



CELEBRATING 131 YEARS OF WORSHIP ON THE WATERFRONT
— HONORING THE LEGACY OF OUR PARISH —

+May 19, 2020
In the Holy & Joyful Season of Easter

Mr. James J. Farina
City Clerk – City of Hoboken
City Hall
94 Washington Street
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030

Dear Mr. Farina,

May God give you Peace.

I respectfully request that the following be entered into the record of the public portion of the May 20th, 2020 City Council Meeting, relative to any matter on the Agenda concerning the Office of Constituent Affairs and, specifically, Ms. Caroline Caulfield, who currently holds the position of Director/Chief of that Office.

I have been following and have come to understand that there is a movement afoot to dismantle/abolish the Office of Constituent Affairs and/or the position and employment of Ms. Caroline Caulfield. Such an action would be an abomination, negatively affecting our Citizens of Hoboken most in need and most vulnerable. The voice of the poor, low-income tenants, those with disabilities, senior citizens, etc., have as their instrument, Ms. Caulfield through the aforementioned Office. Essentially, we would be muting the crying voices of those Citizens, who finally found an Office and caring Director and Staff to whom they could reach out, count on, and receive relief and assistance, concerning their most basic needs and quality of life as members our City. Hoboken always has been and must always be: a caring, listening Community, apolitical where Citizens' needs are concerned.

I state and write this as a life-long, born and raised Citizen of Hoboken, as a Religious leader within the Catholic Christian Community; and as one who served as a corporate executive in a major governmental entity concerned with serving the public, The Port Authority of NY & NJ, for more than twenty years prior to my Ordination to the Priesthood.

As I think back, the Office of Constituent Affairs and Ms. Caulfield were established a couple of years ago, within the time of my current Pastoral capacity here in Hoboken. Upon learning of it at the time I, along with countless Hoboken Citizens, expressed sighs of relief and embraced newfound Hope. Finally, a Mayoral Administration placed such a priority on responsiveness to the citizenry, that the establishment of the Office and hiring of someone of the caliber, zeal, and heart of Ms. Caulfield was accomplished. I applaud Mayor Bhalla and those members of the City Council and Administration who supported this venture, for such foresight and accomplishment. The citizenry would be heard, have an advocate and 'ombudsperson' for their needs and, in justice and equality, given relief or direction, allowing them to live in dignity and respect as a member of a caring Community.

Since the establishment of the Office of Constituent Affairs and Ms. Caulfield's leadership, there were countless times when we communicated for the good of individuals or groups of our Citizens, either that have come my way, or who have been referred for help. Most recently, Ms. Caulfield reached out to me in the early phases of the Coronavirus pandemic, as she was seeking to establish a force of volunteers to help provide and deliver food to what turned out to be more than 2,000. So trusting and confident am I in Caroline's ingenuity, professionalism, and sense of moral purpose, that I encouraged my Parish population of approximately 1,100 Families (more than 3,000 individuals) to join and support her efforts in such a laudable, necessary, human cause. Countless Citizens have turned to Ms. Caulfield and her Office for assistance in so many ways during this pandemic time especially, including assistance with things as basic as navigating the often confusing methods of applying for and accessing unemployment insurance payments, and other services and benefits available to them, from the City, State, or other entities. These are the people who would be left without someone to walk with them, to 'hold their hand,' to guide them; to relieve their anxiety, confusion, and fear at these times of uncertainty in their lives. To consider any change in such direct human services, especially during this unprecedented time of disruption to normal life, defies logic and is devoid of compassion.

Caroline's is an attitude and approach that has one goal: 'How can I help this person, this group, this situation, and make them or it better?' In all of our communications and working together, it was always clear to me, without a doubt, that Ms. Caulfield's response was never based 'in politics.' Rather, although an appointee existing in a 'political environment,' she operates and responds without prejudice. The needs of the constituency is her 'political party.' Pray God the same could be said for those in elected Office.

Any consideration of terminating Ms. Caulfield, her position or Office, would be a tragedy for the Citizens of Hoboken. It would be a degenerating act and shameful mark on our little Town. We shouldn't ever forget that Hoboken would be a desolate, dusty place, laden with cobwebs and tumbleweeds, if it were not for a citizenry that always took pride in being and remaining here – loyal through the old, somewhat very difficult historical years, and hanging in with pride for the present better times – seeking only the justice of a safe and dignified life. The Office of Constituent Affairs, and the person, being, and essence of Ms. Caroline Caulfield, have been largely contributing to the dignity and quality of life of our Citizens, and allowing them to feel safe by being provided for with needed assistance. These constituents are not politicians; they are Sacred, precious, valuable, regular human beings – individuals, Families, young, old – needing a voice and a caring heart. That is Ms. Caulfield.

Thank you for receiving this communication. May the Lord bless you and your Families with Peace and Joy.

Respectfully,



Reverend Monsignor Michael A. Andreano, Citizen
Pastor,
Saints Peter & Paul Parish, Hoboken
Archdiocese of Newark