

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**APRIL 20, 2021**

At 6:01pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 9, 2021, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

*Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-8(b), and N.J.A.C. 5:39-1.1 - 1.7, this meeting will be held in-person and as a remote public meeting (live-streamed) using Zoom conferencing service. Due to social distancing requirements related to Covid-19, there are limited seats for in-person attendance by members of the public. Visit the event calendar page for April 20, 2021 at [www.cityofnorthfield.org](http://www.cityofnorthfield.org) to determine current seating availability. Face coverings and social distancing will be required for in-person attendance. To reserve an available seat, contact the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 609-641-2832, ext 125, no later than 4:00pm on April 20, 2021. Once all available seats have been reserved, virtual attendance will be required using a web-browser to Join the Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83935418461> or by telephone using one tap mobile +16465588656,,83935418461# or direct dial +1 646 558 8656 using Meeting ID: 839 3541 8461. For those wishing to comment during the dedicated public comment portion of the meeting, but who may be unable to attend (in person or via Zoom), public comments may also be submitted in advance via email to [mcanesi@cityofnorthfield.org](mailto:mcanesi@cityofnorthfield.org) or by written letter to the Office of the Municipal Clerk, 1600 Shore Road, Northfield NJ 08225, or by hand delivery to the drop box in the parking lot at the south corner of the municipal building, addressed to the attention of the Municipal Clerk. Comments shall contain the name and address of the author, will be read aloud and addressed during the remote public meeting, and must be received by 2:00pm on April 20, 2021.*

Municipal Clerk Canesi read the following statement:

“Due to social distancing requirements related to Covid-19, there are limited seats for in-person attendance by members of the public this evening. For this reason, this meeting is also being presented simultaneously as a remote public meeting, live-streamed, using Zoom conferencing service, and in accordance with the Governor’s Executive Orders and the Open Public Meetings Act. Zoom meeting participants can dial in by telephone and listen to the proceedings, or they can access the meeting using a web-browser, and be able to view and listen. Instructions on how members of the public could reserve one of the limited seats, as well as how they can access Zoom have been made available on the municipal website and were published in the Press of Atlantic City. The full text of the public meeting notice has been posted at the entrance to the municipal building and includes Zoom instructions, information on where to find the meeting agenda and relevant documents, as well as instructions on how members of the public could submit comments in advance of tonight’s meeting. For those participating via Zoom, all participants will be ‘muted’ upon entry to the meeting. Web-browser participants will not be able to share their screens or see the camera-view of anyone other than the host, which is the City of Northfield. Zoom participants wishing to exercise their right to participate during the public comment portion of the meeting should wait until the specific announcement is made to open the public comment period. At this time, one by one, any telephone users

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will be asked to identify themselves and will be unmuted to permit commentary. For web-browser participants, comments or questions may be submitted via the chat function and will not be acknowledged outside of the designated public-comment portion of the meeting; chat-users must also provide his/her name and address for the record in order to be heard. Any written comments submitted in advance will be read aloud and addressed during the public comment portion of the meeting.”

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Council Pro Tempore Dewees.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present (in person):** Councilman Dewees; Councilwoman Madden; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Perri; Councilman Utts; Council President Polistina

Absent: Councilman Smith\*; Mayor Chau\*\*

*\*At 6:26pm Councilman Smith entered the meeting.*

*\*\*At 7:02pm Mayor Chau entered the meeting.*

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

Council President Polistina called Counsel Ferguson forward to speak.

**COUNTYWIDE MUNICIPAL COURT SYSTEM:**

James Ferguson, Atlantic County Counsel

Judge Mark Sandson, Atlantic County Vicinage I

James Ferguson introduced himself, and said he was joined by retired Judge Sandson. Mr. Ferguson announced he would provide a brief overview and then turn over the presentation to Judge Sandson for remarks, followed by questions. He explained the origin of the project was County Executive Levinson's idea in July, 2020. There was initial interest on the part of several municipalities as well as area judicial officials. They have had bi-weekly meetings that commenced in September, 2020, following which a subcommittee was formed. The plan would call for a tripartite agreement; the County's contribution would be the site at the county seat in Mays Landing. The County would be prepared to make capital improvements as necessary for two, possibly three court rooms, the judges' chambers, work areas for the prosecutor and public defender, plus administrative offices. At the present time, this was dependent on legislation at the state level, they cannot currently be under control of the County without additional legislation. Hopefully, the necessary legislation would be passed and signed in to law in June, and operations could commence as early as January, 2022. A draft agreement has been shared with Mayor Chau; Mr. Ferguson thanked Mayor Chau for being very involved from the inception and for being an active contributor. There would be two significant committees: a governance committee of five representatives from all areas of the county; that body

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would report back to the other municipalities; there would also be a five-person personnel committee, to determine staffing needs, and make salary recommendations to the County Executive. Personnel would be County employees, and the plan was for public defenders and prosecutors to be contractors. It was planned that municipalities keep their revenue, minus court costs. The estimated savings to Northfield were approximately 33%, with no revenue sharing. Concerns had been raised by chiefs of police about travel, it was anticipated that virtual case-handling at a rate of approximately 85% would continue. This could create savings and add revenue, and enable you to make better use of your police resources. The Atlantic County Sheriff's office would be providing security. He turned the presentation over to Judge Sandson.

Judge Mark Sandson introduced himself, and said he retired in November 2020. He was a native of Atlantic County, he practiced for 30 years and was a judge for 12. There were 565 municipalities in New Jersey and in excess of 400 municipal courts. An opportunity was created during the course of the pandemic in that technology was used to hear cases virtually. There were distinct advantages from a justice standpoint: all would be standardized. A single, uniform municipal court would provide for equal justice. Having many different courts provided opportunity for lack of uniformity; some defendants have complaints in various municipal courts, which can be a challenge for the defendants to get from court, to court, to court. Court session times would be varied. The lengthy time waiting in court would be minimized and cases could be heard more quickly. The Superior Court has gotten involved because it was believed that the county court would be a more efficient court. The Superior Court has committed to establishing kiosks with an iPad, or computer, with some sort of privacy, that would be paid for by the County, to bridge the digital divide if they don't have the ability to access a virtual court. The County applied for and they've gotten a challenge grant from the DCA.

*At 6:26pm Councilman Smith entered the meeting.*

Judge Sandson added that this allowed for support services to be available, more access to probation officers. The County would be able to run a drug-court like program, to staff it and to obtain a probation department and treatment providers who would be available every day. This would allow more access to programs like recovery court, which under the current system are only available for indictable offenses. Substance abuse and mental health issues have to be addressed, not only for the defendants, but for the community. In a municipal context, an Absecon case can't be heard in Linwood, but these could be consolidated at the County court. He was not being critical of the system as it was, but he thought we could do better. On behalf of himself and Counsel Ferguson; he offered to answer questions.

Council President Polistina thanked Mr. Ferguson and Judge Sandson.

Councilman Utts said he was surprised about the use of independent contractors for a percentage of the staff, was the administrative staff going to be county employees?

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Mr. Ferguson explained that the prosecutors and public defenders would not be employees, but would have a service contract, much like municipal court. The judge and administrative staff would be employees.

Councilman Utts confirmed the others would submit bids and be selected by the committees.

Mr. Ferguson replied; the personnel committee would review the resumes and recommendations would be made. In this model, the judge had to be approved by the Governor. The County Executive would submit the recommended name to the State. The Assignment Judge could make a temporary appointment of one or more judges as an interim step if the Governor had not acted.

Councilman Utts asked who selected the members of the governance and personnel committees?

Mr. Ferguson explained that the agreement provided for them to be spread out geographically. The constituent municipalities would choose, and this would be done on a rotational basis, but a municipality couldn't serve on both committees at the same time.

Judge Sandson noted that every town asked that question; the reality was the municipalities had to get together and make these assignments.

Councilman Utts thanked Counsel Ferguson and Judge Sandson.

Councilwoman Madden said she saw a lot of positives; she asked how many municipalities were interested right now?

Mr. Ferguson replied; it changes, some were more committed than others.

Judge Sandson added that they would need ten to be viable.

Mr. Ferguson felt at least eight, but ten would be better. The more we get the better the savings.

Judge Sandson believed eventually all towns would come on board, because the savings are too great to be able to be justified to taxpayers for towns who don't.

Councilwoman Madden asked about the roles of the two committees.

Mr. Ferguson explained the personnel and governance committees.

Councilwoman Madden noted that legislation was key; she asked how confident they were?

Judge Sandson and Mr. Ferguson both believed it was moving forward.

Councilwoman Madden was impressed; she thanked Mr. Ferguson and Judge Sandson for their time.

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Mr. Ferguson offered his telephone numbers for Council to contact him with further questions. This was a true shared service agreement between three entities: The County, the participating municipalities, and the court system.

Councilman Smith apologized for being late, he apologized if he was asking questions that were already answered. He felt we were in favor of this, but have not been assured that it's moving forward at the state level. Things die in committee at the state level all the time. What was the alternative? We have an agreement with Linwood that expires at the end of this year. We have been working with Hamilton Township.

Mr. Ferguson responded that regional courts were still allowed, a tripartite system would still be possible but we would need a lead municipality. He worked on an alternative agreement just in case, we can only try to be prepared as we can be. He encouraged Council and citizens to write to state representatives and apply pressure; they listen to their constituents.

Councilman Smith said he appreciated that; in the meantime, how confident can we be that the court will be ready to go January 1st. He questioned the timeframes.

Mr. Ferguson said he has been on the calls, and noted that Mayor Chau and Linwood Mayor Matik have been particularly vocal. He was confident that the County would be ready; the key was getting the commitment from the requisite number of municipalities. This was priority number one, and it had been made a priority by the County Executive.

Judge Sandson noted that most of the time, important legislation was passed in May and June.

Councilman Smith asked for confirmation that municipalities keep their revenue. Mr. Ferguson replied, yes, and noted that there were various revenue sharing agreements across the County. Under the County court, Northfield keeps the revenue.

Solicitor Facenda asked Mr. Ferguson if there is not a component that goes to the state? Was that contemplated in the numbers we were given?

Judge Sandson stated there was a split; whatever statutory structure is in place would continue. It was a great question. He would find out tomorrow.

Solicitor Facenda asked how long the judge's appointment was?

Judge Sandson believed it was for 3 years.

*At 7:02pm Mayor Chau entered the meeting.*

Councilman Perri asked if the committee members were going to be compensated?

Mr. Ferguson replied, no.

Councilman Perri asked would hiring, firing and discipline be done by the County?

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Mr. Ferguson replied that the County was a civil service entity, so the employees would have certain protections.

Councilman Perri asked about union considerations?

Mr. Ferguson replied there could be.

Councilman Perri thanked Mr. Ferguson and Judge Sandson for their hard work.

Mr. Ferguson noted Mayor Chau's arrival; he reiterated his appreciation for Mayor Chau's involvement.

Councilwoman Madden recapped that as of May 1, we have seven months: legislation, employees, kiosks, renovations, etc., that's a lot on your plate.

Mr. Ferguson agreed.

Councilwoman Madden added that she would love to see this come to fruition, not just for the costs savings, but for other benefits as well.

Council President Polistina moved to the Mayor's Report.

Mayor Chau would like to have a meeting with Mr. DelRosso from the County regarding the library. He would like to develop a committee with the shared service chair, the library liaison, and Mayor Chau.

Council President Polistina asked Councilman Smith and Councilwoman Madden if that worked for them.

Councilwoman Madden replied, yes.

Councilman Smith replied that he would do his best.

Council President Polistina noted they could also have their second-Chair participate.

Mayor Chau expressed how proud he was of this administration; we stand out in the County for our shared services. There was a back-up plan, and yes there was a lot of work to be done. As more towns join, the picture becomes clearer. Kudos to all for their interest and support.

Council President Polistina moved to Committee Reports.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Councilman Perri**– Public Works: Roads, Engineering, Sewer Operations; Senior Citizens

Councilman Perri reported the Senior Committee did poll their members to see if anyone needed the Covid vaccine and the information about the Bunting Pharmacy was shared, they have been able to help some get the shot locally, who didn't want to

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go to Atlantic City. There was a lot going on with roads in town, sewer was not a problem at this time but they were still looking at the assessment of the system.

**Councilman Utts** - Inspections, Code Enforcement, Housing/Zoning, Technology / MRHS Channel; Planning Board

Councilman Utts would report on marijuana during old business, nothing else to report at this time.

**Councilman Notaro** - Fire Department/EMS; Northfield Sports (FAN); Cultural Committee / Veteran Liaison; Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce

Councilman Notaro read the following EMS report for March: TriCare had a total of 128 dispatches, 112 calls with patients, 87 transports, 6 mutual aid calls to EHT and administered 0 Narcan.

Councilman Notaro announced that he met with representatives from Inspira, Operations Manager Jess Shaw, and others. They agreed to meet regularly once the contract begins, to keep the communication open. He was really excited about Inspira. Regarding the Fire Department, they have replaced a 30-year-old air compressor. He thanked Captain Nixon for his heroism fighting a car fire last Friday at Tilton Center, he was there for a while before he got some help. It was a good thing we have him on staff.

Councilman Smith confirmed with Councilman Notaro that Northfield would have a rig in town.

Councilman Notaro replied, yes, and in Linwood also.

**Councilman Dewees** - Buildings/Grounds, Athletic Fields; Birch Grove Park, Bike Path, 1<sup>st</sup> Street Playground, Veterans Park

Councilman Dewees reported that four light poles along the bike path have been replaced. Northfield Little League was painting a new logo on the tan snack bar; the work was being done by volunteers with paint donated by Sherwin Williams.

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

Councilman Smith reported Northfield Little League had its season opener, it was a great success. Northfield Community School had restarted and we were happy to see that. He echoed Councilman Perri's thanks to Bunting Family Pharmacy, it was nice to have them in town and they have been a tremendous support to our community in a number of ways.

Council President Polistina also thanked Kiwanis, who were helping Bunting out with the paperwork. It was nice to see the community coming together.

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Councilman Smith offered condolences to the family of Lori Ayres, she was Councilman Smith's colleague at Mainland, she became ill in December, and passed away a few weeks ago. She has planned on retiring this year.

**Councilwoman Madden** – Insurance and Safety; Library; Mainland Regional

Councilwoman Madden reads the March Fire Department report: 13 total calls, 3 mutual aid calls and 4 building fires.

Councilwoman Madden read the following letter from Melanie Brozosky, the Library Board of Trustees Treasurer, regarding the possible switch to the County library system.

“Please take into consideration the the majority of the library board does not support this initiative and the librarian is cautioning against making the library a part of the County system as well. And here’s why- not only is it not a fiscally sound plan, it would destroy the special culture that exists at the Otto Bruyns Library. This library is a unique landmark in our town with special history that would be corporatized by a County merger. The library is a hub for civic engagement and provides timely and relevant content due to the creativity of our librarian who does exceptional work writing grants, initiating programs and making the library an overall welcoming place. She is able to do this amazing work because she has the freedom to do so, as she is not hindered by corporate hierarchy. And while the County has made a gesture to rehire her, it should not be lost on the Council that she may decline. It would be a great loss should she decide that her talents would be stymied within the County system.

Furthermore, please consider that the County’s offer included a budget proposal for one year only. Naturally, they would give their best offer to encourage the takeover, but what happens the following year and the year after that? The answer is, it’s up to them. If another county library needs extensive renovations, our Northfield branch’s budget could be on the chopping block. So not only would a merger sanitize a wonderful, small town library, it gives control away with nothing but promises that our branch would remain funded.

Best,  
Melanie Brozosky  
Otto Bruyns Public Library Board Treasurer”

Councilwoman Madden noted the process was ongoing.

Mayor Chau noted that some statements in the letter were not truly accurate and when the committee meets with Mr. DelRosso this will become apparent.

Councilwoman Madden asked would Ms Hiers and Mrs. Brozosky be offered a seat on the committee?

Mayor Chau replied, no. This was between the elected officials. He noted exploration



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was the responsibility of the Council, the committee may end up not recommending, if they do, the taxpayers would ultimately make the final decision because it has to go to a referendum.

**Council President Polistina** – Finance and Collections; Municipal Alliance

Council President Polistina regarding finance and collections, announced that the budget would be presented this evening. For collections we were on-target, he appreciated that our residents have been able to keep up.

Mayor Chau, regarding the budget, added that he had proposed the hiring a police officer, promotions, and a 2nd lieutenant.

Solicitor Facenda reminded Mayor Chau not to speak about specific employees.

Mayor Chau understood the budget was pretty tight, he would bring it back up, and if the budget was favorable Council could consider it. He would not pursue the promotions.

Council President Polistina moved to the work session, unfinished business.

**WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- Zion Road Pump Station Easement – *Update from Solicitor Facenda or Engineer Nassar*

Solicitor Facenda did not have an update, he deferred to Engineer Nassar.

Engineer Nassar advised that he contacted the Planning Board Secretary, we would be responsible to pay the \$1,000.00 escrow fee for the Planning Board Engineer to review the plans, so we need to budget that. The application fees would be waived, the County fee would be \$250.00. Engineer Nassar's fee would be about \$3,000.00 plus Solicitor Facenda's fee. A total of approximately \$5,000.00.

Clerk Canesi asked would waiting two weeks be a problem? That way we can reduce to writing?

Solicitor Facenda and Engineer Nassar agreed that would not be a problem.

Solicitor Facenda also asked that we certify the \$7500.00 to buy the land.

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

Engineer Nassar reported that he was still at an impasse, he believed the system to be 25 years old, but the State had no records. The State was trying to say it was our responsibility, but it was definitely theirs.

Councilman Perri felt if it was inadequate and it was not working, they had to upgrade their system. He suggested putting them on notice, in writing.

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Engineer Nassar advised that had already been established. He would try to go higher up the organization, perhaps a letter with Solicitor Facenda's assistance.

- Lease Agreement, Parking Spaces at Jackson and Fuae Avenues – *Update from Committee*

Council President Polistina reported that at our last Council meeting we had our Planning Board Chair in attendance, he believed there was no reason we should not proceed with the lease, it seemed as though there were some improvements to the property that did not occur, so the spaces may not be needed, but if they make the improvements, their approval was conditioned upon several other items. He did not believe the lease would affect that. He suggested moving forward with the lease.

Councilman Perri believed the approval from the Planning Board required the spaces; he believed the City should move forward as the landlord with the lease agreement.

Mayor Chau asked if it would be for the same number of spaces?

Councilman Perri replied, it was pre-existing.

Council President Polistina added the approval was from the Adjustment Board in 1990, the approval to do their expansion was contingent upon various other approvals, bonding, drainage, etc. If the improvements move forward all of those things would still be in play.

Councilman Perri added that the parking spots were a condition of approval under the railroad, the lease should be updated to include the City. He also felt there should be a maintenance clause in the agreement that the owner has to maintain it.

Councilman Dewees noted if you go by the 150' feet the spaces are separated by the handicapped spaces.

Councilman Perri advised that the municipality put the parking lot in but never adjusted the lease agreement and took spaces away.

Councilman Dewees suggested modifying the number of spaces.

Councilman Perri noted they could also have a tenant and subcontract to the adjacent business, expansion of the property would require our lease agreement.

Solicitor Facenda would like to review the documents again.

Council President Polistina will reconvene as a committee and have something for the next meeting.

- Shared County Court – *Update from Mayor Chau*

Council President Polistina moved to Recreational Marijuana on the agenda, noting that Shared County Court was discussed earlier in the meeting.

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- Recreational Marijuana – *Update from Committee*

Clerk Canesi announced for those participating via Zoom that the zoning map, being distributed by Councilman Utts to those in attendance in person, was just added to the Work Session Agenda on the website.

Councilman Utts, regarding recreational marijuana, met in committee with Councilman Dewees and Councilman Perri. He explained the RC zone, and the CMF zone, and the exclusion of the CMF zone, at least initially, and that it could always be added. The recommendation was to exclude cultivation and manufacturing. The recommendation was to include wholesale or distributor license, they garner a 1% revenue. The Class 5 is the retail and Class 6 is the delivery, he noted both have a 2% tax revenue. The committee recommended no businesses would be no closer than 500' from residential structure. This is the recommendation of the committee, he urged Council to think it over, talk to their constituents. This could potentially encourage economic development, increase revenue and add jobs.

Council President Polistina thanked the committee. Whether we approve the sales or not, we will have it in our town. The revenue may help address the issues that come with it.

Councilman Utts suggested banning smoking cigarettes and marijuana on the Bike Path, as a separate ordinance.

Councilman Notaro thanked Councilman Utts; he would suggest taking as much time as we possibly can. He had polled many people, ironically, it's 70/30, following the trend. He realized the statewide vote was decriminalizing, not selling it. Councilman Notaro has not decided. As far as Class 1 and 2 we don't have the knowledge to rule that out, it could be less impact with the same revenue.

Councilman Utts reiterated that it could be reexamined down the road, and the availability of cheap warehouse space elsewhere in Atlantic County. He could share first-hand that there is an odor associated with grow facilities.

Councilman Notaro suggested a visit to a facility.

Council President Polistina had seen a hemp facility, and that too has an odor associated with it.

Councilman Utts also mentioned signage, we want them to be fairly low key but still providing a service.

Councilman Perri noted the Economic Development Committee, which Councilman Notaro heads, would have some bearing. This was an emerging growth industry, he suggested moving forward with zoning and the Planning Board.

Council President Polistina asked where medical fell into this?

Councilman Perri replied that medical was a more arduous process, it was more economical for someone to buy it here from a licensed vendor.

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Councilman Utts felt once retail was available, the medical cards would start to disappear. If it's overtaxed the street will be cheaper.

Councilman Perri suggested no smoking on municipal property, the Bike Path, and Parks. Council would make a recommendation to the Planning Board and they would decide what zone it goes in.

Council President Polistina suggested a straw poll.

Solicitor Facenda confirmed the committee was recommending the RC Zone only, not the CMF zone, for Classes 3-6 including 6? Not closer than 500 feet to any residential zone, or structure? He felt zone was an easier metric.

The committee agreed.

Councilman Perri reiterated he would like to see no cannabis, no vaping, no smoking on the bike path and municipal property, to include the library.

Clerk Canesi noted that the State had decided that vaping was included as prohibited where smoking is prohibited.

Council President Polistina took a straw poll vote, all present with the exception of Councilman Smith were in favor.

Councilman Dewees, to Engineer Nassar, asked if the county had to approve the Zion Road Pump plan?

Engineer Nassar responded, yes, we will request they take the pump station out of the right of way.

**WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS**

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Nassar announced a new Green Acres Grant, the 2021 Urban Parks Grant. Northfield was eligible. The application was due in June. We now have two grants we can move forward with for Birch Grove, we could possibly upgrade the playground, exercise equipment.

Councilman Utts and Councilman Dewees asked about pickleball courts?  
Engineer Nassar explained we could not use this grant for that because they don't want you to clear trees. We can apply for that with the other grant. He would also try to include upgrading walkways and improve drainage to the walkways.

Councilman Perri asked about Green Acres restrictions?

Engineer Nassar hasn't looked at them yet.

Councilman Perri added there were significant restrictions that come with Green Acres.

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Clerk Canesi advised she would review the restrictions with Engineer Nassar.

Councilman Smith noted handicapped playground equipment he's seen at the Cape May Zoo.

Council President Polistina moved to the regular agenda.

**REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Council President Polistina reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda.

Council President Polistina made the agenda assignments.

**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.

Dominic Leonetti, 38 Cove Avenue, stated that he lived there for 14 years, there was a basin next to his house and kids were playing ball there. He didn't want pot in Northfield. Mr. Leonetti was against cutting trees. He provided photos of kids playing in the basin, sand in front of his driveway and sand at a neighboring home. There was sand in the street as well, he offered to pay for a street cleaner.

Councilman Dewees understood the basin was maintained by the Home Owners Association; kids had permission to play on that from them.

Jean Leonetti, 38 Cove Avenue, stated that they have called the police, she doesn't want to call the police anymore. She had tapes on her phone of the children singing Christmas carols. When she purchased the lot, she wanted to find out if the lot was a ball field. She was assured it was not designated. The fencing etc. had been removed from the basin. She wanted something done. She didn't want to hire a lawyer but she would.

Councilman Perri asked if the basin was privately owned; wasn't that a civil matter?

Solicitor Facenda stated that if it's private property the City doesn't have any jurisdiction over anything other than a violation of the subdivision approvals. The Leonetti's could file a complaint.

Mrs. Leonetti stated they would sue the City.

Mayor Chau advised that he had been in discussion with the Leonetti's and with Code Enforcement; the response from Zoning Officer Dattalo was that this was private property, Mayor Chau had been told there was nothing we could do. He suggested the Leonetti's may want to speak to the HOA.

Mrs. Leonetti did that well over a year ago. They have had their doorbell rung; they have a bag of baseballs. She thought Council should step up to the plate.

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Mr. Leonetti stated they would sue for \$10 million dollars.

Mrs. Leonetti felt the Zoning Officer should make the HOA put the fence back up.

Solicitor Facenda noted if the property was not in compliance, Mr. Dattalo had the ability to enforce that.

Mrs. Leonetti stated the Zoning Officer would not address the neighbor's car pushing dirt into the street.

Mayor Chau believed she was referring to a car not being able to be parked on anything other than a driveway.

Council President Polistina replied we would address what we can.

Beth Loftus, 102 Oxford Circle, agreed with Council President Polistina's quote in the Sentinel to ban it now and change it later. Yes, it did seem like additional revenue, but at what cost? Legal doesn't necessarily mean safe. She gave examples of nicotine in cigarettes and opioids for pain, both of which people get addicted to. The way our City was laid out, we had businesses interspersed throughout neighborhoods. She asked if Birch Grove Park could ever be developed into homes, as it backs up to the proposed marijuana sales district?

Councilman Dewees replied, no.

Mrs. Loftus asked what other drugs could become legalized and expanded into these businesses? Back in the 90's it was "Just Say No" and teaching refusal skills to our students, it didn't seem likely, like it was now. What someone does in their own home or property is their businesses, but second-hand smoke becomes the public's business. It could come in your windows from your neighbor. Is it possible you can look for tax revenue somewhere else, and ban the sale and smoking and vaping of cannabis in all public spaces? She felt very strongly about this. She did not want Northfield to be the gateway to something else.

Bill Garry, 202 St. James Place (speaking via Zoom), said there was an issue of collecting water on the Southwest corner of St. James Place, the street was starting to crumble. He was concerned about a health hazard of standing water, there is still a twelve-foot area of 6" deep water from rain this week, he was concerned about West Nile. The Engineer told him it would be done, but it wasn't. Was there a plan?

Engineer Nassar replied; he had discussed the concern with Mr. Garry, it is connected with the 2020 Road Program. The Fuae Avenue project was a grant and we couldn't use the grant money for that.

Mr. Garry asked, so in the next week or so?

Engineer Nassar advised it would be done in the next few weeks, when they start paving.

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Mr. Garry asked for temporary fill to prevent mosquito breeding.

Engineer Nassar replied the fill would be the responsibility of the Department of Public Works.

Councilman Perri advised he would have Public Works look at it to see if they could do something in the interim.

Mr. Garry continued; regarding cannabis, he felt voters had spoken, it was not Council's position to say no, it should be how to regulate via licensing etc.

Council President Polistina stated that licensing is via the State, our discussion was where we would allow the sale, it was up to those businesses to get licensed.

Councilman Utts added that the current thought process was to exclude only cultivation and manufacturing.

Councilman Notaro asked did the State have a formula?

Councilman Utts replied that right now they are talking about 37 licenses state-wide.

Seeing no one else in Zoom wishing to speak, Clerk Canesi read the following letter into the record from a Northfield resident:

“Good Afternoon Mayor Chau,

It is my understanding that the City Counsel will be discussing the above mentioned subject in the upcoming meetings.

As a resident, former employee of the City of Northfield and as a parent, I feel that I must voice my concerns regarding any proposal that would permit or expand the sale/use of Marijuana within our city limits.

I believe this would cause a negative impact on our city's overall longterm health - economically, socially, as well as on the wellbeing and comfort of our residents.

The obvious concerns have already had an impact on my family's day-to-day activities. Such as:

1. My neighbor periodically smokes his "medical" Marijuana on his front porch. This prohibits my son from enjoying any outdoor activities like riding his skateboard or bike in front of his own home due to the stench and second-hand exposure. Also, for the same reasons indicated, our family is unable to enjoy having the windows in our home open on any day that the weather is favorable. Why should my family's rights to fresh air and outdoor activities be disregarded/limited due to someone else's choice to participate in this behavior.
2. This will increase the occurrences of exposure and usage by younger more vulnerable residents and have an unacceptable increase of school drop-outs. My son has at least 3 friends who get enough Marijuana from their parents to use several times per day. All of these friends, ages 14-17 are considering quitting school because they are unable to focus due to their daily use of this

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substance. Increasing the acceptance and accessibility will only increase these risks to our kids.

3. This would invite less-desirable individuals to move about and/or into our community. You mentioned in the press release that some of the surrounding cities have already, or are expected to, implement their own ordinances permitting the sale and recreational use of Marijuana. Do you really want the City of Northfield to be comparable to Pleasantville? As a resident, I can say that I definitely DO NOT.

The short term economic boost the sale of this product may provide the City would be far outweighed by the overall negative impact on our community and youth and I hope that you and the Counsel take these long term effects into consideration.  
Sincerely,  
Victoria Burke”

Council President Polistina thanked Mrs. Burke.

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

At 8:37pm, on a motion of Councilman Utts, seconded by Councilman Notaro, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk