

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 18, 2019**

At 6:00pm this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 5, 2019, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

ROLL CALL

Present: Dewees, Korngut, Madden, Perri, Smith, Lischin
Absent: O'Neill*

**At 6:18pm Councilman O'Neill entered the meeting.*

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

WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – OLD BUSINESS

- Potential Sale of Landlocked City Owned Property

Solicitor Facenda advised that we had one bid on a single parcel for \$20,000.00; the resolution to approve the bid was on the agenda tonight.

Council President Lischin asked what was next now that it was complete, should we remove from the agenda?

Solicitor Facenda replied that we could re-advertise, but did not feel it would be with much effect.

- Bike Trails at BGP – *Identification of Trails is Pending*

Councilman Dewees advised the trails had been identified; the creation of maps and signage is in progress. Solicitor Facenda would need to approve the wording on the signs.

- 2018 Road Paving Project – Tree Conflicts on Walnut Avenue

Engineer Nassar stated that the trees have been removed; the project was moving forward and should be completed in July. The homeowners have been made aware of their obligations.

Council President Lischin moved to new business.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 18, 2019**

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Nassar announced a new Municipal Aid grant for paving and the bike path; the application is due in July.

- Plastic Bag Restrictions – *Requested by Council President Lischin*

Council President Lischin moved to the topic of plastic bag restriction. He was not suggesting a fee, more of a ban. He advocated as an environmental issue and felt banning bags may be a good start. He asked Council for their opinion.

Councilman Perri needed more information.

Councilwoman Madden felt it was a good concept noting the money in Somers Point goes back to the store.

Councilwoman Korngut would support something like this, and suggested banning balloon releases as well. She would like to talk to Tilton Market to get their thoughts.

Mayor Chau added that our businesses are smaller than a ShopRite style business; he pointed out that home delivered newspapers come in a plastic bag. He announced that the 3rd graders from the community school visited City Hall today and he issued 2 proclamations to NCS students who proposed banning plastic straws.

Councilman Smith, generally speaking was supportive, he agreed with Councilwoman Korngut that we should consult with local businesses, and perhaps ShopRite to get their feedback.

Councilwoman Korngut asked about the balloon ban, she would like to have a resolution on the next agenda.

There were no objections from Councilmembers present.

Councilman Dewees also noted that our pet-waste bags were plastic.

Council President Lischin suggested that it remain on the agenda for now.

- Resolution in Support of Online Training for Firefighters – *Requested by Council President Lischin*

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 18, 2019

Council President Lischin explained support requested by the County for support of online firefighter training. Many have full-time jobs and online training would make it easier for them to acquire training. He would send out a sample resolution to the Council for consideration for the July meeting.

- Support of Senate Bill 3745, Playing Taps at Military Funeral to Become Excused School Absence – *Requested by Councilman Smith*

Councilman Smith announced that Bill 3745 came to his attention through a student at Mainland, whose father is an acquaintance. The Bill would allow for a student who plays taps at a military funeral to have an excused absence from school. The Bill was inspired by a graduating senior at Mainland. Municipal Clerk Canesi did prepare a resolution that he asked be considered this evening – the Bill falls in line with everything we want to see in our youth.

Council President Lischin was in favor of supporting via a resolution this evening.

Councilman Dewees agreed.

At 6:18pm Councilman O'Neill entered the meeting.

Mayor Chau felt it was unfortunate that we don't have that many musicians to play taps.

Councilwoman Korngut, Councilwoman Madden, Councilman Perri and Councilman O'Neill all agreed to support the resolution.

Solicitor Facenda added Resolution 144-2019 to the agenda, in support of S3745; he announced it would be read in full during the Regular meeting.

Council President Lischin asked if anyone from Council had any new business.

Councilman Smith advised that Northfield Little League asked that we change the date on their coin drop application from June 22nd to August 10th. He asked for Council's support to vote on it this evening.

All were in favor.

Solicitor Facenda added Resolution 145-2019 for the coin drop date change.

Council President Lischin added that Mayor Chau brought to his attention that a letter had arrived from a concerned citizen who opposed the City of Northfield being a sanctuary city. Council President Lischin read the letter aloud. As a Councilman he was all 'for' immigration but is not in favor of Northfield being a sanctuary city. He

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 18, 2019**

did not know how much we can oppose this. He asked Solicitor Facenda for his opinion.

Solicitor Facenda would look at the legislation for the next meeting.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Lischin reviewed the regular meeting agenda and made assignments.

Councilwoman Korngut asked for Resolution 135-2019 be voted on separately.

PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Lischin opened this portion of the meeting for any member of the public to speak on any topic; he noted a 5-minute limit per speaker.

Tom Corona, 2602 Leeds Avenue, said he was here to discuss Birch Grove Park. He wanted the snack bar open and someone to enforce the rules and regulations. He wanted a safer environment. He felt if something was 'open' it created a safer environment. He referred to signs at Birch Grove Park. He added that Atlantic County had the highest rate of opioid use in the State and unattended bathrooms are a haven. When the snack bar was open and a key had to be issued to use the bathroom it was better. He said he had asked for a lot of information, and praised City employees for their professionalism and responsiveness. The information from finance showed a net loss at Birch Grove Park that included a large onetime expense. The park could have been profitable if it was a onetime expense. He reviewed the cost of goods sold, and other fees that were on the information that had been provided to him. The park had always been manned; staff needed to be there to keep people in line. He asserted that we are in violation of our stock rights. He believed the park could be manned at a reasonable cost.

Heather Mellon, 2509 Herbert Drive, thanked the City for having the crosswalks at Shore Road and Yorkshire Avenue painted. She agreed with everything said by Mr. Corona, except the issue of them using only the bathrooms for drug use. She asserted that drug use was everywhere. She felt permitting bikes in the park was a big mistake; she did not feel children would abide by rules. She felt it would be dangerous and encouraged more thought before it was put into use.

Paul Utts, 144 East Rosedale Avenue, agreed with Mr. Corona that the park should be manned. He suggested having a non-profit man the snack bar, or perhaps the County would merge it with the Hackett parcel and manage it all. He owned a pest control company, and we have had an increase in rats. The increase in abandoned homes is the only reason he can think of. He offered that resident Dave Notaro

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 18, 2019

shared that other towns have a fee, and collect money that can be put in escrow to have the lawn mowed, deal with rats etc. He liked Council President Lischin's idea of banning bags; more pressure from towns would force manufacturers to explore other opportunities.

Councilman Dewees advised that the City was partnered with the County to contact the owners of vacant properties, and there was a fee.

Council President Lischin explained the Community Champions program.

Mr. Utts noted the passing of Claire Moyer, and that her obituary mentioned that she is credited with naming Birch Grove Park.

Councilman Dewees clarified that the park was not closed, it was open.

Mr. Utts reasserted that it should be staffed, and said taxes can support more supervision at the park.

Mayor Chau stated that residents were providing food that the rodents eat; if we break the pattern, the rats would not come back. He thanked Mr. Notaro and Mr. Utts for their feedback. He reiterated the details of the Community Champion ordinance and offered that he's asked the solicitor to explore further.

Lynn Clark, 2497 Herbert Drive, said they have had rats in her neighborhood for four years. They were told they came when Wawa was changed and a field that had rats' nests was disturbed. She remembered Northfield before Birch Grove. The people that created Birch Grove created rules, good rules, and one that was there were no bikes in the park. Trails are too narrow. She did not feel children would follow any rules that were established, and that kids will get hurt, with lawsuits as a result. She also felt the park needed to be manned, and needed to be utilized more than it was.

Melissa Wheaton, 10 Mt. Vernon Avenue, said she walks Birch Grove all the time by herself, but never felt afraid because there was always someone riding around in a truck. She referred to the two attacks, and said if the park was not manned it was the tip of the iceberg. She agreed that bikes would be a problem. We may need more police if something was not done. She felt volunteers should man the snack bar and felt people would pay fees to camp there.

Joan Brennan, 116 Dolphin Avenue, said she had been at Birch Grove every Saturday for the last four weeks, and she saw a police officer once. If something was not done there would be more assaults. She saw people barbecuing, if it was not manned there should not be barbecuing. She had to get insurance when she had an event there. If the park was not manned, it was creating a free for all.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JUNE 18, 2019**

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

At 6:53pm, on a motion of Councilman Perri, seconded by Councilwoman Korngut, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Registered Municipal Clerk