**BOROUGH OF CALIFON**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**September 5, 2024**

Mayor Charles Daniel called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 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 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.”***

**FLAG SALUTE**

**ROLL CALL: PRESENT: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith**

**Absent: L. Janas**

**Also Attending: Borough Attorney M. Anderson – Via Zoom**

**Karen Mastriano, Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs for Comcast, via Zoom.**

**Chief Almer, WTPD**

**\***Councilman Janas arrived at the meeting at 7:04 pm.

**DISCUSSION- Karen Mastriano, Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs for Comcast read the blow statement and asked that it be included in the record:**

My name is Karen Mastriano, I am a Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs for Comcast Freedom Region Systems in Northern New Jersey.

**I have a prepared statement that I would like to read into the record tonight.**

We are in the final stages of the Cable Television Franchise renewal process which is governed by both Federal and State statutes and regulations.

Comcast began the renewal process on or about August 9, 2022, by sending a letter to the Township indicating our intention to seek renewal of our non-exclusive Franchise (under section 626(A) of the Cable Communications policy Act of 1984 and 1996.

Following the States timeline, Comcast filed an application for renewal of municipal Consent on or about July 17, 2024, that application has been available for public inspection in the Clerk’s office.

Tonight’s hearing is on that application. No Action of the Council is required this evening. However, tonight’s hearing is an opportunity to hear from both the governing body and the public.

**THE GOVERNING BODY MUST JUDGE OUR APPLICATION ON THE FOLLOWING FOUR CRITERIA**

1. **Have we complied with the terms of the existing franchise?**
2. **Has the quality of service, signal quality, response to consumer complaints and billing practices been reasonable in light of community needs?**
3. **Does Comcast have the technical, financial, and legal ability to provide service as proposed?**
4. **Is our proposal reasonable for meeting the future cable-related needs and interests of the community?**

Two things the governing body **may not consider** in deciding to renew or deny renewal are:

1. **Rates- These are governed by the state and federal statute, not a municipal decision.**
2. **Programming- The cable operators channel lineup is protected by the 1st amendment,**

**just as newspapers content is.**

No members of the community were present at the meeting.

We briefly discussed the franchise agreement, the Comcast application process, and our choices regarding the Comcast franchise renewal.

Council members will review the application and decide whether to renew the franchise at the next meeting.

**CHIEF’S REPORT**

Chief Almer reported that August was a slow month and has nothing to report. Councilman Ruggiero inquired if there was an increase in suspicious activity in Califon and neighboring towns such as attempted break ins? Chief Almer reported that there has not been.

Councilman Ruggiero advised that social media posts indicate that there have been unidentified people

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES- Meeting of August 15, 2024**

.

Motion was made by L. Janas seconded by C. Smith to approve the meeting minutes of August 15, 2024.

For: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**LIST OF BILLS**

Motion was made by M. Medea to approve the list of bills for $1,320,325.51 seconded by

E. Haversang.

For: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**CORRESPONDENCE/CLERK’S REPORT**

**\_** August 26, 2024, Board of County Commissioners, Letter to Mayor Daniels thanking Califon for their support of a Veterans Community Access Point in Hunterdon County.

\_email- 9-5-24- DCA regarding the new affordable housing reporting requirements

\_notice from Tewksbury Land Use regarding 200’ requirement for new addition on Cold Springs Rd.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **RESOLUTION 2024-58- Social Affairs Permit**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2024-58**

**APPROVAL OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS PERMIT FOR CALIFON FIRE COMPANY**

**FOR OCTOBER 13, 2024, STREET FAIR.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Borough Council of the Borough of Califon, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that the following application for a Social Affairs Permit has been approved to be issued in the Borough of Califon for the one-day, Califon Street Fair event on October 13, 2024; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Municipal Clerk or her duly authorized agent is hereby authorized, directed and ordered to sign, issue and deliver such permit to the following licensee:

NAME Club License No ADDRESS

Califon Fire Company 1004-31-002-002 41 Main St

Califon, NJ 07830

Councilwoman Smith made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-58 as read seconded by Councilman Medea.

For: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION 2024-59- Approval to hire part-time office cleaner**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2024-59**

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF CALIFON AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF SARA LIRDSCHULZ AS THE PART-TIME OFFICE CLEANER.**

**WHEREAS** the previous cleaner for the Municipal Office is no longer in business, necessitating the Borough to hire a new cleaner and;

**WHEREAS**, Sara Lirdschulz applied for this position and currently works as the Washington Township Municipal building cleaner and the Washington Township Police Department cleaner and can fulfill our requirement of cleaning on the weekends and

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Borough of Califon has offered Sara Lirdschulz employment to clean the Municipal Office twice a month during weekend hours.

Councilman Baggstrom made a motion seconded by Councilman Janas to approve Resolution 2024-59 as read.

For: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

1. **RESOLUTION 2024-60- Releasing the Tax Collector to Collect Taxes on the following Unknown Properties.**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2024 60**

**RELEASING THE TAX COLLECTOR FROM THE COLLECTION OF TAXES ON PROPERTIES OF UNKNOWN OWNERSHIP AND THAT THESE TAXES ARE THEREFORE CANCELLED**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Califon that the taxes on the following properties of unknown ownership, as listed in the tax duplicate of the Borough of Califon, are deemed to be uncollectible, and, that being so and according to New Jersey law 54:91-2, the tax collector is hereby released from the collection thereof, and these taxes are therefore canceled:

BLOCK LOT AMOUNT

5 (River Rd) 28 $7.66

6 (Academy) 25 $49.78

11 (River) 1.03 $26.80

21 (Bank St) 5.01 $22.97

22 (Mill St) 18 $164.65

31 (Backland) 13 $76.58

Councilwoman Smith made a motion seconded by E. Haversang to approve Resolution 2024-60 as read.

For: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 2024-02-TITLE 17.10 - IMPROPER WASTE DISPOSAL**

Mayor Daniel read Ordinance 2024-02 title 17.10 by title and opened the meeting for public comment. With no comments, the public hearing was closed.

Motion was made by J. Ruggiero seconded by E. Haversang to adopt Ordinance 2024-02 Chapter 17.10.

For: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

1. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 2024-02, TITLE 17.08 – CONNECTIONS TO STORM SEWERS AT COUNTY HIGHWAYS TO BE REPLACED BY ILLICIT CONNECTIONS.**

Mayor Daniel read Ordinance 2024-02, title 12.08 by title, and opened the meeting up for public comment. With no comments, the public hearing was closed.

Motion was made by L. Janas and seconded by R. Baggstrom to adopt Ordinance 2024-02 Chapter 17.08.

For: R. Baggstrom, E. Haversang, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**PUBLIC COMMENT-** No members of the public were present.

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

to develop a plan for the island by the post office. He completed the plan and submitted it to Lori Jenssen, the Chairperson of the EC. The plan does not include a tree in the center to eliminate issues with the sight line. Council members agreed that keeping the sight line open has been nice since removing the old tree. M. Medea advised that there is talk about planting the island before **the Street Fair. If the plantings cannot be done, then at a minimum we will need to have the** island cleaned up and place some fall mums and pumpkins so it looks nice until more permanent plantings can be done.

We also discussed placing a small sign, “Clayton’s Corner,” as a tribute to Clayton Huff, our retired crossing guard. The sign will be placed facing Mill Street in recognition of the 16 years of friendly service Clayton gave Califon before he retired.

Councilman Haversang reported that a tree planting will be held at Califon Island Park on Monday, October 21st, in partnership with the Raritan Headwaters Association.

Councilman Janas reported that Clerk Mastro was present at the last planning/zoning meeting for the historic review of the front steps replacement. The planning board members approved this resolution. The next meeting will be September 18th.

Councilwoman Smith reported that she missed the Historical Society meeting.

The Califon Board of Education meeting was on August 21st, and the first school day was August 28th. There were 92 students enrolled, ten more than this time last year.

Board member Rebecca Kipp Newbold was presented with a plaque in recognition of obtaining the designation of Master School Board Member.

Councilman Baggstrom reported that the County did get Aqua to repave the section of Main Street where the road had been patched, causing traffic noise to the neighbors.

Councilman Ruggiero reported that he is in the middle of taking the grant writing class, which is very dry, but there are some good resources he has received so far in the course.

**MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Daniel reported that the Hunterdon County Commissioner's office sent him a letter advising that Califon will receive a $30,000.00 grant for our stormwater project.

It is less than half of what we had applied for, but we can earmark this money for our project and apply for additional grants.

Mayor Daniel reported he received a letter from Clerk/Administrator Mastro advising she will be retiring as of February 1, 2025.

With no further business to attend, C. Smith made a motion, seconded by R. Baggstrom, and it was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Mastro, RMC