

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

At 5:00pm, this meeting was called to order by Shannon Campbell, Deputy Municipal Clerk. This meeting has been properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 27, 2018, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Council President Dewees.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Korngut, Murray, O'Neill, Perri, Dewees

Absent: Lischin*, Travagline

Councilman Lischin arrived at 5:46pm.

Mayor Chau arrived at 5:17pm.

CFO Dawn Stollenwerk was also in attendance.

Council President Dewees asked all to refer to their updated budget worksheet, and deferred to CFO Stollenwerk.

CFO Stollenwerk explained that she tightened up and adjusted where she could, money was cut from the sewer capital and put in reserves; we are at an increase of 4 cents. Council President Dewees had some ideas with regard to Birch Grove Park, those changes had been made.

Council President Dewees advised that he met with Qwin Vitale. It was hard to get accurate records, Public Works started late last year taking over Birch Grove. Qwin had some great ideas. We would fund the snack bar workers from the Birch Grove Park fund. The revenue from the park will fund it.

Councilman Perri asked if it was going to be a wash.

Council President Dewees replied yes.

CFO Stollenwerk reported that the park brought in \$40,000.00 and spent \$40,000.00, there were a lot of non-recurring charges.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

Council President Dewees felt we should be able to control with Public Works noting it was a good meeting.

Councilman Perri asked if there was any input from the advisory board.

Council President Dewees replied that Qwin has met with them.

Councilman Perri wanted them to be aware that the money was coming from the fund; he wanted the board to be on the same page.

CFO Stollenwerk explained we could use the recreation trust fund to offset anything at the park, that's what it was for; it could be used for salaries, we are talking less than \$25,000.00.

Council President Dewees noted that some products from last year would be reduced.

All of Council were generally in agreement with the changes on the park line.

Councilman Murray noted that the budget seemed tight; he was not sure where else there was to cut.

Councilwoman Korngut asked what the JIF pays as far as legal costs.

Councilman Perri replied that we do have a deductible.

CFO Stollenwerk explained the EPL deductible, and auto and property deductibles.

Councilman Perri added that we do have a lot of stuff going on with fair share housing.

CFO Stollenwerk said our costs have gone up; affordable housing was a large amount of it.

Councilman Perri felt privatizing solid waste was an option, some people are putting out more trash than others. He also thought we could look at sites for cell towers, and mentioned the "Welcome to Northfield" signs noting people paid and some are not even in business anymore. He felt this could be an option for revenue.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

Council President Dewees asked who oversees the signs.

Councilman Peri said it was the EDC; the ordinance states the fees.

Council President Dewees asked if there were any records.

Deputy Clerk Campbell believed there was a file in the Clerk's office, there were about 6 signs around town. At the request of Council President Dewees she would look into it.

Councilman Perri noted it was still revenue, the sponsor paid every three years to his recollection, Councilman Perri has a file with the ordinance. In regard to the cell tower on City hall, it was probably obsolete. It was opposed by a certain individual locally, but is pre-existing non-conforming.

Councilman Murray suggested looking into the cell towers.

Councilman Perri said they were putting more carriers on the one at Birch Grove; we are losing. We would need a professional to tell where another could be added.

CFO Stollenwerk asked if land use required preferential treatment to government property, would have to bid if we want to use some of our land, can do a lease or easement.

Councilman Perri noted that 5G was more restrictive with line of sight.

Councilwoman Korngut asked why haven't we looked in to it.

Councilman Perri replied that it was a complicated process, there will be an availability in the future for more need.

Councilman O'Neill pointed out two issues: he felt we had done everything we could with the budget noting CFO Stollenwerk did a nice job. The other issue was the tax revenue, we have no control over that, he did not see any other places to cut.

Councilman Murray asked if the budget was \$700,000.00 less than last year.

CFO Stollenwerk replied yes, noting that \$250,000.00 were grants.

Councilman O'Neill noted that residents were concerned with the tax rate.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

Mayor Chau asked how much to cut a penny.

CFO Stollenwerk replied about \$80,000.00.

Councilwoman Korngut said she had a few ideas, being new to this, and noted that there had been talk about the sale of the sewer. It is a money maker, she was not favor of selling it. She was concerned with losing control if it was privatized. She asked if there was a hybrid arrangement, such as being able to lease it.

Councilman Perri said possibly on the maintenance end of it; he hasn't seen anything on the collection end. The work could be subbed out to a big utility.

Councilman O'Neill added that over the last years he has met with our Public Works and didn't think anyone could do it cheaper. Our guys do a great job; he thought Linwood made a mistake,

Mayor Chau added that he had asked one of the vendors if any capital improvements were needed who would pay for them, the vendor said they would have to raise the rates. We were not trying to make a profit, they were.

Councilman Dewees asked do we consider raising the rates again.

Councilman Perri noted that the cost of living had gone up a little.

Councilman Dewees and Councilman Perri discussed some upgrades by the ACUA.

Councilman O'Neill asked about the money for FAN.

CFO Stollenwerk did not make any changes.

Councilman Dewees felt it should be discussed with the liaisons and give them another year.

Councilwoman Korngut asked why give them another year if they have \$30,000.00 in the bank.

Councilman O'Neill suggested cutting them off this year; they wanted to be self-funded.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

Councilman Dewees discussed taking the allowance partly away; he was concerned they would have a hard time finding insurance.

CFO Stollenwerk advised that they have a policy through Rich Gerber.

Councilman Murray was against cutting their insurance without notice.

Councilman O'Neill informed Council that he was there when they took over; they said they would pay for it, It's been 5 years.

Councilman Dewees had told Little League that the funding was going to stop. He felt it would be better to take away the allowance money we give them and pay for the insurance.

CFO Stollenwerk advised that would cut \$8,500.00 from the budget.

Councilwoman Korngut replied that none of us want to make these kinds of cuts.

Councilman O'Neill wanted to give them notice that this was the last year we are paying.

Councilman Perri was leaning more toward the premium then the donation part of it. He would like to see some kind of concession this year.

Councilman O'Neill would rather have the insurance paid.

Councilman Perri noted we were paying insurance for volunteer fire, they have \$200,000.00 in the bank and get stipends.

CFO Stollenwerk advised the volunteers were under the JIF.

Council President Dewees asked Councilwoman Korngut how she felt about paying the insurance and taking away the allowance.

Councilwoman Korngut understood they were going to be self-funded, they have the money, her first obligation is to the taxpayers, she was ok cutting them knowing they would be ok.

Council President Dewees noted the insurance premium was due March 1st, and wanted to know if that would give them enough time. He suggested taking the

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

allowance money away this year and inform them that next year we will not be paying the insurance.

CFO Stollenwerk reminded Council that they appointed them to provide services, you want to make sure they are covered.

Council President Dewees took a straw poll vote to pay the insurance this year and stop the allowance. All present were in agreement with the exception of Councilman Murray who opposed.

Councilwoman Korngut, asked when 911 the contract would expire.

Mayor Chau advised Councilwoman Korngut that if it disbanded we could be in a dilemma; who to go with and how much would it cost. He felt we could have benefited if county dispatch came to fruition. There were concerns with equipment, we had no other options.

CFO Stollenwerk advised that the contract was for \$392,000.00 and the contract expires in 2021, we just upgraded the CAD system, e-ticketing both included. She deferred to Chief Newman for further explanation.

Chief Newman stated that we just dumped a lot of money into the system.

CFO Stollenwerk reminded everyone that it was much more than just someone answering the call.

Chief Newman noted that this system will accept the legacy data from New World; that was a concern with the County system.

Councilwoman Korngut asked if yard waste was collected every week.

Council President Dewees and Deputy Clerk Campbell explained the collection schedule.

Mayor Chau asked about the library.

CFO Stollenwerk replied that the State gives the numbers for the levy.

While campaigning Councilwoman Korngut was asked by residents asked about bike path; thought that residents could use a portion for loved ones as revenue.

**CITY OF NORTFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

Councilman Perri explained that the committee did not want another memorial other than the bench or tree plague, it became a shrine and was unsightly, they did not want the bike path looking like a cemetery.

Deputy Clerk Campbell explained the prices for the benches noting that we were not trying to make a profit off of them.

Councilman Perri felt the bike path should be uniform, it has become lax.

Councilwoman Korngut agreed with Councilman Perri and thought bricks were the best idea, police have better things to do. She thought we could make money by selling bricks in an area on the bike path.

Councilwoman Korngut asked if Council had always been a paid position.

Councilman O'Neill replied that Council lowered their salary about 15% three years ago.

Councilwoman Korngut was just putting it out there that Council could reduce their stipend, she also asked if it had ever been suggested changing our form of government for less council members.

CFO Stollenwerk advised that changing the form of government would have to be done by referendum.

CFO Stollenwerk advised that we were at 3.87 cents with the minor changes discussed tonight.

Councilman Lischin apologized for being late.

Councilman O'Neill brought Councilman Lischin up to speed with how we got to 3.87 cents.

Councilman Lischin was in agreement to remove the allowance from the sport organizations.

Councilman Lischin stated that he looked at minutes and reviewed budget; it was very tight with very little movement.

Councilman Perri asked if the purchase of a lien matters.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

CFO Stollenwerk replied yes, it counts as collected on the delinquent side

Council President Dewees asked if there was anything else, if not, CFO Stollenwerk can put the budget on the March agenda.

CFO Stollenwerk advised that she was still waiting for the number of state aid; we will introduce the budget in March.

All present agreed to the numbers presented tonight.

CFO Stollenwerk asked if Council was doing anything with scanning, it was not in this budget.

Council President Dewees was against it, he did not see where in this budget we could put it.

All present agreed not to move forward with scanning this year.

Councilman Lischin brought up the issue of other portions of our budget, noting we had no control of the county or schools, and felt we needed to be involved in those budget meetings.

Councilman O'Neill suggested a meeting with the school boards to discuss their budgets.

Councilman Lischin felt the school and county need to do their parts, he believed we needed to have some sort of control over them.

Councilman Murray stated that we do elect members to sit on their boards, he knew that Mainland had been working hard to keep their budget in line.

CFO Stollenwerk noted we were about 1/3 of the tax rate.

Councilman Perri said that the loss of ratables county-wide affects us as well, the net worth in many municipalities had gone down, and the County needed to make it up.

PUBLIC SESSION/FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Dewees opened the public session, seeing no one wishing to speak he closed the public session.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2018**

Councilman Perri felt our legislature needed to look harder at the funding.

Councilman Lischin asked all to keep a diligent eye on the schools.

At 6:01pm on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Campbell, Deputy Municipal Clerk