

Mayor and Council Special Budget Meeting – March 2, 2020

The Special Budget Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Monday, March 2, 2020. The meeting began at 5:10pm at Borough Hall.

Mayor Alessi called the meeting to order announcing that notice was provided in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

Mayor Alessi asked Chief Peterson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call indicated the following:

Present: Mayor Alessi, Council President Santomauro, Councilman Chiaia, Councilman Astorino, Councilman Kessler, Councilman Rees and Councilman Tilton.

Also present were: Kevin O'Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Rich Mondelli, CFO; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Municipal Clerk.

Executive Session

Resolution R-50-2020 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting for Certain Specified Purposes: Personnel – NCPD. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Astorino. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

The meeting was re-opened to Public at 5:26pm.

Citizens to be Heard

No one from the public came forward.

Items for Discussion

The 2020 Operating Budget and Capital Budget requests were presented by each department head.

Municipal Court

Municipal Court Administrator, Ashley Nolen, requested two credit card processing terminals, one for Essex Fells and one for North Caldwell. She noted that processing fees would be covered by court costs and that the credit card payment option would improve fine collection rates and would reduce time payment schedules. A personnel-related request was tabled to Executive Session after provision of a Rice Notice.

Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Tim Peterson detailed the NCFD requests for clothing allowance reimbursements, a CAD system to log in fire calls, modems to run software in the fire engines and repairs for department vehicles. Councilman Rees requested information regarding the Fire Association's annual budget. Chief Peterson offered to request the information from the Association President.

Chief Peterson stated the need for a command vehicle which could be leased but would require a one-time cost for custom outfitting. Other options were considered such as retrofitting other vehicles currently in the fleet. Chief Peterson requested the replacement of protective gear which requires replacement every ten years. He noted that four (4) sets per year are replaced on a rotating basis.

Chief Peterson explained the need for epoxy flooring in the Fire Station bays to prevent slipping when they are wet and cracking of the concrete from wear and tear. The replacement of a ladder truck was discussed if multi-floor development at the Green Brook Country Club property is constructed.

Recreation Department

Operating Budget - Recreation Director, Bill Maranz, described requested increases for Christmas tree lighting, Summer Fun camp instructor wages, office supplies and parades/fireworks. He also requested a new budget line item be created to dedicate a portion of program fees to DPW needs. He added that rental of the turf field to third party entities may be a new revenue source.

Capital Budget – Mr. Maranz described requests for bleachers at the turf field, windscreens for the tennis courts, backstop fencing for the baseball fields at Mountain Avenue Field, extended concrete walkways at the turf field to accommodate the walking path after on-deck circles are installed, and a storage shed for turf field equipment.

Pool Utility

Operating Budget – Mr. Maranz described requested increases for lifeguard re-certification expenses, pool chemical costs and lifeguard and gate monitor wages.

Capital Budget – Mr. Maranz stated the need for pool resurfacing and the potential for short-term repairs. A long-term refurbishing of the pool was discussed for future exploration and design for 2021 improvements.

Water Utility

Mr. Mondelli provided an overview of the Water Utility performance from the previous year. An increase in the water rate per gallon was discussed due to an increase in rates from both Passaic Valley Water Commission and Essex Fells.

Assistant DPW Director, Bill Stickles, described increases requested for the Water Utility capital budget including replacement of old infrastructure, hydrants and valves.

Current Fund

Mr. Mondelli reviewed the standard increases in salaries and wages not including special increase requests. He noted the strength of the Fund Balance and the option to increase surplus. He reviewed the pending one-time expenditures for the 2020 Budget. He summarized that a 2.26% tax increase would be likely based on discussions to date.

Mr. Mondelli reviewed requested increases for record disposition, planning software, meeting dues, JIF coverage, Construction Sub-code salary increases, Crossing Guard increases and unused vacation/sick time payouts.

Police Department

Chief Deuer stated the need to equip police vehicles with cameras and recording equipment.

Technology

The Council discuss the requested technology budget increases for Mountain Avenue field security, cyber-security, video-streaming of meetings, Windows upgrade, and new computers.

Department of Public Works

Assistant DPW Director, Bill Stickles, explained the need to expand the sidewalk around Liberty Park to accommodate on-deck boxes at the field near the Firemen’s Field parking lot. He added that pump station upgrades are needed as well as new radios for the DPW trucks, a gas monitor detector and a pro-press. He requested a pick-up truck and an excavator which could be leased. Mr. Stickles added the need to replace approximately eight fire hydrants and valves.

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the roadway improvements planned for 2020 including those being funded by the DOT grant. He noted that the cost of the design and plans, approximately \$68,000, could not be funded with the grant.

The Council requested that certain employees be provided with Rice Notices for further personnel-related discussions at a future meeting.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Chiaia, that this meeting be adjourned at 9:43pm. This motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti
Borough Clerk