

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
JUNE 28, 2022**

At 6:05pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 8, 2022, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Councilwoman Bucci; Councilman Leeds; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Utts; Council President Polistina; Mayor Chau

**Absent:** Councilman Dewees; Councilman Smith

Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Nassar and Chief Newman were also in attendance.

Council President Polistina welcomed all to the meeting, and moved to the Cultural Committee Awards.

**6PM PRESENTATION OF CULTURAL COMMITTEE AWARDS:**

Rob Patrick, explained the Cultural Committee Awards and called forward the first baby and her parents.

Northfield's First Baby – Madelyn Reed

Mr. Patrick read the following statement:

“Timothy Reed and Lindsay Carignan are the proud parents of the First Baby. They met at Mainland Regional Highschool in 2010, in Mrs. Tucci's food class. Last year, in May of 2021, they finally tied the knot after years of dating. Timothy was born and raised in Northfield, and Lindsay in Somers Point. On February 4, 2022 God blessed them with a daughter, Madelyn Reed.

Joan Brennan presented Madelyn and her parents with an award and gift certificate.

Mayor Chau presented the family with a certificate from the Mayor and Council.

Miss July 4<sup>th</sup> – Molly Carlton

Mr. Patrick called Molly forward and read the following:

“Molly recently graduated from Mainland Regional High School, she earned her Bronze Award with Girl Scouts by completing a community project, she volunteered to be a teacher's assistant with the religious education program at St. Gianna's, served four years as a Northfield Cardinals Junior Coach, volunteered her time at the

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Ventnor Boat House and Lake Lenape teaching aspiring rowers proper technique and safety.

She used her title as Miss Yacht Club of Pleasantville and created the platform "Molly's Mission" with which she organizes different collections to benefit local organizations. Her most recent event was a toy collection for Atlantic County Toys for Kids. She read "In Flanders Fields" at our Veteran's Day service."

Joan Brennan pinned a Miss 4<sup>th</sup> of July sash on Molly, and Mayor Chau presented her with a certificate from the Mayor and Council.

Citizens of the Year – Northfield Volunteer Fire Company and Northfield Ladies' Auxiliary

Mr. Patrick extended a gesture of gratitude to the Local Volunteer Fire Department and Ladies Auxiliary. Everyone was aware that the volunteers are at fires but they are also here to serve as medical first responders at accidents, rescue calls and hazardous material incidents. They were founded in 1924 and have hosted several community events such as flea markets, silent auctions and antique car shows.

All recipients posed for photos.

*At 6:13pm Council President Polistina called for a brief recess.*

*At 6:15pm Council resumed its meeting.*

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Councilman Dewees was absent. On behalf of Councilman Dewees, Council President Polistina announced that we were meeting with another painter for a museum quote. Public Works has been out cutting trees to address safety issues.

**Councilman Utts** - Inspections, Housing/Zoning; Cultural Committee, Veteran Liaison, Mainland Regional; Technology / MRHS Channel; Planning Board

Councilman Utts announced there was a Planning Board meeting next week, he had no other report.

**Councilman Notaro** - Sewer Operations; Northfield Football, Cheer, Basketball (FAN)

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Councilman Notaro reported that FAN was holding their night out this week, \$30 tickets are available at the door. The Connolly Mile was coming up on July 4th. He attended the Economic Development Commission meeting chaired by Councilwoman Bucci, and congratulated her.

**Councilman Leeds** – Fire Department/EMS

Councilman Leeds read the fire report for May, including 293 hours of volunteer labor on behalf of the City. The quote for the fire truck had expired, the new price was \$1.3M. He echoed Councilman Notaro's accolades to Councilwoman Bucci for her work on behalf of the EDC.

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

Councilman Smith was absent. on behalf of Councilman Smith, Council President Polistina reported that Councilman Smith attended the school board meeting on Monday. Council had asked the school to consider closing the school to students on primary election day. They would investigate. Some parents in attendance at the meeting had concerns about a recent trespassing incident, he believed Chief Newman had previously advised that patrols had been increased.

**Council President Polistina** – Finance and Collections; Senior Citizens

Council President Polistina reported that there was a resolution on the agenda tonight for the Government Workers Union, it would be discussed later.

**Councilwoman Bucci** – Insurance and Safety; Library; Municipal Alliance; Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce

Councilwoman Bucci reported that the next Alliance event was National Night out on August 2<sup>nd</sup> at Birch Grove. A representative of the JIF would be in attendance at our July 19th meeting, Council could address any questions regarding insurance. For the Economic Development Commission, Max Slusher had attended the recent meeting and given a brief presentation with ideas and recommendations. Councilwoman Bucci attended the Somers Point EDC meeting last night; they have been around for a very long time and are very involved. Councilwoman Bucci got some great ideas. The next meeting would be July 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. She would try to get Chuck Westcott, who runs the Somers Point Business Association, to attend and give input. She did hear there was talk of one big chamber of commerce. Councilwoman Bucci advised that herself, Mayor Chau, Council President Polistina and Councilman Notaro and attended a meeting with the Camden County Diocese, the proposed location was behind and to the right of the existing nursing home, 75 one-bedroom units, with 1/2 to 2/3 subsidized, our COAH credits should be one to one. Our taxable income will be around \$30,000 for the first year. Northfield was not involved

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but the involved, personnel were keeping us informed.

Council President Polistina asked if the land would be subdivided.

Mayor Chau replied he did not know; the developer will be contacting our COAH attorney.

Council President Polistina moved to old business.

**WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS**

- Northfield Avenue at Rt 9 Drainage –*Update\* from Engineer Nassar*
- Stormwater Facilities Shared with the County of Atlantic – *Update\* from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar did not have an update yet, he was working to finalize what lines were shared and an agreement would be drafted.

- Potential Acquisition of Fire Truck – *Award of Contract Slated for 7/19/22*
- Potential Public Auction of City Owned Property Block 66 Lot 11 – *Pending \* if available*

Council President Polistina announced the sale of land was still pending and based on affordable housing needs.

Council President Polistina moved to new grants.

**WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS**

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Nassar reported there was a state grant for drainage improvements. He would contact Superintendent Vitale; the grant will be due in November.

- Hiring of Additional Firefighter

Council President Polistina asked if there was any additional data on the department.

Councilman Leeds replied that it was the exact same data we used to hire an additional police officer. He believed we should use that data.

Councilman Notaro believed the need is there, with the additional senior development, homes on Wabash, and the Gurwicz project. There was a fine line between taxes and services and thinks services should take precedent.

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Council President Polistina moved to the change in vital records.

- Ordinance to Reduce Fees for Vital Records – *Requested by Mayor Chau*

Mayor Chau said as a member of the Volunteer Fire Company, he felt the needs had grown. Mayor Chau had concerns when we moved to part timers to alleviate the work load, it's hard, sometimes you can't depend on part timers. He believed hiring an additional firefighter was appropriate at this time.

Mayor Chau, regarding the vital records; announced he had learned we are out pricing ourselves. these records can be obtained from the State for less money. We have lost a significant amount of money from several funeral homes. Mayor Chau had met with several, and came up with the price of \$5.00.

Council President Polistina asked that is the price it used to be, correct?

Mayor Chau replied, yes.

Council President Polistina noted we would have an ordinance for the next agenda.

Council President Polistina moved to a potential ballot question, and read the following as proposed language:

Should the Common Council of the City of Northfield approve an ordinance to authorize up to three Class 5 retail cannabis licenses (as defined by the Cannabis Regulatory Commission) in an area recommended by the zoning board and approved by the Common Council on the western end of Tilton Rd. proposed to be (approximately) from Deborah Street west to the Northfield border with Egg Harbor Township subject to a 1000' separation requirement to any Church or school. Further, retailers approved for a Class 5 license may also be considered for and/or approved for a Class 6 cannabis delivery license. It is anticipated that revenues received in this regard may be used to offset the costs of City services that will reduce the tax burden on City residents.

Solicitor Facenda suggested further changes - in the 2nd line instead of 'recommended by', he wants to change it to 'referred to, and in accordance with Municipal Land Use Law.' The interpretive statement would be updated to be in conformance with the question. For any additional types of licenses, the same language could be used.

Councilwoman Bucci noted that we have three liquor licenses in town; and said it's the same thing.

Council President Polistina urged that cultivation be added as a public question.

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Councilman Utts believed it should be two separate classes.

Councilman Leeds suggested adding parks and daycares to the 1,000-foot buffer. Councilman Leeds believed schools, churches, daycares, etc were included in the definition of a drug free school zone at the state level, adding that the state law did not change.

Councilman Leeds wanted to further discuss the hiring of the firefighter, and suggested a straw poll.

All members present were in favor, with the exception of Council President Polistina who voted no, without supporting data.

Clerk Canesi pointed out that Council would have to negotiate employment terms before hiring.

**REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Council President Polistina reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda.

Council President Polistina asked if anyone wanted anything voted on separately from the consent agenda. There were no responses.

Council President Polistina made the agenda assignments.

**PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER**

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

David Goldstein, 116 Dolphin Avenue, stated he had been a resident since 2003, he had a very public dispute with the County Executive and County Administrator years ago when they built the bus parking lot. He believed Council was being misinformed. County representatives made erroneous statements about who had been notified about the bus parking lot, and Mr. Goldstein was witness to this. He believed Council was being misinformed about where bodies are buried because there are no records, they were destroyed in a storm. His mother-in-law, Joyce Pullan, had been our town historian; Roy Clark was well-versed on town history. There is a living witness who can advise that bodies were buried in various locations. In the book 'Who is Buried in Northfield' that his mother-in-law and Roy Clark wrote, they know that this is only a partial list. Trees were removed that had been planted in the 1960's. He urged Council to get facts. He noted that Council is worried about how cannabis and taxes will affect residents, he commended Council for that. He noted regular speeding by county employees on Dolphin Avenue. The Mayor had written a letter on Mr.

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Goldstein's behalf, and a reply that said the County wasn't doing anything. He urged no new building until the current problems were fixed. The Diocese could use their own land.

Council President Polistina thanked Mr. Goldstein, adding that this is why we are involved.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Council President Polistina closed the public comment portion of this meeting.

At 6:49pm, on a motion of Councilman Leeds, seconded by Councilman Notaro, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk