

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 14, 2015**

At 6:02pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on February 14, 2015 in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Councilman Perri.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Dewees, Lischin, Murray, Perri, Travagline

Absent: Mayor Chau, O'Neill, Piergiovanni

Solicitor Kris Facenda and Engineer Dan Kwapinski were also in attendance.

*At 6:03 Mayor Chau entered the meeting.*

**WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- PRESENTATION: Solar Energy Associates, Ltd.
  - Requested by Councilman Lischin

Council President Travagline welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that the solar presentation personnel were not present and asked Councilman Lischin to explain the online payment system being proposed.

- PRESENTATION: Edmunds; tax and sewer online payments
  - Requested by Councilman Lischin

Councilman Lischin introduced Jeff Sates from Edmunds & Associates to provide an overview of an online payment system.

Mr. Sates the module provides an online system that interfaces with Northfield's existing tax and sewer billing modules. He explained the various aspects of the system, including WIPP, web inquiry and payment portal. The homeowner has various ways to look up their account; if they choose to pay online there are fees to the resident but not to the municipality. The installation and training for employees is easy. The system is in use all over NJ and nationwide. The fees to Northfield would be \$1,200 annually each for tax and sewer.

Councilman Murray asked for clarification of fees for credit, debit, and e check.

Mr. Sates reviewed that credit cards are most expensive, e check is least.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 14, 2015**

Council President Travagline asked what the options are for technical support

Mr. Sates stated that the support will be same as Northfield has now, which is mostly by telephone, but also email and live chat support.

Cindy Ruffo, Tax Collector, lauded Edmunds for their assistance and support through this process.

Council President Travagline asked Mr. Sates about efficiencies gained by using the system.

Mr. Sates shared that one town showed a 33% reduction in call volume, he said there is anecdotal evidence about reduction in man hours but no concrete evidence. He is not certain of any impact on collection rates.

Councilman Perri asked how long before the funds are deposited in our accounts.

Mr. Sates stated usually about a day, but definitely less than it takes now with a paper check.

Mrs. Ruffo stated she logged onto Egg Harbor Township's system and looked at the 10 homes that are on our sewer system; she said the program is very user friendly. The program will also make it easier for residents to look up information at tax time, and when trying to obtain information for tax appeals. Northfield is the last in the area to use an online payment system.

Council President Travagline advocated for acquiring the system. He conducted a straw poll vote; all were in favor pending availability of funds. Council President Travagline asked the Municipal Clerk to place it on the next agenda for approval.

Solicitor Facenda asked Mr. Sates to provide a form/agreement to the Clerk so that it can be reviewed.

- Tax Collector – Vacancy in Position, June 2015
  - Requested by Councilman Murray

Councilman Murray noted the pending retirement of the Tax Collector and thanked her for her years of service. Councilman Murray conferred with the CFO, Dawn Stollenwerk, and she advocated replacing the collector with another full time position.

Council President Travagline asked about options, such as sharing or part time.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 14, 2015**

Councilman Murray stated there are certain times of the year when the office has to be open, such as tax time, or when the seniors are filing for their deductions. A shared collector can't be in two places at once. He also stated that our CFO and Assessor are already part time, with \$21M flowing into that office annually, CFO Stollenwerk felt it warrants a full time position.

Council President Travagline stated he met with representatives from Linwood in the past, realizing that the tax collector would be retiring. They just could not make it work, and Linwood wasn't in favor of it.

Councilman Perri suggested that as the City proceeds, that the Safety Coordinator position become part of the full time Tax Collector's position.

- Dog Tethering Ordinance
  - Requested by Mayor Chau

Mayor Chau received an email copy of the proposed dog tethering ordinance being recommended by Atlantic County SPCA.

Council President Travagline asked if there are any objections, none were voiced. He asked that the ordinance be placed on the next agenda.

- See, Click, Fix App
  - Requested by Councilman Dewees

Councilman Dewees stated the he and Clerk Canesi attended a meeting with the ACUA to discuss an app that allows residents to report conditions such as street lights, bike path lights, street signs, pot holes etc. The app is free to residents as well as to the City. Councilman Dewees feels that the City should pursue it. The City controls where complaints will go for resolution.

Clerk Canesi explained that only one other municipality uses the system now, but ACUA purchased the rights to the system for all of Atlantic County. ACUA will set up everything and do the training. We can set up a pick list of 5 items and the department will be emailed the complaint which will then allow that department to evaluate the complaint and come up with a resolution. The resident will be able to track their complaint so they can see when there is a resolution. ACUA will facilitate the reporting to Atlantic Electric, we will be able to still see where street lights are out.

Council President Travagline conducted a straw poll; all in favor.

- Possible Acceptance of Additional Flows – EHT
  - Requested by Council President Travagline

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 14, 2015**

Council President Travagline stated that he had meeting with EHTMUA regarding the possibility of taking additional flows from Fire and Mill Road into the Northfield system. Discussions came up in the past and failed but the MUA would like to engage in discussions again. The old proposal would be back on the table, whereby we would get reimbursed for half of the \$20k Maple Run Bridge cost just for considering discussion of future flows.

Councilman Dewees asked where the closest line is on the Egg Harbor Township side.

Engineer Kwapinski stated it is on the west side of the Parkway bridge.

Councilman Perri noted that the onus is on the developer, and points out that there are already capacity issues with the other new development.

Darren Boyd, Linwood/Northfield Sewer Department, requested that Egg Harbor Township be responsible for all of the lines until they connect at Northfield.

Councilman Perri agreed.

Council President Travagline conducted straw poll, all in favor as long as the conditions are as stated.

Mayor Chau passed out to all of council a copy of the budget proposal from MRHS.

Councilman Dewees asked Engineer Kwapinski to look at Cresson Avenue between Burton and Walnut. The city has had one claim; the road is in bad shape. He requested options for emergency repairs.

#### AGENDA REVIEW

Council President Travagline reviewed the agenda.

#### PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Travagline opened the public session.

Marco Smigliani, Veterans Advocate, attended the meeting to advocate for Lieutenant Dan Mitchell. He stated that Mitchell was supposed to be promoted to Captain and future police Chief and that he was blocked because it would interfere with his future service. He does not have the facts, and would like Council to correct them.

Solicitor Facenda stated that Mr. Mitchell has initiated litigation against the City; it

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 14, 2015**

has been forwarded to our insurance carrier. He encouraged Council not to comment at all.

Council President Travagline stated these were policies of past administrations; the Mazzeo administrations, the McGee administrations. The Mayor now was not the Mayor then.

Councilman Perri also pointed out that Councilman O'Neill was also pro tem.

Mr. Smigliani asked if he can leave his contact information and be advised when the litigation is over.

Mike Merlino, Veterans Advocate, stated that the lawsuit sends such a poor message to the men and women coming home today. He encouraged Council to put an end to this matter before it gets too much publicity.

Mr. Smigliani thanked Council for the time, and said he will come back at an appropriate time.

Courtney Mitchell, wife of Lieutenant Dan Mitchell, stated she knew Council was going into Executive Session to discuss his promotion which was denied by Mayor Mazzeo. Her husband has given his life for the community. His child only sees her father on weekends. She urged Council to do the right thing, so that others can be promoted so the town can be whole again.

Aubrey Gerhart, Librarian, invited all of Council to party at birch grove park, she explained the new lending library and asked about the roof repair

Councilman Dewees stated they are waiting for the permit.

Solicitor Facenda clarified for record that the Mitchell Executive Session is to discuss active litigation, not any promotion.

Seeing no one else from the public wishing to speak Council President Travagline closed public session

At 7:59pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk