

The Special Budget Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Saturday, March 4, 2023. The meeting began at 8:30am 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 Floria-Callori, Councilman Matthew Atlas, Councilman Robert Kessler, Councilman Arthur Rees, Councilman Kenneth Tilton and Councilman Steven Weinstein.

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

Mayor Raymond asked CFO Rich Mondelli to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Items for Discussion

Recreation Operating Budgets

Pool Utility Fund Operating Budget - Mr. Mondelli provided an update on 2022 revenues and appropriations. Councilman Kessler reviewed the anticipated repairs and costs for 2023. The 2023 pool registration fees were increased by resolution in January for residents and out-of-town memberships.

Recreation Department Operating Budget - Budget increases for Summer Fun Camp salaries and wages, turf maintenance and parades and celebrations were presented. Summer Fun Camp revenue would reflect the addition of Essex Fells residents.

Recreation Capital Budget

Recreation Director Bill Maranz requested consideration of a holistic vision for the Gould Recreation Complex which could be improved in phases. He noted that improvements were needed for the parking lots, tennis courts, basketball court, Magnusson field, and field equipment storage.

Mr. Maranz departed the meeting at 9:35am.

Operating Budget

Mayor Raymond recognized Paula Sules who was present on behalf of the West Essex First Aid Squad. Ms. Sules, Community Outreach Director, reviewed current sources of funding and call volumes for each of the towns serviced by the squad. She requested that the governing body increase the annual contribution by \$10,000.

Executive Session

Council President Floria-Callori made a motion to amend and move Resolution R-61-2023 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: Employee Compensation. Said motion was seconded by Councilman Tilton and was carried unanimously with six (6) affirmative votes.

The public meeting resumed at 10:42am.

Citizens to be Heard

No one from the public came forward.

Operating Budget (continued)

Water Utility Fund Operating Budget

Mr. Mondelli reported that the 2022 Water Utility was under budget and surpassed anticipated revenues due to decreased water purchases coupled with leak prevention initiatives. He noted that the last interest payments were being made on the debt service. Surplus funds could be used for debt payments or for capital expenditures.

Current Fund Operating Budget

Administration – Mr. Mondelli reviewed the anticipated budget items for 2023. Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the increase in State Health Benefits premiums.

Police Department – Mr. Mondelli reviewed the budget increases for the upcoming year including the SLEO Class III for West Essex Regional School District, the increase in dispatcher salaries and dispatcher holiday pay which were not in the 2022 budget. Chief Strodthoff reviewed the costs for Enforsys,

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fingerprinting supplies, vehicle maintenance and leases. He presented the need for an additional officer and dispatcher.

West Essex First Aid Squad – The request for a donation increase from WEFAS was discussed. Call volumes for each participating town would be requested for consideration of an increase.

Fire Department – Chief Peterson requested an Operating Budget increase for maintenance, equipment, training and communications technology.

Snow Removal – Mr. Stickles reviewed the 2022 savings in snow removal costs attributed to the mild winter.

Trash and Recycling Collection – Mr. Mondelli noted that the current trash collection contract expires in July 2023 and an increase in collection services was anticipated. Alternative bid options were discussed for the upcoming bid process. The budget would be increased for July through December 2023. Mr. Mondelli added that recycling expenses decreased due to an increase in a recycling grant.

Sewer/Stormwater Maintenance – Mr. Stickles presented the need for maintenance on pumping stations and catch basins. Mr. O’Sullivan noted that the Stormwater Utility Grant application was pending approval.

Recreation – Mr. Stickles reviewed the anticipated increases and decreases in 2023 expenses for mowing and trimming of Borough property, equipment repairs and service, and DPW overtime for Borough events.

Roads – Mr. Mondelli reviewed increases reflecting the full year of salaries and overtime wages for DPW personnel additions and promotions as well as the annual Teamsters’ contract increases.

Water – Mr. Stickles reviewed costs for mandatory PFOA notifications, leak detection, tuberculation services and hydrant flushing.

Court – Ms. McMillion presented budgetary requests for the Shared Court and presented potential grant opportunities if a court expansion to include Verona is approved.

Councilman Kessler departed the meeting at 12:40pm.

Sewer – Mr. Mondelli and Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed recent invoices from Caldwell, Fairfield and Two Bridges Sewer Authorities as estimates for 2023 expenses. An increase in annual sewer rates of \$25.00 per residential household was discussed to offset the increase in sewer fees imposed by the sewerage authorities.

Mr. Mondelli summarized the increases discussed and the decreases required to maintain a flat budget for 2023.

Technology – Captain Credico reviewed a grant opportunity for license plate reader (LPR) for which decorative street poles are recommended for camera placement. Further discussion was held for the Capital Budget Meeting.

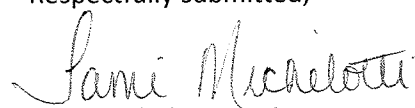
Open Space Trust – Mr. Mondelli reviewed the payments made on the notes for the purchase of Walker’s Property and for the dredging of the pond. He added that the bond ordinance funds were available for improvements on the property.

Capital Budget

The governing body would schedule and advertise a meeting at a future date to discuss Capital Budget requests. Mr. Mondelli confirmed that the capital budget funding would not affect the current year’s Operating Budget.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Councilman Kessler, that this meeting be adjourned at 1:04pm. Said motion was carried unanimously with six (6) affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,


Tami Michelotti, RMC
Borough Clerk