

**BOROUGH OF CALDWELL
COUNCIL BUSINESS/CONFERENCE MEETING
MINUTES – June 14, 2022**

The Council Business Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Caldwell was called to order at the Trinity Academy Gymnasium at 7:15 PM.

PRESENT: Mayor Kelley, Councilman Cole, Councilman Lace, Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi, Councilwoman Buechner, Council President Gates, and Councilman Alonso.

ALSO PRESENT: Deputy Clerk Kim Conlon, Deputy Clerk, Brittany Heun Borough Administrator Tom Banker, Borough Attorney Mary Kate Serratelli, and Police Chief James Bongiorno, Police Captain DeAngelo.

ABSENT:

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this Council Business/Conference Meeting was given on January 20, 2022. Notice was posted on the bulletin board of the first floor of Borough Hall, One Provost Square, Caldwell, New Jersey. Official newspapers of the Borough were notified of this meeting by mail. Notice was posted and all persons requesting notice were sent the same.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 17, 2022

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Councilman Lace and seconded by Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi. Upon a roll call vote, all members present voted in the affirmative. Minutes approved 6/14/2022.

PRESENTATION

1. Thomas Harris – Legacy Barber Shop
 - a. Official opening of Legacy Barber Shop on June 20, 2022
 - b. Located at 482 Bloomfield Avenue

REPORT OF BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR

Thomas Banker

1. 24 Smull Avenue Adaptive Reuse for Health Department.
 - a. *Improvements are complete.*
 - b. *Food Pantry located on the main level.*
 - c. *Staff will be moving in within the next 10 days.*
2. Temporary Trailer Installation.
 - a. *Hold up with Verizon*
 - b. *11 of 12 trailers have been put in place*
 - c. *Only remaining trailer to be set up is a Police trailer*
 - d. *No charge until July 1st*
 - e. *Cannot occupy the trailers until the electricity is connected.*
3. 14 Park Ave Rehabilitation.
 - a. *Interior Demo contract awarded*
 - b. *Will be the permanent home of the health department, food pantry, and senior services*
 - c. *Ran into an issue with asbestos found in the flooring of 14 Park Ave*
 - d. *Will be completely gut renovated, and will be fully ADA Compliant*
4. Community Center Reconstruction.
 - a. *Conceptual plans are complete*
 - b. *Went out to bid for selective demolition, and in the process of reviewing the bids*
 - c. *Not knocking the building, but renovating to eliminate Flooding issues*
 - d. *Should be able to award the contract within the next 2-4 weeks*
5. Municipal Building Construction.
 - a. *Submitted a detailed report on the 3 year activity of the municipal complex*
 - b. *This covers what had been 6 options that had developed over time.*
 - c. *The report details the different plans that were established and the challenges with some of those options*
 - d. *A new design with a smaller foot print that still includes the Library, Police Department, Municipal Court and Municipal Offices*
 - e. *Targeting a July 19th meeting for award of bids for the Municipal Building*
6. Water Distribution; Storm Sewer Collection and Road Projects.
 - a. *Continuing to work on the Hillside, Hatfield, and Crane area*
 - b. *The final step for work that was done on Miller and Welshman, is on the agenda tonight.*
 - c. *Canton terrace, personage, orchard square, among the 8 additional streets that will be done.*
 - d. *When repaving is done, inspection of the water and sewer lines are done first so that if improvements need to be made, that can be done before the new streets are put in.*
 - e. *Many of the water mains in Caldwell were undersized, and in 2017 there was a study done to identify the areas in Caldwell*
7. Stormwater Management Study.

- a. The Borough decided to do a comprehensive stormwater study, which Caldwell had never done before
 - b. Began in September of last year and final report is due around Labor Day of this year.
 - c. The goal is to make recommendations as to what we can do to eliminate the tension on the system in times of storms like IDA
 - d. Due to NJ laws municipalities can only detain the water, they are not legally allowed to move the water to other municipalities.
 - e. The Forest Avenue Corridor and the Pine Brook are the primary sources of Flooding in Caldwell.
 - f. The Borough is in the process of installing Detention facilities in Town to help mitigate the flooding issues.
 - g. The forest avenue corridor will be aided by detention systems on Smull Avenue on land that the Borough owns.
 - h. To help ease the Pine Brook the Borough is looking to acquire some of the wooded area by Caldwell University and Mount Saint Dominic
8. Wastewater Treatment Plant Projects.
- a. We do not have capacity in the Wastewater Treatment Plant,
 - b. The proposal from our consultants is that the Borough undergo the construction of a third treatment chain on the site of our Treatment Plant.
 - c. Goal is to get from 4 1/2 million to the high 7s or 8 million gallons a day.
 - d. That would be a sufficient increase to handle all of our consumer communities.
 - e. Required to use a uniform and equitable means of charging the communities, which is why we are in litigation with Roseland. Court has prohibited the connection of new sewer connections. The Court appointed a Special Master to make determinations on those applications. The demand is growing and will continue to grow
9. Property Acquisitions.
- a. Pursuing acquisitions to provide capacity for stormwater management and for parking
 - b. Closed on 24 and 26 Smull Avenue
 - c. Made an offer on 6 Hanford Place - have not gotten a response
 - d. CU and MSD offer
 - e. 28 Smull Ave - made an offer that was not accepted
 - f. 22 Smull Ave - made an offer to add parking capacity, which is under consideration by the owners.
10. Public Parking Plan.
- a. Capt. DeAngelo and Theresa Camilleri are spear heading that
 - b. Expect to make a presentation at the June 28th meeting
 - c. Depended on newer technology that has made parking enforcement much easier
 - d.
11. Bloomfield Avenue Realignment Project.
- a. Doing special presentation. Meet with Rotary, and West Essex Ministerial Association.
 - b. Trying to finish the education component before town hall meeting
12. 2022 Budget
- a. In NJ if you have municipal utility, they need to be self-sufficient and not depend on tax payer money. That has been the case for our sewer and water utility
 - b. Due to the fact that Roseland and West Caldwell have significantly underpaid, the sewer utility is not self-sufficient.
 - c. We cannot adopt a budget with a utility not being self-sufficient. Only options are to liquidate to get a waiver granted by the State. Had been waiting for a case management
 - d. Will be going to the State with information, and present our case to the Local Finance Board.
 - e. We would have to subsidize the utilities in order to introduce the budget, which is why it has not been introduced yet this year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (FIRST SESSION RESTRICTED TO 7 SPEAKERS)

Max Time: 3min per speaker

Members of the public are invited to comment at this time on ANY issues, whether or not on the agenda

Sister Peggy Ann, 40 Ryerson Ave, Provided comments on the value of a Library in a town. Quoted from ilovelibraries.com regarding the importance of preserving the Caldwell Library. Thanked the Caldwell Librarians for their tremendous work throughout the pandemic and the closure of the library after the flood.

Margie Samuels, artist and instructor from West Caldwell. Has a long history with the Caldwell Library. The Caldwell Public Library has provided a space for her to offer art classes both prior to and after the flood. They have provided supplies to her students while she has given remote instruction. The Library has also acted as a gallery to display her and her students work. Expressed her desire to see these spaces remain in the new design of the library.

Ken Trimmer, Welshman Court, did not intend to speak at this meeting tonight, and wanted to point out that the Mayor and Council run the town and not the Business Administrator

Luke Gabella, spoke to loss of the library and his memories spent at the Caldwell Library. He has been a frequent customer of the library and expressed its' importance in his life. Please, we want out Library Back.

June Cowell, 29 Brookside Avenue, Submitted a second petition to the Mayor and Council for tonight's meeting. People are not happy with the current state of things so hope you take these potions seriously

Robyn Stevens, recently moved out of Caldwell, Member of the Caldwell Library Board of Trustee. Teacher at Lincoln School. Spoke to the history of the library and it's ongoing relationship with the Board of Education.

Paullie Domingues 19A Brookside Avenue, Teen perspective. Spoke about the importance of the Caldwell Library to him and to kids his age, especially in a time when everyone has become so technologically dependent.

Lisa Shoner, Social Services director for Marion Manor, here to speak about the importance of the Caldwell Library, particularly for the seniors living in Caldwell. Praised the Library, and particularly Frances Larkey for their work in providing seniors with library books during the pandemic and the closure of the library.

Nick Corrieli, 29 Westville Avenue, asked what are all of these projects going to cost the taxpayers? Stated that the Borough should be up front with the residents about these costs and what these projects are going to do with taxes. Applauded the Council for walking the project back, but he still believes that there are a lot of changes can still be done. It doesn't sound like dispensaries will be much of an asset to the town. It seems like we are in a rush to get things done before the next administration. It seems like we are starting more initiatives than what we can ever pay for. There needs to be some accountability for what we are spending money on. Thank the Council for coming together to meet in person.

Mayor Kelley stated that we took short term debt in the amount of \$15 million. We did not borrow \$40 million dollars for all of this. Financial Document compiled and left for the public in the back of the gym. The existing Borough Hall will be torn down. Previous administrations have kicked the can down the road and we are trying to address these problems and correct what previous administrations have done. The elected officials are part-time officials and do not do this full-time. The Borough Administrator is a full-time employee and does advise the Mayor and Council, with his 40+ years of service in this industry. Thanked the residents who brought forth all the support for the Caldwell Library.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. 1428-22 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A SHARED DRIVEWAY EASEMENT ON CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF CALDWELL IDENTIFIED AS BLOCK 23, LOTS 9.01 AND 9.02, COMMONLY KNOWN AS 14 AND 16 PARK AVENUE

Mr. Banker and Ms. Saratelli spoke to the nature of the ordinance and provided the Council with more information. A motion to introduce Ordinance 1428-22 was made by Council President Gates and seconded by Councilman Cole. Discussion ensued. Upon a roll call vote, all members voted in the affirmative. Ordinance introduced on 6/14/2022.

ORDINANCE NO. 1429-22 BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF CALDWELL, IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$2,998,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,948,500 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF.

Mr. Banker and Mayor Kelley spoke to the need for this ordinance and provided background information. A motion to introduce Ordinance 1429-22 was made by Council President Gates and seconded by Councilman Cole. Discussion ensued. Upon a roll call vote, all members voted in the affirmative. Ordinance introduced on 6/14/2022.

RESOLUTIONS - CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be acted upon by a single motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless members of the Council request specific items to be removed for separate action.

6-150	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT WITH J.C. CONTRACTING, INC., 681 Mill Street, Rahway, New Jersey, FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF DEBRIS REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL FROM THE PINE BROOK STREAM AND CULVERT AND IDENTIFY AND INSPECT ANY SUSTAINED STORM DAMAGE FOR THE AREA LOCATED FROM CALANDRA'S ITALIAN VILLAGE AT 234 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE TO THE REAR OF THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 25 ROSELAND AVENUE, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$35,000.
6-151	RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF CALDWELL, IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY MAKING APPLICATION TO THE LOCAL FINANCE BOARD PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:2-7(d)
6-152	AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF THE BILLS AND THE ISSUANCE OF CHECKS FOR THE PERIOD 05/17/2022 THROUGH 06/13/2022 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ 2,652,762.59
6-153	RESOLUTION DESIGNATING JUNE AS "LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH" IN THE BOROUGH OF CALDWELL
6-154	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A REFUND OF A CONSTRUCTION PERMIT PAYMENT TO Mr. Michael Pedneault, 31 Hatfield Street.
6-155	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUING OF LICENSE FOR RAFFLE. APPLICANT AND APPLICATION HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY THE CLERK'S OFFICE -ROTARY/KIWANIS CALDWELL STREET FAIR OFF-PREMISE- CASH RAFFLE
6-156	RESOLUTION AWARDDING A CONTRACT IN LIEU OF PUBLIC BIDDING TO TILCON NEW YORK INC., 9 ENTIN ROAD, PARSIPPANY NEW JERSEY, 07054, FOR THE REPAVEMENT OF WELSHMAN COURT AND MILLER STREET, 2022 MORRIS COUNTY CO-OP ROAD PROGRAM

Councilwoman Buechner made a motion to consider resolution 6-154 seperately. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi. Discussion ensued. Resolution removed from consent agenda 6/14/2022/

Ms. Conlon explained the resolution, as an employee of the Construction Department.

A motion to adopt Resolution 6-154 was made by Councilwoman Buechner and seconded by Councilman Alonso. No discussion. Upon a roll call vote, all members voted in the affirmative. Resolution adopted 6/14/2022.

A motion to approve the consent agenda as amended, was made by Councilman Alonso and seconded by Councilwoman Buechner. No Discussion. Upon a roll call vote, all members voted in the affirmative with Council President Gates abstaining from Resolution 6-155. Consent agenda approved 6/14/2022.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Lace took a moment to recognize the people that turned out to this meeting tonight. He stated that this is the only way when government works well, when people follow up. Nothing good ever happens in government when people don't follow up. Thank you for showing up and giving your input, and those that give their input in the future. As that input is given in respectfully. Not every decision that government makes is the right thing, but every discussion can be made the right way.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Borough Council Members

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

John Kelley

Mayor Kelley stated that the elected officials are trying to do what we believe is in the best interest of Caldwell. Caldwell is a special place, and a great community. Please keep in mind that as elected officials, we are doing this because we do love this community and are trying to do what we believe is best for the community.

REPORT OF BOROUGH ATTORNEY

Mary Kate Serratelli

No report

PUBLIC COMMENTS (SECOND SESSION)

Max Time: 3min per speaker

Members of the public are invited to comment at this time on ANY issues, whether or not on the agenda

Rich Hauser, Former Councilman for 6 years. Respectfully suggest that the actions that the governing body have made over the last 3 years have not been good for Caldwell. The relationship or lack thereof with our neighboring towns have created issue. Past Councils have so worked through many issues that you are currently facing. With all due respect that this governing body has kicked the can down the road for the last few years. There have been ample issues to address issues before the Council. I have a business on Bloomfield Ave and stare at a pile of rubble for years. That has taken parking away from my business and other businesses around town.

Tim Lally, 24 Brookside Avenue, speaking to the changing of the traffic in Caldwell more specifically making Brookside Avenue a two-way street. Brookside Avenue is more or less a gateway to Grover Cleveland Park. Brookside Avenue is used for parking for residents, for kids riding their bicycles up and down the street. I asked the Fire Department about how these changes would affect their response times, as it is critical for their response. We have at least 35 parking spots on our town, so if that becomes a 2 way, it will remove those 35 parking spots which will harm businesses in the area as well as the residents. There is a parking concern, and a safety concern for changing Brookside to a 2-way road. Half of the people that use Bloomfield Avenue are not residents of the town and use it as a way to get through town, not to stop in town. Don't change the parking to appease the travelers instead of the residents. Residents are the taxpayers and the voters and are the ones that will be affected by these changes. What is the rational and the benefit to this?

- Mayor Kelley said that this is a study and we have not been implemented. The purpose is to get input from people like you to make adjustments. We are trying to get the walkability of the downtown Caldwell to be improved for business owners. This is just a traffic study

Mr. Lally said that the point is to slow down the traffic, but at 5pm the traffic isn't that fast. We are the smallest town in Essex County, so if you want to keep this community small, then the high rises have to stop as well.

- Councilwoman Buechner said that when we got the presentation I had asked and made it clear that the end of our contract is the education session. Speaking for myself, I will not vote to appropriate funds for this yet, as I do not like what we have heard to date. Contract ends when the sessions are done.
- Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi said that we have not made decisions about this. I do not see Hanford and Brookside being 2-way streets either. The beautification ideas are a nice way to beautify the downtown area of Caldwell. West Caldwell has a lot of land, while Caldwell does not have a lot of land. We want to encourage use of the businesses on Bloomfield Avenue.
- Council President Gates said that the companies that did the traffic studies are professionals that we hired to provide us with suggestions. They have given us ideas that many of us have opposed. I don't think that there is anyone up here that is a fan of making Hanford and Brookside 2-way streets. I know I have said at previous meeting that I am not a fan of the redesign of the traffic patterns. The plan was to get information and suggestions from the public.

David Lattimer, owner of David Chad. We only have this little section of Bloomfield Ave. The most successful thing that has happened in Caldwell is the rebuild of The Wilson and the Grover House. We have been able to grow and stay in Caldwell. We have a climate base of 5,000 people. Most people come out of town and drive to town. COVID screwed us all and now that we are back on our feet, you take 1/3 of the Smull lot and take that away from our clients. We are going to sacrifice the things that make the town of money, to improve things that don't bring Money into the town like the community center. Why stunts the growth? I know we need a new Borough Hall and a new Police Department.

- Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi asked about the spots that Mr. Silver allocated in Saint Als

Mr. Lattimer suggested that his clients will not be willing to park at Saint Al's and walk down to the salon.

- Mayor Kelley said that the trailers are sitting predominantly on land acquired by the Borough of Caldwell on 24 and 26 Smull Avenue. We want to open additional parking in the area, and we recognize that we have consumed some of the parking, but we don't have land to use.

Mr. Lattimer said that now that the Food Pantry and Human Services is at 24 Smull, how long would it take to get the offices for human services out of Smull and into Park Ave? Would you consider paving 22 Smull Ave when it is acquired, while the trailers are in place? What can you do for us to get us more parking today?

- Council President Gates asked Mr. Banker how long would it take us to move the pile of rocks from the Roseland Ave lot to open up spaces in that former lot to alleviate the parking issue. Mr. Banker said we could move the rocks and pay to have the hauled and then pay to get more rocks later on.

Mr. Lattimer if the public is asking what you can do for us?

- Councilman Lace said that when the Borough was looking for places to put the trailers, did the Borough approach Saint Al's?
- Mr. Banker said that we did look to use the rear portion of the lot for the trailers, and the Msgr said that they were hopeful to rent this building and wouldn't commit to the 2-year time frame. There were limited places in Caldwell that we could use to accommodate the government offices. Each office has specialty needs that cannot be located to any facility.

May Champion, 52 Arlington Ave, have previous BA's been part-time? what is our BA part-time or full-time? When do we get say in these decisions? I thought that there would be some sort of presentation. Could we have not used this building

- Councilwoman Buechner stated that it's not ADA compliant, and not air conditioned. I am not sure if the Msg wanted a short-term rental
- Councilman Cole said that they wanted to move the library here, but we weren't able to.

Ms. Champion, I support the library and the Community Center. They do make funds and are needed in this town. When will we be given a say in the dispensary, Bloomfield Avenue, the other projects? Do we get a say?

- Mayor Kelley said that is why we were elected

Ms. Champion asked why don't we have a say in this, but you do when you won't be here.

- Councilman Lace said that he has been looking into this with our legal team. Since we are not a Faulkner Act town, we don't have all the rights and privileges that other Faulkner Act towns do. Related to your comments to the dispensaries, I have said before I am 100% apposed

John Kenselaar 12, Chestnut Street. I came to say how important the library is to me. The staff is very kind and compassionate. Two of my favorite things about Caldwell are the Library and the Community Center. I sense that the community is frustrated with the lack of communication with the town.

Adrienne Longo, Small Business owner on Bloomfield Ave in 307 Bloomfield Avenue. would like clarity and express concern with what we are dealing with. There is confusion due to lack of communication. I have clientele that have a hard time getting to our office to utilize our services. When I considered coming to Caldwell, I had questions because the downtown was quite dead. Once the Grover House opened up, there was new life in Caldwell. I try to spread the wealth to other businesses in downtown Caldwell. If we are bringing money into downtown caldwell. How long is this going to last, and what I should be telling my clients.

- Councilman Alonso said that our downtown is the bloodline caldwell. Why not put an advisory board together and put businesses owners together to be a part of the discussion?

Maureen D'Aloia, 36 Highview Road, water situation; what is the status? Can we drink it.

- Mayor Kelley said that yes, you can drink it. Essex fells has cut off the well so that the water is safe to drink

Ms. D'Aloia, I have heard that Jefferson School is full. What is going to happen to that districting if Jefferson is already full?

- Councilwoman Buechner said that it is my understanding that this was brought up to the Board of Ed and according to their professions said it wasn't a problem.

Ms. D'Aloia asked about Central Avenue as well.

- Councilman Cole said that is another builder's remedy. If you look at the lane avenue apartment, most of those are 1 bedroom so very few are family units.

Ms. D'Aloia asked how much higher are our taxes going to go up?

- Mayor Kelley said we don't have any information regarding a rate increase in taxes because we have not introduced a budget because of the sewer issues.

Ms. D'Aloia said I don't see how shrinking the Ave is going to improve.

- Mayor Kelley said we will finish the contract out before we make any decisions.
- Councilwoman Buechner said we are going to finish the contract because they owe us information.
- Mr. Banker said that the projections on the impact on taxes 1.7% increase on the tax levy. Caldwell Community Center and parking improvements will be paid by the fees that user pay
- Councilman Lace said that the soft cost is only 10% of the hard cost. Can you explain what the basis and rational for that?
- Mr. Banker explained that the hard cost is actual cost of physical construction. Soft cost is the cost of the things necessary to get to the building stage. Typically, 10% is what it would cost you to pay the architects etc. These buildings are not at the point yet.

Christine Gurriere, 26 Welshman Court, looking for Clarity on expenditures? Stormwater mitigation, land acquisition, 14 Park Ave, Caldwell Community Center, all with 25 million dollars? How are you going to be able to pay for all of this? I have a concern with the priorities. Why are we only have these conversations now, instead of before the money was spent? This process seems backwards to me, and that money is being spent randomly. A Dispensary has a lot of issues, and shouldn't be utilized for simply tax revenues purposes. I feel like you are all over the place. We have 2 big issues, storm water and sewer plant.

- Mayor Kelley said that the document that was left in the back does address a lot of the questions
- Council President Gates said regarding the priorities. The Court will not allow the Chambers to be used due to the conditions. The Police Department has failed state inspections and needs to be made compliant.

John Pace, 18 Brookside Ave., against any dispensary in town. My taxes have almost triples since I moved here, and I don't think you should move forward with any of this. I don't think this is good for Caldwell.

Doug Piazza, 24 Erwin Place, former Councilman. Communication is a big issue and I think is a basis of the issues that the people are voicing. Communication the past few years has been awful. I understand we had a pandemic, but when we stopped having in-person meetings, someone turned off the tv channel. Channel 35 goes into everyone's home and is the best resource. The phone

calls that were used for COVID update should have been used to bring information to residents regarding these changes and projects. I want to bring up the sewer bill, and asked if there is anyone that waters their lawn, fills a pool, or washing a car. We are paying more than we are supposed to. The sewer charge calculation was changed in late December. This problem was acknowledged, and said that you were going to fix this and we were told that you had a solution. We have been told that we are not doing that now because of the litigation with Roseland and West Caldwell. If they don't have to pay, then why do we have to pay. Stop penalizing me and everyone like me for using water. When are we going to fix it?

- Mayor Kelley said that we are presenting to the state. It is based on water consumption

Mr. Piazza said that we have discussed that I would have to purchase a separate meter to prove to you that I am over paying. Stop penalizing and overcharging because I am not using the sewer system. Why? You are charging us for something we are not using.

- Mary Kate said that we are working on the solution, that is all I can say.

Giovanni Lima, 25 Smull Ave. directly across the street from all the plans that are happening. I understand that during this COVID time, everything has been difficult. This administration has used Zoom meetings to make plans without us knowing. You keep pivoting now that people are coming out. When we were trying to bring up our concerns, you weren't flexible. What is the plan after the trailers are gone? The Borough is my neighbor now, and they are crappy neighbors. This is affecting our privacy and we were not notified of anything. Do we just do things under the cover of night and in private sessions. I am going to have to live with this for the next 2 years. Today for the 2nd time, someone was on my property looking for the food pantry. There is no signage or clear markings on the Food Pantry.

- Mayor Kelley asked Mr. Banker if we have a signage plan?
- Mr. Banker said that we do.

Mr. Lima said you need to step up your communication. The only reason people stop is because we put "no Trailer" signs up.

- Mr. Banker said that the trailers will be removed upon the completion of the project.

Mr. Lina said we do not want dense housing there.

- Council President Gates said that those properties were purchased with the intent to expand the parking. The long-term plan is having that property be parking
- Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi said there was a suggestion to make a parking deck there, but we did not want that. Therefore, we are increasing surface lot.
- Council President Gates said that the plan would be to continue to be behind the homes as it currently is. Much of the parking in town is hidden behind homes and we want to maintain that.

Mr. Lima said that the driveway and parking that is across from my street. Is that going to be used as parking?

- Mr. Banker said that will be used as an entrance the exit will remain the same.
- Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi said that we only own Provost Square and the Smull Avenue area. We had a citizen advisory board that oversaw the reopening of the Community Center. We will be taking down the Borough Hall and putting parking there. That parking will be utilized for the Community Center, Library, Police, and Municipal Complex. The only other place we own is Smull Ave. The backyards of the of the properties are being utilized for the trailers. The children's library was decimated and we are trying to save the façade. The advisory board of the library has been working hard on reopening and rebuilding the library. This is are only area for us to build. My job is to do the most we can for the most amount of people. We are going to do some beautification and landscaping to make those properties better. This is for the community not for us.
- Councilman Lace stated that the Borough needs to do a better job of communicating. I apologize to the residents who were not notified about the trailers. Asked Mr. Banker what can be done to minimize the impact of flooding in that area?
- Mr. Banker said that we heard complaints about catch basins that were overflowing. The survey will help to identify the issues that we need to be addressed. The big issue is detention, which means you build a place for water to be collected and spread out during the storms. We are looking at the idea of a "pool" that would ease the flooding damage to the Bloomfield Ave, Roseland Ave section of town. The stream on forest was redirected years ago and caused the flooding that are. One idea is to potential rerouting the steams so it does not take the strange twists and turns. The Smull Avenue are would have an underground detention system to collect the flood water. The plan is to clean out the system, create greater detention capacity.

Jim Hammer, 22 Brookside Avenue. Read a letter from his 90-year-old mother-in-law regarding Bloomfield Ave realignment and the possibility of Brookside Ave becoming a 2-way street. Spoke to the importance of neighborhood that is Brookside Avenue, and an appeal to keep it as is. Idea of a timetable on the demolition of the existing library and existing borough hall.

- Mayor Kelley said that Labor Day is the time frame for work to begin

Mathew Fox, 6 Lockward Road. We are just finding out about all the changes, and it is unrealistic to think that we would all take in this information that you all have known for a while. All of you are responsible because you are all aware of what going on.

Nick Conforti, 6 Brookside Ave. Owners of Angeloni's. Stated concerns about the traffic plan and stated that businesses have been struggling since COVID and this is going to cripple us.

John Shaw, 10 Wakefield place. Plan for the current building is on land that we own?

- Mayor Kelley stated that yes, it would be on land that we own.

Mr. Shaw said that it seems that the majority of the town is aligned on most things. Despite the communication issues, there might have been issue taken when it was said that you are trying to do too much. I am also against the dispensary as well, and I hope that you listen to everyone

Carla Maras, Ashland Street. Concerns with the Bloomfield Avenue and how that will affect emergency responses. Concerns with dispensaries and how it will be affecting our Police Department while they have to police the users and the dispensaries. Disgusted by all that is happening in this town

Guy Olsen, 17 Gladding Road. Retired traffic engineer. Believes that the administration has done a good job for infrastructure initiatives in town as well as cultural initiatives like the pride plan. I think all that good is at risk for being over looked due to a public relations disaster. How did the Administration believe that tearing down the library would be an issue? In the end, I think you need to have general buy-in by the community. The community as a whole should come away with a general feeling that they

were listened to and that their concerns were addressed. I know that the library wants more space, are they okay with the reduction?

- Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi stated that it was not being reduced.

Mr. Olsen asked why not have all communities install the meter?

- Mr. Banker said that Roseland only has one place where the water comes into their town. All other town have pipes that connect through 4 different town. Most of the pipes in our system, flow through multiple towns and therefore you can't distinguish where the water is coming from. Sewer meters are notorious for becoming inactive frequently due to the make-up of the sewer sludge. We measure what comes into the plant, we report what comes into the DEP.

Olsen: Does demolition inside the community center and Borough Hall and the Library have to happen all at once.

- Mr. Banker said there are concerns about the length of time that these projects take. The best way to keep the time frames short, is to do the projects simultaneously.

Mr. Olsen brought up the water billing. He said that there is no rate printed on the bill or for sewage which I understand is based on water use. Returning parking to the lower level of the Roseland Avenue. Can that be restored without moving the rocks, if that's the issue? Was there a study done on the parking demand?

- Mayor Kelley said that yes, there was a study done in 2021
- Mr. Banker said we had a study that started right before the pandemic that was cut short. We have had some traffic counts in our parking lot. We have never had a true demand study done.

Mr. Olsen said he would argue that it's not the issue of doing too much, but that it's all too fast.

- Council President Gates said that this meeting length has been pretty normal for me. I remember going to meetings before I was on council that were 20 mins long. Every meeting we've had have been significantly longer than the ones in the previous years.

Jason, 8 Cleveland Street. Caldwell's classic downtown that is in danger. Too much car infrastructure tends to degrade downtowns. Sometimes parking takes over small towns, like it has in west caldwell. Parking spaces should be taxed as much as the parts of town that are in high demand. Car infrastructure is expensive to maintain. Cars are getting heavier causes infrastructure to need to be replaced. There is a minimum amount of parking that should be had. There should be handicap spaces and parking meters to prevent high demand parking to be filled up. Should post meeting and other information on Facebook page as well.

Shawn Rudden, 31 Francis Place. Thanked for the opportunity to speak tonight. As an elected member of the caldwell democratic committee for District 6, I have been vocal against some of the things that have happened in Caldwell. I have invited Mr. Banker and the Mayor to Francis place, and those invitations were never accepted. I hope that is something that takes place in the future. I feel that proposal should have been dictated to the public before money was invested. Perhaps if we knew what was going to be considered before the money was allocated, there would be less tension. The sewer solution that we were told would have been available to date, has not been made available yet. Still no change. Change is being forced on us as residents. Change is inevitable, but when it is forced, it is intrusive. We have to move and work with the change. I believe that there is no stopping some of the things that are happening, but there are things we will continue to fight, like a dispensary. Bloomfield Avenue redesign, I don't feel like that is going to work out in town. Change should be collaborative, before proposals are met and paid for.

- Councilman Alonso said that we did have meeting prior to discuss the fairness of sewer. I know we have litigation.
- Mr. Banker said we cannot charge the Caldwell residents different rates then the other towns. We could adopt a rate schedule that reflects that some water is not going to the treatment plant. Right now, we are in a period of flux, because we do not know what the court is going to do. We had hoped for faster dispositions from the court. We proposed to the court that the court treat this matter the same as tax appeals. You can't appeal your taxes unless you pay them first. The court has allowed for a customer to simply not pay because they do not like the method of billing. We are in a position where the court is allowing customers to not pay, and yet maintain standing in litigation. If the court over the next few weeks does not show us any movement, then we can certainly make an interim adjustment to the sewer billing method.
- Councilman Cole said if we don't have a decision from the Court, then we should make that adjustment for the meeting in July.
- Mr. Banker said that he will work with the Borough attorney to draft an ordinance for the July meeting

Evelyn Ponzek, 14 Wakefield place, I am happy to hear this because I am affected by the sewer billing. We have had so many accidents on Wakefield, because people whip around the corners on park and central. If we do that to Bloomfield Ave, we are going to have a lot of accident caused by that. I am really opposed to changing that traffic pattern and it is going to affect all those that live close to Bloomfield Ave. I was wondering if there was any truth to the rumors, I've heard about the Jostens building being sold and made into apartments?

- Mr. Banker The Borough did have talks, but not for apartments, and those talks did not go through.
- Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi said that she just wanted to remind everyone that nothing has not been built. Encouraged resident to sign up for the newsletter
- Councilman Cole said that there is going to be mailing the magnets with contact information for the borough.

Diana, Smull Avenue, 7-billion-dollar surplus in Trenton. Has the council reached out to Trenton about the possibility of refund of excess taxes?

Robert Sullivan, 6 Parkway West, former volunteer Fireman for the Caldwell Volunteer Fire Department. If you cut down Bloomfield Ave to one lane, and the fire truck parks in the one lane, how are you going to maneuver around the truck?

- Councilman Cole said that the Council didn't know about the proposals until they were presented. There are pieces that the Council certainly doesn't agree with. The reason we have professionals, is to gather information and expert options, and then evaluate them before the money is spent.

Steve Sandor 72, Forest Ave. Thanked the Council to have these meetings. I am encouraged to see so many people coming out an participating, because this is how democracy works. The was a rumor that there was a petition to just not have the library. I think it is important to give a shout out to the Librarians and all the hard work that they have put in. Wanted to recognize Chris and Francis and all of the library staff for all of their hard work. Thanked Verona for allowing Caldwell Library to utilize their space and welcoming us in their library. Asked that the Mayor and Council continue to look at improving communication. There is no such thing as over communication

Garrett Jones, Myrtle Avenue. Was a 25-year resident of Smull Ave. Those trailers are taking up space in the Smull Ave lot. That lot was always open, it certainly is used more now than it was in the past. Caldwell has always had a problem with parking. No matter where you take it from, taking parking will affect the town and its businesses. Curious about the 1.7%. If Roseland and West Caldwell decide that they do not want to use our sewer plant, what would our tax rate go up to then?

- Mr. Banker said that municipalities cannot change sewer providers at the drop of a hat. If we wanted to get rid of a town, we would have to give them 5 years notice, and the same goes the other way. Parsippany-Troy Hills advised our engineers that they were under a court order, much like ours and couldn't allow for connections outside of the current users. Two Bridges Sewer Authority handles some of North Caldwell, most of Fairfield and other towns. They have shelf capacity, which means they have an approval to build a new plan. When we contact them about their availability to take capacity off of our hands, they said they had not ability to do that in the future. If they desired to go somewhere else, Roseland or west Caldwell, they probably couldn't. You want everything to be going downhill. Municipalities are limited to looking at what river is nearest to you are and lower in elevation. Roseland and West caldwell have all of the documents that we have. The dispute is really that they do not want to be contractually on the hook for their portion of the possible expansion

Mr. Jones stated So we have 5 years to fix this? Did they offer to dismiss the lawsuits?

- Council President Gates said we have not had active contracts with them since 2009. Contracts were for certain amount of time.
- Mr. Banker said the contracts operate almost like a moth-to-month lease.

Mr. Jones asked if we haven't had a contract for 12 years? It takes 5 years to back out of the contract?

- Councilman Alonso asked if there are towns willing to sign?
- Mr. Banker said yes, we have 3 towns that we expect to sign contracts.

Mr. Jones: This communication is healthy and good to see. Caldwell is a very slow town. We were the last town in the county to hold out on the 1 penny meter. I miss the old Caldwell, and the old businesses. That can still be felt today. I would like to keep our small town.

- Councilwoman DePalma-Iozzi stated that one of the reasons I ran was because of the 4 homes on Orchard Square that burned down. The infrastructure is what we are still working on.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business to be conducted, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilman Lace and seconded by Councilman Alonso. Upon a voice vote, all members voted in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned at 11:05pm.

Prepared by: Brittany Heun
Brittany Heun, Deputy Borough Clerk

6/28/2022
DATE