

Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – October 12, 2021

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, October 12, 2021. The meeting began at 6:31pm via tele/video-conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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, Councilman Matthew Atlas, Councilman Anthony Floria-Callori, Councilman Robert Kessler, Councilman Arthur Rees, Councilman Kenneth Tilton.

Also present were: Kevin O’Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Irene Asbury, Borough Attorney; Rich Mondelli, CFO; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; Paul Ferriero, Borough Engineer; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

Mayor Alessi asked Councilman Floria-Callori to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizens to be Heard

John Chiaia – 34 Grandview Place

Mr. Chiaia noted appreciation to Essex County and to the Borough Departments of Public Works for removing stones and storm debris from the West Greenbrook Road/Central Avenue/Grandview Avenue triangle after Tropical Storm Ida. He congratulated the North Caldwell Police Foundation for the successful golf outing fundraiser held at Green Brook Country Club.

Jason and Tanya Weschke – 24 Grandview Avenue

Mr. Weschke described the stormwater flow through the stream and culvert on his property. He referred to the Suburban Drainage Study that noted the smaller pipes that feed water from the culvert. He described the water flow from the Shenandoah Drive extension that was not addressed in the study. He shared photos of the water flow and flooding damage from Tropical Storm Ida.

Michelle Cuozzo - 30 Grandview Avenue

Ms. Cuozzo described the safety issues from the intense water flow down Grandview Avenue and Shenandoah Drive onto her property and that of the Weschkes.

Mr. Weschke added that stormwater also flows from Allen Road onto Grandview Avenue. He noted that stormwater runoff from the impending development of 68-72 Grandview Avenue is also a significant concern.

John Gakos – 12 Grandview Avenue

Mr. Gakos stated that the Suburban Drainage Study did not detail or quantify the sheet flow of stormwater from properties above his home. He stated that he felt the stormwater conveyance system was undersized and required larger pipes. Borough Engineer Paul Ferriero agreed that a supplemental study was needed to achieve flooding mitigation and reduced water flow. He added that the borough is committed to improving conditions but that flooding could not be completely eliminated.

Rabbi Norman Patz - 16 Grandview Avenue

Rabbi Patz stated that heavy water flow was not present during the 40 years he has lived in town until uphill construction occurred. He described heavy water flow in his front and back yards.

Mr. Weschke added that recent construction on Allen Road and Shenandoah Road has contributed to flooding during heavy rain storms. Ms. Cuozzo stated that the previous owner of her property did not see stormwater breach the bridge and retaining wall.

Councilman Floria-Callori noted that Mr. Ferriero helped to implement heightened stormwater standards in a revised stormwater ordinance for the Borough. He added that a study would be forthcoming to determine the feasibility of implementing a stormwater utility.

Scott Grunther – 14 Grandview Avenue

Mr. Grunther spoke in support of his neighbors regarding water flow in the yards of the neighboring properties.

Items for Discussion

Councilman Floria-Callori made a motion to add to the agenda the discussion of a Borough Logo, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

General Election Early Voting

Ms. Michelotti provided an overview of the options for voting in the General Election including the implementation of Early Voting at locations throughout Essex County.

Borough Hall Opening

Mr. O’Sullivan announced the re-opening of Borough Hall as of Monday, October 18, 2021 as building improvement projects have been completed. He noted that public meetings would commence in-person with simultaneous virtual/remote access in November.

2020 Annual Audit Corrective Action Plan

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the recommended audit findings and Mr. Mondelli provided the correction action plans regarding Building Department software updates and a card swiping system to manage pool badges.

Best Practices Inventory

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the inventory results and confirmed that the report would be filed by the November 2, 2021 deadline.

Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) Sale

Mr. Mondelli reviewed the results of the November 7, 2021 note sale. He noted that the winning bid was for a .29 interest rate. He noted that permanent bonding of short-term debt may provide for better interest rates.

FEMA Response Updates: Tropical Storms Isais and Ida

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the certification of projects for FEMA review of emergency response work and debris removal from Tropical Storm Isais. He anticipated a reimbursement of \$25,000 for each category. He added that a similar process would be undertaken for Hurricane Ida expenses regarding overtime and debris removal. Mr. Ferriero updated the Council on the Green Brook surveying work for repairs needed from Hurricane Ida damage. Chief Deuer added that COVID vaccination site overtime was approved for reimbursement as well.

Drainage Projects (Grandview, Fox Run, Sunset) / Stormwater Infrastructure

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed a proposal from Mr. Ferriero regarding the Grandview Avenue drainage study for which a bond ordinance would be necessary for funding. Mr. Ferriero reviewed his mapping of recent flooding problems from Hurricane Ida as they correlate with the Suburban drainage report and recent improvements completed by the DPW.

Drinking Water Notification

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed a notice of a NJDEP drinking water supply violation received from Essex Fells. He noted that North Caldwell is required to notice our water customers via mail and on the Borough website regarding the elevated PFOA levels.

Municipal Pool Future Improvements and Funding

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the 2021 Municipal Pool budget status and the necessary improvements and repairs anticipated for 2022.

Recreation Employment Posting

Councilman Kessler reviewed the need to fulfill the Recreation Program Manager position and offered the job description for Council review.

Flag Football Contracts

Councilman Kessler reviewed a proposed change in vendor for Flag Football who would provide a higher level of service at a lower cost.

Seniors Club Fees

Mayor Alessi noted that North Caldwell residents have asked that out-of-towners contribute a fee for participation in the Seniors Club luncheons. Councilman Kessler presented the increasing out-of-town attendees and the desire to encourage participation. He suggested that program fees be set for implementation in the new year.

Borough Logo

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Councilman Floria-Callori reviewed the intent of a new Borough logo that would provide for a uniform presence as homage to the history of the Borough. He noted that historic photos of the town were reviewed which resulted in a depiction of Walker's Pond, mountains and a mill. He presented a sample that could be implemented on signage, merchandise, vehicles and the website. Council members offered their suggestions and revisions. Councilman Floria-Callori would communicate the suggestions to the creative design vendor for another draft.

Action to be Taken

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

- Resolution R-201-2021 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills
- Resolution R-202-2021 A Resolution Approving the 2020 Annual Municipal Audit Corrective Action Plan
- Resolution R-203-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Additional Part-Time Seasonal Employees – Soccer Referees
- Resolution R-204-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Additional Part-Time Seasonal Employees – Recreation Assistant – Event Staff
- Resolution R-205-2021 A Resolution Revoking R-177-2021 Award of Contract for Flag Football
- Resolution R-206-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council to Execute an Agreement with Adrenaline Fitness for Flag Football
- Resolution R-207-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council to Execute an Agreement with CSF Soccer Academy, LLC

Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Executive Session

Resolution R-208-2021 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, (2) National Opioid Settlement;
- B. Potential Contract Negotiations: (1) Pulte Homes – Hilltop Drive Extension Paving;
- C. Contract Negotiations: (1) Water Purchase Contract

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 Council President Astorino, seconded by the Council, that this meeting be adjourned at 9:09pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti
Borough Clerk