**BOROUGH OF CALIFON**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**September 19, 2024**

**MINUTES**

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, L. Janas, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith**

**Absent: E. Haversang**

**Also Present: Borough Attorney M. Anderson and Kirsten Nuber, Associate of Woolson, Anderson & Peach**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES- Meeting of September 5, 2024**

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Motion was made by C. Smith seconded by J. Ruggiero to approve the meeting minutes of September 5, 2024.

For: R. Baggstrom, L. Janas, J. Ruggiero, C. Smith

Absent: E. Haversang

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**LIST OF BILLS**

Motion was made by R. Baggstrom to approve the list of bills in the amount of $17,183.63 Seconded by M. Medea.

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

Absent: E. Haversang

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**CORRESPONDENCE/CLERK’S REPORT**

**\_**DMC Associates, Land Surveyors submitted a proposal for the TIER A Stormwater Inventory – GIS.

\_9-18-24 email from Aqua Water advising that they would be amicable in doing a full paving of Hoffman Drive & Eisenhower instead of trench patching in place of the MOU /Credit for Philhower.

\_9-12-24 letter from Assignment Judge Kevin Shanahan summarizes advancements in the judiciary and municipal courts in the past year.

\_ Lebanon Twp shared a copy of an Ordinance recently passed that amends their Land Use Law to ban the manufacturing and service provisioning of Psilocybin.

\_ 9-16-24 email from resident J. Bell advised that he and resident G. Smith could not loosen the anchoring pin to the flagpole at the municipal building to paint.

\_9-11-24- NJLM Update advising SHPP rates have been adjusted to 16.4% down from 17.2%.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **RESOLUTION 2024-61 – Expressing Support of the Hunterdon County Board of County Commissioners for SCR-81/ACR-58 aimed at increasing the NJ veteran’s property tax deduction to $2,500**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2024-61**

**EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR SCR-81/ACR-58 AIMED AT INCREASING THE NEW JERSEY VETERANS’ PROPERTY TAX DEDUCTION TO $2,500**

**WHEREAS** The Veterans property tax deduction, currently set at $250, has not been increased in over twenty years; and

**WHEREAS** bipartisan bills SCR-81/ACR-58 propose a constitutional amendment to increase the amount of veteran’s property tax deduction from $250 to $2,500 over four years; and

**WHEREAS** under the State Constitution, both houses of the state legislature must approve the bills either by supermajority votes or in consecutive years; and

**WHEREAS** according to the legislation, Veterans who are honorably discharged from active service in a branch of the United States Armed Forces qualify for the deduction. A qualified veteran’s surviving spouse would receive the deduction after the qualified veteran dies; and

**WHEREAS** the legislation calls for the proposed increase in the property tax deduction to be phased in over a four-year period and the state would provide municipalities with funding to offset the tax revenue reduction and

**WHEREAS** it is the opinion of the Board of County Commissioners that Veterans deserve this recognition that has been earned through their sacrifice and dedicated service to the Nation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Hunterdon County Board of County Commissioners and the Borough of Califon does hereby strongly support bipartisan legislation SCR-81/ACR-58; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to members of the 15th, 16th, and 23rd Legislative Districts, the New Jersey Association of Counties and all 26 Hunterdon County Municipalities.

Motion was made by R. Baggstrom seconded by M. Medea to adopt Resolution 2024-61 as read.

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

Absent: E. Haversang

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

1. **RESOLUTION 2024-62 Releasing the Tax Collector to collect taxes for the year 2023 for unknown properties.**

The following Resolution was introduced for adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2024 62**

**RELEASING THE TAX COLLECTOR FROM THE COLLECTION OF TAXES ON PROPERTIES OF UNKNOWN OWNERSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2023, 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 FOR 2023

5 (River Rd) 28 $7.34

6 (Academy) 25 $47.74

11 (River) 1.03 $25.70

21 (Bank St) 5.01 $22.03

22 (Mill St) 18 $157.90

31 (Backland) 13 $73 .44

Motion was made by C. Smith seconded by R. Baggstrom to adopt Resolution 2024-62 as read.

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

Absent: E. Haversang

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **INTRODUCTION ORDINANCE 2024-03- AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REVISED BOROUGH CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF CALIFON BY REPLACING ITS ENTIRETY CHAPTER 15.16 OF TITLE 15 WHICH CHAPTER IS ENTITLED “STORMWATER CONTROL”**

The Mayor read Ordinance 2024-03 by title.

Motion was made by R. Baggstrom seconded by C. Smith to adopt Ordinance 2024-03 Stormwater Control.

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

Absent: E. Haversang

Opposed: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**DISCUSSION – SHORT TERM RENTALS**

Council members agreed that an ordinance establishing restrictions regarding short-term rentals, which are rentals of a single-family home for between one and 30 days, is necessary.

Discussed what regulations should be adopted to provide the best possible

outcome for the residents and the homeowner providing short-term rentals. The council discussed what should be regulated and advised that they would want the power to revoke a license, minimum stays, and license fees.

The council asked Borough attorney M. Anderson to draft a simple registration ordinance for short-term rentals, as discussed. They would review it and further discuss it if necessary.

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Councilman Medea reported that everything is in order for the upcoming street fair on October 13th. Councilman Ruggiero said he would promote the street fair on-air through WRNJ on Monday, September 23rd.

Councilman Janas reported that the September 18th Planning Board meeting was canceled. The next meeting will be on October 16th.

Councilwoman Smith reported that the California Historical Society met on September 17th and will be at the Street Fair. The Historical Society has a Voting-in-Califon exhibit at the Cabin by the River until November 3rd.

The Califon Board of Education met, and enrollment is still at 92. Fire Safety Week is from October 6th through October 12th, and the Califon Fire Company will visit the school during this week.

Councilman Baggstrom reported that the police report shows that calls were down.

Signs on School Street were recently replaced on the Main Street side.

Councilman Ruggiero reported that he will begin working on the next edition of the Crier next week. If someone wants to write the cover story, please submit it by then.

Councilman Ruggiero advised that he is still taking the grant writing class that covers areas that apply to municipal grants.

**MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Daniel advised that he has been in touch with several mayors, and they are discussing stormwater issues throughout the state and recent litigation against one municipality.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment made.

Mayor Daniel advised that the meeting would now be an executive session. No action will be taken after the executive session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR A MEETING NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC IN   
ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEW JERSEY OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Califon that an Executive Session, not open to the public, shall be held immediately following the adoption of this Resolution for

attorney-client discussion with the Borough Attorney.

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the regular meeting will continue, and further public discussion and action may occur. It is anticipated that minutes of the Executive Session may be disclosed to the public as to

as to discussions with the Borough Attorney, since the attorney-client privilege has no specific expiration date, the Borough Council may disclose the minutes when it determines that the public interest no longer requires confidentiality.

Councilwoman Smith moved to go into executive session, seconded by Councilman Janas. All were in Favor. The meeting was moved to executive session at 7:52 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Councilwoman Smith motioned to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by R. Baggstrom. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Mastro, RMC