

BOROUGH OF CALDWELL, N.J.
COUNCIL CONFERENCE MEETING
MINUTES – APRIL 7, 2009

The Council Conference meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Caldwell was called to order in the Council Chambers at 7:02 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Gartland, Councilman Lawshe, Dassing, Curley, Norton and Brennan

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator, Maureen Ruane, Borough Attorney, Stuart Koenig, Esq., Deputy Clerk, Beth Bush Telepan

ABSENT: Councilman Slattery

Adequate notice of this Council Conference meeting was given on January 15, 2009. Notice was posted on the bulletin board on the first floor of the Borough Hall, One Provost Square, Caldwell, New Jersey on January 15, 2009. Four official newspapers of the Borough were notified of this meeting by mail on January 15, 2009. Notice was posted and all persons requesting notice were sent same.

PRESENTATIONS:

Anne Marchioni, Environmental Commission gave a presentation regarding Sustainable New Jersey and Clean Power Community Partners, Ms. Marchioni reported that there is a \$10,000 Grant the Caldwell can apply for.

Meryl Layton, Caldwell Downtown Alliance, gave a proposal on the proposed Farmers Market and the Caldwell Downtown Alliance. Discussion was had as to the proposed locations for the Farmers Market, the parking lot behind the theater or the parking lot behind the Caldwell Diner. The Farmers Market will run for approximately 19 weeks beginning the last week in June through the last week in October.

Zach Edelman, Fairview Insurance and Earl Miller, Garden State Municipal Joint Insurance Fund gave a presentation on the Municipal Joint Insurance Fund. Zach Edelman handed out a cost comparison analyzing the premiums from the prior insurance fund to the current insurance fund. By changing insurance funds the Borough saved \$45,000.00. The new insurance fund also offers many free safety programs and training for employees.

Ryan Graham, Fairview Insurance gave a presentation on health benefits and the proposed new deductibles for the current traditional program and raising the co-pays for the direct access programs and the cost savings associated with them.

Mayor Gartland recognized the employees in attendance and asked if anyone had any questions for Ryan Graham they can be heard now. Deborah Khost, 14 Caton Terrace, questioned what the shortfall in the town's budget that is having the town consider the new Health insurance proposal. Ms. Ruane responded that the shortfall at this time is \$445,000 in the Municipal Budget. Councilman Dassing also responded that this is one part of the budget that the Council is looking into; we have done a lot of other cuts without changing the Medical Benefits. Karen Kleppe Lembo, 76 Gould Place, reported that the library budget, that she has worked so hard on reducing is about \$480,000, everyone that works in the library pays taxes and having held the line for eight years and pinched pennies. This group of people that are not unionized and it feels as if they are being penalized for that. Mr. Lembo reported that the people that this is affecting is the heart of the library and the heart of the town. Councilman Norton responded that as head of the budget and finance committee they were asked to see what they can do to reduce costs for the 2009 budget year. The committee has done their due diligence and has worked countless hours. We have tried to keep taxes at a minimal impact this year due based on the economic situation. The health benefits are one piece of a big pie; we are not targeting the non-union employees. Councilman Norton reported that he has gone to the

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Police and the DPW and they pointed out they are not willing to help for this year. Moving forward toward 2010 and 2011 we have to change the mindset of the way that the Municipality works. Councilman Norton responded that these are difficult decisions and difficult times. Mayor Gartland responded that over the years we have been very responsible with every budget that we have put together. We have always made an effort to save the municipality money without hurting our employees. As a result of those responsible efforts of every council, Caldwell is in far better shape than any of our surrounding communities. Rebecca Roth, 43 Bowers Road, reported that as far as she knew the Borough of Caldwell is fiscally sound. Ms. Roth wanted to know what the cost would be to the taxpayer if the Health Insurance was not changed. Councilman Curley responded it would be approximately \$25.00 per year per household. Mario Bifalco, Director of DPW stated that at the last meeting Councilman Lawshe said they were not going to go after the same twenty-five people to balance the budget. Councilman Lawshe responded that we have asked Fairview Insurance to come in to explore options. Councilman Lawshe explained that no decisions have been made on the Health Insurance options yet. Debrah Khost, 14 Caton Terrace, wanted to know if the town was in a deficit or not in a deficit. Councilman Curley responded that the Borough has introduced a balanced budget, the town is not running in a deficit. Caldwell is the only town in the West Essex area that has introduced a budget that is below the 4% CAP. Lisa O'Neill, 19 Parkway West, made a statement that she has no problem with raising the co-pays, but she does not believe that is fair that it is only for 19 employees and not the Union employees. Marilyn Reeve, 8 Birkendene Road, wanted to know if the Council had a definitive answer on what the State will give us on Extraordinary Aid. Ms. Ruane responded that the town will be applying for the Extraordinary Aid by April 15, 2009. Annette Sellars, 14 Park Place, requested that when the Council is considering the employee changes in the Health Benefits that it be done when the union contracts are negotiated.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

RECEIVING OF BIDS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

Mayor Gartland opened the meeting to the public at 8:45 P.M. for public comment on resolutions. Seeing no one from the public wishing to be heard Mayor Gartland closed the open public comment on resolutions at 8:45 P.M.

RESOLUTIONS:

4-72 Authorizing the 2009 equivalent connection charge of \$390.00 per equivalent connection, based on the number of equivalent connections and the application of the sewer user agreements between The Borough of Caldwell and the sewer user municipalities of West Caldwell, North Caldwell, Essex Fells and Roseland

Moved by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Brennan. Discussion Ensued. On roll call vote, all members present voted in the affirmative. Resolution adopted 4/7/09.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND MEMBERS:

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Councilman Lawshe – No report.

Councilman Dassing – Reported that the Caldwell West Caldwell Education Foundation Board would like to thank all the restaurants and sponsors and the people that attended the Taste of The Caldwell's. We were very pleased to have so many community people at the event. The event was a big success. Councilman Dassing reported that the lanterns that were used at The Taste of Caldwell's will be displayed in the Council Chambers. The Taste of The Caldwell's will be on March 14, 2010.

Councilman Curley - Reported on the Traffic Committee Contest. The deadline for the contest was April 1, 2009. The signs are now displayed in the Council Chambers. The winner of the contest will be announced at the meeting of April 28, 2009. Councilman Curley thanked Councilman Norton for kicking this off. Councilman Curley also reported that the emergency notification system Global Connect is on the Caldwell website and he encourages all the residents to go on the site and register.

Councilman Norton – Reported that the Budget Finance Committee will have their next meeting early next week. Councilman Norton made a statement that it is April 7, 2009 and knock on wood we should not have any snow for the rest of the year. Councilman Norton thanked Mario Bifalco and the DPW crew for the great job they did this winter.

Councilman Brennan – No Report.

Mayor Gartland – Thanked the Police and the Fire Department for their quick response to the accident that happened on Bloomfield Avenue. Mayor Gartland reported that The Taste of Caldwell's was very nice. It was great to see the different restaurants that came out in the area.

Administrator Report – Administrator Ruane reported that Anthony Marucci, Borough Engineer, will give a report on the Police Station Alterations. Mr. Marucci reported that there was an additional amount of \$2,620.00 change order on the contract for the Police Department. Various discussion ensued regarding the change order. A resolution will be put on the next meeting agenda for the change order. Mr. Marucci gave a report to the Council on the Pine Brook. Mr. Marucci also gave a report to the Council regarding the performance bond on Agudath Israel. Discussion ensued regarding three quality of life issue still open with the Temple. It was agreed to hold the release of the performance bond until those matters are resolved. Ms. Ruane asked permission to put a resolution on for the next meeting for the Click It or Ticket Mobilization of May 18 – May 31, 2009. All Council members agreed. Ms. Ruane asked for authorization for the Borough Clerk to advertise and receive sealed bids for a generator for the Municipal Complex. All Council members agreed. Ms. Ruane asked for authorization for the Borough Clerk to advertise and receive sealed bids for fitness equipment and leasing of fitness equipment for the Caldwell Community Center. All Council members agreed. Ms. Ruane asked for authorization for the Borough Clerk to advertise and receive sealed bids for a Mako air compressor for the Caldwell Volunteer Fire Department. All Council members agreed. Ms. Ruane gave an update on the trees that were cut down on Bloomfield Avenue and the Woman's Club.

OPEN MEETING: Mayor Gartland opened the meeting to the public at 10:13 PM. Jim Neil of 24 Washburn Place stated that his house had a fire on March 15th of last year. Mr. Neil had contacted Tax Assessor; Jack Kelly about the status of the fire and Mr. Kelly told him he should bring this up with the Council. Mr. Neil said he had sent letters to the Mayor and never received a response. Mayor Gartland responded that she has not seen the letters. Mr. Neil said that he is owed an answer. Mayor Gartland said that she will address the situation tomorrow and apologized for not getting back to Mr. Neil sooner. Seeing no one else from the public wishing to be heard Mayor Gartland closed the open public portion of the meeting at 10:16 PM.

On a motion made by Councilman Curley, and seconded by Councilman Lawshe, unanimously affirmed, the Council moved into Executive Session in order to discuss a matter of contract negotiation, potential litigation and litigation. Said motion was unanimously approved and the Council went into Executive Session at 10:16 P.M.

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The Executive Session was adjourned and upon motion by Councilman Brennan, seconded by Councilman Norton the Council Conference Meeting was opened to the public and the press at 11:22 P.M. All those previously in attendance were present.

There being no additional business to be conducted a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Curley, unanimously affirmed by all members present, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 PM.

Prepared by:

Beth Bush Telepan
Deputy Clerk

Date