

**BOROUGH OF CALIFON
REGULAR MEETING
February 1, 2024**

Mayor Charles Daniel called the regular meeting to order at 7:02 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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Ruggiero stated that his committee report reads that” the cameras in the park will be reinstalled sometime in the near future.” When it should read, additional cameras will be reinstalled in the park in the near future.

Motion was made by C. Smith seconded by L. Janas to approve the meeting minutes of January 18, 2024 with the above change noted.

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

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

LIST OF BILLS

A motion was made by J. Ruggiero seconded by E. Haversang to approve the list of bills for \$647,251.86

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

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

CORRESPONDENCE

1.19-24- email – State Planning Commission- re-updating of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan-preliminary plan will be published April 8, 2024.

1.26.24-email-A. Burger- Aqua Water- re: plans for water line replacement on Philhower. They will try and complete it ahead of the paving project.

1.29.24- email – A. Kovacs- LEAP Coordinator- re: request to have a volunteer complete community service.

1.30.24-email-Chief Almer- regarding the new road closure notification process.

1.30.24-email-K. Pyatt- pot hole repair completed for First St, Bank St, Philhower and River.

1.31.24-email-K. Pyatt- Plowing of Rescue Squad parking lot. Kevin advised that they would be unable to do this as the equipment they use is too large for this property.

1.29.24-email- Lindsey & Abraham Beates- So. Branch Outfitters- re Annual Trout Fest- Saturday, April 20, rain date April 21st. - Park Use Application.

1.29.24-email- T. Boorady, PE- Construction costs estimate for Philhower Ave – Section 20 costs. The grant is for \$219,330. The estimate is for \$404,890.00.

1.30.24-corresp. Notice of Public Hearing- Highlands Council Regional Master Plan Amendments. -re: Warehouse Policies.

OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL ADOPTION

The Mayor read Ordinance 2024-01 by Title:

**ORDINANCE 2024-01
ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS
AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK**

(N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)

Mayor Daniel opened the public hearing on Ordinance 2024-01. There being no comments from the public, the public hearing was closed.

The following Ordinance was Introduced for adoption:

**ORDINANCE 2024-01
ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS
AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK**

(N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget up to **2.5%** unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and,

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Califon in the County of Hunterdon finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2024 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council hereby determines that a **1.0%** increase in the budget for said year, amounting to **\$6,462.73** in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary and,

WHEREAS the Borough Council hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Califon, in the County of Hunterdon, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2024 budget year, the final appropriations of the Borough of Califon shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5%, amounting to **\$22,619.56**, and that the CY 2024 municipal budget for the Borough of Califon be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.

Motion was made by M.Medea seconded by J. Ruggiero to adopt Ordinance 2024-01.

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

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

1. COAH- Legislative Bill A-4- Review/Discussion

(at this time, Mayor Daniel left the meeting)

Borough attorney Mark Anderson presented a brief history of COAH to members of the Council. M. Anderson then proceeded to provide a summary and analysis of this new proposed legislation of A-4 and its companion bill, S-50. M. Anderson advised that he believes Califon should wait and see what transpires with this legislation but did suggest that our Planning Board review the matter.

- 2. Environmental Commission-** Clerk Mastro advised that the Environmental Commission would like permission to plant new, native plantings at the small triangle in front of the Post Office at Main Street and Academy Street. This triangle has been maintained and decorated by a resident volunteer couple for many years, and they will soon be moving. The Environmental Commission would like to take over the design and planting of this area. A short discussion took place, and it was agreed that a plan must be made before the Environmental Commission begins to replant this area.

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Motion was made by C. Smith seconded by L. Janas to approve the Environmental Commission members to take over the plantings and maintenance of the triangle property at the Main Street and Academy Street intersection once the current volunteers relocate.

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

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

Clerk Mastro advised that the Environmental Commission will also participate in the Tree Recovery program again this year, giving away seedlings to residents at the April 20th Stream Clean Up and planting additional trees at the park.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Councilman Bagstrom reported that our OEM Coordinator, G. Waseleski spoke with Chief Almer and Chief Almer agreed to post any road closures that Califon has due to weather, trees ect on the Washington Township website.

Councilman Bagstrom reported that he received a report from K. Pyatt, DPW, that Califon has 16 Stormwater drains that need to be updated to comply with the safety requirements for bicycle riders. The report also states that we have 27 drains that need emblems affixed to them.

Councilwoman Smith reported that she attended the North Hunterdon Voorhees Board of Education meeting which had been rescheduled from January 23, 2024.

Councilwoman Smith advised that there is a renewed interest in the library and book banning, which drew hundreds of people to this meeting. The public comment was very controversial for 2 hours and 15 minutes, with one man being removed from the meeting by police officers.

Councilwoman Smith advised that she continue to attend these meetings and hoped that everything would begin to calm down.

Councilman Janas reported that the Planning Board has not met since the last Council meeting but will meet on February 21st. They will be looking at Airbnb and the new bill, A-4.

Councilman Haversang reported that the Environmental Commission had its Reorganization meeting on Tuesday, January 23rd. The EC members are researching trash service consolidation to try and eliminate the number of garbage trucks that drive throughout town throughout the week.

Councilman Haversang advised that the EC also discussed the possibility of managing or eliminating nuisance noise, particularly from backpack blowers, at certain times.

Councilman Haversang reported that the Emergency Management Committee met and discussed ways to improve communication among the first responders as well as between the first responders and the residents. Councilman Haversang advised that present at this meeting were Police Chief Almer, Chief Paul Pannella -Califon First Aid, Chief Morris- Califon Fire Dept, George Waseleski, OEM, and the Deputy OEM.

Councilman Haversang advised that the meeting was very productive and important.

Councilman Medea advised that Parks and Recreation will have an open house meeting on Monday, February 12th.

Councilman Medea advised that the batter's box at the park floated away during the last storm but has since been returned to the park.

Councilman Baggstrom advised that he received a letter of congratulations from Commissioner Kuhl. This letter also pointed out that municipalities can apply for grants of up to one million dollars for infrastructure and parks.

Some discussion took place on grants and how we may want to form a grant committee to find and apply for grants that would benefit our town.

MAYORS REPORT

No report

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jane from the Hunterdon Review asked if the Coles Mill Dam was discussed at the Environmental Commission meeting. Councilman Haversang advised that a little, but that this was a privately owned dam, and that the Commission's main interest lies with the Weiss Mill Dam.

With no further business to discuss, C. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm seconded by J. Ruggiero.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Mastro