

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 19, 2021**

At 7:04pm, this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. It was advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 9, 2021 in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

Municipal Clerk Canesi read the following statement:

“Due to social distancing requirements related to Covid-19, there are limited seats for in-person attendance by members of the public this evening. For this reason, this meeting is also being presented simultaneously as a remote public meeting, live-streamed, using Zoom conferencing service, and in accordance with the Governor’s Executive Orders and the Open Public Meetings Act. Zoom meeting participants can dial in by telephone and listen to the proceedings, or they can access the meeting using a web-browser, and be able to view and listen. Instructions on how members of the public could reserve one of the limited seats, as well as how they can access Zoom have been made available on the municipal website and were published in the Press of Atlantic City. The full text of the public meeting notice has been posted at the entrances to the municipal building and includes Zoom instructions, information on where to find the meeting agenda and relevant documents, as well as instructions on how members of the public could submit comments in advance of tonight’s meeting. For those participating via Zoom, all participants will be ‘muted’ upon entry to the meeting. Web-browser participants will not be able to share their screens or see the camera-view of anyone other than the host, which is the City of Northfield. Zoom participants wishing to exercise their right to participate during the public comment portion of the meeting should wait until the specific announcement is made to open the public comment period. At this time, one by one, any telephone users will be asked to identify themselves and will be unmuted to permit commentary. For web-browser participants, comments or questions may be submitted via the chat function and will not be acknowledged outside of the designated public-comment portion of the meeting; chat-users must also provide his/her name and address for the record in order to be heard. Any written comments submitted in advance will be read aloud and addressed during the public comment portion of the meeting.”

ROLL CALL

Present (in person): Councilman Dewees; Councilman Perri; Councilman Smith; Councilman Utts; Council President Polistina; Mayor Chau

Present (via telephone): Councilwoman Madden; Councilman Notaro

Solicitor Facenda and Engineer Nassar was also in attendance. Chief Newman was present via Zoom.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

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Council President Polistina called for a motion to approve the minutes.

READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion of Councilman Dewees with a second of Councilwoman Madden, all members present were in favor of approving the minutes of January 5, 2021 without formal reading.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Chau welcomed Solicitor Facenda. He announced openings on the Library Board and Planning Board, and suggested interested parties contact the Mayor's Office or the City Clerk's Office. The old generator would be moved from City Hall to Public Works. He had been keeping Northfield Community School Superintendent informed about our concerns with regard to the cost of the third shift; the school had asked for ample time to be able to give notice to parents. We did get a small amount of money from the CARES Act, but nowhere near covering the cost. He noted that City operated on calendar year budget and the school was on a fiscal year.

MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor Chau read the following statement:

“As Americans we look forward to the new year. After many months of social distancing, making and waiting, 2020 is finally ending. No doubt...history will record 2020 has one of our Nation's most dreadful pandemic. It is my hope that 2021 delivers the much-anticipated positive news in a year dominated by COVID-19. The vaccine is finally here. This optimism shines through the extraordinary year where Americans have experience financial setbacks and has claimed so many lives.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the passing of several special Northfield residents who have each given much to our community. The first one was Mr. John Davis; Mr. Davis was a longtime board member for Mainland Regional High School. His dedication undoubtedly would leave a mark in terms of what our high school is.

Debi Doherty, a former Northfield City Councilwoman and longtime crossing guard. She along with her family have been very instrumental, dedicated, and involved with our City government.

Finally, Carol Patrick and Joyce Pullan. Their dedication and volunteer work will forever become an indelible mark in Northfield history. From organizing our annual Fourth July Parade, long time members of our Northfield Cultural Committee, ice cream socials at Birch Grove Park and much more. They will be missed.

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I believe our economy will be quick to turn around. Throughout the US history, our nation has emerged from wars, civil upheaval and economic shocks stronger than before, proving time and again that tomorrow tends to look better than yesterday.

I want to congratulate the election of Council President Tom Polistina and Councilman Dave Notaro. I look forward to working with them and all city elected officials and city employees. I want to especially recognize the leadership that Councilman Frank Perri provided as our 2020 Council President.

As City Council works in the next coming months to formulate our 2021 city budget, I will strive to support a fiscally responsible budget and to maintain vital city services. On that note, I am excited to be working on a proposed Atlantic County Shared Service for an Administrative Court System that could potentially save Northfield residents a significant amount of tax dollars. At this moment NJ Senate President Steve Sweeney, State Senator Chris Brown, and Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson are proposing legislation to create this shared service in Atlantic County. Cresson Hill Condos continues to move forward in its building phases which will provide housing and a strong tax base. We have applied for a grant to upgrade and renovate our bike path. Through the efforts of City Council and our City Engineer we have been very successful in the year 2020 obtaining significant grants for our road paving projects. ADA upgrades to City Hall are currently in progress. Thank you to Council, Engineer Nassar and our City workers for their diligence and help. Let's hope Covid-19 will end shortly and we can continue to make Northfield a great city to live in."

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT

Engineer Nassar reviewed the Engineer's Report as previously distributed to the Council. The tower behind City Hall was taken down last Friday and all demolition work was complete. He would meet with the architect tomorrow and the foundation should begin next week. The project should be complete by the end of February, then paving would begin at City Hall and the Library. The entire project should be completed by the end of April. There was a preconstruction meeting for the road program on January 14, 2021; Engineer Nassar anticipated drainage improvements to begin in February to account for settlement. The concrete and paving work would begin in April, and would be substantially completed by the end of June. In regard to the reconstruction of Fuae Avenue, the concrete work was finished; we would hold off on paving until March due to weather. The reconstruction of Merritt Drive should hopefully begin by summer and be done by end of the year.

Councilman Dewees, regarding Fuae avenue, asked could the contractor rake behind the curb, to address uneven ground?

Engineer Nassar replied that he'd called the contractor because Superintendent Vitale called about the issue; they would address it when the weather permits. The contractor was aware.

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Councilman Smith asked should we let people know it's dangerous?

Engineer Nassar would walk the area with the contractor and put signage out.

Councilman Dewees suggested putting something on our website.

Clerk Canesi asked, in conjunction with signage? Yes. She asked that location information be provided.

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.

Clerk Canesi typed in the Zoom chat that the public portion of the meeting was now open.

Seeing no one wishing to make a comment Council President Polistina closed the public session.

RESOLUTIONS

Council President Polistina 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, will be treated as a separate matter. Any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of Funds.”

Councilman Perri asked if Resolution 33-2021 was making a separate position?

Council President Polistina replied, this is only in the event that our solicitor was unable to serve due to a conflict.

Councilman Perri asked was the \$5,000.00 in addition?

Clerk Canesi explained if Solicitor Facenda was unable to serve then it would be \$5,000 less that he would be compensated, it wouldn't be \$25,000.00 on top of this.

Solicitor Facenda further explained if the service that the conflict solicitor would have to render would have been compensated to Solicitor Facenda. If Solicitor Facenda didn't have a conflict, under the retainer portion, at that point he would make arrangements to reimburse the conflict solicitor out of whatever monies Solicitor Facenda had been paid. If there was outside litigation or a conflict that

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Solicitor Facenda would be paid hourly, that hourly rate would shift to the conflict attorney.

On a motion of Councilman Smith, second of Councilman Utts, all present were in favor of voting by consent agenda on Resolutions 32-2021 through 36-2021.

- 32-2021** Northfield Senior Committee Appointments
- 33-2021** Resolution Appointing Alternate/Conflict Solicitor for the City of Northfield, as a Professional Service and Pursuant to Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1, et seq.)
- 34-2021** Memorialize Separation of Employment Public Works Laborer
- 35-2021** Northfield Cultural Committee Appointments
- 36-2021** Authorizing Schaeffer, Nassar, Scheidegg Consulting Engineers to Proceed with Engineering Services for the Project Known as Slip Lining Deep Sanitary Sewer Pipes

Councilman Smith motioned, second of Councilman Utts, to adopt the consent agenda for Resolutions 32-2021 through 36-2021.

Roll Call: Mr. Dewees - yes, Mrs. Madden – yes, Mr. Notaro – yes, Mr. Perri - yes, Mr. Smith – yes, Mr. Utts - yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Motion carried.

PAYMENT OF BILLS \$ 2,428,995.65

Councilman Perri motioned, Councilwoman Madden seconded, for payment of bills.

Roll Call: Mr. Dewees - yes, Mrs. Madden – yes, Mr. Notaro – yes, Mr. Perri - yes, Mr. Smith – yes, Mr. Utts - yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Motion carried.

Councilman Smith read the meeting notices.

At 7:24pm, on motion of Councilman Perri, seconded by Councilman Utts, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk