

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2023**

At 4:29pm this meeting was called to order by Deputy Municipal Clerk Shannon Campbell, who welcomed the audience. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on February 11, 2023 and in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

Present: Councilwoman Bucci; Councilwoman Carfagno; Councilman Dewees; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Smith; Council President Polistina; Mayor Chau

Absent: Councilman Leeds

Municipal Clerk/Business Administrator Canesi, Certified Financial Officer Stollenwerk, Chief VonColln and Chief Cummings were also in attendance.

2023 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Council President Polistina referred to the timeline noting that recreation and personnel had been added, he asked if there was anything else?

CFO Stollenwerk wanted to confirm increases for volunteers, were they approved? They were in there.

Councilman Smith and Council President Polistina replied, yes.

CFO Stollenwerk noted the fire suppression was discussed; she increased the line for facilities to include it. She had a request from OEM for a storage trailer, she included that as well; the money would be available after adoption. She announced that Governor Murphy put \$2 million dollars in the State budget to offset municipalities with State Health benefits. She was not sure when that money would be available, it was still developing, we would wait for final adoption as long as we can. We are at 1.5 cents now.

Councilwoman Carfagno asked for the budget deadline.

CFO Stollenwerk gave the dates noting we would get state aid figures before state budget.

Clerk Canesi added we were required 28 days between introduction and final adoption.

CFO Stollenwerk noted we have plenty of time.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2023**

Council President Polistina asked where was the OEM trailer going to be stored?

Councilman Smith why did we need it.

CFO Stollenwerk replied, it was in budget request for capital, it would be used for cones and equipment, she moved it to the operating budget, the purchase still needed to be approved.

Mayor Chau advised the SUVs are set up for mobile stations.

Councilman Dewees believed one used as command center, not storage.

Mayor Chau asked was there room for a storage shed.

Clerk Canesi added they may need it to be mobile.

Councilman Dewees agreed with Clerk Canesi.

Clerk Canesi announced it would be used for the traffic signal generators - per a text from OEM Coordinator Tim Joo.

CFO Stollenwerk moved to capital items.

Councilman Smith, not pushing for this year, referred to an article in the Sentinel, noting the benefits to a frisbee golf course, he had mentioned in the past. He felt it would be a great attraction to Birch Grove Park, it would help local businesses; he would put together a proposal for next year.

Council President Polistina referred to Public Works and Fire Department trucks.

CFO Stollenwerk noted that Superintendent Vitale advised her that they were not sure they can find trucks this year, it may be pushed back, this was 5-year plan. Our 2012 bond would be retiring in 2028, CFO Stollenwerk explained borrowing capacity and debt. These were projects submitted, one addition came this afternoon, the roof estimate came in around \$300,000.00, we would not be sure until we go out to bid.

Councilman Notaro, Councilman Dewees and Council President Polistina discussed the roof repairs needed and cost.

CFO Stollenwerk advised we can self- finance if we wanted to move forward, Council could do an ordinance.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2023**

All basically agreed it needed to be repaired.

CFO Stollenwerk continued, she added money for the fencing as discussed last meeting. We were applying for grants for park projects, the DCS would be releasing more for local recreation.

Councilman Dewees was looking at the entire sports complex, fields needed regrading, we needed to think about the bigger picture.

Councilwoman Carfagno asked had we looked into having a recreation facility in Northfield, that people can use.

Council President Polistina responded that Council discussed pickleball and basketball, it comes down to cost and location.

Councilman Dewees recalled a recreation lodge when he was young.

Councilman Smith added the community school was supposed to be available.

Council President Polistina, regarding vehicles, asked if there was a way to share ones not being used constantly? For example, between OEM, First Responder, and the Chief vehicle?

Councilman Notaro did not think it was possible to do that, they needed to be ready.

Chief Cummings added that the First Responder was also used to go to school and for people to respond to the station, it also had additional medical equipment.

Chief VonColln added there was sensitive information in them.

Councilwoman Carfagno asked if we purchase from auctions?

CFO Stollenwerk replied it is very difficult, we don't buy used because we use them forever. We do lease passenger cars; bond law allows us to capitalize the SUV's.

Clerk Canesi noted we could share the code car, it was only used on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, it's logoed but if there's a need on the weekend, its available.

Council President Polistina moved to roads and drainage.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2023**

CFO Stollenwerk announced that she combined them, funding was available that hadn't been expended, sewer have longer term life, stretching out keeps our debt service payments stable.

Councilman Smith regarding dispatch, if we need to invest in equipment, where would it fit in?

Councilman Notaro replied we would still need capital.

CFO Stollenwerk added that ancillary costs not were not in there, you need to include those in your cost outs, it would not be in this budget.

Council President Polistina asked Councilman Smith if it would be this year.

Councilman Smith noted they were waiting for estimates, it might take a year, he didn't know the time frame to obtain equipment, possibly the end of 2024.

Chief VonColln advised that licensing costs were not discussed in the meeting.

CFO Stollenwerk moved to storm water mapping, there were new requirements, it was helpful to have something in place.

Several council members discussed dispatch costs and equipment. It should be a true cost shared service.

Council President Polistina asked if there were any other projects? There were no responses.

CFO Stollenwerk asked Council if there were any questions? They needed to make a decision about vehicles; did they want to put financing in now?

Superintendent Vitale, regarding Public Works vehicles, announced that they would not be available until next year, a price probably would not be available until July, they prefer Ford, the '99 is used for parts, a majority of the fleet was 20+ years old.

Council President Polistina felt it was best to leave in so we were ready when they were available.

CFO Stollenwerk added that we would replace the most pressing first.

Council President Polistina believed everything was captured.

PUBLIC SESSION/FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2023**

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.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, Council President Polistina closed the public comment portion of this meeting.

MEETING NOTICES

Council President Polistina read the meeting notices.

Clerk Canesi asked do we need the next budget meeting or was Council happy with the budget now to introduce?

CFO Stollenwerk announced we were a penny and 1/2 as the budget stands now.

Clerk Canesi advised Council given the timeline, we needed to introduce March 21st.

Council President Polistina asked if there were any objections as the it stands now? We have held steady for several years.

Councilman Smith asked CFO Stollenwerk her opinion.

CFO Stollenwerk replied she was not a decision maker.

Councilman Smith asked CFO Stollenwerk if we were ok with surplus.

CFO Stollenwerk replied yes, the rate had been stable, it was attractive to rating agencies, past planning and investments in infrastructure had helped us be strong financially, the number could drop with state aid.

Council President asked to put discussion on the work session but did not believe we need the meeting on the 9th.

Clerk Canesi confirmed the work session for the 21st.

At approximately 6:25pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Campbell, Deputy Municipal Clerk