

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
MARCH 13, 2018**

At 6:07pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 13, 2018, in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

ROLL CALL

Present: Korngut, Lischin, Murray, O'Neill, Perri, Dewees
Absent: Travagline

Mayor Chau, Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Nassar and Chief Newman were also in attendance.

WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – OLD BUSINESS

Council President Dewees deferred to Solicitor Facenda for an update on the potential land sale.

- Potential Land Sale – Update

Solicitor Facenda did not have an update.

Request for County Assistance - Signs for the Casto House and Museum on Shore Road and Rt. 9

Council President Dewees did not have an update; we are still working on identifying locations.

Mayor Chau requested that Clerk Canesi send a card to Mrs. Pullan on behalf of the Mayor and Council as she was in the hospital.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Hours of Operation for Municipal Offices

Councilman O'Neill stated the hours of operation should resume to being 8:30am – 4:30pm.

Council President Dewees noted it was not Council's decision but they could talk about it.

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Councilman O'Neill felt when employees were here the public should be served.

Mayor Chau stated that except for Councilwoman Korngut, all members of council were surveyed and there were no objections. Mayor Chau was only aware of one resident who complained, who felt the hours were not convenient to the resident, and that since employee's salaries are paid by the taxpayer, that employees should work at the convenience of the taxpayer. Various offices have different hours of operation; the rationale behind changing it was to give the tax office the opportunity to tend to administrative tasks, and it is a common practice. If the tax office opened at 9am, and an individual can't come in at 9, there were other ways for residents to make payments, including electronic means, via mail, the drop box etc. Tax payment does not require interaction with an individual; if the resident needed to speak with an employee, they can call them on the phone. Mayor Chau consulted with the tax office in Linwood, and they have the same practice, and Somers Point is open 9am to 5pm. Chau interviewed the tax office staff and asked them if there have been any complaints or a back log of people waiting to come in, and the response was that there have been none. Mayor Chau felt it was reasonable to allow the employees the opportunity to get ready for the public, so they are prepared when the public arrives. Mayor Chau was not convinced that there have been sufficient difficulties that would warrant making a change.

Councilwoman Korngut has talked to a great many people while campaigning, and did not hear from one person that the hours of operation at City Hall were insufficient. Since she has been in office, she has heard complaints from residents, but none of them were about the hours of City Hall. She also spoke directly with the employees involved and felt that was important. More than one female employee said they were concerned about money, they are in the halls with money, and there is money on their desks. If a customer comes in at 4:29pm, then it becomes a big production. As to the court, they may be interacting with Linwood, or with the courts. We all understand the benefit of having uninterrupted time, but it doesn't always work that way. It was not reasonable to think that the work day ends at 4:30pm with the last customer, and the employees are going to be ready to go home at that point. She agreed with the Mayor at this point, in terms of overall efficiency and employee safety, that there is no need to change it at this time.

Mayor Chau added that he admired the bullet proof window and glass that Linwood had; perhaps we should put this in capital.

Councilman O'Neill stated that employees are being paid during the 1/2 hour in the beginning and end of the day, but not serving the public.

Mayor Chau advised they were working; they were just not interacting with customers yet. He has witnessed people knocking on the doors and the employees have let them in before or after the hours.

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Councilman Perri said it was an Executive Order of the Mayor so until the Mayor rescinds it, it stands. Cash transactions require a receipt, and you have to interact with an employee to do that.

Councilman Lischin felt we are repeating one person's complaint; if this individual needed to be accommodated, that could be accomplished with a phone call.

Mayor Chau noted it was not etched in stone; it could be changed.

Councilman Murray had no comment.

Council President Dewees yielded to the Mayor.

- Resolution in Support of Assembly Bill A3292, Requested by Councilwoman Korngut

Council President Dewees asked Councilwoman Korngut to speak on her proposed resolution.

Councilwoman Korngut was prompted to do this by something she'd read about the County Board of Freeholders supporting this bill which would require warning stickers on opioid medications. People may not be aware of the potential effects and these warning stickers can be beneficial. There was a slight change in the resolution from what was distributed last week, in that the list of those who will receive it upon adoption; she asked for Council's support.

Municipal Clerk Canesi advised that the suggested list of names was on the resolution as contained in the agenda packets.

All members of Council present supported the resolution.

Solicitor Facenda advised that if we add to the agenda, we will need to read it in full during the regular session.

Municipal Clerk Canesi assigned number 79-2018.

Solicitor Facenda advised council that resolution 78-2018 would no longer be needed.

Councilman Perri in regard to the cell tower off Burton Avenue, there was some discussion as to what approvals they may need. He saw that there may be revenue opportunities if the City were to go out to bid for a cell tower.

Council President Dewees would contact Councilman Perri to discuss.

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AGENDA REVIEW

Council President Dewees reviewed the agenda and made assignments.

Councilwoman Korngut asked that Resolution 71-2018 be voted separately.

Councilwoman Korngut regarding Resolution 76-2018, commented that the application indicated that the individual has keys asked do all coaches have keys.

Council President Dewees responded, most coaches, yes, but not to everything. This individual had been involved for a long time, so yes, he had keys.

Councilwoman Korngut asked if night use was involved.

Council President Dewees advised the individual was here, he would allow him to speak.

Councilman O'Neill stated for the record that as to resolution 75-2018, there was a time change, from 10am-2pm to 11am-3pm.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Dewees opened the public portion of the meeting for any person to speak on any topic.

Bob Webb, 218 W. Revere Avenue - asked what security there was in the building at night.

Mayor Chau reported that the building is locked, and alarmed and patrolled by police.

At 6:40pm Councilman Travagline entered the meeting.

Mr. Webb felt there should be an officer in the building 24/7. He felt nepotism was a problem in Northfield; Councilman Perri does a fine job with the seniors but not enough money is spent on them. Too much money on the kids, and he does love kids, but it's too much money. Too much money was spent on the schools. Council was supposed to be working for the people.

Jean Leonetti, 38 Cove Avenue said there was an issue with her street that resulted when it was paved. Cars were parked along the side and digging up the dirt.

Mayor Chau asked whose property it was.

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Engineer Nassar replied that Cove Avenue was a public street.

Mrs. Leonetti also stated there were drainage issues.

Council President Dewees advised that we are researching where the responsibility lies; if there was curbing, it would be clear, but there was no curb.

Dominic Leonetti, 38 Cove Avenue, added that water causes all kinds of problems.

Mrs. Leonetti showed photos on her cell phone to each member of Council.

Engineer Nassar said the contractor did restoration, but because people park there, the grass can never germinate.

Mr. Leonetti stated that he had asked the people who park there to sweep up the dirt, but they won't.

At 6:50pm Clerk Canesi noticed that recording equipment was not operating. She turned it off, and then on again, and it activated.

Caren Fitzpatrick, Freeholder, from Linwood, said she was happy that Councilwoman Korngut saw Assemblyman Armato's bill. This was a significant problem. We were losing a decade of kids; she lost her son this way, Duncan Fitzpatrick. He was a high school kid, his friend had a sports injury and they get ridiculous amounts of pain killers, and like Mr. Perri said, it's a no brainer. We will be the first State to have this law, and maybe a warning label will make some people think. She thanked Council for their support, says maybe we as a community can do something about this.

Mr. Webb asked Freeholder Fitzpatrick what she is going to do about the Governor and marijuana.

Freeholder Fitzpatrick replied that in Colorado, since marijuana was legalized, opioid deaths have decreased 25%.

Mr. Webb stated that he opposed marijuana.

Freeholder Fitzpatrick replied that was another conversation for another time.

Barbara Madden, 403 Park Lane, looking to Mr. Webb, stated: there were services available through the County and Marilu Gagnon. She helped the residents of the City of Northfield too, through the Office of Intergenerational Services.

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Bob Webb, 218 West Revere Avenue, asked if City ordinances were still in effect. It used to be a law that you can't have a yard sale on Sunday, but it was broken. Cars are not supposed to be parked on the wrong side of the street.

John Sheeran, 2026 Sutton Avenue, stated that he was the field use applicant on the agenda this evening.

Councilwoman Korngut asked if there would be night play.

Mr. Sheeran replied they will not use lights.

Councilman Dewees informed Mr. Sheeran that there have been issues with lights being left on.

Sean Sutley, 605 Herzel Avenue, stated that he also had a field use request on the agenda this evening. No lights will be used; he will not request the softball field, only the minor field. If the minor field would be needed they would use the farm field.

Council President Dewees stated that he felt Council's questions had been addressed.

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

At 6:59pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk