

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES  
AUGUST 27, 2013**

At 6:02pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 7, 2013 in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

**FLAG SALUTE**

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

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Carew, Dewees, Mahon, O'Neill, Perri, Polistina, Travagline

Mayor Mazzeo, Solicitor Marc Nehmad (in place of Solicitor Kris Facenda), Municipal Engineer Dan Kwapinski, CFO Dawn Stollenwerk, Chief Robert James and Deputy Clerk Mimi Marlor were also in attendance.

**WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- Discussion to reduce the salaries of Mayor and Council by 10%

Council President Travagline suggested that Mayor and Council should consider a salary reduction and he noted the economic conditions warrant the reduction.

Councilman Perri stated that Council has not taken raises in the past ten years. Council President Travagline replied that he thinks there have been no raises since 2007.

Councilman Carew stated that Council earns and deserves what they make.

Mayor Mazzeo stated that with a salary comes accountability and asked what the \$9,000 in savings would be used for.

Council President Travagline stated he believes that reduction in salary sends a message to employees that Council is willing to sacrifice.

Councilman Perri stated this affects the terms and conditions of employment for the eight people here and noted that he believes all 8 should have received a Rice Notice.

Councilman Carew stated leadership is proving oneself.

Council President Travagline stated that they would table the discussion until another meeting.

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Municipal Clerk Canesi suggested a straw poll.

Councilman Perri urged that the Solicitor research the Rice Notice issue and report his findings at the next meeting.

- Sewer rate increase to align our fees with the County and neighboring Cities.

Councilman Perri stated that CFO Stollenwerk has completed a study with regard to costs of operating the sewer department, including all expenses. He notes that the report showed Northfield is on the low end of the fees when compared to neighboring communities. He said the last increase was in 2010 when the rate changed from \$280 to \$300 per year for residential sewer service.

Councilman Carew provided a brief history of the last increase and noted the public opposition.

Councilman Perri and Councilman Carew exchanged thoughts regarding the infrastructure needs and the dedication of funds for improvements.

CFO Dawn Stollenwerk stated that the costs are being covered now. Council's actions would depend on the desired infrastructure improvements and the associated impact on debt service.

Council President Travagline stated that sewer improvements are needed.

CFO Dawn Stollenwerk clarified that Council President Travagline's concern is that the excess sewer revenue should be dedicated to sewer improvements.

Council President Travagline suggested a straw poll to determine if Council members are in favor of an increase.

Straw Poll: Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. O'Neill – yes; Mr. Dewees – yes; Mr. Mahon –yes; Mr. Travagline – yes; Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Polistina -yes

Councilman Carew suggested a Committee be formed to evaluate the proposed increase and asked that the CFO prepare an analysis of costs spread over the next 15 years.

Councilman Perri added that he would like to see the analysis include incremental five dollar increases.

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- Possible change in the Employee Health Plan

Councilman Perri shared that the Employee Health Plan is under review and the City has heard a presentation from one new prospective carrier and another from the State Health Benefits Plan. Perri noted the complexity of the issues and suggested going out for RFP.

Council President Travagline recognized the expertise of the CFO in this very complicated matter.

Councilman Polistina expressed concern as to the uncertainty of future increases with any new firm and suggested that a history of their rate increases be part of the RFP.

Mayor Mazzeo said the representative from the State Health Benefits Plan suggested that the City can negotiate with employees with regard to different plans that may save money as well. He also commented that any plan would have to be equivalent or better than the existing plan. He also noted that he would like to approach the representative of the State Plan to negotiate before going out for RFP.

Councilman Carew suggested Council tread lightly and move slowly as we may see a big savings in years one and two and then be scrambling again.

Council President Travagline took a straw poll of other Council members to see if they had interest in going out for RFP.

Councilman Perri asked if dental and vision would stand alone or would it be covered in the RFP. Carew replied that they would be included.

Straw Poll: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Dewees – yes; Mr. Mahon –yes; Mr. O’Neill –yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Polistina –yes

Municipal Clerk Canesi announced that Resolution 164-2013 will be added to the agenda to authorize the City to initiate competitive contracting for the provision of employee and retiree health benefits in the City of Northfield.

CFO Dawn Stollenwerk suggested that a committee be formed to work on the RFP. She noted that they may get a sample from Brigantine.

- Reconfiguration of City Hall basement space.

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Council President Travagline explained his plan for the configuration of basement space and noted there are some funds in the budget.

Councilman Polistina said he spoke with Shore Medical and they have no issues with moving.

Councilman Dewees said as Inspections Department Chair he'd like to look at the proposed plan.

Councilman Carew noted the need for an architect to ensure we are compliant, especially with ADA requirements with any reconfiguration of space.

- Field Use – Encouragement of donations in lieu of fees

Council President Travagline recapped that field use fees have not been implemented and since users in the past have made donations he would like that to continue.

Councilman Carew stated he feels it is working and does not need to be changed.

- Discussion of Proposed Capital Budget

Council President Travagline opened the discussion regarding the Capital Budget.

Councilman Perri requested that a separate meeting be scheduled to discuss Capital Budget.

Councilman Polistina reviewed past discussions and the proposed list of capital expenditures.

Councilman Carew stated that he would like to request that the County consider a shared service pursuant to the letter of request regarding flashing lights at Ridgewood Court, Mill and Zion, and Zion and Wabash. He noted that the cost for each flashing light is approximately \$30,000 each, for a total of \$90,000. He asked permission of Council to send a letter to the County requesting they entertain sharing the costs and add that expenditure to the capital budget.

Councilman O'Neill indicated his support for the proposal and there were no other objections.

Councilman Carew suggested that the Work Session meeting of 9/10/2013 start at 5:00 pm for the discussion of the Capital Budget.

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Municipal Clerk Canesi explained the effect on the timeline. She stated that Bond Counsel must prepare the Ordinance, which would allow Council to introduce the Ordinance on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and adopt October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013.

Councilman Polistina motioned, Carew seconded, to change the start time of the 9/10/2013 Work Session meeting to 5:00pm.

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Dewees –yes; Mr. Mahon – yes; Mr. O’Neill – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Travagline – yes Motion carries

The Municipal Clerk announced that she will advertise the new time for the meeting on 9/10/2013.

Council President Travagline asked other members to review the regular agenda and asked if they wanted to consider any resolutions separately.

Councilman Perri requested that resolution 76-2013 and Resolution 154-2013 be voted separately. He also asked if there will be a closed session for discussion of the PBA contract.

Mayor Mazzeo answered no, and explained that Ordinance 10-2013 had to be adopted first.

Councilman Perri asked if there was a required estoppel period for Ordinance 10-2013. The Municipal Clerk Canesi confirmed that an estoppel period was not required.

Council President Travagline made assignments for the regular meeting and then opened the public session inviting anyone to speak on any subject.

Tom Wolfe, 317 Davis Avenue, asked if sewer mains ever have to be repaired. He stated that the laterals are caved in on Second and Davis Avenues and he believes they have been that way for 25 years. Councilman Dewees responded that he would have someone there the following day to evaluate the situation.

Cornelius Masterson, 1208 Second Avenue said there is extensive flooding in his neighborhood and distributed photos to Council. Council President Travagline assured the resident that the matter will be addressed.

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Councilman Carew explained the existing infrastructure and improvements made thus far and furthered noted several suggestions for additional improvements, such as, new inlets into the storm drain.

Robert Webb, 218 Revere Avenue, asked that Revere Avenue be added to the paving list.

Erland Chau, 1001 Shore Road, noted poor condition and potential liability of the bus shelter located at Shore Road and Dolphin Avenue. He explained it is in a state of disrepair. He noted that Municipal Clerk Canesi may have helped address the problem today by faxing the agreement to Gerry Del Rosso at the County which states the County is responsible for upkeep and maintenance. As of today, Del Rosso said the County would take care of it.

Larry Carlson, 922 First Street, read from a prepared statement which outlined his attendance at the Special Meeting of Council that was convened to address the temporary appointment of a resident to fill the vacant Ward One Council seat. He expressed his concern for the process by which he was not nominated to fill the vacant seat. He shared that it is his intention to be an active resident and participate in the process of government.

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

At 7:52pm on motions properly made and seconded this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi  
Municipal Clerk