

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
OCTOBER 11, 2022**

At 6:06pm 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 Dewees; Councilman Leeds; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Smith; Council President Polistina; Mayor Chau

**Absent:** Councilman Utts

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

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Councilman Dewees reported the football tower stair project had started; it should be finished by the end of the week. The next priority is columns out front of City Hall, we should have a quote next week.

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

Councilman Notaro stated he was at the fields and saw the stairs were underway, he thanked Councilman Dewees. He reported the snack bar roof was complete. FAN held their annual free basketball clinics; they were a great success with a big turnout. He announced the dates for travel basketball tryouts. FAN got a generous donation from Exelon and Chris Kennedy. Councilman Notaro thanked Mr. Kennedy.

**Councilman Leeds** – Fire Department/EMS

Councilman Leeds thanked Councilman Dewees; he said the Volunteer Fire Company realized on Saturday that their trash had not been picked up and Councilman Dewees took care of it right away. He read the EMS report for September, noting there were issues with exceeding response time. They were being called out of town, but he did not have numbers to report on that. He also read the Fire Department's number of calls and average response times. Great job to Deputy Clerk Campbell and the Municipal Alliance for Trunk or Treat.

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

Councilman Utts was absent.

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

Councilman Smith reported that the next Northfield Little League meeting was tomorrow night. The next Northfield Community School Board of Education meeting was scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup>.

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

Councilwoman Bucci had no report for Insurance and Safety. Regarding the Economic Development Commission; all of Council should have received their invitation to the launch event. She thanked Deputy Clerk Campbell and the Police Department for their work on the Trunk or Treat, there was great attendance and it was a really fun night. She announced upcoming events, including a holiday cookie decorating in December, Coffee with a Cop, and a Bike Rodeo in early 2023.

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

Council President Polistina had no report.

Council President Polistina moved to ongoing business.

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

- Northfield Avenue at Rt 9 Drainage –*Update\* from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar noted this can be taken off of the agenda for further; it's nothing we will be dealing with.

- Stormwater Facilities Shared with the County of Atlantic – *Update\* from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar reported we were moving close to having an agreement with the County for the storm system issue.

- Potential Public Auction of City Owned Property Block 66 Lot 11 – *Pending \* if available*

Nothing new to report.

- Changes to Sign Ordinance

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Councilwoman Bucci advised Council that she looked at similar towns for signs, she noted permitted uses in Brigantine. There were not a lot of regulations in other municipalities. She noted Linwood has one tenth of the retail frontage that we have.

Mayor Chau noted that in storms or high winds, certain signs could be an issue.

Councilwoman Bucci felt that there should be a requirement that they be brought in in severe weather.

Solicitor Facenda noted the need to be able to enforce any conditions that are put in an ordinance; no one was going to be out with a wind meter.

Mayor Chau stated that when Code Enforcement had approached violators, property owners have said they have to hire a vendor to take signs down, resulting in delays.

Councilwoman Bucci felt the signs were needed to help businesses do better.

Mayor Chau was not sure they would help businesses do better; he felt the City had been very liberal with regard to signage. He gave examples of safety issues related to blinking signs. He felt a business' reputation would draw patrons, regardless of signs. He cited the example of the Atlantic City Country Club.

Councilwoman Bucci referred to shopping centers on Tilton Road, and said we need to do things that are business friendly.

Mayor Chau replied it was not the City's job or responsibility.

Council President Polistina agreed that we would like to make it easier for businesses to succeed, if they succeed it's better for everyone than to have closed businesses.

Mayor Chau felt many signs were in violation of square footage requirements because it was misinterpreted, but it was not fair to go after them now. Mayor Chau announced he was involved in the crafting of the LED language; we must ensure that the rules are understood and that they are enforced.

Councilwoman Bucci urged that all look at Somers Point, there were no tattered signs, they want the businesses to look good.

Clerk Canesi explained that the current sign ordinance did not require Zoning approval, the only Zoning approval in the sign ordinance was for a sandwich board. All compliance related to signs falls to the Construction Official. She urged that if an ordinance was being reviewed, that this be looked at as well, to include an approval process that makes sense.

- Joint Court – ACPO Proposal to Provide MCP Services

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Councilman Smith did not have an update on court.

Mayor Chau stated there was an upcoming meeting.

- Further Discussion of Fire Pit Ordinance

Councilman Notaro reported that the Fire Department has recommended that we take out commercial properties allowing them to have fire pits, but we have to work out details so it makes sense where they can be.

Council President Polistina asked if Council wanted a committee? He suggested Councilman Notaro.

Councilman Leeds volunteered.

Council President Polistina said he would join as well.

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

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Nassar reported he met with OEM Coordinator, Tim Joo, on a pre-disaster mitigation funding grant, we can apply for FEMA money. Coordinator Joo was applying for a grant for a generator for Public Works, and for the emergency shelter, and to address some drainage issues. The applications were due November 18<sup>th</sup>. Engineer Nassar stated he was going to try to apply for a grant to map our stormwater system as well.

Councilman Dewees said that back in the day, the Health Department did apply for handheld GPS. Somewhere in Public Works, there was a map.

Engineer Nassar replied in agreement, but added that this did not include all outlets. There were aspects of the system where we don't know where the flow discharges.

Council President Polistina added that this was a recommendation from OEM, in the event of a spill, etc.

Councilman Leeds spoke; after Hurricane Ian there was flooding. He had conferred with County representatives who said the stormwater backs up from the bay.

Engineer Nassar replied that was not exactly true, there were issues with the system.

**REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

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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 replies. He stated that resolution 195-2022 was no longer needed.

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.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, he closed the public session.

Council President Polistina resumed Work Session agenda discussion, as one item had been overlooked unintentionally.

- Resolution in Support of 100% Smoke-Free Workplaces

Council President Polistina had been contacted by Dr. Bob Zlotnick, from Atlantic Prevention Resources, who had asked that the City Council support legislation to include casinos as workplaces where smoking is banned. They are right now partially excluded.

Council President Polistina took a straw poll, all were generally in favor, he would have a resolution on the next agenda.

At 6:37pm, on a motion of Councilman Notaro, seconded by Councilman Smith, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk