

## Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – November 9, 2021

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, November 9, 2021. The meeting began at 6:31pm at Borough Hall and 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 (virtually), 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 Attorney; Rich Mondelli, CFO; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; Paul Ferriero, Borough Engineer; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Mayor Alessi asked Essex Fells Mayor Ed Davis to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Citizens to be Heard**

No one from the public came forward.

### **Items for Discussion**

#### **Water Quality Notice**

Mr. O'Sullivan reviewed a memo from Borough Water Operator Mike Grasso regarding recent modifications made by the Essex Fells Water Operator and testing results from the interconnections with North Caldwell. He noted that PFOA levels were under 14 parts per trillion but noted that the annual average would decrease slowly. He added that Mr. Grasso stated no concerns with resuming water purchase from Essex Fells which is now below state standards and which is blended with water from Passaic Valley.

Essex Fells Mayor Ed Davis stated that three (3) wells were initially shut down with another two (2) recently closed of the total 16 wells. He added that the wells in use have PFOA levels below the New Jersey standard. Mayor Davis committed to stringent monthly testing until a carbon filtration is in place. He added that Suburban Consulting Engineers is working on an analysis and budget to revamp Essex Fells' water facilities. He thanked the governing body for their commitment to working together.

#### **2022 Reorganization Meeting Date**

Councilman Kessler requested that the Reorganization Meeting be held on Sunday, January 2, 2022. A quorum was secured for that date. Council President Astorino requested a strategic meeting during the first week of January.

#### **2022 Professional Services Requests for Qualifications**

Mr. O'Sullivan announced the issuance of a request for qualifications and proposals in preparation for the annual professional services appointments. He confirmed that submissions would be shared with the Council.

#### **2022 Mayor's Ball**

Mayor Alessi announced his intention to hold a Mayor's Ball for March 2022 at Green Brook Country Club with proceeds to go toward the Walker's Pond Conservancy for property improvements. Councilman Atlas stated objection to raising funds through the event for the Conservancy as the improvements were already funded through a bond ordinance. Councilman Kessler noted that the Conservancy was working to establish itself as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Council President Astorino would follow up with the CFO regarding a fund status for Walker's Pond and address the project during the Strategic Plan Meeting planned for January 2022.

#### **Stop Sign Ordinance Amendment**

Mr. Ferriero reviewed the intersection of Hilltop Drive and Arbor Road which was part of the Hilltop Parcel 2 development by K. Hovnanian. He noted that the intersection will soon be open for public thoroughfare and requires a stop sign on Hilltop Drive for which an ordinance is required.

**Walker’s Pond Site Improvement Update**

Mr. Ferriero provided an update on the improvement plan progress relative to the 5-Year Plan. He noted that surveying and wetlands consultants were preparing reports for NJDEP permit applications. He reviewed his intention to include all improvements in one application for submission in 1Q2022 for which the permit would have a five-year life. Mr. Ferriero added that the NJDEP permit process is typically 90 days and confirmed that the application would be presented to the Council prior to submission. He noted that DPW performed sediment and debris-clearing as a result of Tropical Storm Ida.

**Altice Fiber Optic Upgrades**

Councilman Floria-Callori announced that Altice was working in town to install fiber optic lines but was unsure if permits were obtained. He noted that neighboring police departments were assisting the NCPD to provide safety measures and traffic control during the project. Mr. O’Sullivan noted that the existing infrastructure was not being upgraded but that the existing infrastructure would be less congested as customers migrate to the fiber optic service.

**Borough Logo**

Councilman Floria-Callori reviewed the feedback received from Council members regarding the proposed Borough logo and presented additional drafts that incorporated the suggestions. The Council agreed upon a logo for which a resolution would be prepared for the next meeting.

**2022 Municipal Budget Timeline**

Mr. Mondelli reviewed the proposed timeline for 2022 budget preparation with department budget proposals due December 1, 2021. He stated that he planned to meet with the Personnel Committee regarding employee salary requests. Council President Astorino stated that he planned to hold a strategic meeting that would incorporate the capital and operating budgets. Mr. Mondelli planned to introduce the 2022 budget after filing financial statements on February 10, 2022. He added that a new Technology Budget would be incorporated for the new year.

**Municipal Alliance FY 2022-2023**

Mr. O’Sullivan announced the Municipal Alliance Grant award from Essex County for which a resolution authorizing and executing the agreement would be prepared for the next meeting. He added that the grant equals that awarded last year and suggested that improving and expanding the Municipal Alliance programs can help to increase the grant award in the future.

**Soccer Referee Wage Increase**

Councilman Kessler reviewed a request from the Recreation Director that wages for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade referees be increased to be in alignment with other towns’ wages scales. He noted that it has become challenging to consistently employ referees at the current rate.

**Recreation Program Manager/Recreation Administrative Assistant**

Councilman Kessler stated that candidates were interviewed for the Program Manager position and that an appointing resolution was prepared for the Council’s consideration later in the meeting.

Mr. O’Sullivan stated the need to increase the total hours allotted to the part-time recreation department administrative assistant. He noted that Ms. Capstraw was required to work more hours during the Program Manager vacancy and that she was not authorized to work for the remainder of the year based on her appointing resolution. A resolution to authorize an additional 100 hours for the remainder of the 2021 calendar year would be prepared for consideration at the next meeting.

**Action to be Taken**

The following resolutions were read by and moved by Council President Astorino as a Consent Agenda, seconded by Councilman Kessler:

- Resolution R-214-2021 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills
- Resolution R-215-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of Sean Kinney as Recreation Facilities Coordinator/Program Manager for the Borough of North Caldwell.

Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

**Executive Session**

Resolution R-216-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting for Certain Specified Purposes :

- A. Potential Litigation: (1) Hidden Ridge Performance Bond;

Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – November 9, 2021

- B. Contract Negotiations: (1) Water Purchase Contract, (2) Green Acres Funding, (3) 70 Grandview Avenue;
- C. Potential Contract Negotiations: (1) Drainage Improvements and Easements;
- D. Attorney-Client Privilege Communication: (1) Holiday Displays on Public Property;
- E. Personnel: (1) Municipal Court Judge, (2) Recreation Director.

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

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Rees, seconded by the Council, that this meeting be adjourned at 8:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti  
Borough Clerk