councilman Rees stated that speed table complaints continue to be filed by residents living at the tables. Mr. O’Sullivan shared positive feedback received from other residents. Mayor Raymond requested a post-installation speed study be conducted to measure speeding.

Employee Health Insurance – Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the significant increase in State Health Benefits Plans announced by the State. He noted that alternatives were being researched for health and prescription plans to determine if there are more cost effective options.

Firemen’s Field – Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed items included in a Change Order for the Firemen’s Field Turf Installation project. He stated that additional fencing along the DPW yard and the installation of bleachers purchased by the NCRF were not part of the original scope of the project. A resolution authorizing the change order would be prepared. A “soft” opening of the field was planned for the first weekend of Travel Baseball/Softball with an official ribbon cutting ceremony planned for Opening Day.

Recreation Part-Time Staffing – Mr. O’Sullivan presented supplemental trainers, umpires and referees for which a resolution would be prepared for the next meeting.

Quarterly Newsletter – Councilman Kessler requested submissions from the governing body members and department heads for the 1Q2023 Borough newsletter.

Mountain Avenue (added by motion) – Councilman Rees stated that he asked Essex County Liaison, Maya Lordo, of guidance regarding a speed limit reduction on Mountain Avenue. He stated that an ordinance adopted by the Borough would be a step in making the request for the county road. Mr. Kantor would research the generation of an ordinance to request a speed limit reduction.

### **Action to be Taken**

Councilman Atlas made a motion, seconded by Councilman Tilton, to approve all items listed for inclusion in the consent agenda:

- Resolution R-62-2023 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills
- Raffle License RA-5-2023 West Essex First Aid Squad, Inc. Tricky Tray
- Raffle License RA-6-2023 West Essex First Aid Squad, Inc. 50/50

Said motion was carried unanimously with six (6) affirmative votes.

### **Executive Session**

Council President Floria-Callori made a motion to include a discussion of the Planning Board Attorney and to approve Resolution R-63-2023 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting:

- A. Personnel: (1) Employee Compensation, (2) NCPD Non-Union Contracts;

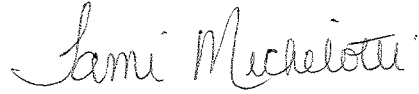
Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – March 14, 2023

- B. Attorney/Client Privilege: (1) OPMA, Social Media, OPRA, (2) Liquor License, (3) Green Brook Country Club, (4) Planning Board Attorney – added by motion;
- C. Contract Negotiations: (1) Shared Municipal Court.

Said motion was seconded by Councilman Atlas and carried unanimously with six (6) 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 9:43pm. Said motion was carried unanimously with six (6) affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tami Michelotti".

Tami Michelotti, RMC  
Borough Clerk