

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 14, 2015**

At 7:13pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. It was advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on February 14, 2015 in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau. Following the flag salute a moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL Present: Dewees, Lischin, Murray, Perri, Travagline

Absent: O'Neill, Piergiovanni

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

Council President Travagline welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Mrs. Linda Albright, Business Administrator, and Mr. Robert Garguilo, Interim Superintendent, from the Northfield Community School to review the Northfield Community School 2015-2016 school budget.

Linda Albright, Business Administrator, thanked Council; she presented an overview of the budget. There is an increase of \$125,000.00, which is about 2.4 cents this year. All current programs are being maintained, there are minor staffing changes. The largest portion of the budget is of course salaries and benefits. There is no increase this year in State aid. There is an increase in the tax levy this year of about 1.5%. Due to declining valuations there would be an increase of about a penny without increasing their levy at all. The final payment on the building will be in September of 2015. The new bond issue for renovations will be significantly lower and the improvements will make the building a lot more efficient. The school saved substantial funds by switching to State Health Benefits.

Robert Garguilo, Interim Superintendent, stated that there is a link on the school's website to allow the community to track the renovations. The most important thing for Mr. Garguilo has been school security, and some improvements have been made already. The State and Homeland Security did a planned lockdown drill and they school got some great suggestions as a result. Safety at the school is paramount. He commented on Mary Ann Devine's Post Crashers and the group will be going full steam ahead soon. They have some great plans ahead for the Veterans.

Mayor Chau asked what current enrollment is and maximum enrollment is at the school.

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Mrs. Albright stated the last time she checked there were 935 presently enrolled with a maximum at about 1200 students.

Mayor Chau stated that Mainland Regional High School has a big budget for special education, about \$2M. He asked what NCS's special education budget is.

According to Mrs. Albright the in house special education programs are about \$1.5-\$2M with about another \$300,000.00 for outside programs.

Mayor Chau asked about the solar energy system.

Mrs. Albright said it's generally positive, but it is a small system, they haven't been able to sell S Recs but their usage has gone down.

Mr. Garguilo stated a new in house special education program was created that has 5 students, next year it could grow to 7. Sending the students out could be a significant expense. He feels the children should be with us, in Northfield.

Council President Travagline asked about the student to teacher ratio now versus 2011.

Mrs. Albright has the information as part of their audit, but does not have it on hand. She will get it to him. They have had retirements and positions have not been filled. The student to teacher ratio has gone down.

Mr. Garguilo said it's hard to tell, especially with kindergarten. There is a little bit more of a transient population. Classes are still around 20; prior years may have been around 22.

Council President Travagline stated he brought this up because of concerns about a new development and the ability of the school to handle additional students.

Council President Travagline wished the board president Steve Wynne a speedy recovery.

READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Lischin, seconded by Councilman Murray to dispense with the reading of the minutes of March 24, 2015. They have been posted, distributed to Council, and are on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office.

Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O'Neill –absent; Mr. Perri – abstain; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Perri - Insurance and Safety, Sewer Inter Local, Planning Board, Senior Citizens

Councilman Perri stated he is still looking for Safety Coordinator and Health Coordinator for the municipality. If anyone would like to do it, contact Councilman Perri, he may have to delegate it. The Planning Board approved a plan for the old Sugar Pine, Councilman Perri presented the Veterans Park plan to the Planning Board and it was very well received. He passed along the information to the City Engineer for the CAFRA permit. The next meeting is May 7th. The seniors meeting will be next Thursday with guest speaker Marilu Gagnon from the County. He met with the Sewer Department, the mechanics and laborers, to look at costs between Linwood and Northfield. They discussed the operation, there have been suggestions made by the Shared Service Committee, it is Councilman Perri's recommendation that Northfield meet with Linwood's Committee to meet now to discuss the terms of the interlocal, which is up in December. Ours is one of the oldest interlocal agreements in existence. Our men are unique, they run a good operation and he feels we should keep the operation in town. Councilman Perri remains open to any suggestions or concerns. He has not received any complaints. We have very knowledgeable and professional technicians. The contract will, however, expire at the end of the year.

Councilman Dewees - Buildings/Grounds, Birch Grove, Public Works, Little League/Babe Ruth, Northfield School

Councilman Dewees stated a contractor for the Library has been selected and we are waiting for the permit for work to begin. Opening day of Birch Grove Park went well, and baseball and softball had their opening day as well.

Councilman Murray - Finance/Collections, Inspections/Engineering, Veterans Park, County/State

Councilman Murray noted that Jim Dickinson, building department, received new fees from the State that will be passed along to the applicants in the building process. They will be presented at the work session next meeting. He thanked Councilman Perri for bringing the Veterans Park plan to the Planning Board. The next round of bricks will be installed April 18th.

Councilman Lischin - Technology, Cultural Committee, Mainland Regional, Green Team

Councilman Lischin advised that he will attempt to reschedule the solar presentation. He thanked Mr. Sates from Edmunds and Cindy Ruffo from the Tax Office for their presentation. He thanked Mrs. Ruffo for her dedication to the City. Sergeant

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Dettinger is still working on the P25 radio project; there will be another meeting with the County this month and anyone with questions should forward them to Councilman Lischin. There is another meeting to discuss time clocks on the 23rd of this month. The Cultural Committee rescheduled their yard sale for the 25th at NCS. Nominations for Citizen of the Year and Miss 4th of July will go directly to the Cultural Committee, but can be routed through Councilman Lischin or the Clerk's Office. The Committee has added a Northfield's Got Talent event to their concert series. The final budget for Mainland is the 27th of this month. He is also working on a new neighborhood watch program with Detective Buccafurni, with more information to follow.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Chau stated he received three applications for the Birch Grove Park Advisory Board for the two open positions. Lisa Alper Russo and Tim Carew were appointed as members and Chuck Smith was appointed as an alternate member. He stated they are still looking for a Deputy OEM Coordinator, he urged any interested parties to come forward. Mayor Chau along with Acting Chief Newman raised the flag opening day at the baseball fields. He mentioned that Coach Dewees was honored for his dedication to the sports programs and to the kids that play. Mayor Chau announced that security cameras have not been working for quite a few years; Council may want to consider replacing or repairing. He noted the decision to have ceremony for Memorial Day at the Veterans Park in lieu of a parade, and was surprised at how many people did not know we had a Veterans Park or where it was. Mayor Chau wanted to highlight the Park and retain some of the components that the parade used to incorporate, just not in a parade format.

Council President Travagline stated that he is in favor of new format.

Councilman Dewees said he would like to improve the aesthetics of the front of the park with plants and sod. He is also in favor of new format.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Engineer Kwapinski reviewed the engineers report. The City will be hosting a State softball tournament; he would like to get certain projects completed. Engineer Kwapinski provided an update on paving, including areas being paved by NJ American Water.

Council President Travagline urged all to attend a meeting of the pedestrian grant group, very informative.

Councilman Dewees asked for an update on the cinders on the bike path.

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Engineer Kwapinski stated there is nothing open right now that would cover the entire cost.

Councilman Perri said one issue that was brought up at the Veterans Park meeting was that the development and paving of the site could be incorporated into an existing project. He stated there is no funding allocated for that part of the project.

Engineer Kwapinski said Council could add it to the scope of the project; he will come up with a cost estimate.

Mayor Chau read the Police Department report for the month of March.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Travagline opened the meeting to the public and asked if anyone wished to speak on any subject.

Aubrey Gerhart, Northfield Public Librarian, thanked the Police Department for the evening patrols. She has been attending the JIF supervisor's training and it has been excellent, the Public Library working with NCS and will be having the entire 8th grade class come in for a poetry event, with the possibility of an intergenerational poetry festival this summer. The Library will be having a sidewalk chalk event. Mrs. Gerhart is a big fan of the Veterans Park and her dad was a veteran. She would like to do some sort of reenactment at the park as an educational effort, and the Library would be happy to partner with any interested party.

Careena Clemente, 815 West Mill Road, owner of Mazza's Country Market. Ms. Clemente state that on Monday, the Zoning Officer came to her business and stripped it of all flags, signs, and banners. He's visited on numerous occasions, but only this time had made issue of the banners. She stated her business sits alone and her customers rely upon the signs. She asked that Council consider changing the Ordinance so that businesses off of main roads have a better chance of being identified.

Mayor Chau stressed that Ms. Clemente was not being singled out. The Ordinance has been on the books for a very long time, possibly 20-30 years. He explained reasons, signs can be distracting as well. Some businesses leave them up for a very long time, and they fall into disrepair. He explained other aspects of the sign Ordinance, such as those that regulate blinking signs.

Councilman Perri noted that the Land Use Ordinance is contained in the Municipal Code on the City website.

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Council President Travagline noted that she is the tenth business owner that has come to Council about signage; he felt Council needed to look at this Ordinance and make sure businesses can have the proper marketing. He suggested forming a committee, asked for volunteers.

Councilman Perri volunteered.

Council President Travagline also assigned himself and Councilman Dewees.

Lisa Brown, 9 Haviv Drive, member of the Economic Development Commission, noted that anything that Council can do to help the businesses, particularly small businesses, is helpful. She stated that all will be getting an invitation to an upcoming event honoring Victoria and Frank Rich.

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

Council President Travagline stated that Solicitor Facenda has asked if Council would still like to convene the Executive Session which was intended to advise council that there is a lawsuit pending. Now that everyone is aware of it, is it necessary? A copy of complaint can be obtained in the Clerk's office as well. (All generally agreed that it is was not necessary) Resolution 76-2015 will be deleted as is will not be necessary.

RESOLUTION/2015 BUDGET

Councilman Murray motioned, Councilman Lischin seconded for adoption of Resolution 78-2015.

78-2015 A Resolution of the City of Northfield, County of Atlantic, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Reading of the Budget by Title Only

Clerk Canesi explained the purpose of Resolution 78-2015 was to permit the budget to read by title only if certain conditions are met. The City has met the criteria required by the State.

Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O’Neill – absent; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries for adoption of Resolution 78-2015.

59B-2015 Final Adoption of the 2015 Budget

Council President opened the public hearing portion of the 2015 Budget.

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Seeing no one wishing to speak he closed the public hearing.

Councilman Murray motioned, Councilman Lischin seconded for adoption of Resolution 59B-2015

Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O’Neill – absent; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries for adoption of Resolution 59B-2015.

RESOLUTIONS/CONSENT AGENDA

Council President Travagline stated that all matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine in nature, and having been reviewed by Council, will be enacted by one motion. Any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of any Council Member and if so removed, will be treated as a separate matter. Any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of Funds. The Executive Session of Council will be held at the end of the meeting and we will come back in public session to make a comment for the record after the Executive Session. Any vote made on subjects discussed will be made in public.

Councilman Dewees motioned, Councilman Perri seconded for Resolutions 69-2015 to 75-2015 and 77-2015 to be voted on by consent agenda.

- 69-2015** Authorize the Northfield Office of Emergency Management to Enter into a Sub-Grant Agreement for the Purchase of Emergency Power Generators; Project Number: FEMA-DR-4086-NJ-0127-R
- 70-2015** Authorize the Hiring of Kathleen Steelman as a Seasonal Concession Stand Attendant for Birch Grove Park
- 71-2015** Authorize the Hiring of Loretta Mazzone as a Seasonal Concession Stand Attendant for Birch Grove Park
- 72-2015** Release of Escrow Monies from the Planning Board
- 73-2015** A Resolution to Cancel Grant Balances
- 74-2015** A Resolution Recognizing Northfield Volunteer Fire Company Members
- 75-2015** Authorizing Schaeffer, Nassar, Scheidegg Consulting Engineers to Proceed with Certain Projects Birch Grove Park Athletic Field - ADA Improvements
- 77-2015** A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12B(4), Regarding Contract Negotiations for 9-1-1 Dispatch Services

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Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O’Neill absent; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries to vote by consent agenda.

Councilman Dewees motioned, Councilman Perri seconded for adoption of Resolutions 69-2015 to 75-2015 and 77-2015 by consent agenda.

Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O’Neill absent; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries for adoption of Resolutions 69-2015 to 75-2015 and 77-2015.

ORDINANCES

Councilman Perri motioned, Councilman Dewees seconded, to introduce Ordinance 11-2015.

11-2015 An Ordinance Authorizing a Shared Services Agreement between the City of Northfield and the Atlantic County Utilities Authority
2nd Reading/Public Hearing/Final Adoption

The Municipal Clerk read the Ordinance by title, and announced the final publication date. This is the second reading and the matter will be considered for final adoption after the public hearing. Since introduction the full Ordinance has been posted in the lobby of City Hall and on the City website, and copies are available at no cost in the office of the Municipal Clerk between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm, Monday through Friday to any member of the public who requests same.

Council President Travagline opened the public hearing. Seeing no one from the public wishing to speak on Ordinance 11-2015, he closed the public hearing.

Councilman Perri asked if the ACUA will make another pass, as stated in number 7 that they are not required to do so.

Council President Travagline stated that yes, they will.

Council President Travagline pointed out to the public that no employees lost jobs as a result of the ACUA Agreement. All departments are being examined. He assured the public that the Council has the employees in mind when these decisions are made.

Councilman Perri would like to see that container size be changed to a use-amount in the future to equalize the costs.

Council President Travagline noted that this is a baby step, but agrees.

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Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O’Neill – absent; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries for adoption of Ordinance 11-2015.

Councilman Lischin motioned, Councilman Murray seconded, to introduce Ordinance 12-2015.

12-2015 An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Northfield, County of Atlantic, State of New Jersey, Providing for the Vacation of a Portion of an 8’ Wide Public Alley Located in Between Lots 14, 15, 21.02, 24, 22 and 5 in Block 41 in the City of Northfield
*Introduction/No Public Input/Published in the Press of AC 4/18/2015
2nd Reading/Public Hearing/Final Adoption 5/12/2015*

The Municipal Clerk read the Ordinance by title, and stated that this is the introduction, and there will be no public input. The public hearing date, and requisite publication dates were announced. The full Ordinance has been posted in the lobby of City Hall and on the City website, and copies will be available at no cost in the office of the Municipal Clerk between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm, Monday through Friday to any member of the public who requests same.

Solicitor Facenda explained Ordinance 12-2015. The land in question involved a border encroachment near the Swift Law Office, the City Engineer was consulted, as was the Assessor, and neither had any objections. Solicitor Facenda offered to answer any questions of Council.

Councilman Dewees asked if there is clean title.

Solicitor Facenda stated we did not do a title search. Whatever problems may exist become the problem of the new owner.

Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O’Neill – absent; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries for introduction of Ordinance 12-2015.

PAYMENT OF BILLS \$239,878.99

Councilman Dewees motioned, Councilman Perri seconded, for payment of bills.

Roll call: Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Lischin –yes; Mr. Murray –yes; Mr. O’Neill – absent; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Piergiovanni –absent; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries for payment of bills.

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Council President Travagline read the meeting notices.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Council President Travagline announced that Council will be entering Executive Sessions and the resolutions authorizing each session were adopted earlier in the evening as part of the Consent Agenda.

77-2015 A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12B(4), Regarding Contract Negotiations for 9-1-1 Dispatch Services

The Municipal Clerk read the resolution by title and said she would defer to the Solicitor for an explanation of the subject matter to be discussed and the amount of time which could be expected to elapse before the minutes of the non-public session could be released.

Solicitor Facenda stated that the Executive Session is in regards to continued negotiations regarding 911 services. The minutes will be kept and made available when permitted and required by law. Timeframe is not known as negotiations will continue. This session is for discussion purposes only; no action is anticipated by council.

At 8:36pm Council adjourned to the Mayor's Office for the Executive Session discussion.

At 9:06pm Council returned from Executive Session.

Solicitor Facenda stated that the Executive Session has concluded no formal action was taken, negotiations continue, minutes will become available when negotiations are complete.

At 9:05pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC Municipal Clerk