

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
APRIL 12, 2022

At 6:00pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 8, 2022, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Council Pro Tempore Dewees.

ROLL CALL

Present (in person): Councilwoman Bucci; Councilman Dewees; Councilman Leeds; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Utts; Council President Polistina;

Absent: Councilman Smith, Mayor Chau*

At 6:10pm Mayor Chau entered the meeting.

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

Council President Polistina welcomed all to the meeting; he congratulated the basketball teams and deferred to Councilman Notaro for presentation of the award.

RECOGNITION AWARD:

Family Association of Northfield – Travel Basketball Champions

Councilman Notaro stated that the FAN organization was very important to him; his daughters grew up in the cheer program. He thanked the coaches for all they do. He read a proclamation recognizing the Northfield Cardinals Boys' Junior Varsity Basketball team, the Northfield Cardinals Boys' Varsity Basketball team and the Northfield Cardinals Girls' Junior Varsity team for their accomplishments this season. He congratulated all.

Finleigh Whoy – NJ State Jersey Optional Gymnastics Association Level 5 Champion

Councilwoman Bucci called forward Finleigh Whoy and read a list of her lengthy accomplishments. She congratulated Finleigh on her success and presented her with a certificate.

Council President Polistina moved to committee reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Councilman Dewees – Buildings/Grounds, Athletic Fields; Birch Grove Park, Bike Path, 1st Street Playground, Veterans Park; Public Works: Roads, Engineering, Sewer Operations

Councilman Dewees reported that he spoke with Superintendent Vitale of Public Works, and would like to add Casey Drive to the 2021 Local Road Paving Program.

Council President Polistina asked how much will it cost?

Engineer Nassar replied it would add approximately 10% to the job.

All members of Council were generally in favor of adding Casey Drive to the 2021 Local Road Paving Program.

Councilman Utts - Inspections, Code Enforcement, Housing/Zoning, Cultural Committee, Veteran Liaison, Mainland Regional, Technology / MRHS Channel; Planning Board

Councilman Utts reported that he attended the Cultural Committee yard sale, it was a very successful event. Regarding the Planning Board there is a church that is appearing before the board, across from the school.

Councilman Notaro - Fire Department/EMS; Sewer Operations; Northfield Sports (FAN)

Councilman Notaro also attended the yard sale, there were many vendors and they raised approximately \$1,000.00. Regarding FAN, he wanted to thank Ben Gravy and Paul Feriozzi who donated a surfboard which raised \$2,000.00 for FAN. Their recent election resulted in three new board members with five running. He attended Northfield Little League's opening day; he thanked the Fire Department for their participation. Councilman Notaro reported he received a call from a resident about a neighbor's firepit, our code prohibits open burning. He felt we should come up with an amendment to code to allow for open burning.

Municipal Clerk Canesi explained the history; our code prohibits open burning. When we get complaints it's because there is smoke. If we were going to regulate it, what would we do about the smoke?

Solicitor Facenda confirmed our code says no burning combustible materials – he suggested perhaps adding with the exception of firewood, kindling, etc.

Clerk Canesi advised the complaints we have had were not related to burning inappropriate material, it was usually firewood, but the complaints were just about the smoke.

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Councilman Leeds – Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce

Councilman Leeds read the EMS report for March. He noted a discrepancy with the response time on one call, which was resolved with the GPS data. He also attended Northfield Little League's opening day; it was a great day.

Councilman Smith - Court / Violations; Little League and Babe Ruth, Northfield Community School; Shared Services

Councilman Smith was absent.

Councilwoman Bucci – Insurance and Safety; Library; Municipal Alliance

Councilwoman Bucci had nothing to report for Insurance and Safety, the Library meeting was coming up. Coffee with a Cop was a very successful event with a nice turnout.

Council President Polistina – Finance and Collections; Senior Citizens

Council President Polistina reported the budget would be heard at the next meeting for final adoption. We were in the midst of our annual audit. The Senior Committee has met and Council President Polistina would get together with them to set up their next meeting.

Council President Polistina moved to old business.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – PRIOR BUSINESS

- Northfield Avenue at Rt 9 Drainage –*Update from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar reported he would check with Public Works to see if they were able to clean the pipe, that should help alleviate.

- Stormwater Facilities Shared with the County of Atlantic – *Update from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar found another line on Hemsley but we don't share that. He was trying to identify shared pipes. It was tedious but we are getting there.

- Potential Acquisition of Fire Truck – *Bid Specifications Pending from Chief Cummings*

Councilman Notaro reported the bid specifications have been prepared and would be presented to the CFO.

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- Potential Public Auction of City Owned Property Block 66 Lot 11 – *Pending*

Council President Polistina announced there would be an update after the closed session.

- 2022 CDBG Application – *Update from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar reported he would have the CDBG project to submit for Thursday.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Nassar reported there were many handicapped ramps, on corners, around town that weren't compliant; there were grants available but there would need to be matching funds.

Council President Polistina felt it may be worthwhile in high traffic areas.

Regarding new business, Council President Polistina reported the exterior sign for the municipal building would be replaced, with a message board for information to be shared for the public, but in LED format. We would need Planning Board approval, but since it was a public safety issue we will proceed with the application. He asked Engineer Nassar and Solicitor Facenda to proceed with the Planning Board application.

Solicitor Facenda asked if we had specifications.

Clerk Canesi replied, yes, we do.

Engineer Nassar added that because it was a residential zone, we'd need approval; but he was confident that because we are serving the public, we were different. He explained the proposed location and he would provide more information for council.

Councilman Notaro suggested trimming the trees back, and enhancing landscaping where the 911 artifact is.

Councilman Dewees replied there was a public outcry not to remove the bushes.

Council President Polistina moved to the Regular agenda.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Polistina reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda and made the assignments.

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PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Polistina opened this portion of the meeting for any member of the public to speak on any topic; he noted a five-minute limit per speaker.

Joan Brennan, 116 Dolphin Avenue, shared a certified letter notifying her of a proposed 10,000 square foot county training center, down towards New Road. It would take one year, the plans weren't finished, she was told everything was submitted to the City; Councilwoman Bucci and Councilman Notaro knew nothing about it. She was assured there won't be a lot of traffic but Joan's experience was different. As a taxpayer she should have say in how much traffic was on her street. Cars speed regularly. The new building will be within 200 feet of her home.

Solicitor Facenda advised Ms Brennan to follow the instructions in the letter to voice her concerns.

Ms Brennan advised that she would, and she had contacted the County, but felt the Council should know.

Ms Brennan, regarding the bandstand, needed a date for people who were going to do the building and the flowers; the bandstand also needed some work. Roy Clark had mentioned to her that the flooring should have a lifetime warranty; Roy would check his files.

Councilman Dewees believed there was an issue with the step and it was repaired.

At 6:51pm Mayor Chau left the meeting and returned moments later.

Councilman Dewees advised we were waiting on the contractor for a date for the painting; we call at least once or twice a week.

Ms. Brennan continued, stating she walks the bike path every night. Electric bikes were a problem, some go 30-35 mph on the bike path. they are very quiet. Ms Brennan was told that if it has a motor it is not allowed on the bike path.

Chief Newman responded noting he would have to look at the ordinance.

Council President Polistina asked Clerk Canesi.

Clerk Canesi advised that there were regulations and that under certain requirements, these vehicles, even though they have a motor, are permitted on the bike path and on sidewalks.

Chief Newman confirmed they could be on the bike path and sidewalks.

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Mayor Chau, regarding County employees speeding on County roads, he had contacted county personnel but has not gotten support.

Councilman Dewees gave kudos to the Police Department; he sees them out there once or twice a week.

Clerk Canesi asked if anyone on Zoom wants to speak. There were no responses.

Clerk Canesi read a letter from previously submitted by Richard Hurley, 6 Catherine Place, Northfield. In summary, Mr. Hurley was in favor of the Planning Board application submitted by Foxman, Foxman and Associates. The medical practice submitted an application asking for a variance to be allowed in a residential zone.

Clerk Canesi noted that that this matter does not come before the Council, it was a Planning Board matter, but the sender of the letter requested that it be read so we complied.

Council President Polistina replied that he did advise the resident of this.

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

Councilman Leeds reported that last Thursday officers did a fantastic job with a kid on a motorcycle on Tilton Road, they stopped the kid without pursuing and without incident by blocking him off at an intersection.

At 7:02pm, on a motion of Councilman Dewees, seconded by Councilman Utts, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk