

Budget Meeting March 20, 2017

The Special Budget Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Monday, March 20, 2017 at the Borough Hall, Gould Avenue and began at 5:42pm.

Roll Call indicated the following present:

Mayor Alessi

Council Members: Council President Cynthia Santomauro, Councilman Frank Astorino, Councilman Chiaia, Councilman Robert Kessler, Councilman Joshua Raymond, Councilman Arthur Rees

Also, present were David M. Paris, Borough Attorney, Frank Zichelli, Borough Engineer, Mel Levine, Borough Administrator, Richard Mondelli, CFO, John D'Ascensio, Fire Chief, and Nancy Bretzger, Borough Clerk.

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 Frank Zichelli to lead those present in the salute to the American flag.

Citizens to Be Heard

Mayor Alessi opened the floor to the public. No one came forward

Items for Discussion

The Mayor thanked everyone for coming in early for this meeting and to discuss the 2017 Capital Budget.

2017 Operating Budget – Richard Mondelli, CFO explained the memo that he had sent to the Mayor & Council regarding the discussion at the last meeting. He stated that the operating budget was at a 7 tax point increase which is a 1.82% increase over last year and under the 2% cap levy mandated by the state. The tax increase is approximately \$47.74 for the year for the average assessed (\$682,891.00) home in North Caldwell.

Water Rate – There was discussion amongst the Council as to the increase of the water for 2017. The current rate is \$5.90/1,000 gal.; a rate increase of \$.20 to \$6.10 would be a 3.39% increase and \$6.15 would be a 4.24% increase. After discussion, the council decided that they would raise the water rate to \$6.10 effective April 1, 2017.

2016 Capital Budget – Mel Levine, Borough Administrator explained the Capital Budget requests.

Police Department – The Police Chief stated through the Borough Clerk that he needed to replace the headquarters doors and the bathroom needed remodeling. It was stated that he can wait on the guns that were requested.

The Council said ok to all of the Police Chief's requests. The guns will be held for another budget.

Fire Department – Chief John D’Ascensio stated that the request for the snow plow can be scratched until next year. The replacement of the fire fighter gear is a necessity every year. The gear is good for 10 years; there are 4 fire fighters whose gear needs to be replaced this year. The current price that is in the request will be going up 20% the middle of April. The bail out system request for training and retro fitting can be scratched this year due to monies remaining from last year’s request.

Chief D’Ascensio stated that the Master Stream Nozzle is to change the nozzle on Engine 6 to a combination nozzle which allows the fire department to direct both a fog stream and smooth bore stream of water onto a fire. He stated that the present situation calls for them to manually change the nozzle. This nozzle will come into play if there is a fire at a larger home. Further reach from the requested nozzle would eliminate changing mid-stream.

They would also like to upgrade the lighting on Engine 6 (2002) specifically the scene lighting and warning lights from halogen to the LED lights. This will allow them to have more lighting or lumens with less electrical draw. This would allow more lighting on the scene.

Another request is to replace the old pagers. They would need 6 new pagers.

The Council asked questions of the Fire Chief regarding the nozzle and lighting request. They Council stated that they would include the nozzle and will wait for answers as to how many lights exactly are needed to be replaced on the engine before confirming.

The Council approved the replacement of the firefighter’s gear, the master stream nozzle, the pagers and they will consider the lighting after they receive more information.

Chief D’Ascensio stated that there was an Emergency Management request also for a Trailer Mounted Message Board; he said that he would request this item at a later time.

Police Radio System – Detective Michael Credico explained that the existing radio system needs to be updated. The radio system would include the Fire Department as well as DPW. He explained that they there were several locations within the Borough that they did not get reception with their radios. Detective Credico stated that they looked into putting in new towers within the Borough but the cost and finding the locations that would work would be costly. They decided that moving onto the State Radio System would give them much more advantages. The Fire Department would still work on the old system for the time being until the FCC would look to change. This would be a joint purchase with Essex Fells; the Borough’s cost would be \$585,000 with a maintenance cost of \$10,500 per year.

Councilman Chiaia explained that Michael has spent 2 years researching the radio systems for the Borough and he wanted to thank him for all of his hard work that he does for the Borough. It was asked if there are any grants available for this type of purchase. Detective Credico stated that he is not aware of any grants.

The Council unanimously agreed to the radio system to be included in the Capital Budget for this year.

Technology – Detective Michael Credico explained the requests for IT this year.

Phone and recording system – He explained that the Borough is definitely paying a lot for the current phone system than we are getting back from them. Ultimately there is \$40,000 of the \$71,000 that is needed for a recording system for the police department as well as it would work with the Borough Hall phones. A new phone system will cost approximately \$31,000, which will include all new phones, lines as well as better connectivity between buildings. We are now on a month to month contract with the current provider. Our contract with the current provider will end in April of 2017. A letter was sent to them in November of 2016 stating that that the Borough would go on a month to month basis once the contract ended in April 2017.

IT equipment – This includes upgrades to the Borough Server and equipment within the Borough.

Alarm System – Detective Credico explained that the panic alarm in the court office and court room has not been working. The new alarm system would be wireless and would also have an alarm in the main Borough Hall office.

Security Cameras – Detective Credico stated that these are for the outside and would cover the pool parking lot, tennis courts and the shed at the tennis courts. There was discussion of how many cameras are actually needed. The Council decided to increase the amount of the Alarm System and add 2 cameras to that item.

Access System – Detective Credico stated that this is for card access for all the doors at Borough Hall and Police Station. He stated that this can be done at another time.

Conference Room Media – Detective Credico stated that this can be done at another time in order to decrease the amount of Capital required this year. The Council decided that \$1000.00 from Building & Grounds in the Operating Budget can be used to purchase a Smart TV for the Conference Room.

The furniture request can be held off until next year. Council President Santomauro explained that she has spoken with an Auctioneer Firm to see if they had any furniture that is up for auction. She stated that they will be in touch with her if any furniture comes in.

DPW – Frank Zichelli, Borough Engineer explained that he has put in for 3 roadways this year, Ferndale Road, Hickory Road and Timber Drive. He explained that Hickory Road and Timber Drive also needed drainage work completed. The Council agreed to these 3 roadways.

Mr. Zichelli explained that he has been approached by the Fire Department about installing a new gas line at the Fireman's Community Center to be used as backup heat. The Council decided that this is not needed at this time.

Mr. Zichelli also stated that there is no heat in the Fire Chief's office at the Fire Department Bays. That needs to be repaired. The Council stated that can be included this year.

Mr. Zichelli explained that the nativity set used at the Borough's seasonal display was a hand me down from Notre Dame Church. This year, baby Jesus has dicinergrated and needs to be replaced while the other pieces to the set are salvageable. The total for a new nativity set is \$3200.00. Councilman Chiaia stated that he has tried to locate the proper size baby Jesus online and has not been able to find one. Mr. Zichelli explained that this price is for a middle of the line nativity set. The Council stated that they wanted him to find a baby Jesus and make due with the rest of the nativity set.

Mr. Zichelli stated that they needed to replace a snow plow on one of the trucks.

Mr. Zichelli asked for a Plotter/Printer/Copier for plans that are sent electronically. He stated that more of the developers and engineering firms are sending plans electronically and they are hard to read on the screen. This would be needed to print out the full size plans. The Council asked him to look into leasing the printer before purchasing it.

Mr. Zichelli stated that the utility vehicle is to replace the current one that is over 10 years old. He explained that the utility vehicle is used from March to November to work on the fields. The Council agreed to this request.

Mr. Zichelli stated that the requests for the water fund can be scratched. There was monies left over from another capital budget and they were able to purchase these items.

Recreation

Councilman Kessler explained that there was \$45,000 from last year's capital budget for the baby pool upgrade. He would like to request \$75,000 for each year for the next 2 years to add to the \$45,000 to upgrade the baby pool to a walk in pool or splash park. He explained that the estimates that they received for the upgrade to the pool are approximately \$200,000.00. There was discussion as to what upgrades are needed. Mr. Mondelli explained that it is better to request all of the \$150,000 at this time. Councilman Raymond and Councilman Kessler both stressed that the baby pool is in desperate need of replacement. The Council decided to go with the \$150,000 for this year and look to have the baby pool replaced by Pool season 2018.

Councilman Kessler explained the Field Upgrades that are needed for this year and the turf field project at Liberty Field.

There was discussion amongst the Council regarding the fields. Councilman Rees feels that the turf field does not benefit everyone in the town. He feels that this decision should be put out to referendum so that the whole town can vote as to whether they would like the turf field. There was discussion as to whether this should go for referendum or not. The consensus amongst the Council was that it should not go to referendum and that the cost to turf Liberty Field should be included in this year's capital budget.

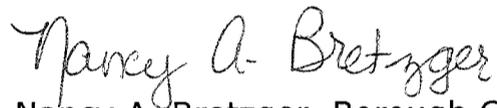
There was discussion as to whether Magnusseon field should also be completed this year with the parking lot and bathrooms. It was decided to

purchase netting for safety purposes with a \$5,000 budget and to gravel a parking lot this year to see if where it is placed works for that area.

Councilman Kessler stated that the North Caldwell Recreation Foundation would be making a donation for the tennis court improvements so those items were not needed any longer.

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 Rees that this meeting be adjourned at 7:57p.m. This motion was unanimously carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk