

Mayor and Council Regular Meeting – October 27, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, October 27, 2020. The meeting began at 7:31pm via teleconference 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 Alessi, Council President Santomauro, Councilman Chiaia, Councilman Astorino, Councilman Kessler, Councilman Rees and Councilman Tilton.

Also present were: Kevin O’Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Mark Semeraro, Esq., Borough Attorney; Rich Mondelli, Chief Financial Officer; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk. Mark Deuer, Police Chief, joined at 7:44pm.

Mayor Alessi asked Councilman Chiaia to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor’s Report

Mayor Alessi reviewed statistics from the recent COVID-19 testing event held in North Caldwell. He noted that 350 tests were administered, of which 175 were given to North Caldwell residents. He provided an update on the Walker’s Pond dredging project and noted pleasure with the progress to date. He announced that he met with Altice representatives that day regarding service issues experienced by Borough residents. Mayor Alessi added that the Borough has been included in Verizon’s schedule for build-outs in the near future.

Citizens to be Heard

No one from the public came forward.

Approval of Minutes

Council President Santomauro moved to accept the minutes from the Conference Meeting and Executive Session (without release) of September 8, 2020, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Council President Santomauro moved to accept the minutes from the Regular Meeting and Executive Session (without release) of September 22, 2020, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Committee Reports

Legal and Ordinance

Property Revaluation

Mr. O’Sullivan reviewed the County’s extension of the property revaluation due to the pandemic. He stated that the award of contract for revaluation services needed to be extended as well. He confirmed that there would be no financial impact of the extension.

Resolution R-161-2020 A Resolution Accepting Bids and Awarding a Contract for 2020 Roadway Improvements - Robin Hill Road and Deer Trail Road was read. Council President Santomauro noted that the lowest bid was received from AJM Contracting and was approved by the Borough Engineer and Borough Attorney. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Rees. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-162-2020 A Resolution Accepting Bids and Awarding a Contract for 2020 Roadway Improvements -Brookside Terrace (Section 3) was read. Council President Santomauro noted that the lowest bid was received from AJM Contracting and was approved by the Borough Engineer and Borough Attorney. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Rees. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-163-2020 – A Resolution Awarding Contract to Ferriero Engineering for Inspection and Construction Management of Roadway Improvements - Robin Hill Road and Deer Trail Road was read. Council President Santomauro noted that the funding for the contract was certified by the Borough CFO. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Rees. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

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Resolution R-164-2020 – A Resolution Awarding Contract to Ferriero Engineering for Inspection and Construction Management of Roadway Improvements - Brookside Terrace Section 3 was read. Council President Santomauro noted that the funding for the contract was certified by the Borough CFO. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Rees. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-170-2020 A Resolution Regarding Easement Encroachment regarding 4 Vale Place was cancelled. Council President Santomauro referred to discussion held during the October 13, 2020 meeting regarding the encroachment request. Mr. Semeraro stated that no action was needed as there was no affirmative action planned in response to the request.

Resolution R-171-2020 A Resolution Regarding Easement Encroachment regarding 207 Smull Avenue was read. Council President Santomauro reviewed the request and the stipulation that two gates be installed in the fence to allow access of the easement. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Personnel and Administration

Resolution R-172-2020 A Resolution Appointing Samuel S. Carsillo IV Volunteer Fire Department Member was read. Motion was made by Councilman Tilton, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes. Council President Santomauro stated that Mr. Carsillo is a Borough resident. Mayor Alessi thanked the Fire Department for their volunteerism and dedication.

Finance

Councilman Astorino made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's Report for September 2020, seconded by Council President Santomauro. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

2019 Annual Audit

Mr. Semeraro asked to table the discussion until the following meeting to allow him time to review the documents.

Councilman Astorino asked the Finance Committee to plan on a meeting with CFO Rich Mondelli before the end of the year.

2020 Best Practices Inventory

Councilman Astorino highlighted the Borough's results of the Best Practices inventory. He made a motion to approve the submission of the Best Practices Inventory to the State, seconded by Council President Santomauro. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-173-2020 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills was read. Motion was made by Councilman Astorino, seconded by Council President Santomauro. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Public Safety

Councilman Chiaia offered the Police Department Public Safety and Detective Bureau Report for September 2020. He highlighted the 750 calls made to dispatch and 73 summons issued. He encouraged residents to keep their vehicle key fobs far enough away from their vehicles to prevent car thefts. He announced that North Caldwell was rated the 21st safest town in the United States and thanked the Police Department. Councilman Chiaia read a letter of appreciation from a resident to the NCPD.

Councilman Chiaia offered the Fire Department report for September 2020 which included 18 calls and repairs completed on Engine 6.

Resolution R-174-2020 A Resolution Appointing a Temporary Interim Municipal Alliance Coordinator was read. Motion was made by Councilman Chiaia, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Public Works

Councilman Rees offered the Construction Permit Activity Report noting 350 permits with fees of \$215,935.00 collected to date.

Councilman Rees reviewed the Animal Control report for September 2020 during which three calls for assistance were placed, four summonses were issued and two warnings were given.

Recreation

Councilman Kessler reviewed the Recreation Director’s Report for September/October 2020. He encouraged all recreation participants to continue to practice social distancing as there has been an increase in positive COVID-19 cases. He added that the local Health Department recommended the close of recreation activities and field use from October 9-23 which has since resumed.

Councilman Kessler noted that Newcomers’ Night was held virtually and was very well attended. He announced that recreation soccer games would be rescheduled and that the inaugural season of recreation field hockey was a success. He welcomed residents to participate in the Halloween Trick or Treat Drive-Thru and make donations to the Annual Food Drive. Councilman Kessler announced that field lights were now functional by remote control which will eliminate the need for coaches to obtain and return the keys from the NCPD.

Resolution R-175-2020 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Agency Service Agreement with TeamSnap, Inc. was read. Councilman Kessler explained the scheduling management web and app program which will be used by coaches and Borough staff. He added that the program will facilitate COVID screenings and is therefore eligible for CARES reimbursement for the year. Motion was made by Councilman Kessler, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-176-2020 A Resolution for Retroactive Approval of Fixing Fees for Certain Seasonal Recreation Programs was read. Motion was made by Councilman Kessler, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes. Councilman Kessler stated that the Trick or Treat Drive-Thru program was developed in response to COVID restrictions as an alternative to traditional Halloween events. He explained that a \$5 program fee would be added to the schedule of recreation program fees. Mayor Alessi added that Wind Ridge Drive would not be closed this Halloween to prevent large crowds. He announced that residents should turn off their porch lights if they did not intend to distribute candy. Chief Deuer stated that additional staff would be on duty on Halloween to maintain safety and enforce COVID guidelines.

Executive Session

Resolution R-177-2020 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting for Certain Specified Purposes : A. Contract Negotiations: (1) Pulte Homes/Hydrogeological Study, (2) Lindsley Heights, (3) Caldwell Sewer Utility Agreement; B. Personnel: (1) NCPD was read. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six 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 Councilman Chiaia, that this meeting be adjourned at 8:22pm. This motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti
Borough Clerk