

## **CITY OF NORTHFIELD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 26, 2025**

At 6:12pm 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 75, Chapter 231.

### **FLAG SALUTE**

Mayor Chau led the flag salute followed by a moment of silence.

### **ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Councilwoman Carfagno; Council Dewees; Councilwoman Kern; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Polistina; Councilman Smith; Council President Bucci.

Mayor Chau, Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Mauro, and Lieutenant Dever on behalf of Chief VonColln were also present.

### **READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On a motion by Councilwoman Carfagno with a second by Councilwoman Kern, all members present were in favor of approving the minutes of November 12, 2025, without formal reading.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Chau announced he would be attending the December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting at Canale Center regarding 911 and emergency communications, he offered to present any questions or concerns on anyone's behalf, please forward to Mayor Chau. Assuming tonight's ordinance 22-2025 is passed, we could go forward. He had established a committee, including Council President Bucci, Councilman Dewees, Chief VonColln and himself to entertain questions and interview. The committee had been contacted, he would like to interview all candidates all in one day and he would make the recommendation to Council and we could start training and transition for the next chief. Once the Chief had retired, interviews for the other ranks would begin. Chief VonColln brought to his attention, that selection of police chief by our ordinance consists of the Mayor, Council President, and the Business Administrator, but regardless, he has established a committee and would like to have as many City Council members as possible involved in the interview process. The tree lighting is December 5<sup>th</sup>, he asked Clerk Canesi the time.

Clerk Canesi believed it was 6pm.

Mayor Chau asked if someone could attend in his place?

Council President Bucci stated she would attend.

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**ENGINEER'S REPORT**

Engineer Mauro reported the LRIG RFP for the parking lot at Birch Grove was on the agenda tonight. The City received \$254,1250.00 for Burton Avenue, the construction estimate was \$354,541.00, so the grant was significant. Juniper Avenue was essentially complete, some landscaping would occur in the Spring. As Councilman Notaro mentioned there were hiccups; a manhole on Shore Road was disintegrated, there was another emergency situation, the ACUA has been onsite and it was their responsibility. Mathis Construction was still putting in the pipe at the other end. Superintendent Boyd has been in communication with the ACUA. The slip line contractor has been on hold as they wait for the replacement work to be done, we would try to schedule so we can get the slip line portion completed. We were replacing pipe at Zion and Shore and Zion and Mill. Superintendent Boyd has been doing a great job keeping everyone informed. The soil sampling for Habitat had been done, site plans could be finalized, Habitat had proposed foregoing sidewalks but the County made it clear that they are required. Habitat made it clear this was not budgeted in their original cost estimate, they were looking for funding sources.

Solicitor Facenda referred to an email from late this afternoon.

Clerk Canesi confirmed that Habitat had acknowledged that the plan did provide for sidewalks.

**PUBLIC SESSION**

Council President Bucci opened this meeting for any member of the public to speak on any topic.

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

**RESOLUTIONS / CONSENT AGENDA**

Council President Bucci read the following statement: "All matters listed under the consent agenda are considered to be routine in nature, and having been reviewed by Council, will be enacted by one motion. Any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of any Council Member and if so removed, it will be treated as a separate matter. Any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of Funds."

On motion of Councilman Dewees, seconded by Councilman Polistina, all members present were in favor of voting on Resolutions 234-2025 through 237-2025 by Consent Agenda.

<b>234-2025</b>	Authorizing Refund of Sewer Rents and Charges
<b>235-2025</b>	Authorizing Refund of Overpayment of Taxes

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- 236-2025** Amending Resolution 226-2025, Resolution of the City of Northfield, Atlantic County, New Jersey, Authorizing Fireworks Display on Private Property Pursuant To N.J.S.A. 21:3-3
- 237-2025** Approval of Specifications and Authorization to Proceed with Advertisement of Request for Proposal for the Project Known as “FY2024 NJDCA Local Government Recreation Grant for Improvements at Birch Grove Park”

Councilman Dewees motioned, seconded by Councilman Polistina, to adopt Resolutions 234-2025 through 237-2025 by Consent Agenda.

Roll Call: Mrs. Carfagno – yes; Mr. Dewees – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes; Mr. Notaro – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mrs. Bucci – yes; Motion carried.

Council President Bucci moved to Ordinance 22-2025.

**ORDINANCE**

Councilman Smith motioned; Councilwoman Carfagno seconded to adopt Ordinance 22-2025.

- 22-2025** Amending Chapter 61 Of the City of Northfield Municipal Code, Regarding Eligibility To Sit For Examination For The Rank Of Police Lieutenant, Captain Or Chief Of Police
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading / Public Hearing / Final Consideration  
Published in the Press of AC 12/02/2025*

The Municipal Clerk read the Ordinance by title, stating that this is the second reading and public hearing, after which the matter will be considered for final passage. Clerk Canesi announced the date of final publication. Since introduction, the Ordinance has been posted in the lobby of City Hall and on the municipal website. Any member of the public who requested a copy of the ordinance would have been provided with one free of charge in the office of the Municipal Clerk during regular business hours up until the time of the public hearing.

Council President Bucci opened the public hearing for Ordinance 22-2025.

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

Council President Bucci asked if there were any comments from Council.

Councilwoman Carfagno stated that she was checking our Police Department promotional procedures in the past; she found an ordinance in 2016 that changed the years of service from 3 years to 2. This was what she was bringing up the last time, but, in 2016 it was changed and now we are changing it again. Why? At the last

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meeting it was said that all of the people who were sergeants had waived the right to take the test or be promoted, but there was a person who was here that did not know and had no idea that this was on the agenda and that it was going to be discussed. The labor counsel was aware of the change and she understood that these individuals were aware.

BA/Clerk Canesi stated that at the last meeting it had not been stated that sergeants had waived the right to test or be promoted. She explained that there were presently five sergeants, three of whom had just reached their 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary. Once the ordinance amendment was final, the three would not be able to sit for the exam for Chief. As to the other two, one would be eligible, and other is not eligible until 2027.

Councilman Smith added that it was intimated that the other three were okay with it; his issue, which has not been resolved to his satisfaction, is that these individuals are affected after the fact, the process had been started and that ball was in motion. He was not opposed to the rationale, they may not have enough time and he agreed with them not being selected for that reason, however, we are changing the rules midgame. He felt that you can't change the rules once the game has started.

BA/Clerk Canesi asked if Councilman Smith read the communication sent by Labor Counsel today?

Councilman Smith replied, he did not.

Other governing body members commented that the communication from Labor Counsel was not from today; it was from Friday.

BA/Clerk Canesi apologized and corrected herself, she was off yesterday, the email was from Friday.

Councilwoman Kern asked if anyone knew why was it changed back in 2016?

Mayor Chau believed there were several positions due to retirements that were not filled by City Council and it left a large number of years, it was not until he became Mayor that he made the recommendations to City Council to fill them. We wanted to fill the positions as quickly as possible so it was recommended that we change the number of years. As all of us know, resolutions and ordinances change. Mayor Chau added that we have voted on resolutions and ordinances to accommodate the needs. It was a time where there were a lot of vacancies. Morale was bad and as Mayor, he wanted to get this done as quickly as possible. Ordinances and resolutions can be changed at any time because things change. As far as the sergeants are concerned, Mayor Chau had a meeting with the Chief this past week and was assured the sergeants were on board, he was not sure why someone was now saying they were not aware. It may be a very unfortunate situation.

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Solicitor Facenda advised Mayor Chau that he did not need to explain the process of how an ordinance gets adopted.

Mayor Chau continued, advising that the Chief addressed his concerns.

Solicitor Facenda, to the Council, said that at this point the ordinance has been moved and seconded, all have received the email from Labor Counsel Curio. The ordinance can be tabled for more fact finding or further consideration. He did not mean to cut the conversation short but he didn't want certain attorney client privileged information to become public. He reiterated that he was not trying to quell the conversation; the Council could continue to discuss or not.

Councilman Smith asked would these individuals have standing if they chose to challenge this.

Solicitor Facenda replied; you've gotten that answer from Counsel Curio.

Councilman Polistina had similar concerns and felt her email did address them.

Council President Bucci moved to vote.

Clerk Canesi called roll.

Roll Call: Mrs. Carfagno – no; Mr. Dewees – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes; Mr. Notaro – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Smith –no; Mrs. Bucci – yes; Motion carried.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS      \$ 171,929.55**

Councilman Dewees motioned, Councilwoman Kern seconded, to approve payment of bills.

Roll Call: Mrs. Carfagno – yes; Mr. Dewees – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes; Mr. Notaro – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mrs. Bucci – yes; Motion carried.

Councilman Smith requested an Executive Session to discuss the process of this. He had requested previously that we get an update in closed session.

Council President Bucci asked what he wanted an update on?

Councilman Smith replied, the salary.

Council President Bucci replied it's not a negation, it's a hiring process.

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Solicitor Facenda would check to see whether the request would fall into an Execution Session, if not, it may just be an update in public.

Council President Bucci urged all to read emails once a day, make a habit of it, it was very important for us to be able to do our jobs.

Councilwoman Bucci wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mayor Chau, regarding the salary, he goes by the ordinance and would recommend that it be sent to the Council for further discussion.

At 6:42pm, on motions properly made and seconded, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk