

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2013**

At 5:00pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 7, 2013 in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Councilman Frank Perri.

ROLL CALL

Present: Carew, Dewees, O'Neill, Perri, Polistina, Travagline, Brown

City Solicitor Kris Facenda, City Engineer Dan Kwapinski, Municipal Clerk Mary Canesi, and Certified Financial Officer Dawn Stollenwork were also in attendance.

Council President Brown opened the work session and turned the budget discussion over to Councilman Travagline.

WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- Proposed 2013 Budget

Councilman Travagline asked Councilman Polisitina to review the surplus projection worksheets that he prepared and distributed to Council.

Councilman Polistina reviewed the worksheets and fielded questions regarding the analysis of revenues, appropriations, and the projected use of surplus from 2013-2017. He stated that using this projection the surplus would be in the negative by 2016 and would put Northfield in a tenuous position going forward.

Councilman Travagline suggested that Council needs to consider both scenarios: raise taxes or cut expenditures.

5:20pm Mayor Mazzeo entered the meeting

Councilman Polistina stated that if Northfield continues to cut expenses you'd have to cut staffing and with less staffing, you'd have to cut services. He stated he would not be in favor of cutting services. Councilman Travagline agreed to the extent that he understands the analysis but questions the direction and trends that the City might be going.

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Councilman Carew stated that previous Councils were very aggressive in their pursuit of shared services in the past and he thinks without that course of action the City might be in worse shape.

Councilman O'Neill asked for an electronic version of the spreadsheet projections and Council President Brown directed Councilman Polistina to share them with Council.

Councilman Perri noted that there are so many variables to work with and consider. He thinks insurance and pension costs are still on the rise and the numbers could go higher.

Councilman Polistina agreed that the number could go higher as his analysis is conservative and he hopes nothing bad happens.

Councilman Perri noted that he'd like to look at the possibility of cutting services such as privatizing trash collection. He stated that this would be a big move for the City but he's heard positive things from Egg Harbor Township and the savings are being reported as substantial.

Council President Brown reiterated that the Budget must be done by March 28th and ready for introduction on April 9th. She moved the discussion from the Budget to the Davis Avenue Ordinance due to the presence of a resident from that neighborhood.

- Parking in the Vicinity of Davis Avenue and Route 9

Solicitor Facenda reviewed the Davis Avenue Ordinance. Discussion ensued to resolve open issues on the draft ordinance.

Council President Brown asked Municipal Clerk Canesi to confirm enforcement plans. Canesi stated that Chief Robert James indicated he would run plates for the cars in the designated zone, similar to the procedures on Cedar Bridge Road.

Solicitor Facenda recapped the proposed changes to include: that the parking change will affect the north side of the street, which is the residential side of the street, and includes the first three residential properties up to and including 425 Davis Avenue. It will be a 24 hour prohibition on parking and the area will be marked with appropriate signage.

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Council President Brown directed that Facenda and Canesi prepare the changes during the break between the Work Session and Regular Council Meeting.

Mayor Mazzeo asked about signage. Councilman Dewees stated that he will coordinate with Chief James and Public Works to order the signage.

- Final review – Increase in UCC Fees

Councilman Dewees distributed a comparison sheet showing fees from other local towns. He asked Council to review the analysis from the Building Department as they are asking for a fee schedule increase. Councilman Dewees noted that the Building Department fees are down but this increase might make them self-sustainable and is more in line with the current state fees. The last fee increase was in 2008 and he stated that he would like to move forward and get this on the April 9th agenda.

Councilman O'Neill asked several clarifying questions regarding the percentages of increase and revenue projections for UCC fees.

Councilman Polistina shared that the UCC fees in 2012 were approximately \$110,000 and the department costs approximately \$140,000 to run.

Councilman Perri asked if the increase was a flat percentage or line by line increase. Councilman Dewees said he would work through those numbers and share them. Council President Brown asked that the Introduction of the Ordinance be on the next agenda but to provide the projected increases and newest analysis to all the Council members before the April 9th meeting.

Municipal Clerk Canesi noted that she will get the information to Solicitor Facenda so that he can prepare the Ordinance.

- Davis Avenue and Broad Street Drainage Improvements

Engineer Kwapinski reviewed the history and current state of the drainage issues and improvements at Davis and Broad. He stated that he would like Council to consider some piping and interconnected trench systems that would likely improve drainage. He suggested that for planning purposes, they might want to consider this prior to paving the area.

Councilman Carew asked that a comprehensive plan be submitted for further Council review. Council President Brown asked Engineer Kwapinski to draw up a global plan

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and have it for the next meeting on April 9th.

Councilman Perri asked Engineer Kwapinski if he could identify where the pressure back up was coming from. Councilman Carew shared that efforts in the past had failed to install a check valve at Zion Road and he wondered if that might be considered again. Engineer Kwapinski suggested he would like to consider something at Virginia Avenue but would also like Council to determine if this is a something they want to resolve and work on now. Councilman Dewees confirmed there is a problem and would possibly like to see an inlet installed on the southwest corner connected to perforated piping allowing for better drainage. Councilman Dewees stated that he would like to see Council take action on this problem.

Council President Brown asked that Councilmen Dewees, Perri, and Carew meet with Engineer Kwapinski to discuss the details. She then asked if there were dollars available for this project.

Mayor Mazzeo stated that he did not think there was funding available. The original grant was for \$220,000 and the project came in at \$213,000. Councilman Dewees shared that there were a total of 5 residents to date that have also requested curbing; but the City does not provide curbing to residents. Engineer Kwapinski clarified he thought one resident was supposed to get pavers relocated that had been there. He stated the resident has disposed of the pavers and is now requesting curbing. Councilman Perri stated he spoke with another resident located at Virginia and Broad who indicated he was anticipating drainage improvement and curbing but noted Councilman Perri noted this was never funded in the project. Mayor Mazzeo noted that the resident who was to receive pavers is referring to City owned property, not his private property. Engineer Kwapinski stated he would work with the contractor in an attempt to get that 6 feet of concrete sidewalk installed within the existing contract. Council President Brown asked Dan Kwapinski to prepare a plan for the next meeting with possible solutions for the drainage problems.

- Insurance Review

Council President Brown asked Rich Gerber of Brett Balsley Insurance Group to review several insurance issues.

Rich Gerber presented to Council an Insurance proposal containing premium quotes for FAN, Little League and Babe Ruth. He explained they are separate entities and require separate insurance policies. Mr. Gerber reviewed the specific coverage limits, deductibles and pricing for each policy. He reported the premium last year for All

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Sports was \$7,000.00 and this year it would increase to \$13,000.00 to cover the three entities known as: FAN, Little League and Babe Ruth. He asked if there were questions.

Councilman Carew asked if he was comfortable with the proposal. Rich Gerber stated that this was a strong company offering like coverage and some better coverage than the existing policy.

Council President Brown clarified that the organizations are the insured and the City is an additional insured.

Councilman Travagline praised Mr. Gerber for his professionalism and response time.

Mayor Mazzeo asked what savings there would be from the Joint Insurance Fund. Mr. Gerber stated he did not yet have that figure but that he will request it from the actuary. Mr. Gerber stated this was a time sensitive decision as payment must be sent in 4-5 days; but he should be able to bind coverage by Monday March 18, 2013.

Municipal Clerk Canesi stated they could do a voice vote for the expenditure pending authorization of funds from the finance office. Clerk Canesi suggested including a “not to exceed” amount.

Council president Brown suggested a “not to exceed” amount of \$13,500.00.

Councilman Perri motioned, Councilman Polistina seconded, to authorize payment for insurance premiums for the FAN, Little League and Babe Ruth policies not to exceed \$13,500 pending certification of funds.

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Dewees – yes; Mr. O’Neill – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Travagline – yes; Mrs. Brown – yes. Motion carries

- A-1196 1st Responders Protection Act

Mr. Gerber shared information regarding a new 1st Responder’s Bill before the legislature that is so broadly written that the burden of proof will fall to the City. Mr. Gerber asked the Council to support opposition of the Bill. He provided the example: that if a 1st responder contracted cancer, under the burden of proof clause, the City could be liable to pay workers compensation for life, which would sky rocket costs.

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Mayor Mazzeo referred Council to the sample resolution provided by the NJSLOM if the city wished to support the opposition of the Bill.

Municipal Clerk asked Mr. Gerber to address volunteer insurance issues before he closed his presentation for the evening.

Council President Brown clarified that volunteer groups must provide proof of insurance but do not need to name the City as an additional insured. Mr. Gerber clarified that the JIF has requested that volunteer entities provide Certificates of Insurance and proof of adult supervision. He stated it was his practice to defer to the JIF for opinions and recommendations.

Councilman Carew asked what a group would do if they didn't have insurance. Mr. Gerber replied they could use TULIP to obtain one day event insurance. Councilman Perri stated he had heard that people having weddings at the bandstand have been told they must provide insurance. Mr. Gerber concurred this was correct. Mr. Gerber thanked Council and concluded his presentation for the evening.

Council President Brown reviewed the agenda for the regular meeting.

Councilman Perri asked for clarification of the new hires. Councilman Carew explained that the employee currently in the year round part-time position is moving to a seasonal position and his part-time position is being filled, no more- no less. Councilman Dewees clarified that the DPW laborer is a replacement candidate because the first one did not take the job.

Council President Brown opened the meeting to any member of the public wishing to speak on any subject.

Robert Webb, 218 West Revere Avenue, asked if someone who has an event at the park is covered by the City's insurance. Councilman Polistina answered that the individual must provide their own insurance. Mr. Webb shared that he thought the City should insure anything that happens at the park and would also like to see more activities for seniors such as shuffleboard courts.

Sue Dickinson, 1122 First Street, asked if the Friends of the Birch Grove Park have to provide their own insurance. Mary Canesi responded that Mr. Gerber had provided an opinion that the Friends of BGP and the Cultural Committee are covered under the City's policy.

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

Councilman Polistina shared that a memorial to Coach Hoopes is being erected at the park and he wanted to make sure the City is aware of the situation and kept informed of the progress. He stated that the funding is being absorbed by Little League donations but the memorial is on city property.

Councilman Perri suggested that a schematic be submitted to the City and that the Park Advisory Board be consulted.

Councilman Carew explained that it is a 40 ft flag pole.

Municipal Clerk Canesi suggested that Council vote to allow them to proceed and that future requests be brought before Council before any work begins.

Councilman O'Neill motioned, Councilman Dewees seconded, to approve the Jim Hoopes Memorial providing a schematic is submitted and no City of Northfield funding required.

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Dewees – yes; Mr. O'Neill – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Travagline – yes; Mrs. Brown – yes. Motion carries

At 6:45pm on motions properly made and seconded this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mimi M. Marlor, Deputy Municipal Clerk