

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025**

At 6:01pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 11, 2025, and in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Chau led the flag salute.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilwoman Carfagno Councilman Dewees; Councilman Polistina; Council President Bucci.

Absent: Councilwoman Kern; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Smith*

**Councilman Smith was absent during roll call; he arrived at 6:05pm.*

Mayor Chau, Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Mauro and Sergeant Czaplinski (for Chief VonColln) were also present.

Council President Bucci asked Clerk Canesi to give an election update.

Clerk Canesi explained to Council that Northfield has been redistricted. The Ward assignments for voters did not change, if you were Ward 1 before, you are still Ward 1. What has changed is that there are no longer separate Districts, everyone in Ward 1 is now in Ward 1 District 1. Ward 2 has been similarly redistricted so everyone in Ward 2 is now in Ward 2 District 1.

She continued; voters will be able to go to any Board of Election worker in their Ward to sign the e-poll book, get their voting authority, and proceed to any available machine. It will no longer matter once the voter is the correct Ward what machine they vote in. This is very similar to an Early Voting setup. Clerk Canesi said she'd met with the Superintendent of Elections yesterday at the Community School; together they redesigned to polling place layout; it will be drastically different. There will be fewer machines and staff, this will be amazing if it is successful. It is a step forward. Once the draft layout is finalized Clerk Canesi will do a social media push, email blast, and Facebook post; she asked all to share anything she posts to get the word out to as many voters as possible.

Council President Bucci moved to Committee reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Polistina – Finance and Collections; Library; Municipal Alliance; Senior Citizens; Affordable Housing

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

Councilman Polistina announced the Library was having an Open House June 5th from 5pm-7pm, the Municipal Alliance is showing a movie at the park on June 13th, at dusk. Hooked on Fishing this Saturday rain or shine from 10a-noon, arrive early to preregister.

At approximately 6:05pm, Councilman Smith arrived.

Councilman Polistina continued; National Night Out registration has begun, with forms available on the City website.

Councilman Dewees – Buildings/Grounds, Athletic Fields; Birch Grove Park, Bike Path, 1st Street Playground, Veterans Park; Public Works: Roads, Engineering

Councilman Dewees thanked Supervisor Boyd and Public Works for doing carpentry work for a bottle filling station at the park, they saved the City money by doing the work themselves.

Councilwoman Kern – Northfield Sports (FAN)

Councilwoman Kern was absent. Councilwoman Bucci presented her Committee report: for FAN, cheerleading sign ups continue until June 1st, football sign ups end on July 15th on their website. New officers for FAN are President Jennifer Hale, Vice President Mark Naman, Treasurer Christian Aiuto, Secretary Stephanie Vandenberg, Sergeant at Arms Stephanie Scullion. She congratulated all.

Councilwoman Bucci – Insurance and Safety; Planning Board; Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce

Councilwoman Bucci thanked Deputy Clerk Campbell for a great job on the Memorial Day Ceremony and thanked the young ladies for stepping up and singing. She congratulated Apex Roofing, this business stayed in the family, it was great for Northfield when that happens. She announced Council received a notice from the MEL for a flood control / risk program. A meeting was set up with BA/Clerk Canesi, Supervisor Boyd, Councilwoman Bucci and Councilman Notaro; it was a free risk assessment. Regarding the Economic Development Commission, building number two at the Aerospace Research Technology Park opened on May 31st; it was a 40,000 square foot facility. The Park has become a national facility.

Councilman Smith - Central Municipal Court; Little League and Babe Ruth; Northfield Community School; Shared Services

Councilman Smith reported that the Northfield Little League season has come to an end, the Florida Gators 12U won the championship, he congratulated all participants and winners in the program. Mainland Regional High School had their Pink Game for cancer awareness in May, he thanked Northfield Little League and President

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

Jason Yard along with the City for getting the field together, adding that they raised \$750 for Gilda's Club. It was a very nice event; he was very appreciative. He felt we may need to have to the Chief address e-bike riders in the park, especially those without helmets. It was an issue in other areas as well such as the Bike Path, but in the park, it is a hazard.

Councilman Dewees thought it was a motorized vehicle and should be prohibited; he believed the State recognized them as such.

Councilman Polistina recalled the Chief noted there were three different classes, he imagined it would be virtually impossible to distinguish them, he believed all e-bikes should be banned from the park.

Councilwoman Bucci suggested banning them from Birch Grove Park; Solicitor Facenda would look at the ordinance.

Councilwoman Carfagno - Fire Department / EMS; Technology / MRHS Channel; Cultural Committee / Veteran Liaison; Mainland Regional

Councilwoman Carfagno said there is a Senior Parking and Share the Keys program at Mainland Regional on June 9th, it is mandatory for students and a guardian, if the student is driving to and parking at the school. She announced dates for finals, senior awards, and the next Board of Education meeting. She heard that we have a 1st baby for the Cultural Committee, they are still looking for nominations for Mr. or Miss 4th of July. For the Hometown Heroes banners, it has been a great start, we have met the minimum order, and it will take 6-8 weeks for the banners to come in. She was working with applicants on the flash drive issue. She echoed what Council President Bucci said about Deputy Clerk Campbell and the Memorial Day Ceremony, it was a great event. Regarding the Fire Department report, she observed three incidents this weekend, at Oak and Zion, at 7-11 and at Tilton Beauty. She wanted to give a shout out to our 1st Responders for all that they do. As to Oak and Zion, we asked the County to look at it, we have to take it in steps and they put up a 4-way light and stop. There have been three accidents since then. She believed some of it is due to travelers not being familiar with the area.

Council President Bucci added that she also reached out to the Chief; last year there were four accidents and in the past six weeks we've had three. Maybe a flashing stop sign needs to be on Zion, it may be too early to consider that.

Councilwoman Carfagno said she was told there were steps and then it goes to the next step.

Mayor Chau said he'd expressed his concern with the County Administrator, who promised to discuss it with the County Engineer. He agreed that it may be due to people being new to the area. Mayor Chau would report further.

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

Lastly, Councilwoman Carfagno advised that the Volunteer Fire Company wanted to hang a banner across the road, similar to what Linwood has. Someone might come in to speak on their behalf; it would be a possible change to an ordinance that we currently have.

Solicitor Facenda confirmed that you can change an ordinance.

Mayor Chau thought it is a good idea, they've wanted to do it in the past. Council may want to consider this on Burton Avenue, where the station is.

Solicitor Facenda confirmed that we are only looking to allow this for the City?

Mayor Chau asked if anyone else would be able to do it?

Councilwoman Carfagno suggested that it be just for City events.

Council President Bucci suggested Shore Road as well, for the Connolly Mile.

Councilman Smith suggested New Road as well.

Solicitor Facenda confirmed this was for City sponsored events only.

Clerk Canesi suggested an application process and approval by resolution of Council.

Solicitor Facenda asked Engineer Mauro if there was a height recommendation?

Engineer Mauro replied, she would get one.

Clerk Canesi suggested we check the County code for their process.

All members present generally agreed.

Councilman Notaro - Sewer Operations; Inspections, Housing/Zoning.

Councilman Notaro was absent.

Council President Bucci moved to ad hoc committee reports.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Special Events Ordinance – *Councilwoman Bucci, Councilman Dewees.*
No update.

Road Opening Ordinance / Remaining Proposed Amendments – *Councilmen Dewees and Notaro.*

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025**

Councilman Dewees stated that they were still working on the ordinance, he referred to someone who was not in attendance at the last meeting.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS

- Regulations re Keeping of Chickens

Council President Bucci referred to sections of the Code that reference the issue and read them; they were Chapter 97-17 and Chapter 215-30. Recommendations had been made and now we need to decide are we going. First and foremost, were we going to allow them. She believed there were a good number of people who have chickens, she did not believe at this point we should prohibit them, but we should perhaps establish a number.

Councilman Polistina suggested a 25' setback and a minimum square footage per chicken for coops, and a required chicken coop size.

Councilwoman Carfagno asked who was checking this?

Council President Bucci also asked how we going to regulate that. She said cats and dogs are regulated through a program the City pays for; do we want the expense of having them licensed? This will all come down to enforceability. She does not believe roosters should be allowed. Her neighbors had chickens for years, they were annoying but they didn't hurt her; if she was on a conference call, she would just put her window down.

Mayor Chau noted we had received complaints about roosters in the past but not recently.

Council President Bucci took a straw poll as to whether members of Council were in favor of allowing residents to keep chickens.

Councilwoman Carfagno voted no.

Councilman Smith said didn't have a problem limiting the number to six, or whatever number we want to establish, but felt it was a code enforcement issue. He didn't believe we should have roosters.

Council President Bucci felt we should limit them, she suggested six.

Councilman Polistina was in favor for hens only, no roosters. The number should be based on the size of the chicken and the size of property, if they have a very small property, they may only be able to fit two without having the proper size coop.

Council President Bucci asked how are we going to regulate that?

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

Councilman Polistina replied that they'd have to be inspected somehow.

Solicitor Facenda suggested as opposed to registering the chickens, have the owner register as keeper of chickens and provide some sort of plot plan.

Clerk Canesi suggested a Zoning permit, adding that if there is a Code Enforcement complaint, we can't typically go onto the property to inspect it.

Solicitor Facenda confirmed but said we can look over a neighboring fence.

Clerk Canesi agreed, adding there are some nuances here, with regard to enforcement.

Councilman Polistina commented on possible health department issues as well, if the owners don't keep it clean.

Solicitor Facenda noted that this would be a County agency.

Councilman Dewees confirmed, it would be the County Health Department.

Councilman Dewees voted in favor of chickens but no roosters.

Solicitor Facenda suggested a maximum number of chickens and a minimum coop size.

Mayor Chau asked if we are going to require some type of license or registration for the chickens.

Council President Bucci replied no; that would require additional expenses.

Clerk Canesi suggested a Zoning application, in accordance with the suggestions Councilman Polistina made as to coop size compatibility relative to the number of chickens. She added that she did not know what that would look like, but it would be a Zoning permit.

Solicitor Facenda suggested backing into it by establishing x number of chickens and a coop of x square feet. He thinks you just cap the number, and regardless of whether you have one or six, your coop has to be x square feet.

Councilman Dewees asked how many people have chickens; he'd never seen one.

Council President Bucci replied, a lot.

Clerk Canesi explained increased popularity during Covid. Her office still gets a lot of calls, and a very frequent question is how chickens can someone have; obviously,

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

we can't give them an answer to that. More recently with the price of eggs, more people have gotten chickens and raised them for household consumption of eggs. She knows that some people have so many eggs they give them away, so are you straddling the line there?

All members present agreed no roosters.

Councilwoman Carfagno asked if the yard needed to be fenced in; people who lived near her did not have a fenced in yard and the chickens would wander.

Solicitor Facenda replied that he did not believe they should be able to come off the owner's property.

Council President Bucci asked if there would be a limit to the number of chickens.

Solicitor Facenda replied there could and asked what the limit would be.

Council President Bucci suggested six, and then to a member of the public in attendance, asked what a common number of chickens was.

Zachary Somers, Northfield, said when he lived on Dolphin Avenue, he had five or six and no one ever complained; his yard was fenced in. He explained that chickens need about four square feet per chicken in a coop and six square feet for a run.

Solicitor Facenda asked for Mr. Somers' thoughts on requiring a fence.

Mr. Somers agreed a fence should be required and said the coop should be kept clean.

Mayor Chau asked how do you get rid of the fecal matter.

Mr. Somers replied, you can use garden lime and it's very good for compost, you need some sort of nitrate-based component. Information was readily available on YouTube; just keep the coop clean. Wood chips are good.

Mayor Chau asked do they need to be vaccinated.

Mr. Somers said if they are from a reputable supplier they are vaccinated; he agreed with roosters not being allowed. He suggested an informational pamphlet for people as a good idea. Tractor Supply in Egg Harbor Township has feed, etc., but no chickens.

Council President Bucci stated it must be against their ordinance.

Mr. Somers confirmed and said four acres were needed.

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

Councilman Polistina said roosters do not only crow in the morning, they crow all day long.

Mayor Chau said we had another situation with another kind of animal and people were complaining that the fecal matter was drawing rodents; he did not know if this was the case with chickens.

Mr. Somers was not aware of that but said chickens will eat mice, too; they are little dinosaurs.

Jackie Kondrk, Northfield, stated they had chickens at their Dolphin Avenue house, they built the coop based on their own research as to what was healthy and made sense; she referenced coops and runs. They let their chickens out during the day when they are home but have an enclosed run as well so that predators can't get to the chickens otherwise. Coops are expensive and if you make the regulations too specific a lot of people would have to start over.

Solicitor Facenda noted the question of retroactive versus proactive as far as the ordinance; he didn't believe you could make it retroactive.

Council President Bucci agreed.

Solicitor Facenda confirmed that the Council was in favor of allowing chickens, but not roosters, a Zoning permit would be required as would a fence. The suggestion is four square feet per coop per chicken and six square feet for the run; we can control those numbers. A maximum number is needed.

Ms. Kondrk said she felt six was a small number, if one gets eaten then you only have five. They started low, now they have more than a quarter acre and they would like to get a couple more; they do die, and the hawks will get a couple.

Council President Bucci asked Ms. Kondrk what her suggestion would be; did she think most people have a similar number?

Ms Kondrk advised they have ten.

Mayor Chau expressed his concern that not everyone may have a large property; some homes are rather close to each other.

Ms Kondrk asked were the number of dogs regulated? Someone could have ten dogs. She suggested a maximum of 20 chickens, adding that people who have chickens will know what is right. She also suggested limiting based on the size of the land.

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

Mayor Chau responded that some would argue that they are being discriminated against based on the amount of land they have. He said he did not know the limit as to the number of dogs but he does not know anyone who has ten.

Ms. Kondrk replied, but they could, and asked what is the difference?

Mayor Chau said there are pros and cons; this is not one of those situations where you are right or wrong, but it is difficult to strike a norm.

Solicitor Facenda said the Council could add a cap later.

Councilwoman Carfagno said we are a very close-knit area and feels that it could get out of control; she doesn't know that it would but feels that it could. She gave the example of three neighbors all having chickens and felt that is what you'd hear all day. People complain about leaf blowers; we're going to be getting complaints about chickens constantly.

Ms. Kondrk said people hear the word chicken and they get upset. She said she did not know if this was the right forum, but the people behind them complained about their chickens. They were going to come in on Wednesday to speak to the woman who wrote them the letter; did it make sense to talk about that now?

Solicitor Facenda replied that he did not believe it made sense to talk about it now; they haven't been cited and there is no violation. He suggested they speak to the Code Enforcement Officer.

Council President Bucci asked Ms. Kondrk if she was the subject of a complaint.

Ms. Kondrk replied, yes.

Clerk Canesi confirmed that the issue being discussed now arose from a noise complaint.

Council President Bucci noted that her neighbor previously had four chickens and they were super loud, but she just shut her window.

Mayor Chau asked Ms. Kondrk if she knew of anyone in Northfield who raised ducks or geese. Some people raise them for eggs.

Ms. Kondrk replied no, and said they are messy. You have to have a pond. They had previously tried to buy a farm in Mays Landing but it didn't work out; now in Northfield they have some little slice of land where they could have something similar to the farm idea they wanted to get in Mays Landing.

Council President Bucci recapped; yes to chickens, no roosters, Zoning application

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

and we're going to work to get the coop size per chicken, and the run. What about the noise?

Councilman Dewees added that according to the research provided by Councilman Polistina, for ten chickens you need a 40 square foot coop and an 80 square foot run.

Solicitor Facenda addressed the issue of noise and said we don't have a noise ordinance. We have a nuisance ordinance; a judge would have to determine if the noise was a nuisance or not. We would not have the ability to regulate noise.

Councilman Polistina said it would be the same as every other noise concern; there would have to be discussions, and gave the example of lawnmowers and fireworks.

Council President Bucci added that it depended on the time of day.

Solicitor Facenda reiterated that we've never had the ability to regulate noise.

Councilman Dewees said it would be a nuisance complaint.

Solicitor Facenda added that a judge would have to determine if it was a nuisance or not and confirmed that there was no maximum number of chickens right now.

Council President Bucci responded that there was no cap on the number of chickens right now but that we are going to work on that. a

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Mauro referred to new grant opportunities for improvements to Burton Avenue and wanted to give additional background. The DOT has two types of funding opportunities, Municipal Aid and Local Transportation Program Funding (LTPF); last year the City applied for two projects under Municipal Aid, Juniper Avenue was approved, under LTPF, Forrest Drive was not approved. They were asked to look at Burton Avenue for milling and paving from Mill to Tilton and sidewalk, the cost estimate came out at around \$779,000.00, she believed it's a big gap from the award amounts. Municipal Aid will allow you to apply for two projects and they can be on the same street. Removing sidewalk and adding a governor strip is around \$382,000.00, milling and paving only is \$397,430.00, you could apply for both, she wanted Council to be aware of the options before submitting. With regard to the sidewalks, the City could also apply under both to get partial funding under both. You don't have to decide now if you want to go Burton Avenue.

Councilman Dewees stated the only reasons he brought up sidewalk was because it is a route to school, his primary concern was the road, we don't always have to go to

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025

Tilton Road, there were several crosswalks that needed to be addressed as well, it was not a horrible road but it is showing signs of wear. He recommended focusing on paving.

Council President Bucci confirmed we can use the grant for both but priority would be paving.

Clerk Canesi said she was not at the last meeting when this was discussed; she asked if Forrest was worse than Burton?

Engineer Mauro felt Forrest was worse; she did ask Supervisor Boyd for his recommendation and he suggested Cedar Bridge from Oak to Route 9 would also be a paving candidate, and the cost estimate was \$199,000.00.

Councilman Polistina recalled Cedar Bridge from Oak to New Road was not wide enough for sidewalks.

Engineer Mauro advised the application was due July 1st, Forrest would require its own resolution and you have another meeting for that.

Councilman Dewees replied, his choice was Burton.

Council President Bucci took a straw poll.

Councilwoman Carfagno advocated for Forrest Drive, it was in bad shape, and there is a lot of traffic.

Councilman Smith would like to check both out before making a recommendation.

Council President Bucci asked what does that do for time?

Engineer Mauro stated Council has one more meeting to make a final decision; the estimate for Forrest was \$399,000.00 and Cedar Bridge was \$199,000.00.

Supervisor Boyd suggested a pedestrian lane on Cedar Bridge.

Councilman Polistina liked that idea.

Engineer Mauro replied that would just be adding striping.

Councilman Polistina agreed with Councilman Dewees, Burton would need it regardless.

Councilman Dewees confirmed that Council would look at the roads and discuss at the next meeting.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025**

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Bucci reviewed the agenda and made the assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION / FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Bucci opened the public portion of the meeting for any person to comment on any subject, he asked that all persons state their name and city of residence for the record and observe the five-minute limit per speaker.

Jackie Kondrk, Northfield, uses Burton Avenue as cut through. The condition makes it difficult to speed, if you pave it, it will make it easier to speed.

Councilman Dewees noted that the speed limit was 25 mph so that is an enforcement issue.

Ms Kondrk suggested speed bumps.

Councilman Dewees advised they are no longer permitted.

Ms Kondrk suggested painting on the roadway that says the speed limit is 25.

Councilman Dewees reiterated its an enforcement issue.

Jerry Herriott, Northfield, said he contacted Councilman Dewees on May 13th regarding street sweeping and was told on May 19th that he would get back to him but Councilman Dewees did not. Mr. Herriott advised that Lesley Lane was not swept last year, south from Zion Road to Linwood, he knew it was not the city but do we pay the County.

Clerk Canesi confirmed street sweeping is done through a grant and performed by the ACUA. She asked if he reported the missed street. She explained it is performed via a shared service with the ACUA, but we do follow-up if there is a complaint. She offered to reach out to the ACUA and get back to Mr. Herriott.

Mr. Herriott provided his contact information to Clerk Canesi.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Council President Bucci closed the public session.

At 7:08pm, on motions properly made and seconded, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 3, 2025**

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk