

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 27, 2020**

At 6:06pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. This meeting has been properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 25, 2020, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Council President Perri.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Dewees Korngut, Madden, O'Neill, Smith, Utts, Perri

Absent: Mayor Chau

CFO Dawn Stollenwerk Chief Cummings and Chief Newman were also present.

READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion of Council President Perri, all present were in favor of approving the minutes of the meeting of February 13, 2020, without formal reading. They were posted, distributed to Council, and on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office.

Council President Perri welcomed everyone to the meeting and deferred to Chief Newman regarding the lieutenant's position.

Chief Newman reported that the promotion list would expire in April of this year; he did not feel the budget would be ready in time. He respectfully requested to withdraw the request for the second lieutenant's position.

Council President Perri stated that he had been asked by Councilman Dewees to discuss the Event Coordinator position.

Councilman Dewees clarified that this position would assist with City functions, not necessarily school functions.

Council President Perri asked if this position would be the Deputy Clerk.

Councilman Dewees replied, yes.

Council President Perri noted that the job did not yet exist, but would require two readings – he asked if all were in favor.

Councilman O'Neill asked if the position would assist with any events.

Councilman Dewees replied, at the direction of the Mayor.

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CFO Stollenwerk reported that she received final numbers from the ACUA; she was waiting for the final adjustment. We had anticipated \$900,000.00 but the bill was \$873,000.00, so that reduced the budget by \$27,000.00. The Fire Department needed a new super-duty washing machine to wash turnout gear etc. CFO Stollenwerk said she'd added \$15,000.00 to the capital line because that was the quickest way. She also added additional funding to the police operating expenses because she misunderstood training costs. With that the budget is still at zero, so the gain from the ACUA was a wash.

Council President Perri reported that he had a last-minute request from the Superintendent of Public Works for wastewater; Perri was told the stipend hadn't increased in years. It was around \$3,000.00 and other towns get \$10,000.00-\$12,000.00.

CFO Stollenwerk replied that it had increased annually along with the unaligned; this year it is anticipated for the same increase as others, 3.5%, so it would be \$95,697.00 plus \$3,367.00 for the sewer operator stipend. His salary was close to \$99,000.00 total.

Council President Perri thanked CFO Stollenwerk.

At 6:18pm Municipal Clerk Canesi noted that the recording equipment did not appear to be functioning – she tested it, but was unsuccessful – she continued the meeting. It was later confirmed that no audio record of this meeting exists.

Council President Perri asked if anyone had questions about capital; he asked CFO Stollenwerk to explain the increase in surplus.

CFO Stollenwerk explained that the tax collection rate went up quite a bit; interest had been favorable as well. She continued, the only other thing, if everyone was happy with the operating budget in general, was to discuss capital.

Councilwoman Madden noted that the Fire Department needed a compressor; she asked would that be included in capital.

CFO Stollenwerk replied yes and referred to the page of the packet for capital.

Councilman O'Neill asked if we ever did the improvement to the bathroom at Public Works.

Councilman Dewees replied that it looked like it may cost more than we had anticipated, the estimate could come in at \$100,000.00 with \$50,000.00 appropriated.

Councilman O'Neill added that the football snack bar would need a new roof.

Councilman Dewees agreed.

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Council President Perri requested \$200.00 for the seniors.

CFO Stollenwerk replied that we would find it.

CFO Stollenwerk asked if Council was okay to introduce the budget on March 10th with adoption on April 14th.

Councilman Utts asked what the Asset Management Plan was.

Council President Perri explained the origins as related to the Gurwicz project, and the need for an Asset Management Plan.

CFO Stollenwerk added that the City purchased a sewer inspection camera and was having the Engineer look at the sewer infrastructure, which would lead to an asset management plan, and then we can prioritize projects as follows. We tied it with the Zion Pump Station and used the Infrastructure Trust because of the possibility of principal forgiveness.

Councilman Utts asked could the funds be used for long term sewer maintenance projects. We had \$1.4 million in revenue and \$900,000.00 goes to the ACUA.

CFO Stollenwerk explained that 98% of taxpayers are on the sewer system, it's all part of the same pot; she noted that the \$2 million was a 5-year plan for sewer. It was part of an ongoing plan; we've been upgrading pump stations then we will focus on the lines.

Council President Perri added we would focus on force mains and gravity mains, and some of the deeper connector lines. It's a massive system, but it's a good system. Cresson Hill would be added to the system and would be paying for it.

Councilman Utts asked, so we aren't making money?

Council President Perri confirmed we were not; we were using the funds to maintain the system. The camera had been in for a week and we've had to use it already.

Councilman Utts questioned the LED sign for City Hall but we turned down the country club?

CFO Stollenwerk noted that was the next item on for discussion.

Chief Newman replied that he was not asking for LED, but wanted the bottom of the sign changed. The existing sign was terrible but the Planning Board said no, so, Chief Newman walked away from the request.

Councilman Smith asked could we apply to the Planning Board.

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Clerk Canesi replied yes, just like anyone else can.

CFO Stollenwerk asked should she leave the sign in the budget.

All members present replied yes.

CFO Stollenwerk added that the Department of Public Works needed to replace their air compressor for \$14,000.00, the Fire Department needed a fill station for \$50,000.00 and Public Works asked to add a bucket truck at a cost of \$115,000.00. If Council wanted to do that, she could move a few things around to keep us under the \$5 million threshold for arbitrage.

Councilman Dewees explained the need for a bucket truck, there were many uses including trimming trees, replacing lights, etc.

Discussion ensued amongst all of Council with regard to capital projects.

CFO Stollenwerk asked for confirmation as to what projects would be added to the capital budget.

Council President Perri asked Chief Cummings to explain the fill station need.

Chief Cummings explained that the current fill-station was 31 years old, and it was getting harder to find parts. This was used to fill all of the SCBA cylinders. The current fill-station was donated. The Fire Department had applied for grants over the past five to six years; they did get the grant for the air packs.

Councilman O'Neill informed Chief Cummings that Assemblyman Mazzeo, Senator Brown, etc. had been asked to be copied on grants.

Councilman Smith asked Chief Cummings if he received reasons for the grant denial.

Chief Cummings replied that they were FEMA grants. The first phase was evaluated by computer; we haven't gotten past the first phase in a few years.

Council President Perri called for a voice vote for the proposed additions to the capital plan, all members were in favor.

CFO Stollenwerk noted that we may do the 2020 and 2021 ordinances together so we only have to pay the attorney once. The only item left was the vector truck. The quote came in at \$370,000.00 from Grand Turk via the national cooperative. She would need approval from Council.

Council President Perri asked CFO Stollenwerk if she had specifications.

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CFO Stollenwerk replied that she had specifications from Vac Con and Pierce Eagle, but Superintendent Vitale said he'd prefer Grand Turk.

Council President Perri explained it was a machine that used water to clean storm drains using high pressure; we were required by the State to clean them.

Councilman Dewees added that we had about 500 storm drains and 5 miles of pipe, plus the sewer.

Council President Perri felt we were against the wall, the State mandated it but we had to pay for it.

Councilman O'Neill asked CFO Stollenwerk what percentage of the new apartment complex would be on this year.

CFO Stollenwerk replied it will be on the added and omitted for this year, and on the tax rolls for 2021.

Council President Perri asked if CFO Stollenwerk was comfortable waiting one more meeting for vactor truck.

CFO Stollenwerk replied yes, and we could have it ready for the second meeting in March.

Council President Perri wanted to make sure we were buying the right piece of equipment and that everyone was on the same page.

PUBLIC SESSION/FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

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

At 6:52pm on motion of Councilman Dewees, seconded by Councilman Smith, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk