

## Mayor and Council Conference Meeting – June 12, 2018

The Conference Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of North Caldwell was held on Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at the Borough Hall, Gould Avenue and began at 7:31pm.

Roll Call indicated the following present:

Mayor Alessi

Council Members: Council President Santomauro, Councilman Astorino, Councilman Chiaia, Councilman Kessler, Councilman Raymond, Councilman Rees

Also, present were David M. Paris, Borough Attorney; Frank Zichelli, Borough Engineer; Mark Deuer, Police Chief; George Librizzi, Borough Tax Assessor; and Tami Michelotti, Acting 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 Mr. Tom DeVita, a North Caldwell resident who was present at the meeting, to lead those present in the salute to the American flag.

### **Citizens to be Heard**

No one from the public wished to be heard.

### **Items for Discussion**

#### **Amending Resolution R-47-17 Authorizing the Filing of Assessor's Tax Appeals, Answers, Counterclaims, Appeals and Cross Appeals in Tax Matters on Behalf of the Borough of North Caldwell**

Mr. Zichelli stated the Tax Assessor, George Librizzi, was present to address any open issues remaining from the Governing Body's discussion at the last Conference meeting. He added that the new proposed resolution specifies that the Tax Assessor report to the Governing Body regarding settlements of all non-residential appeals as well as for the hiring of experts other than appraisers.

Mr. Librizzi stated that he has no issue with the changes. He added that he routinely keeps track of appeals and dispositions as part of his reporting to the Borough CFO for preparation of the annual user-friendly budget. He offered to share his reports on a regular basis or as needed. Mr. Librizzi noted that pending State appeals are not removed from the reports until physical judgements are completed and delivered. He added that there are currently 15 tax appeals pending.

### **Executive Session**

Resolution R-133-18 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 – RPM, Caldwell Sewer Utility; B. Litigation – COAH Declaratory Judgment, LaSerra Farms; C. Anticipated Litigation – Pulte Homes. Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Chiaia. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

The Council entered Executive Session at 7:41pm to discuss the matter of LaSerra Farms litigation while Mr. Librizzi was still present at the meeting. Mayor Alessi recused himself from the discussion at 7:41pm.

The public meeting was reopened at 7:49pm.

### **Items for Discussion (continued)**

#### **Bond Ordinance for Turf Field**

Mr. Zichelli explained the possibility that not enough money was funded for the turf field project. He stated that the project was currently out for bid and any difference between the awarded bid and the amount funded would be covered by this additional bond. He noted that bond ordinances require two meetings to approve so the bond ordinance introduction was on the agenda for that night with the bond ordinance adoption scheduled for June 26, 2018.

#### **White Rock Road Traffic Study**

Mr. Zichelli shared an update with the Council regarding the Borough's response to concerns of Four Seasons residents raised at the Homeowners' Association meeting in April. He stated that he and Mayor Alessi spoke with Verona's town manager and learned that Verona residents were looking to rectify traffic issues as well. Verona's manager was planning to hire a consultant to study the White Rock Road and Bloomfield Avenue intersection as well as speed of travelers on White Rock Road. Mr. Zichelli stated that Verona asked North Caldwell to share the cost of the White Rock Road portion of the study.

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He added that the study should provide information regarding the need for additional lights, signage, etc.

The Council discussed the times of day and traffic flows on White Rock Road. Mr. Zichelli explained that the anticipated cost of the study is \$6,500. Chief Deuer noted that White Rock Road is not a Borough road and that Verona should lead the study but North Caldwell should participate in the study as it affects the Borough residents.

The Council decided to share the cost of the study as long as the report is prepared for North Caldwell's concerns as well as for Verona. A contribution of approximately \$2,000 was discussed but was left open to consideration of Verona's requested contribution.

### **Hidden Ridge Pump Station Acceptance**

Mr. Paris recused himself from the meeting at 8:00pm for the Hidden Ridge Pump Station discussion.

Mr. Zichelli stated that Hidden Ridge property owners are paying for the electricity to run the pump station. He added that repair costs and inspection fees have been resolved, leaving the Borough to accept only the pumping station which is similar to the agreement for the Arbor Road detention basin. Mr. Zichelli anticipated presenting a resolution for the next Council meeting. Councilman Chiaia noted that the Caldwell Sewer Authority did not permit the water to follow the flow of gravity.

### **Bids to be Received: 2018 Roadway Improvements, Roosevelt Boulevard Pavement Overlay, Liberty Turf Field**

Mr. Zichelli shared that three bids were expected the following week. He stated that resolutions would be prepared for consideration at the next Council meeting.

Councilman Chiaia asked for information regarding pothole repairs. Mr. Zichelli stated that potholes are repaired by the Borough DPW and done in bulk with hot mix during the summer months.

Mr. Paris rejoined the meeting at 8:04pm.

### **Mayors Against Illegal Guns**

Mayor Alessi shared that resident Emily Goldberg, who represents Moms Demand Action, thanked the Council for permission to hang a banner and to distribute postcards in public places to publicize Gun Violence Awareness Weekend. Mayor Alessi added that Ms. Goldberg also asked him to sign a Statement of Principles and join Mayors Against Illegal Guns. The Council reviewed each of the principles and agreed that the Mayor should participate. Mayor Alessi signed the statement for submission to the coalition.

### **NCRF 5K and Color Run**

Mr. Tom DeVita of Hamilton Drive East was present to ask the Council for permission for the North Caldwell Recreation Foundation to hold a 5K run and a separate 1-Mile Color Run in the Borough as a fundraiser. He stated that the Color Run would start one hour after the start of the 5K run and would use a one mile portion of the sanctioned 5K route. Chief Deuer noted that the 5K course was already sanctioned from prior events and that the Color Run would take place on a flat section of the 5K course. Mr. DeVita asked for the approval of the Governing Body so that the NCRF could start work on promoting the event.

Councilman Raymond added that the event was planned for the day of the Town Picnic, Saturday, September 8, 2018. Mr. DeVita added that the NCRF planned to post a dedicated website for the run information and registration. Chief Deuer offered to issue a Reverse 911, Nixle alert and post information on the electronic bulletin board to notify residents of the event and associated road closures. The Council approved signage to be posted on public property in the Borough similar to those posted for the 2017 Mayor's Ball.

Mr. DeVita announced that the safety netting installation at Magnusson Field has been completed.

### **Bridge/Mahjong Club**

Mayor Alessi stated that residents he met at the Seniors meeting and luncheon asked to start a Bridge Club. He added that the Clerk's Office had also received requests for a Mahjong Club. He suggested that the Borough provide the Fireman's Community Center and coffee for residents who are interested in participating. Councilman Kessler offered that the Recreation Department can coordinate the club. Mr. Zichelli added that the Borough can purchase card tables and cards.

**Donation of Book Sale Proceeds**

Mayor Alessi shared with the Council his visit from residents Charlie and Mary Kannankeril. He stated that Mr. Kannankeril is currently retired and developed 71 patented products during his career. He added that Mr. Kannankeril recently wrote a book titled “The Inventor In You: A Step-by-Step Guide to Your First Invention”. Mayor Alessi explained that Mr. Kannankeril would like to coordinate with the Borough to hold or join a Borough event at which he could sell his book and donate 50% of the proceeds to the North Caldwell Fire Department.

Mayor Alessi stated that he would discuss the idea with Fire Chief D’Ascensio. Council President Santomauro suggested that Mr. Kannankeril be permitted to sell the books at the Town Picnic.

**Little League Baseball**

Councilman Kessler stated that he and Councilman Raymond met with residents who were interested in obtaining a Little League baseball and softball charter for North Caldwell. He added that Caldwell’s Little League charter lists North Caldwell as a member but that the Borough was not consulted on its inclusion in Caldwell’s charter.

Councilman Kessler stated that the interested parties discussed the scope of Little League certification, a general timeline for implementation, and sustainability of the league as organizers and coaches move on when their children age out of Little League. Councilman Kessler explained the intention that all West Essex sending districts be included in the league. He added that support from other towns is essential for participation and field availability. He noted that the potential league would not include Caldwell, allowing Caldwell’s charter to remain in place.

Councilman Kessler explained that Little League teams would replace the recreation baseball and softball teams currently organized by the Borough Recreation Department. He confirmed that all interested players would be placed on teams where all would play; there would be no try-outs or children cut from teams. Councilman Raymond added that the spring season of Little League would function as recreation baseball/softball currently does and that All-Stars would be selected to play in play-offs over the summer.

Councilman Kessler stated that Little League rules include field requirements, i.e. higher fences, as well as minimum participant quantities. He stated that the next step would be meeting with the Little League District Commissioner to learn more and that Mr. Maranz, Recreation Director, would contact other West Essex towns’ Recreation Directors to gauge interest.

Council President Santomauro expressed concern that children should not be “cut” from teams and that all children have the opportunity to play. Mayor Alessi stated concern for losing Opening Day festivities if a Little League were instituted. Councilman Kessler confirmed inclusion of all children in spring play and the possibility of rotating Opening Day hosting responsibilities among the West Essex towns.

**PSE&G Funding**

Mr. Zichelli stated that PSEG contacted the Borough about their energy savings program through which PSEG would pay 70% of energy efficient improvements. He added that the Borough was already involved in a similar program for the new boiler, compressor and LED lighting for Borough Hall and the Fireman’s Community Center. Mr. Zichelli explained that this program may include the sports field lighting and that PSEG was receptive to looking into the project.

**Action to be Taken**

Councilman Raymond moved to introduce Ordinance O-11-18 An Ordinance Amending Bond Ordinance O-4-17 Adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of North Caldwell, New Jersey on May 23, 2017 regarding a turf field which was seconded by Councilman Astorino. Public Meeting and Final Reading will be held on Tuesday, June 26, 2018. Councilman Rees voted against the introduction of the ordinance stating that it was his opinion that the initial Bond Ordinance O-4-17 for a turf field should have gone to referendum. He added that his vote against the introduction of Ordinance O-11-18 follows his same opinion. All other members of the Council voted in favor of the ordinance introduction. Said motion was carried with five affirmative votes and one nay vote.

Resolution R-124-18 A Resolution Authorizing the Renewal of Liquor License #0715-33-001-001 to Green Brook Liquor License, LLC was read. Motion was made by Councilman Raymond, seconded by Council President Santomauro. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

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Resolution R-125-18 A Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills was read. Motion was made by Councilman Astorino, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-126-18 A Resolution Authorizing for Redemption and Cancellation of Record of Tax Lien Redemption – Block 606, Lot 7 was read. Motion was made by Councilman Astorino, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-127-18 A Resolution Authorizing Settlement of Contested Litigation and Execution of Stipulations of Settlement was tabled until a later date pending further discussion in Executive Session regarding the details of the litigation.

Resolution R-128-18 A Resolution Approving the Borough of North Caldwell Volunteer Fire Department Certified LOSAP List for the Year 2017 was read. Motion was made by Councilman Chiaia, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-129-18 A Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Seasonal Employees for the 2018 Summer Fun Season – Counselors was read. Motion was made by Councilman Kessler, seconded by Councilman Raymond. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-130-18 A Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Seasonal Employees for the 2018 Municipal Pool – Lifeguards was read. Motion was made by Councilman Kessler, seconded by Councilman Raymond. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-131-18 A Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Additional Seasonal Employees for the 2017-2018 Basketball Season – Referees was read. Motion was made by Councilman Kessler, seconded by Councilman Raymond. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-132-18 A Resolution Authorizing the North Caldwell Recreation Foundation to Hold a 5K Run on September 8, 2018 was read. Motion was made by Councilman Kessler, seconded by Councilman Raymond. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Resolution R-134-18 A Resolution Authorizing Third Quarter 2018 Estimated Tax Bill was read. Motion was made by Councilman Astorino, seconded by Councilman Kessler. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

Chief Deuer announced that PSEG found unanticipated layers of rock during the excavation of Mountain Avenue to replace gas pipes. He added that the project now requires an extra backfilling step which will lengthen the project. The expected completion date is now closer to Labor Day.

### **Executive Session (continued)**

Motion was made by Council President Santomauro, seconded by Councilman Chiaia to re-enter Executive Session referencing Resolution R-133-18 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 – RPM, Caldwell Sewer Utility; B. Litigation – COAH Declaratory Judgment, LaSerra Farms; C. Anticipated Litigation – Pulte Homes. Said motion was carried unanimously with six votes.

The public meeting was reopened at 9:55pm.

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 Kessler that this meeting be adjourned at 9:56pm. This motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Tami Michelotti  
Acting Borough Clerk