

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
MARCH 18, 2008**

This meeting was called to order by Carol A. Raph, Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised according to Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

The flag salute was led by Mayor Vincent Mazzeo. Following the flag salute, there was a moment of silence to recognize Robert Saunders who passed away on March 6th. Saunders was a Veteran of World War II, and served on city council from 1986 to 1990.

ROLL CALL

Present: Kern, Notaro, O'Grady, Vain, Zlotnick, Martinez
Absent: Carew

Attorney Robert Reynolds was present in place of City Solicitor, Steve Scheffler; City Engineer Matt Doran was in attendance as well.

AGENDA REVIEW

Council President Martinez reviewed the agenda and invited anyone wishing to discuss this evening's Resolutions and Ordinance to speak; no comments were made.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Zlotnick announced that a 2nd draft of the Rescue Squad Memorandum was received last week; the few remaining details are being ironed out and should be finalized for a vote at the next meeting. She had the pleasure of attending the Think Day competition on Saturday March 15th. Northfield Community School placed 3rd and she extended thanks to Mr. Vain and Mr. Miller who were the coaches of the Think Team. The event was great fun!

Councilor Notaro advised that he's been working on a project to reduce electric bills for the Building and Grounds department. At his request, Doran Engineering looked into a program being used by the City of Ocean City in three of their buildings. Notaro deferred to Doran for further explanation; Doran said that Ocean City is leasing their space for the use of solar or alternate energy sources, and in exchange is benefiting from a projected reduction in energy costs of approximately 30%. Doran said it was in the newspaper a few weeks ago that Ocean City was able to structure a deal that included a grant to be used as seed money and was awarded to the successful bidder to start the project. The remaining costs to install the infrastructure would be borne by the contractor, who would retain ownership of the infrastructure, and the City would then share the benefits of the credits that are available for the use of the alternate energy sources. Notaro asked if the scope of the project included street lighting; Doran replied that the projected savings are to the overall energy bill. Council President Martinez directed Doran to investigate our options, including what grants may be available, and to respond to Councilor Notaro.

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Councilor Vain announced that approximately 1 ½ weeks ago, he and Mayor Mazzeo met with representatives from Atlantic County and the City of Linwood, regarding the Cedarbridge Road and Zion Road intersection project. Northfield was asked to come up with three ways to modify the intersection, with Doran drawing up a cost schematic. Linwood was asked to share in 1/3 of the cost of creating the schematics. Mayor Mazzeo noted that current budgetary concerns may be the reason for the lack of a speedy response from Linwood. Councilor Vain said that he received a letter from Chief James in response to the question posed at the March 4th Council meeting from Atrium Court resident Craig Tanzola. The Chief's recommendations include moving the existing stop sign closer to Mill Road to improve the line of sight for cars exiting Atrium Court, and installation of additional warning signs for east bound traffic warranting the use of caution due to the upcoming intersection of Atrium Court, Mill Road and Burton Avenue; this should discourage drivers from using the shoulder to pass cars that are stopped waiting to turn left onto Burton Avenue.

Councilor Kern offered an update on Court Safety, noting that the benches have been installed, giving a whole new look to Council Chambers and making it appear more spacious. She reminded all in attendance that the benches were installed for the Safety of the Court, and thanked Court Administrator Donna Clark for her efforts on this project. Representatives from various departments met again last week regarding continued efforts to improve security in City Hall, and progress is being made towards outstanding issues. The Cultural Committee's semi-annual garage sale at Northfield Community School was very successful; congratulations to all of the members of the Committee. She added that the Cultural Committee asked that she publicly recognize former Councilor Robert Saunders. He was one of three individuals who met with County officials in 1972 to discuss plans for Northfield's bicentennial program. That committee went on to become the Northfield Cultural Committee, which is still in existence today. He was instrumental in securing the City's old Library building, which had been cast aside in the City's maintenance yard and helped physically turn it into part of the Museum at BGP. He was also involved in securing funds to build the Bandstand and will long be remembered for his dedication to the City. The March 10th Municipal Alliance Meeting has been rescheduled for March 19th at 4:30 at City Hall. Kern offered the February Fire Report as follows: total fire incidents 19, mutual aid 3, total EMS incidents 41, assistance with ambulance transport 0, and non emergency responses 3. She added that if it was not mentioned at last meeting, the light in front of City Hall has been fixed. Councilor Kern asked Chief James if the Police Department sign in front of City Hall is illuminated; he replied that it is not, however he has asked Construction Official Jerry Nuzzolo to contact an electrician about lighting this sign. In response to an inquiry made by Councilor Zlotnick at the March 4th meeting with regard to having the Northfield Fire Department perform inspections of fire protection systems as a shared service with Northfield Community School, Councilor Kern advised that

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Fire Official Leon Delcher has confirmed that this is not feasible due to state regulations. Reading from a letter sent by Delcher, Kern said that anyone working on these types of systems must be certified by the State Division of Fire Safety, per Uniform Code Chapter 74. School maintenance personnel do perform the monthly checks as required by Code, and the Delcher is responsible for all annual inspections as the City's Fire Official. A copy of this letter is on file in the City Clerk's Office. Kern asked Councilor Notaro, as Council Chairperson for Public Works, to take a look at the intersection of Deborah and Evergreen, as there is some patching that needs to be done, and to follow up on the street signage for the intersection of Cara Court and Haviv Drive, as discussed at the March 4th Council Meeting. The Minutes from that meeting reflected that Councilor O'Grady would attend to this, however, Councilor Notaro is the responsible party. Councilor O'Grady confirmed that a sign is necessary where Cara Court and Haviv Drive meet; Notaro will address both issues.

Councilor O'Grady announced that the Planning and Zoning Board had a meeting on March 6th; this was a public session to review the amendments to the City Master Plan, which were accepted. The new computer and server installation at City Hall continues and he will be getting a status report from United Computer on March 19th. Construction continues on the City website, including the addition of the City Master Plan, and up to date Minutes shortly. Councilor O'Grady again encouraged frequent visitation to cityofnorthfield.org. City email accounts for Council should be set up by next week; this will provide another method for citizens to easily communicate with members of Council.

MAYOR'S REPORT

On March 6th, Mayor Mazzeo attended a meeting in Trenton, along with over 300 other Mayors and elected officials. All municipalities represented and officials in attendance were in agreement that a hardship situation was created when State aid was cut without warning; state aid to Northfield alone was reduced by \$232,000.00. The Mayor continued by saying that the state's intention during the meeting was to force municipalities to consolidate and share services, appears unwilling to compromise. If any aid is returned it may be minimal and we will have to anticipate less in our 2008 City budget. Mayor Mazzeo announced that City budget meetings were held last week, and he extended thanks to the Governing Body for their efforts, and to CFO Marilyn Dolcy for her hard work and dedication in preparing the budget. 2008 marks Mayor Mazzeo's fourth year as a Council representative and 1st year as Mayor, and as a result of the State cuts he declared that this is one of the most difficult budget processes in his experience thus far. It is evident that the state's mandates are affecting both sides of the City's balance sheet, decreasing revenues and increasing expenditures, and this is a tremendous challenge. He announced that

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sewer and tax delinquencies are higher than in past years, possibly evidence of the effect of the current economic situation on our residents. He received a letter from Somers Point City Council indicating that the Vietnam Moving Wall is coming to their city from June 5th-9th of this year. They are asking for possible assistance with security; Mayor Mazzeo discussed this with Chief James, who will investigate the possibility of providing volunteers. This will be pursued further at a later date. Mayor Mazzeo received a letter from a resident who was visited on a Sunday evening by a person soliciting for charity; the current ordinance permits solicitation Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., so a Sunday visit is not permitted. In addition, the citizen is asking that Council consider reducing the hours during which solicitation is permitted to 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and the Mayor agrees that this should be explored. He attended a celebration at the Library on March 15th honoring Frank Perri and Jean Blasciak for their many years of dedication and hard work on behalf of the Library. It was a very nice affair, and he too thanks these individuals for their efforts.

Councilor Kern added that she concurs with the citizen who wrote the letter regarding door-to-door solicitation and 5:00 p.m. is a more reasonable cut-off time. She also noted that she spoke with Council President Martinez about having City Tax Assessor Mark Sykes attend an upcoming Council Meeting to address Council about some of the concerns that citizens have recently voiced about property taxes. Mayor Mazzeo and Council President Martinez agreed and this will be scheduled at a later date.

MRHS 2008-2009 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Dr. Dever and Dr. Blake presented the proposed 2008-2009 budget for Mainland Regional High School, and responded to questions from the Mayor and Council. A copy of the proposal is on file in the MRHS Board Office.

President Martinez opened this meeting to the public to discuss any items that were covered at this session.

Jim O'Neill of 7 Cara Court addressed Council and inquired as to why the Minutes of various public meetings were removed from the City website. Councilor O'Grady advised that the last time he checked the website, the minutes were there and there is no intention on the part of Council to remove them. He stated that if they were removed, it may have been an inadvertent result of the work being done on the website, but he will follow up. O'Neill asked when new Minutes would be added to the website; O'Grady responded that they should be posted within a few days of them being finalized by the respective Recording Secretaries.

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Seeing no one else from the public wishing to speak, the work session portion of the meeting was closed.

Council President Martinez called for a brief recess before reconvening for the Regular Session of Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Raph, RMC/CMC