

Mayor and Council Regular Meeting – January 26, 2021

The Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, January 26, 2021. The meeting began at 7:30pm 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 Alessi, Council President Astorino, Councilman Atlas, Councilman Floria-Callori, Councilman Kessler, Councilman Rees and Councilman Tilton.

Also present were: Kevin O’Sullivan, Borough Administrator; Mr. Mark Semeraro, Esq., Borough Attorney; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; and Tami Michelotti, Borough Clerk.

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

Mayor’s Report

Mayor Alessi provided a COVID update from his weekly call with Essex County Executive DiVincenzo. He noted that he was joining other mayors to advocate for additional vaccines to be provided to teachers and school administration in an effort to reopen schools. He encouraged all residents to register for vaccinations at the County and State websites. He also announced that homebound residents could register for local vaccination distribution by the Health Department.

Mayor Alessi announced that sediment dredging at Walkers Pond was completed. He stated that final restoration would be performed in the spring, followed by longer-term plans for improvements as recommended by the Walker’s Pond Conservancy.

Mayor Alessi reminded residents to license their pets before the end of January. He stated that over 50 pets were vaccinated at the Annual Rabies Clinic held on January 19th. Mayor Alessi announced that Christmas tree collection would conclude on January 31st, that first quarter property taxes were due on February 1st and that Borough offices would be closed for the Presidents’ Day holiday.

Citizens to be Heard

Dan Gallagher – 36 Ferndale Road

Mr. Gallagher asked if stormwater drainage issues are covered by the Pulte Homes performance bond. Councilman Atlas stated that 30% of each line item covered by the performance bond would be retained. Mr. Ferriero added that drainage issues are not covered by the bond but are covered by the developer’s agreement. Mr. Semeraro explained the laws governing performance bonds and their reduction. He encouraged the public to submit evidence of comparative changes in conditions before and after the construction of The Reserve.

Approval of Minutes

Council President Astorino moved to accept the minutes from the Conference and Regular Meeting and Executive Session Minutes (without release) of December 15, 2020, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Councilman Atlas and Councilman Floria-Callori abstained. Said motion was carried with four affirmative votes and two abstentions.

Council President Astorino moved to accept the minutes from the Special Meeting Minutes of December 15, 2020, seconded by Councilman Rees. Councilman Atlas, Councilman Floria-Callori and Councilman Kessler abstained. Said motion was carried with four affirmative votes including Mayor Alessi and two abstentions.

Committee Reports

Legal and Ordinance

Councilman Atlas made a motion to introduce Ordinance O-1-2021 An Ordinance to Amend and Supplement the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of North Caldwell, Chapter 53, Article III Regarding On-Site Stormwater Detention, Stormwater Controls, seconded by Councilman Floria-Callori. Said motion was carried with six affirmative votes. Councilman Atlas noted that a public hearing was scheduled for February 23, 2021 at 7:30pm. He explained the need to amend the current ordinance to comply with NJDEP standards.

Mayor and Council Regular Meeting – January 26, 2021

Councilman Atlas made a motion to introduce Ordinance O-2-2021 An Ordinance to Accept Falcon Point Drive as a Public Thoroughfare, seconded by Councilman Floria-Callori. Said motion was carried with six affirmative votes. Councilman Atlas noted that a public hearing was scheduled for February 23, 2021 at 7:30pm. He explained that the street for the new development would be transferred to the Borough and accepted as a public street.

Resolution R-36-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Release of the Falcon Custom Homes, LLC Performance Bond No. 38125 was tabled to the next meeting to verify two required elements of the required improvements.

Resolution R-44-2021 A Resolution Requiring a Maintenance Bond from Falcon Custom Homes LLC was tabled to the next meeting to verify two required elements of the required improvements.

Resolution R-37-2021 A Resolution Authorizing and Adjustment and Cash Reduction of the Pulte Homes Performance Guarantee for the Reserve at North Caldwell was read. Councilman Atlas stated that \$1.4 million would be maintained in the bond. Motion was made by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Council President Astorino. Councilman Rees voted no. Said motion was carried with five affirmative votes.

Resolution R-38-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Release of the RPM/White Rock Urban Renewal LLC Performance Bond was read. Mr. Ferriero noted that there was no need for a maintenance bond as no improvements would be owned by the Borough. Motion was made by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Councilman Tilton. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Resolution R-39-2021 A Resolution Authorizing a Change Order for the Walker's Pond Sediment Removal Project was read. Councilman Atlas noted that the zero-cost change order was due to credits for less sediment removed than originally planned. He stated that the total cost of the project was less than forecasted. Motion was made by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Personnel and Technology

Technology Sub-Committee Update – Councilman Floria-Callori provided a summary of a recent Technology Sub-Committee meeting. He reviewed the progress made with security cameras, website redesign, potential solar energy projects and cellular phone service improvements. Councilman Kessler added the potential for electric vehicle charging stations. Councilman Atlas noted that some opportunities may generate revenue as well as providing better service for the community.

Finance

Council President Astorino offered the Tax Collector's Report for December 2020.

Resolution R-40-2021 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills was read. Motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Floria-Callori. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Resolution R-41-2021 A Resolution Approving 2020 Budget Transfers was read. Motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Atlas. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Public Safety

Councilman Tilton thanked the NCPD for their services during the pandemic and for their coordination to soon provide COVID vaccinations for homebound residents.

Councilman Tilton offered the Police Department Public Safety and Detective Bureau Reports for December 2020 and Year-End 2020. He noted that over 24 calls to Dispatch were received on an average day in 2020.

Councilman Tilton offered the Fire Department Public Safety Report for December 2020 and Year-End 2020. He highlighted the year's accomplishments including the installation of a self-contained fill station and compressor. He added that the department's radio system was upgraded so that each officer has his/her own radio.

Public Works

Councilman Rees offered the Construction Permit Activity Report for December 2020 and highlighted that the total number of permits issued for the year slightly exceed that of the year prior while the value was less.

Councilman Rees offered the Solid Waste Collection Report for Year-End 2020. He noted an increase in paper/cardboard and a decrease in comingled recycling.

Councilman Rees offered the Animal Control Report for December 2020 which included one response by officers.

Recreation

Councilman Kessler offered the Recreation Director's Report for January and February 2021. He noted that Recreation Basketball was not yet permitted due to the pandemic. He announced the opening of registration for baseball, softball, sports clinics, adult tennis and spring programs with appropriate restrictions and health guidelines in place. Councilman Kessler noted that baseball and softball team sponsorships would be available for the season. He announced the spring lacrosse season and installation of fencing at Mountain Avenue ball field. Councilman Floria-Callori added that the North Caldwell Recreation Foundation would soon be issuing a survey to residents regarding recreation facility improvements.

Executive Session

Resolution R-42-2021 A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell to Hold a Closed Session Meeting for Certain Specified Purposes : A. Contract Negotiations: (1) Pulte Homes/Hydrogeological Study, (2) Lindsley Heights, (3) Caldwell Sewer Utility Agreement, (4) Collective Bargaining Agreement Negotiations, (5) Green Brook Country Club, (6) Joint Municipal Court, (7) Police Dispatch, (8) Zen-Fi ROW, (9) 137 Gould Avenue Lease; B. Contract Negotiations/Attorney-Client Communication – (1) Hidden Ridge Maintenance Bond Review; C. Potential Litigation: (1) Property Tax Delinquency; D. Attorney Client Privileged Communication: (1) Conduct of Meetings; E. Personnel: (1) NCPD was read. Motion was made by Council President Astorino, seconded by Councilman Atlas. Said motion was carried unanimously with six affirmative votes.

Mayor Alessi announced that the meeting would return to public session after Executive Session discussions.

Return to Public Session

The public session resumed at 10:39pm.

Resolution R-43-2021 A Resolution Accepting a Bid and Awarding a Lease for 137 Gould Avenue, North Caldwell, New Jersey Rental Property was read. Motion was made by Councilman Atlas, seconded by Council President Astorino. 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 Councilman Kessler, that this meeting be adjourned at 10:41pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti
Borough Clerk