

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

At 6:03pm 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 Executive Order of the Governor of the State of NJ Nos. 242 and 243, the previously advertised September 14, 2021, meeting of Northfield City Council, to be held in Council Chambers, 1600 Shore Road, Northfield, New Jersey, 08225, will be held in-person and as a remote public meeting (live-streamed) using Zoom conferencing service. Due to continued 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 September 14, 2021 at 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 September 14, 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/82082685864> or by telephone using one tap mobile +13017158592,,82082685864# or direct dial +1 301 715 8592 using Meeting ID: 820 8268 5864. 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, 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 September 14, 2021.

Municipal Clerk Canesi read the following statement:

“As you may know, in late May, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order No. 242, related to Covid-19 and which eased restrictions on face coverings in indoor public spaces, under certain conditions. The order permits employers to impose stricter requirements regarding face coverings in indoor settings, which, in the best interests of our employees and visitors, the City of Northfield opted to do in May, and continues to do. Based on CDC guidelines, the City of Northfield continues to require face coverings and social distancing in our indoor public spaces, and visitors are made aware of this decision with signs at the entrances to the building.

Due to the continued social distancing requirements, there are limited seats for in-person attendance by members of the public this evening. 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, the

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

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 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 Mayor Chau.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Councilman Smith*

**Councilman Smith was absent when attendance was taken but arrived at 6:16pm.*

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

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

Council President Polistina announced Committee Reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Councilman Perri thanked all for their work on the 911 Ceremony. He was also told that on zoom and YouTube his microphone does not work, we need to get that resolved. He also had a long meeting with the GWU, he hoped that would be resolved soon. Councilman Perri reached out to the Senior Committee, Joan McCord, who advised him that the Library was not prepared to hold their meetings at this time, so that is on hold. He yielded to the Engineer for a report on the slip lining.

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

Councilman Utts concurred with Councilman Perri; the 911 Ceremony was great; Deputy Clerk Campbell did a great job. He had nothing to report for the Planning Board this month. Housing and Zoning employees received badges.

Council President Polistina confirmed that one position still needed to be filled.

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

Councilman Notaro reported that FAN had their home game opener; it was a great turnout. The new FAN Board has done a phenomenal job. He thanked Public Works and Councilman Dewees for helping out and getting the place ready for the season. Between 45 and 50 sponsors donated, it was amazing to see. There was a game date-change from 10/23 to 10/24; Councilman Notaro would notify Police and EMS. Regarding Economic Development, Councilman Notaro spoke with Mitchell Gurwicz and with a real estate agent who represented national chains, to see what they were looking for and to see if we can make it advantageous for national chains. If we have national chains, other businesses prosper. EMS has moved in to our building, and are mostly set up; they would be on site here from 7am and 7pm. Councilman Notaro read statistics regarding response times and mutual aid.

Council President Polistina was glad to hear response times were going well.

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

Councilman Dewees referred to the leak in the hallway due to the air conditioner, he would follow up on that tomorrow.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

Councilwoman Madden – Insurance and Safety; Library; Mainland Regional

Councilwoman Madden had nothing to report for Mainland Regional High School. The Library meeting was last Thursday; attendance for August was 493, circulation was 1,408 items, 63 e-books, 58 audio books, fees and fines collected were \$189.15, in-person programs 18 with a total attendance of 298. Masks are still in use in the Library. They are working on a draft of their strategic plan

**Councilman Smith arrived at 6:16pm.*

Council President Polistina asked if the plan was for long term or short term?

Councilwoman Madden replied, both.

Mayor Chau asked was the library going to be closed for a certain time for renovations?

Councilwoman Madden replied it would be done in three days, it may be closed for a period of time. Professional staff would be doing the moving.

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

Councilman Smith apologized for his tardiness, he had a cross country meet at Absegami. He apologized for missing the last meeting as well; it was his wife's birthday. He reported that Northfield Community School was back in school, he urged all to be careful with school in session now. He commended Superintendent Bretones for his communication efforts with the families, and for adjusting plans based on feedback from parents.

Council President Polistina – Finance and Collections; Municipal Alliance

Council President Polistina apologized for his absence from the last meeting, he got married and went away for a few days. He reported the audit results were complete with no issues. He thanked all for the 911 Ceremony, it was a great location for the artifact. He thanked Deputy Clerk Campbell for organizing, former Assistant Chief Lauren Crooks for obtaining the artifact, and Engineer Nassar for the design.

Councilman Smith added to his Committee report: there was an opening for Zoning and Code Enforcement. He and Clerk Canesi have had Zoom meetings and are engaging in discussions with Pleasantville for at least one of those positions with a shared service agreement. He was waiting for a proposal from them.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – INCOMPLETE BUSINESS

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

Solicitor Facenda announced the contract has been signed by both parties and paperwork has been signed and submitted to the State. The next step would be an application to the Planning Board.

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

Engineer Nassar did not have an update.

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

The Committee had nothing new to report.

- Sump Pumps discharging into Storm Drains – *Ordinance Pending*

Councilman Perri found that our Ordinance 7-2020 adopted last year will make the sump pump issue more difficult because of some of the exemptions. He would need Solicitor Facenda's opinion. Councilman Perri felt we may have to adjust that first or the State may trump us.

Engineer Nassar confirmed that it was a state requirement; they can dump into a drainage system, our issue is how they get the water to the drainage system.

- 2021 Local Road Program – *Finalize Street List, Requested by Engineer Nassar*

Council President Polistina confirmed the list was finalized at the last meeting and can be removed from the agenda.

- Stormwater Facilities Shared with the County of Atlantic – *Update* from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar was still waiting on additional information; he would present to Council in a plan-format when he had all of the information.

- Potential 2021 Acquisition of Fire Truck

Councilman Notaro reported that the committee has met on several occasions, they were looking at two different makes of fire truck. Chief Cummings should have an

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

updated bid spec by November. Councilman Notaro will be meeting with them tomorrow.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Council President Polistina moved to New Grant Opportunities; none were presented.

- Potential Public Auction of City Owned Property Block 66 Lot 11

Clerk Canesi believed discussion would take place in closed session at a future meeting.

- Facilities Use Applications Required for All Field Uses

Council President Polistina stated that FAN has already submitted their field use application. We need to implement with the other sports groups, and all would follow the existing process.

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.

Christine Camp, 701 Burton Avenue, asked Council where do we stand with the sale of cannabis? She was told we wanted three dispensaries and two boutiques.

Council President Polistina replied that an ordinance was on the agenda this evening.

Ms Camp asked if the ordinances would be enforced? All of them, no smoking on the bike path etc.

Council President Polistina replied; yes they would be enforced.

Ms Camp asked if anyone on City Council was going to make a profit off of this?

Council President Polistina replied; the State law did not allow it.

Ms Camp asked what about home grown? Smoking on premises?

Council President Polistina advised home grown was not permitted, and no smoking on the premises is part of the state regulations.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

Ms Camp asked would the City be hiring additional police?

Council President Polistina replied; we are not at that point.

Ms Camp responded; so you're putting the cart before the horse?

Mayor Chau noted that during the budget hearing, he proposed to hire a police officer. The problem we all have is that it is an unknown, it's not that we don't want additional officers. He felt confident Council would take appropriate action if it became necessary.

Ms. Camp asked if Council was going to limit number of licenses?

Council President Polistina replied it was not in the ordinance right now, we'd have to change that.

Heather Mellon, 2509 Herbert Drive, thanked Ms. Camp for speaking. She asked if a preschool would be located on Route 9 between Shepherd and Ridgewood, and was it a private preschool or was it the school itself.

Councilman Utts replied there was a preschool on the other side, it would have 154 students.

Mrs. Mellon asked who was funding it?

Councilman Utts replied that it was private.

Mrs. Mellon asked what the facility was on the other side, the old Owl Tree?

Councilman Utts replied that this property has not come before Zoning or Planning, unless someone else had information.

Councilman Perri stated that the Construction official had been on vacation, and the builder contacted Councilman Perri for assistance, with which Clerk Canesi helped out immensely. It had something to do with the Community School but Councilman Perri was not sure what. He had posed a question to the Mayor at the last meeting about this, because the referendum said all students would be on-site.

Mayor Chau believed the program was a grant, and he believed this was part of it.

Councilman Perri added that he only knows because he as he'd said, he had to help get an inspector in there before school opened.

Mrs. Mellon asked had the Arthur Henry property been sold and were plans in place for apartments?

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

Councilman Utts replied they came before the board with certain questions as part of their due diligence in making a potential purchase.

Mrs. Mellon asked would it be low-cost housing?

Councilman Utts replied they may be open to a certain percentage of low-cost, because they want the approvals.

Fruqan Mouzon, indicated in the Zoom chat that he'd like to speak, however there were technical difficulties on the part of the City of Northfield that initially prevented Mr. Mouzon from speaking; he typed in the Zoom chat, and Clerk Canesi read aloud: "I am the Cannabis Chair at the Law Firm of McElroy Deutsch. Formerly I worked as General Counsel for the Senate Majority and am very knowledgeable on this topic. I just wanted to make myself available if needed."

It became apparent that while Zoom participants could hear the proceedings as they occurred in Council Chambers, those present in Council Chambers could not hear the Zoom participants. Clerk Canesi attempted to restore two-way communication in the Zoom format, but was unsuccessful.

At 6:50pm, on motion of Councilman Dewees seconded by Councilman Utts Council took a brief recess to attempt to address the technical difficulties with two-way communications in the Zoom format.

At 7:09pm Council resumed the meeting. The two-way communication was restored for the balance of the meeting.

Fruqan Mouzon, in attendance via Zoom and speaking via telephone, stated he was the cannabis chair, before this job he worked with Senator Sweeney and others, he knew this issue very well and was pleased that Northfield was willing to consider it, he offered to answer any questions.

Councilwoman Madden asked for and was provided with Mr. Mouzon's contact information.

Clerk Canesi advised there was no one else participating via Zoom who wished to speak.

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

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Polistina asked all to refer to their agenda packet.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021**

Council President Polistina made the assignments.

At 7:12pm, on a motion of Councilman Dewees, seconded by Councilman Notaro, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk