

Mayor and Council Regular Meeting – September 22, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, September 22, 2020. The meeting began at 7:34pm 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; Mr. Mark Semeraro, Esq., Borough Attorney; Rich Mondelli, Chief Financial Officer; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

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

Mayor's Report

Mayor Alessi extended his wishes for a Happy Rosh Hashanah and an easy fast for Yom Kippur. He announced additional PPE for the town and new COVID testing dates in North Caldwell and in nearby communities sponsored by Essex County.

Mayor Alessi provided an update on the Walker's Pond remediation and restoration project. He stated that the sediment removal work was ready to mobilize in early October which would re-establish the pond, restore waterways and provide recreation opportunities. He announced a groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for October 3, 2020.

Mayor Alessi reminded residents to remove branches and vegetation before the leaf and snow season. He also announced recent infrastructure upgrades performed by Altice as a result from coordinated efforts between Borough officials and the Director of Government Affairs. The Mayor reminded the public that Governor Murphy declared the General Election to be primarily voting by mail-in ballots.

Citizens to be Heard

John Zurlo, 19 Glenview Road

Mr. Zurlo asked for an update on the storm drain installation on Ferndale Road. Mr. O'Sullivan offered to get an update on the installation schedule. Mr. Zurlo asked for an update on plans to broadcast Council meetings. Mr. O'Sullivan provided an update including the installation of cameras and funding through CARES Act and Capital Budget improvements.

Mr. Zurlo requested an update on modifications to detention basin 2 at the Hilltop development. Mr. O'Sullivan noted that Pulte was awaiting plan alteration approvals from the NJDEP inspections which were delayed due to the pandemic. Mr. Zurlo noted that the northern-most detention basin was not yet complete although the adjacent homes were occupied. He noted that additional plantings were planned for the fall and were not yet installed. Mr. O'Sullivan stated that Mr. Ferriero met with Pulte one week prior to identify missing trees and trees in need of replacement.

Approval of Minutes

Council President Santomauro moved to accept the minutes from the Conference and Regular Meeting and Executive Session of August 18, 2020, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Committee Reports

Legal and Ordinance

Bid Results for 137 Gould Avenue Rental

Mr. O'Sullivan stated that no bids were received for the rental of Borough property at 137 Gould Avenue. He noted that the property rental will be rebid.

Open Space Tax Levy Referendum Affirmation

Mayor Alessi stated that the discussion would be held in Executive Session under Attorney-Client Privilege.

Personnel and Administration

Councilman Tilton offered the following resolutions to be considered as a Consent Agenda:

- Resolution R-151-2020 A Resolution Appointing Suzanne DePoe, Sergeant
- Resolution R-152-2020 A Resolution Appointing Paul O’Neill, Sergeant
- Resolution R-153-2020 A Resolution Appointing Tyler Johnson, Officer
- Resolution R-154-2020 A Resolution Authorizing Employment of Matthew T. Carleo as Police Department Probationary Patrolman
- Resolution R-155-2020 A Resolution Appointing Diana Ruthman as Full-Time Administrative Assistant

The motion was seconded by Council President Santomauro. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes. Mayor Alessi offered congratulatory wishes to each of the appointed employees.

Finance

Councilman Astorino made a motion to accept the Tax Collector’s Report for August 2020, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Public Safety

Councilman Chiaia offered the Police Department Public Safety and Detective Bureau Report for August 2020. He noted that 612 calls were received by Dispatch, 17 summonses were issued and 23 medical assists were requested. Chief Deuer reviewed the appointments of Sergeants DePoe and O’Neill and Officer Johnson who all had completed their one-year probationary periods in their positions. He added that Officer Carleo will be replacing Officer Mautone who retired.

Councilman Chiaia offered the Fire Department report for August 2020 which included 59 calls for service. He noted the department’s request for the acquisition of a command vehicle.

Public Works

Councilman Rees offered the Construction Permit Activity Report noting 36 permits issued for the month of August 2020 with \$25,000 in fees collected.

Councilman Rees reviewed the Solid Waste Collection report for August 2020 which showed a 20% increase over the prior year.

Councilman Rees reviewed the Animal Control report for August 2020.

Recreation

Councilman Kessler expressed his appreciation for a successful pool season. He added that tennis membership nearly doubled from 2019. He announced that tennis clinics and recreation soccer were underway. Councilman Kessler stated that COVID screening was implemented for all recreation activities which includes temperature checks and daily health certifications to ensure the safety and health of all participants. He announced plans for a virtual Newcomers’ Night event scheduled for October 14, 2020 for all new residents.

Councilman Kessler noted the one-year anniversary of the opening of the Turf Field at Liberty Park. He stated that the field has resulted fewer rained out and rescheduled games as well as increased opportunities to offer more varied programs such as field hockey. He congratulated Recreation Program Director Samantha O’Neill and her family on the arrival of their newborn son.

Councilman Kessler moved Resolution R-157-2020 A Resolution Authorizing the Termination of Agreement with Pay.Gov, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Councilman Kessler moved Resolution R-158-2020 A Resolution Authorizing a Contract with Community Pass for Credit Card Processing for Recreation Program Payments, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Executive Session

Resolution R-159-2020 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/Hydrogeological Study, (2) Lindsley Heights, (3) Caldwell Sewer Utility Agreement, (4) 620 Mountain Avenue; B. Personnel: Municipal Court. Mr. Semeraro asked that a discussion regarding the Department of Community Affairs be added under Attorney-Client Privilege. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Astorino. Said motion was carried unanimously


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with six affirmative votes. Councilman Kessler noted that the Governing Body would likely return to public session for the consideration of Resolution R-160-2020.

The meeting resumed at 9:19pm. The Mayor stated that Resolution R-160-2020 would be tabled to the next 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 9:20pm. This motion was carried unanimously with five affirmative votes. Councilman Astorino was unable to cast a vote due to audio issues.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti
Borough Clerk