**BOROUGH OF CALIFON COUNCIL**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**JUNE 15, 2020**

Mayor Charles Daniel called the regular meeting of the Borough of Califon Council to order at 7:30 p.m. with the reading of the following Sunshine Law announcement: ***“I would like to announce and have placed in the minutes that adequate notice of this regular meeting of the Borough of Califon Council has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by publication of the annual notice in the Hunterdon Review and the Hunterdon County Democrat.”***

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the State of Emergency imposed by Governor Phil Murphy, the Borough of Califon Council will hold their regularly scheduled monthly meetings conducted remotely through a web-based platform called Zoom until the Borough is fully opened and operational to the public. Public notification regarding access to the Zoom Council meetings will be posted on the Borough website and Facebook. Adequate notification of this change of format has also been provided to both the Hunterdon Review and the Hunterdon County Democrat.

**FLAG SALUTE**

**ROLL CALL: PRESENT: R. BAGGSTROM, J. COLLINS, E. HAVERSANG,**

**L. JANAS, M. MEDEA, C. SMITH**

**ABSENT: NONE**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by L. Janas seconded by J. Collins to approve the minutes from the meeting held on June 1, 2020 with the following corrections:

Page 96; 1st paragraph; sentence #5 under Police Report: replace “Both Councilmen Baggstrom and Collins felt strongly that the property owner face repercussions and possibly summonses for her behavior” with “Both Councilmen Baggstrom and Collins stated that the property owner should be issued a summons if the stop sign was moved again.

Page 96; 1st paragraph; sentence #8: replace “Councilman Collins summarized the incidents and stated that he was speaking for the entire Philhower Ave. neighborhood” with

“Councilman Collins summarized the incidents and stated that he had spoken with several neighbors on Philhower Ave. who were also concerned the stop sign was down for almost 5 hours.”

For: Unanimous

Opposed: None

Absent: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mayor Daniel made the following alteration to the meeting agenda:

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

1. Karen Grieco – Appearance before Council – Notices of Violations @44 Main St.

Mayor Daniel introduced Karen Grieco, property owner of 44 Main St. and she addressed Council, via the Zoom meeting, stating that she had sent an e-mail to all members of Council regarding the 4 Notices of Violation she received from the Zoning Officer for a sidewalk project she initiated on the side of her property. Ms. Grieco complained that she was troubled by being unfairly treated when the zoning officer issued a “stop order” and 4 “Notices of Violation”. Ms. Grieco asked why Council did not come to her first before sending the zoning officer to site her with 4 violations. Mayor Daniel reminded Ms. Grieco that he had spoken to her on several occasions regarding the process that needs to be followed for the installation of new sidewalks/curbing; permits need to be obtained and since she is in the historic district, an appearance before the Historic Preservation Commission is necessary as well. Ms. Grieco then introduced James Celentano, a mason and the contractor hired to install the sidewalks, who addressed Mayor and Council strongly questioning the requirements as explained by Mayor Daniel; for permitting and for HPC requirements. Mr. Celentano argued that these requirements amounted to harassment of Ms. Grieco and called them ridiculous. Councilman Medea stated that a road opening permit was required as well and that all the violations cited were under the zoning officer’s jurisdiction and Council is in support of his decisions. Councilman Medea said that this is a Planning Board issue now and recommended they attend the next Planning Board meeting on June 24th. Councilman Collins asked why the contractor and Ms. Grieco felt the need to illegally move the Stop sign. Mr. Celentano replied that it was only moved for a short time and then put back. Councilman Janas stated that he does not have sidewalks in front of his property but, given that Ms. Grieco’s project was not just a repair but rather the installation of new sidewalks that had not been there previously and because of right of way issues, the proper process needs to be followed, beginning with contacting the zoning officer. Councilman Baggstrom reiterated that the zoning officer should have been contacted initially to inform Ms. Grieco of the procedures to follow as per our land development ordinance. Mr. Celentano began yelling at and arguing with the Mayor and Council once again, calling the situation ridiculous and harassing. Mayor Daniel and Councilman Collins called for this conversation to be ended due to the Mr. Celentano’s confrontational tone. Council agreed and the conversation was ended.

Mayor Daniel asked if there were any further comments from the public. Jim Holland, owner of Shannon’s Fly and Tackle addressed Mayor and Council suggesting that the town consider hiring a land use attorney for the Califon Park land acquisition project/Weis Dam, using funds donated by Trout Unlimited. Bill Kibler had told Mr. Holland that Califon Boro and the NJ Water Supply Assoc. had used an attorney from the NJ Water Supply Association when they partnered to purchase the Nellie Hoffman estate as open space many years back. Mayor Daniel agreed to consider this suggestion and Councilman Haversang stated that he thought it was a great idea.

**LIST OF BILLS**

Motion was made by R. Baggstrom seconded by C. Smith to approve the list of bills in the amount of $196,461.06.

For: Unanimous

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**TAX COLLECTOR’S REPORT**

The Tax Collector’s Report was reviewed and filed.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**\_\_** Statewide Insurance Fund; Loss Control/Risk Management; Ivan Cohen report of audit; citing of 3 recommendations in need of remediation

\_\_ HC Dept. of Health; Public health Alert; Rabies incident – Racoon tested positive for rabies in area of Rt. 512 and Guinea Hollow Rd.

\_\_ Police Report for month of May

\_\_ listing of 16 participating municipalities in the Hunterdon Area Energy Coop (HAEC) from Lisa Hibbs

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **RESOLUTION – APPROVAL TO SUBMIT GRANT APPLICATION TO THE NJDOT FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO VARIOUS ROADS INCLUDING BANK STREET, PHILHOWER AVE. AND RIVER RD.**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2020-52**

**RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTE A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO VARIOUS ROADS, INCLUDING BANK STREET, PHILHOWER AVENUE AND RIVER ROAD**

**WHEREAS,** 2021 Municipal Aid funds are available through the New Jersey Department of Transportation; and,

**WHEREAS,** the Califon Mayor and Council desire to construct road improvements to the following roads: Bank Street (between Mill Street and the municipal boundary); Philhower Avenue (between Main Street and the municipal boundary); and, River Road (between Main Street and the Nellie Hoffman House), consisting of approximately 6,450 linear feet (1.22 miles) including pavement resurfacing, guide rail repairs, drainage improvements, curb repairs, sidewalk repairs, traffic control signs, pavement markings, and striping; and,

**WHEREAS,** the Califon Mayor and Council desire to request aid from the State of New Jersey in the amount of $550,000.00.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** the Mayor and Council of Califon Borough formally approves the grant application for the above stated project; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application identified as MA-2021-Various Roads-00265 to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of Califon Borough; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of Califon Borough and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

Certified as a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Council on

This 15th Day of June, 2020.

Motion was made by R. Baggstrom seconded by E. Haversang to adopt Resolution 2020-52 as read.

For: Unanimous

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **RESOLUTION – GOVERNING BODY CONSENT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE TWA APPLICATION TO THE NJDEP FOR APPROVAL OF SEPTIC PLANS @ CALIFON BOOK SHOP; BLOCK 22; LOT 13; 72 MAIN ST.**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2020-53**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Califon hereby consents to and certifies the submission of the Treatment Works Approval (TWA) permit application for the project known as “Califon Bakery”; 72 Main St., Califon, N.J. 07830; applicant: Perry Papantonis; to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for approval; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the project, as proposed, conforms with the requirements of all municipal ordinances; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Municipal Clerk is hereby authorized to sign and fully execute the A-1 “Consent by Governing Body” section of the TWA application.

Motion was made by J. Collins seconded by M. Medea to adopt Resolution 2020-53 as read.

For: Unanimous

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Councilman Medea asked if, according to our insurance carrier the Statewide Insurance Fund, the playground should be open or remain closed. The Clerk will ask Ivan Cohen, Risk Manager, for his opinion. Councilman Medea stated that our position should be predicated on the insurance company’s directive.

Councilman Medea reported that the new basketball court is being actively used. There was a recent act of vandalism throughout town. Graffiti was applied to the basketball court, playground, pavilion, train station, school and random signs throughout the town. A number of people volunteered to clean the graffiti off of the various areas; the hardest to clean completely was the train station. Volunteers included Councilman Medea, Chris Keiser, Bob Runge, Mayor Daniel and 2 women from town. The school custodian cleaned the areas of the school that were affected. Councilman Medea reported that the Police Chief put the cameras back up and stepped up patrols of the Park.

Councilman Haversang reported that there was no Recreation Committee meeting in June. The next Rec meeting will be held on July 8th at which time the Committee will make a decision on whether or not to hold this year’s Street Fair.

Councilman Janas reported that there will be a Planning Board meeting, via Zoom, on June 24th at which time the HPC recommendation on Jennifer Gross’s application will be memorialized.

Councilwoman Smith reported that the Board of Education will meet this week. Councilwoman Smith reported that 7 girls from Califon School graduated from 8th grade in a live Zoom graduation. Each gave a speech and all worked out beautifully. Councilwoman Smith and Mayor Daniel attended the virtual graduation. Mayor Daniel gave the civic leadership award to graduate Ava Zajac. Mayor Daniel also gave all 7 girls a gift of “Nothing Bundt” cakes following their graduation parade.

Mayor Daniel reported that Mr. Patton, the principal and Ms. Ruberto, the CSA, have both left their positions at the school. Mayor Daniel commended both of them for doing great positive work helping the school to maintain its level of excellence. Councilman Medea stated that the graduation this year was very different due to the pandemic but it was a very memorable event. Councilman Medea stated too that the parade was a success despite the fact that the Fire Co. who was supposed to lead the parade, was called out to a fire call just as the parade started. Voorhees had a parade as well for the graduates and they had their picture taken by local newspapers.

Councilman Baggstrom read the Police report for May showing an increase in speeding calls.

Councilman Baggstrom reported on the recent Police incident involving the theft of a couple of cars and a police chase for the suspects through Readington Twp., Tewksbury Twp., Califon Borough, & Washington Twp. There were two patrolmen and the K-9 covering Califon. Patrolman Seabeck did a great job chasing and attempting to stop the suspects. Mayor Daniel stated that he will speak to the Chief about issuing a proclamation or something acknowledging Patrolman Seabeck’ s act of bravery which should be acknowledged.

Councilman Janas reported that throughout this tense police chase through Califon in the early morning hours, the police were friendly and professional.

Councilman Medea asked if we could look into getting text messages from Nexel as notification in emergencies such as this so that residents know what is going on. Councilman Baggstrom will speak with the Police Chief to see what they use and will also contact our OEM Coordinator, George Waseleski.

Councilman Collins reported that at their last meeting, the Board of Health approved a septic waiver for septic plans at the Califon Book Shop. The BOH voted not to amend the ordinance regarding the cat situation and complaint on Coolidge Court; discussed at length at the last BOH meeting.

Councilman Collins reported that Jennifer Gross, new member on the Environmental Commission, together with the newly formed lighting Committee, is proceeding with an inventory of streetlights in town as a first step in a plan to get all the streetlights in town to be consistent and coordinate to all LED lighting. There are currently 39 sodium streetlights that would need to be switched to LED with an expected cost savings. The Committee will present their report when concluded.

Jim Holland and Trout Unlimited would like to proceed with the Weis Dam removal and the land acquisition of park lands utilizing the services of a land use attorney; the cost of these services to be covered by Trout Unlimited. This was discussed earlier in the meeting when Mr. Holland addressed Council with this idea.

**MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Daniel reported that he noticed a big tree being taken down on Philhower Ave. He asked Councilmen Haversang and Collins what they knew about this. Councilman Haversang said a large crane was used and there may have been some damage to the street. Councilman Collins stated that there was superficial damage that was not severe.

Mayor Daniel reported that the auction is tomorrow, 6.16, to establish the new rate for the Hunterdon Area Energy Cooperative. Councilman Haversang stated that the energy costs should be low. Councilman Baggstrom reported that he read recently that the Supreme court ruled that the Penn East gas line is allowed to be installed along the Appalachian Trail.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mayor and Council discussed the possibility of holding the next Council meeting on July 20th in public at the Municipal Bldg. Following a brief discussion, Mayor and Council concluded that the meeting will be held on Zoom unless otherwise notified.

There being no further business to come before Council at this time, motion was made by C. Smith seconded by L. Janas and unanimously accepted to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Laura G. Eidsvaag, RMC

Municipal Clerk/Administrator