

**BOROUGH OF CALIFON**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**March 7, 2024**

Mayor Charles Daniel called the regular meeting to order at 7:04 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, L. Janas, M. Medea, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith**

**Also Present:**

**Borough Attorney M. Anderson was present via Zoom.**

**Tom Silvia, Califon Zoning Officer**

**Chief J. Almer, WTPD**

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

Motion was made by C. Smith seconded by R. Baggstrom to approve the meeting minutes of February 15, 2024.

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

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

At this time, Mayor Daniel moved to Public Comments on the Agenda.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Don Freibergs, proprietor of Rambo’s Country Store, Main St, Califon, addressed his concerns with the Office of Fire Prevention. He has contacted the County for a second opinion regarding the recent inspection and violations he received with his business.

Don Freibergs, advised the council that he would like to erect a storage shed at the Hoffman House property to store items for the Califon Historical Society.

Lindsey Beates, proprietor of South Branch Outfitters, Main St, Califon, gave an update on the upcoming Trout Fest, scheduled for Saturday, April 20, 2024, with a rain date of Sunday, April 21, 2024. This event is in partnership with the Stream Clean Up, which takes place from 9 am to 12 pm on the same day. Lindsey advised that they welcome any and all committees and commissions from the Borough that would like to set up a Vendor Table and be a part of this event.

There are over 25 vendors currently signed up, along with two food trucks and a beer truck. All food licenses and applications are being completed as required.

Liam Morris, Center St, Califon, Chief of the Califon Fire Company, advised that the Califon Fire Co. was awarded its second American Rescue Plan grant. They applied for \$75,000 and received the full grant amount. The grant will purchase additional turnout gear, masks, and thermal imaging cameras. One set of turnout gear costs \$5,300 and must be replaced every 10 years, and right now, they have eight sets that are expiring.

Chief Morris thanked the municipal staff for their assistance in securing this grant.

Bill Kibler, Director of Policy at Raritan Headwaters Association, discussed the process that takes place during land transfer involving Green Acres. Regarding the land transfer to the Borough from the County, the County is getting the land transfer sign made, and it will be placed at the Weiss Mill Dam. This must be in place at least 30 days before the public hearing. The county will advise us of the date of the public hearing, and the hearing will most likely take place at the municipal offices.

Once the transfer occurs, the governing body can adopt a resolution authorizing Raritan Headwaters to take the lead in obtaining financing and working with the NJDEP and other project partners in connection with the demolition of the Weiss Mill Pond Dam.

Bill distributed a sample resolution for Council members to review.

## **POLICE**

Councilman Baggstrom advised that he has received a few calls from residents asking why the Borough cannot place a traffic light at the intersection of Main Street and 513. He realized that this involved County Roads, but he wanted the Chief to know this was coming up in case he received calls.

Councilman Baggstrom advised that in the past, they have asked the County to please consider this, but they have decided not to pursue this matter.

Councilman Baggstrom and Councilwoman Smith shared that they have noticed more activity with patrol cars in Califon lately. Chief Almer advised that they had over 1000 activities in Califon this past month for the second month.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

\_ 2.21.24-email from L. Hibbs of Commercial Utility Consultants- advising the 2024 BGS-Basic Generation Service has been approved by the Board of Public Utilities. \* Clerk Mastro advised that she will be asking L. Hibbs to attend a meeting in the near future to give counsel members an update on the upcoming auction and market.

\_ LFN2024-5- State Aid Certification- this was distributed to council members via email.

\_ LFN2024-03- Outlines Appropriations Cap Relief for Municipal Budgets.

\_ 2.26.24-B. Spinelli, Highlands Council – a reminder to municipalities of funding opportunities regarding Stormwater

\_ 2/27/24- Email from B. Fahey of Emergency Management regarding local assistance for the Open Cupboard Food Pantry after the recent fire shut down their operation in Clinton.

\_ 3/7/24- email- K. Pyatt , DPW, advising that they were out checking behind 31 Main St and the rear of the firehouse cleaning and will check again before the next round of rain on Saturday.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **DISCUSSION – TIER A/ MS4 ORDINANCES 2024-02-2024-10**

The Zoning Officer, T. Silvia shared his experience working in a town that had a ordinance regarding trees. T. Silvia advised that he noticed that the tree ordinance did lend itself to creating neighbor disputes.

T. Silvia advised that he would work with the municipal office to manage the requirements of this ordinance. Record-keeping is critical to tracking each resident's history of tree removal and determining when and if a replacement is required.

Forms/applications will need to be created by the office.

Ash trees meet the definition of a Hazardous Tree and meet exemption G. They may be removed without paying a fee and do not require a replacement.

The council discussed whether we could have a more straightforward, bare-boned ordinance. Since the state requires us to adopt this ordinance, there is little leeway in what we can modify. It was agreed that this ordinance has enough flexibility to allow residents to remove a without a replacement requirement.

Council members agreed that the state is requiring these ordinances in response to the problems municipalities are experiencing with stormwater.

Council members reviewed other Ordinances and advised that these could be introduced on March 21<sup>st</sup>, with the Public Hearing and final adoption on April 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **DISCUSSION – AMENDED STORMWATER CONTROL ORDINANCE-2024-11**

Mayor Daniel advised that the Borough engineer made necessary changes to our existing Stormwater Control Ordinance as required by the state. The state has changed the calculations/ measurements of stormwater runoff, which needed to be reflected in our current stormwater control ordinance.

Council members had nothing to add or change in this draft amended ordinance.

The Borough Attorney, M. Anderson, advised he will implement these changes. The ordinance must be submitted to the County for final approval before our adoption.

M. Anderson advised that these sample ordinances from the state do not fit the format of our existing code. He will work with the Clerk and Mayor to transition these new ordinances into the code that makes the most sense.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Councilman Medea reported that Parks and Recreation has a new Chair, Nathan Snyder. The Egg Hunt will occur on March 23<sup>rd</sup> with a rain date of Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

Deputy Clerk Barbara Thomas will begin planning the Memorial Day Parade event and work with Nathan and the Recreation Committee.

Meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Municipal Building.

Councilman Haversang advised that the Environmental Commission meeting will occur next Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 pm.

Councilman Haversang stated that the Stream Clean-up is on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, from 9 am to 12 pm, followed by the Trout Fest.

Councilman Haversang shared that he was on an NJ Dams call last week, during which they discussed the need to streamline the dam removal process within the various levels of government.

Councilman Haversang reminded the council that on Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30, the council members and the mayor are invited to the firehouse to view the new PPE equipment they have been awarded under the ARP Grant.

Councilman Janas advised that the last Planning Board meeting was on February 21<sup>st</sup>, during which attorney J. Testa gave a brief update on the overhaul of the affordable housing bill. At this point, it is unclear how it will affect municipalities that are 100 % within the Highlands, and it is a work in progress.

Discussion of the Tier A ordinances and the amended Stormwater Control ordinance occurred. J. Testa advised that the Council would be the lead on these ordinances, and the planning board would review the stormwater control ordinance for consistency.

A brief discussion on the state redevelopment plan took place.

Air B and B was briefly discussed. Council will be the ones that drive the policy in regards to Air B and B's and the Planning Board would review for consistency.

The majority of the meetings took place during the executive session.

The next meeting will be on March 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.

Councilwoman Smith advised that the North Hunterdon / Voorhees Board of Education met on February 27<sup>th</sup>. They anticipate a 2% tax increase, and there will be a budget hearing at the March meeting. Once the Polytech school opens, they expect a revenue stream.

Councilwoman Smith advised that the state aid amounts came out and that Califon School will receive 2.78% and North Hunterdon / Voorhees will receive .46%..

Councilman Baggstrom advised he had nothing to report.

Councilman Ruggiero advised he had nothing to report.

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Daniel reported receiving a letter from Senator Steinhardt from the 23rd legislative district requesting that our office put together a list of our top two or three budget requests for 2024. He believes that this would amount to roads and stormwater projects for Califon. Mayor Daniel advised that we will submit these needs once the finance team identifies which projects are priorities.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no public comments, so Mayor Daniel asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 pm.

All In Favor  
Meeting Adjourned.