**BOROUGH OF CALIFON COUNCIL**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**APRIL 19, 2021**

Mayor Charles Daniel called the regular meeting 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 Califon Borough Council conducted via the online platform Zoom, 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 continuing Covid-19 pandemic and the State of Emergency imposed by Governor Phil Murphy, the Borough Council will hold their regularly scheduled monthly Council 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 (arrived 7:56 pm), M. MEDEA, C. SMITH**

 **ABSENT: NONE**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by R. Baggstrom seconded by C. Smith to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 5, 2021.

For: R. Baggstrom, J. Collins, E. Haversang, M. Medea, C. Smith

Opposed: None

Absent: L. Janas

**MOTION CARRIED**

**LIST OF BILLS**

Motion was made by M. Medea seconded by E. Haversang to approve the list of bills in the amount of $12,067.87.

For: R. Baggstrom, J. Collins, E. Haversang, M. Medea, C. Smith

Opposed: None

Absent: L. Janas

**MOTION CARRIED**

**TAX COLLECTOR’S REPORT**

The Tax Collector’s Report was reviewed and filed.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

\_\_ Municipal Court report for month of March

\_\_ Califon School Board of Education – agenda for special meeting on April 15, 2021

\_\_ Police Report for month of March

\_\_ e-mail from Mary Phillips to Art Owens, Planning Board Chair, regarding tree buffer on Wilmark development – referred to legal counsel

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **DISCUSSION – NEXT STEPS IN THE ACQUISITION OF H.C. PARKLANDS AND THE REMOVAL OF THE WEIS DAM REMNANT**

Attorney Anderson reported to Mayor and Council that, to date, his efforts to reach out to the County to negotiate an agreement on the need to undertake a Phase 1 Environmental Study, prior to accepting the County’s donation of parklands surrounding Island Park, have proven fruitless. After repeated attempts to make contact with Aaron Colter, Hunterdon County Counsel, there has been no response. Attorney Anderson recommended that, to move this forward, a group of interested parties ask to be placed on the agenda of a meeting of the County Commissioners, to bring this issue to their attention. In Mr. Anderson’s opinion, the County appears ambivalent about the Phase 1 Environmental Study because there are concerns they will be responsible for any remediation that is determined by the study. The purpose of attendance at the County Commissioner’s meeting would be to assure the County that Califon is only interested in doing this as the results would determine whether or not the Borough will accept the County donation of the parklands; with no intention of holding the County responsible for any potential environmental issue discovered. Mr. Anderson recommended that Califon’s position be conveyed to the County in the form of an informal agreement between Califon and Hunterdon County, if all parties agree to sign it.

Mayor Daniel agreed that such an agreement would clearly state that neither the County or the Borough want to be held responsible or assume the liability for any remediation. A lengthy discussion ensued, during which Councilman Collins expressed his frustration with the 2-1/2 years he, Trout Unlimited and the Environmental Commission have spent advocating for this project and the lack of action and motivation on the part of the County; expressing some doubt about continuing with this project. Councilman Collins did say that if the group meets with the County Commissioners and there is no action following this meeting, the Borough will then have their answer. Councilman Medea brought up the fact that there are safety issues with the parklands that need to be addressed. Councilman Baggstrom suggested approaching the County first with concerns about the condition of the property and then bring up taking of the parklands. Mayor and Council agreed to giving this project one more attempt; the group to attend the Commissioners meeting to be comprised of Jim Kinney, along with two or three Environmental Commission members. Councilman Collins and Councilman Haversang agreed to one more attempt to salvage this project; contacting Jim Kinney for his availability and asking Mr. Kinney to put together a letter to the Commissioners asking to be put on the agenda for one of their scheduled meetings and why.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **RESOLUTION – INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 2021-05 – HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION FOLDED BACK TO PLANNING BOARD**

The Clerk read Ordinance 2021-05 by title: **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF CALIFON, HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY BY ELIMINATING THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AS A SEPARATE ENTITY AND AUTHORIZING THE PLANNING BOARD TO EXERCISE ALL OF THE POWERS OF AN HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION.**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2021-52**

**BE IT RESOLVED** BY THE Mayor and Council of the Borough of Califon that Ordinance 2021-05 entitled: **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF CALIFON, HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY BY ELIMINATING THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AS A SEPARATE ENTITY AND AUTHORIZING THE PLANNING BOARD TO EXERCISE ALL OF THE POWERS OF AN HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION** is hereby introduced upon first reading; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Ordinance 2021-05 will be considered for final adoption following the public hearing on May 17, 2021; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that “Notice of Ordinance” 2021-05 is hereby scheduled to be published in the April 28, 2021 edition of the Hunterdon Review as required by law.

Motion was made by C. Smith seconded by L. Janas to adopt Resolution 2021-52 as read.

For: Unanimous

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

1. **RESOLUTION – INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 2021-06 – SALARY & WAGE**

Tabled until next Council meeting on May 3, 2021.

1. **RESOLUTION – MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE – NEWLY FORMED PARKS AND RECREATION**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2021-53**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Califon that due to the adoption of Ordinance 2021-03 on April 5, 2021 that merged the separate Recreation Committee and Parks Committee into one entitled: Parks & Recreation Committee; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Borough of Califon Council has the power to establish the membership on the newly formed Parks and Recreation Committee; 11 members, all with staggered 3-year terms as follows:

 Member Term expiration

 Barbara Baggstrom 12/31/21

 Jason Beard 12/31/22

 Me’Lina Bolcar 12/31/23

 David Bolles 12/31/21

 Diane Haversang 12/31/22

 Leilani Meshulam 12/31/23

 Melissa Nanna 12/31/21

 Stephanie Ruggiero 12/31/22

 Jason Ruggiero 12/31/23

 Matthew Taylor 12/31/21

 Jackie Zajac 12/31/22

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that 2 (two) Council liaisons are appointed for one-year terms.

Motion was made by M. Medea seconded by E. Haversang to adopt Resolution 2021-53 as read.

For: Unanimous

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Councilman Medea reported that the Recreation Committee will meet tomorrow to discuss plans for Memorial Day. The next meeting will be an organizational meeting for the newly formed Parks and Recreation Committee. Baseball has begun at the Island Park for the spring season.

A google calendar will be created soon to view the many events scheduled at Island Park this year.

Councilman Haversang reported that he had reached out to Justin Pill of Coldspring Landscaping to discuss mowing of the new park and his ability to move the new picnic tables. Justin did ask if the town wants to have the playground at the park mulched and agreed to provide a quote for this project. Tomorrow night the Recreation Committee will discuss whether or not this is the time to re-mulch the playground. Councilman Medea asked if the cameras were still operational at the park so that they may have caught who had a pizza party at the pavilion and left the garbage strewn all over. Councilman Baggstrom said he would contact the Chief of Police to ask about the cameras and to increase patrols. It was agreed by all to have the Clerk order two small Carry-in/Carry-out signs to be posted on the pavilion.

Councilman Janas reported that the Planning Board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 21 has been cancelled.

Councilwoman Smith reported that the BOE held a long-range strategic planning meeting on 4/15. A survey had been distributed to the public and 29 residents responded. The results of the survey found there to be 4 top strengths of the school:

1. Sense of community
2. Dedicated staff
3. Full day kindergarten and pre-school
4. Positive school environment

Two weaknesses were highlighted: 1) fiscal restraints due to an aging infrastructure and 2) overall declining enrollment.

Councilwoman Smith reported that this meeting was very informative and overall a very positive exchange of ideas.

The public hearing on the 2021-22 budget is scheduled for April 28th.

Councilman Baggstrom read the Court report for the month of March and the Police report for March. There were 689 police calls and 49 traffic stops.

Councilman Baggstrom reported that the DPW cleaned out the underdrains on River Rd., necessary for the anticipated road resurfacing project on River Rd. They also cleaned up and patched some bad areas of Limerock Lane and Crestmore St.

Councilman Baggstrom reported that there is a road resurfacing project for County Rt. 513 planned for summer to extend from Long Valley to the Voorhees Observatory entrance.

Councilman Baggstrom will authorize the DPW to order the dumpster for flooding debris to be placed at the DPW yard.

Councilman Collins reported that the Stream clean-up held on Saturday was successful.

The streetlight on the bridge was reverted back to the original sodium bulb by JCP&L.

**MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Daniel reported that he had a meeting with Borough Engineer Tom Boorady, Kevin Pyatt and Brian Conner of the DPW to walk River Rd. and observe that the DPW did an excellent job of cleaning out the underdrains on River Rd. in the section of the road that will be under construction soon for road resurfacing. They then moved on to look at areas of the stormwater project; 1) opened diversion chamber at the intersection of Philhower Ave. and Main St.; 2) discussed redesign of grate that clogs; will need to find a welder to do this; 3) took pictures in diversion chamber to see what can be done to improve function of baffle and took pictures in front of fire house. Councilwoman Smith reported that for the welding work, Laura King will be completing welding school and will be back home in June. Ms. King will contact Mayor Daniel about the grate welding project. Mayor Daniel reported that they observed the depressions in the sidewalk in front of David Rambo’s home that were initially installed to avoid tripping. It was agreed that they both will be re-painted yellow using special paint for crosswalks, following Mr. Rambo power-washing the sidewalk. Councilman Baggstrom will take a look around town for additional crosswalks that may need painting to combine with this sidewalk project.

Mayor Daniel reported that at the end of the day, he and Mr. Boorady met with Toby Barkman to discuss remediation of the flooding that occurs at the culvert in back of the firehouse during heavy rain storms. Mayor Daniel stated that Mr. Barkman had some good ideas for remediating the problems in the culvert and will provide an estimate of cost for this project. Mayor Daniel stated that 2 additional contractors will be contacted to provide estimates for comparison.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There was a brief discussion among Council members regarding the resumption of in person meetings and it was suggested that if everyone is sufficiently vaccinated by May 17th then it may be possible to resume live meetings. This will remain an ongoing discussion.

There being no further business to come before Council at this time, motion was made by C. Smith seconded by R. Baggstrom and unanimously accepted to adjourn at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Laura G. Eidsvaag, RMC

Municipal Clerk/Administrator