

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JANUARY 19, 2021**

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 9, 2021, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

Due to social distancing requirements related to Covid-19, there are limited seats for in-person attendance by members of the public. Visit the event calendar page for January 19, 2021 at www.cityofnorthfield.org to determine current seating availability. Face coverings and social distancing will be required for in-person attendance. To reserve an available seat, contact the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 609-641-2832, ext 125, no later than 2:00pm on January 19, 2021. Once all available seats have been reserved, virtual attendance will be required using a web-browser to Join the Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83866839112> or by telephone using one tap mobile +16465588656,,83866839112# or direct dial +1 646 558 8656 using Meeting ID: 838 6683 9112. For those wishing to comment during the dedicated public comment portion of the meeting, but who may be unable to attend (in person or via Zoom), public comments may also be submitted in advance via email to mcanesi@cityofnorthfield.org, or by written letter to the Office of the Municipal Clerk, 1600 Shore Road, Northfield NJ 08225, or by hand delivery to the drop box in the parking lot at the south corner of the municipal building, addressed to the attention of the Municipal Clerk. Comments shall contain the name and address of the author, will be read aloud and addressed during the remote public meeting, and must be received by 2:00pm on January 19, 2021.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

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 entrance 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.

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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.

Council President Polistina moved to committee reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Perri– Public Works: Roads, Engineering, Sewer Operations; Senior Citizens

Councilman Perri announced that he had a meeting with the ACUA; Clerk Canesi was also in attendance. There were changes in how recycling was processed, it was being shipped out. There were also wastewater changes, there were adjustments due to reduction in Atlantic City. Hopefully, it would turn around. All customers had to contribute to make up for the reduction. We did fall to number two for recycling, Northfield was number one for a long time. Tipping is up; the rationale was that everyone is home more, and putting more trash out. The tipping rate was up as well. We received the wastewater report for December, another high. The rationale, from the ACUA, was that there was a lot of rain. This was something we're going to have to look at. Councilman Perri hasn't had a chance to look at other municipalities for December; he just received the report.

Councilman Dewees commented that he did not find the infiltration argument plausible. He felt the number could be skewed.

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Councilman Perri replied that he would have our guys, and the engineer, look at it. We've asked for documentation. We've spent considerable time and resources looking at it.

Councilman Utts asked do they take water usage into account, whether it's up or down?

Councilman Perri replied, we look at that at the end of the year for commercial; residents are a fixed rate. For sewer, there is a meter at Dolphin Avenue, and one at the Linwood border.

Engineer Nassar felt the groundwater argument was flawed. It takes a while to have the groundwater go up, it doesn't happen the next day. December was not a high-water month. In the past, businesses have connected to the sanitary sewer, we need to look at that.

Councilman Dewees asked would it behoove us to meter commercial; there were a lot of assumptions.

Engineer Nassar suggested a dye test as an alternative.

Engineer Nassar added there was some infiltration, but he did not feel it could be sufficient to justify the increases. He noted the slip lining project that was on the agenda.

Councilman Perri added that revenue was down \$1.5 million from the prior year. Councilman Perri stated that he'd just looked at the report, all but one other town did increase as well; not as much as Northfield, but they did increase. We can't use our own meters as it is their system. Their explanation was always that it's an anomaly.

Engineer Nassar felt, if it was infiltration, the spikes should be in April and May.

Councilman Perri reviewed prior investigative efforts; the numbers were difficult.

Councilman Utts felt the water usage would be telling.

Engineer Nassar offered that he could request it from the water company; adding that he was not sure if they can provide it. He would explain that we were having issues and see if they can give us the information.

Councilman Smith asked Councilman Perri to repeat the financial numbers stated earlier. He meant to bring this up in December, but experienced technical difficulties. He relayed that he saw the collection personnel put recycling and yard waste in the same truck.

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Councilman Perri reported solid waste was \$63.60 and is going up to \$65.50 per ton, and increase of \$1.90. In 2019, we had 3.1 million tons and in 2020 we had 3.5 million tons; a definite increase. They are not supposed to mix the various types of solid wastes. Construction debris was a factor, we should be looking at that also. Councilman Perri and Clerk Canesi have both reported the mixing of waste streams to the ACUA, and they did address it. At any time, anyone can make a complaint. If someone is new, or covering for a vacation, they can make a mistake. We also asked about \$114,000.00 in other charges, and we were told it was street sweeping and bulk pick up, but that was also a considerable sum. He reiterated that we should get the certifications from the calibration company for the sanitary sewer meters.

In regard to the Senior Committee, Councilman Perri reported that the members of this year's Committee were on the agenda for tonight. He hoped by midyear the group would be able to resume activities.

Councilman Utts - Inspections, Code Enforcement, Housing/Zoning, Technology / MRHS Channel; Planning Board

Councilman Utts would report on Housing and zoning at the next meeting. In regard to the Planning Board, there was a minor subdivision at the end of Yorkshire Avenue.

Councilman Notaro - Fire Department/EMS; Northfield Sports (FAN); Cultural Committee / Veteran Liaison; Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce

Councilman Notaro read the following EMS report: TriCare had a total of 159 dispatches, 137 calls with patients, 96 transports, 17 mutual aid calls to Egg Harbor Township, and administered 0 Narcan.

He deferred to Councilwoman Madden for the Fire Department report.

The FAN Board had a meeting scheduled for this Thursday; he had reviewed improvements to the football field with the Board President.

He thanked the Cultural Committee and in particular Roy Clark for his years of service to the museum.

Councilman Dewees - Buildings/Grounds, Athletic Fields; Birch Grove Park, Bike Path, 1st Street Playground, Veterans Park

Councilman Dewees reported that he met with members of FAN and Councilman Notaro to discuss plans for the football field. The Babe Ruth field would need some minor repairs as well. It was reported to Councilman Dewees that there was a light out at the First Street Playground, the light would be repaired by Atlantic City Electric by the end of the month. There was also a report of a light out on the Bike

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Path; this has been given to Superintendent Vitale. The Birch Grove Park Advisory Board met last week; the Board was coming up with a three-to-five-year plan of things they'd like to see at the Park.

Councilman Smith - Court / Violations; Little League and Babe Ruth, Northfield Community School; Shared Services

Councilman Smith reported that Northfield Little League and Babe Ruth sent out an email in the last day or two with regard to the spring season; registration was open. The Northfield Community School Board of Education meeting would be this coming Monday night, they did reopen today for in person schooling, and crossing guards were on duty. He would have a shared service update during the work session.

Councilwoman Madden – Insurance and Safety; Library; Mainland Regional

Councilwoman Madden had nothing to report for insurance and safety; the next meeting was scheduled for February 18th. The Mainland Regional High School Board of Education meeting scheduled for tonight had been canceled, Councilwoman Madden was working on getting the full year schedule. Councilwoman Madden was looking forward to partnering with Councilman Notaro on the Fire committee. She attended her first Library meeting last Thursday, and read the Library Report for December: attendance was 280; 910 items were in circulation; \$29.00 was collected in fines and fees; there were no programs offered. She did a comparison to December of 2019. Last December, attendance was 2695; 1616 items were in circulation; \$383.86 was collected in fines and fees; 31 total programs with attendance of 282. She felt the difference was due to COVID-19, and hopefully we are looking forward to an end to this terrible disease. She noted that she was member of the Friends of the Library, and had seen firsthand what the Library Director does. The Library was a vibrant part of our community and the Director works tirelessly; she also highlights diversity via events. There was a lot on hold right now due to COVID-19.

Council President Polistina – Finance and Collections; Municipal Alliance

Council President Polistina reported that he hasn't met with the Municipal Alliance yet. As far as Finance goes, we were closing out the year and Council would be going over dates to begin budget discussions.

Councilman Smith commented that he'd forgotten to mention something during his Committee report. He expressed condolences to the family of Chris Griggs; he was a graduate of Mainland and Councilman Smith had the pleasure of coaching him, he was member of the Board at Tilton Pool. He passed away recently from cancer, he left behind a wife and children. He was active in our community. Councilman Smith offered condolences and prayers to the family.

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Councilman Perri requested a correction to number he'd reported earlier in the evening with regard to solid waste; 3,535 was our tonnage, it wasn't a million. He confused it with the flow chart. It was 355 extra tons and equated to a \$40,000.00 increase in tipping fees. It was the big difference from 2019, it translated into a lot of money.

Council President Polistina moved to the work session, old business.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – OLD BUSINESS

- *Zion Road Pump Station Easement – Response from County Officials Pending re ROW*

Engineer Nassar reported that he was working with the county to get documentation that they were in agreement with our plan to have the private property become part of the County right-of-way. As soon as we hear from the County we can move forward.

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

Engineer Nassar advised all that he re-sent an email to the Department of Transportation representative, he hasn't received anything back, from this email and two previous emails.

- *Emergency Medical Services – Update, if any from Councilmen Smith and Notaro*

Councilman Smith reported that Northfield and Linwood have met. Linwood issued the RFP, as lead agent, we received one bid, from the current provider, and at a substantial increase to the City. Councilman Smith had spoken with Councilman Notaro and, informally, with representatives from Linwood Council. They felt we could do better; it was Councilman Smith's and Councilman Notaro's recommendation to reject the bid. The committee was looking at whether we could extend for 90 days.

Councilman Notaro stated that he was informed that there was a 90-day extension, and if need be, we have until May.

Council President Polistina asked Solicitor Facenda, were we limited to 5 years?

Solicitor Facenda replied he would like to see the agreement and the extension language. He would opine that if we should err, it should be in favor of providing the service.

Council President Polistina added that Linwood was lead, but we both have to agree.

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Clerk Canesi explained that we both have to agree because the proposals submitted contained various options that vendors could choose. Either just Linwood, or, just Northfield, or both. Vendors were not permitted to submit for just one town, and in this case, the vendor had submitted a proposal to provide service for both towns. Linwood and Northfield have to agree. Based on Councilman Notaro's informal conversations it seems that Linwood would reject and then Northfield would also formally reject by resolution. Linwood was not controlling the process; we do things together.

Solicitor Facenda would look at contract to see if 90-day wording was in there.

Councilman Perri added that the actual charge rate to patient was increasing substantially also. If they were going to balance bill, that should also be addressed.

Council President Polistina moved to new business.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Council President Polistina asked if there were any new grant opportunities? Seeing none, he moved to the lease agreement for Jackson and Fuae.

- Lease Agreement - Parking Spaces at Jackson Avenue and Fuae Avenue

Clerk Canesi recalled that a committee was to be formed to examine the issue.

Council President Polistina asked for volunteers to join him on the committee.

Councilman Perri and Councilman Dewees both volunteered.

- Selection of Dates for Budget Workshop Meetings

Council President Polistina asked all to take out their calendars.

Clerk Canesi noted that Thursdays work better for CFO Stollenwerk.

Council President Polistina suggested February 4th as the initial meeting, and February 11, and February 25 at 3pm.

Mayor Chau advised that he would be out of town on February 4th.

Councilwoman Madden advised that she has a library meeting at 6pm.

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Seeing no other new business, Council President Polistina asked all to take out their agendas.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Polistina reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda and made the assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Polistina opened this portion of the meeting for any member of the public to speak on any topic; he noted a five-minute limit per speaker.

Eric Leeds, 802 Debora Street, regarding EMS, Atlantic County has a mutual aid agreement, if you get in a jam, you will still have EMS coverage.

Clerk Canesi announced she typed in the Zoom chat that the meeting was open to the public; no comments as of yet.

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

At 7:00pm, on a motion of Councilman Dewees, seconded by Councilman Utts, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk