

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
OCTOBER 22, 2013**

At 6:03pm, 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 Councilman Perri. Following the flag salute a moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

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

Solicitor Kris Facenda, CFO Stollenwerk, Municipal Engineer Dan Kwapinski, and Deputy Clerk Mimi Marlor were also in attendance. Mayor Mazzeo was not in attendance at Roll Call.

WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- Grant Writer RFI

Council President Travagline addressed that the City received two proposals in response to the RFI for grant writer. He contacted both companies and asked them the same questions. He noted that Triad does not work on a commission basis and even though that wasn't surprising; we may want to put it out again. He stated that he would like to schedule each company to make a presentation to Council at an upcoming meeting.

Councilman Polistina asked if there were any fees discussed in the proposals. Council President Travagline responded that Triad has a base fee of \$200.00 per month and he thought that was very attractive.

Councilman Perri asked if the County has a grant writer on staff. Council President Travagline replied that he believes they do. He has spoken to Congressman LoBiondo's office and they have someone on staff as well.

Discussion ensued with regard to grants previously received by the City.

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- RFP – Health Insurance Brokerage Services

Council President Travagline referred to the RFP's that were submitted for Health Insurance Brokerage Services.

Councilman Perri indicated that they were received on the 16th of October and to date he has not had a chance to review any of them.

Council President Travagline indicated that he supports Innovative Risk Solutions.

CFO Stollenwerk provided an overview of the 4 different proposals received and based on the criteria, it is between Innovative Risk Solutions and BCA Insurance Group. CFO Stollenwerk stated that Innovative and CBA gave the most complete package and agreed with Council President Travagline's support of Innovative Risk Solutions because they will provide other services, such as COBRA administration, at no additional charge.

Council President Travagline stated he feels the process is too slow and it appears the City will have to pay the \$2000.00 census fee again.

6:24 pm Mayor Mazzeo entered the meeting

Discussion ensued with regard to brokerage fees and they debated pros and cons of staying in the State Health Benefits Plan versus moving outside of it.

Council President Travagline stated he advocates saving money regardless of what plan. He also noted that the savings may only be realized in the first 12-15 months before rates increase.

Mayor Mazzeo asked if anyone could provide the savings presented by Innovative Risk Solutions at the initial meeting. Council President Travagline replied that he thought it was \$60,000.00.

Councilman Perri asked if one of the Republican candidates is related to the representative of the firm, Innovative Risk Solutions, being recommended by Council President Travagline. Council President Travagline responded that he believes it is a person's brother-in-law. He also stated that Innovative Risk Solutions has not made any political campaign contributions.

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CFO Stollenwerk shared that employees have asked if they can purchase health insurance on the exchange. She indicated that she doubts that will happen because they will not meet the participation percentage requirements.

Council President Travagline commented that a representative from the state will be coming back next week to further discuss the options for employees in State Health Benefits.

Council President Travagline asked if there were any other items for discussion.

Councilman Perri asked why someone on the ball field waited 21 minutes for an ambulance response at Saturday's Cardinal's game. He further stated that he thought mutual aid should have been used.

Council President Travagline asked why the rig was not stationed at the ball field. Councilman Polistina indicated he was not made aware of the issue until shortly before the meeting.

Mayor Mazzeo suggested to Council that the Communications Committee be resurrected.

Council President Travagline asked Councilman Polistina to meet with Mayor Mazzeo and find out what happened with the ambulance, where it was and why did it leave.

Mayor Mazzeo stated they would report back to Council.

Council President Travagline announced that two representatives from Commercial Utility Consultants were in attendance if anyone has questions or anything further to discuss.

Mayor Mazzeo brought to the attention of Council that two union employees did not get a raise that was brought to the union by Donna Clark. There was a question as to whether or not it was agreed upon in the contract.

CFO Stollenwerk clarified that the issue was not an oversight; the contract's wage guide was clear that the wage would remain flat for 2013. If they choose to pay it the contract will have to be reopened and the wage guide would need to be redone for the duration of the contract.

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Councilman Perri stated he was not in favor of setting a practice and if it will change the contract then it would have to be reopened.

Mayor Mazzeo reported that he will get back to Council.

Councilman Carew asked the effect of Ordinance 13-2013. Peter Hodson, Director of Energy Products and Client Coordination for Commercial Utility Consultants, spoke and explained that 30 towns in New Jersey are in the Ordinance process. He clarified that the Ordinance indicates the City will investigate whether energy aggregation is for you. He stated that nothing will happen until the process is complete, including the RFP.

Councilman O'Neill asked the timeframe of the process from beginning to end. Peter Hodson replied that it averages to be about three months. He explained the step by step process including a 30 day awareness program which may be in the form of town hall meetings, website information and call center options.

Councilman O'Neill asked once we find out there is a savings how much time to get the word to the residents. Peter Hodson answered that the savings are only realized after the RFP.

Council President Travagline reviewed the agenda for the regular meeting and made assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Travagline opened the meeting to any member of the public wishing to speak on any subject.

Robert Webb, 218 West Revere Avenue, asked Mr. Hodson from CUC what is the impact of Atlantic City Electric on the energy program. Mr. Hodson noted that Atlantic City Electric will remain the distributor of electricity. Mr. Webb also asked about repairs. Mr. Hodson clarified that too remains the same; only the supplier changes. Mr. Hodson also explained what happens with those individuals that presently have a 3rd party supplier.

Councilman Perri asked if the rate is consistent. Mr. Hodson answered that it is consistent for the life of the contract and stated there are no fees; residents can leave at any time unlike private 3rd party suppliers that require a contract period.

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Gerry McGee, 1620 Zion Road, asked what the predicted savings is for each resident of Northfield. Mr. Hodson replied that the savings is predicted at two cents per kilowatt hour.

Paul Utts, 144 East Rosedale Avenue, asked the effect on people that currently have a third party supplier. Mr. Hodson noted they would not be included in the aggregation group. Mr. Utts asked about energy sources. Mr. Hodson stated that the aggregation group/the towns would decide what would be most important to them, such as clean energy verses straight savings and that would, by law all be reflected in the advertised RFP. Mr. Utts acknowledged that consumers would automatically choose the cheapest price but asked if information is presented to include options such as clean energy. Mr. Hodson reiterated that the Co-op or aggregation groups decide what is important and that should reflect resident feedback.

Stella Blumberg, 127 East Oakcrest Avenue, stated she was present to remind Council that the residents want their entire street paved and commented that the City will save money if they pave now in conjunction with New Jersey American Water restoration work. She thanked the members of Council who visited the street.

Engineer Kwapinski responded that New Jersey American Water is scheduled to pave next Monday and they will be doing restoration work that is lane wide not street wide.

Tom Boyd, 117 Northfield Avenue, asked for clarification of the location of flashing lights referred to in Bond Ordinance 12-2013. Councilman Carew answered that the locations are at Shore Road and Ridgewood Court, Mill Road and Wabash Avenue, and Zion Road and Wabash Avenue. Mr. Boyd asked for a definition of flashing light. Councilman Dewees replied that it is a pedestrian crossing light.

Erland Chau, 1001 Shore Road, asked what happens if he already has a third party supplier of electricity. Mr. Hodson responded that he would not be included in the aggregation group at the onset. Mr. Chau stated that the condition of paving at Surrey Avenue and Shore Road is deplorable and asked that the Road Department take a look. He also said he is seeing more flashing/moving signs at businesses and stated his concern in the interpretation of the sign ordinance which in turn may be leading to violations. Additionally Mr. Chau asked if the City was notified that Comcast is moving outside of Northfield. Municipal Clerk Canesi responded that she believes a notice provided by Comcast is posted in the lobby. Mr. Chau continued and urged Council to find out why the Northfield office is closing and stated he was disappointed that customers will now have to go to Pleasantville.

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Mayor Mazzeo asked Mr. Chau to clarify his comment regarding the discrepancy in his interpretation of the sign ordinance. Mr. Chau explained he was involved in creating the ordinance and shared that signs should not take up 100 percent of window space. Mayor Mazzeo said he disagreed with Mr. Chau's interpretation and further stated there should be compromise. He said he thinks Northfield's sign ordinance is too restrictive, especially in these economic times.

Councilman Dewees stated he feel that parts of the ordinance are sometimes difficult to police. Mr. Chau suggested Council consider changing the ordinance rather than enforcing it.

Council President Travagline stated he will contact Comcast.

Gerry McGee, 1620 Zion Road, asked if signage needs approval of the Planning Board before installation. Mayor Mazzeo replied and explained he was referring to temporary signage. Councilman Perri also spoke and explained some of the sign ordinance provisions, such as the need for a permit to hang a neon sign. He also commented that compliance is enforced by the Zoning Officer.

Mr. McGee asked if there is a paving schedule. Councilman Dewees replied that there is a paving schedule. Councilman Carew concurred that there is a list and he further explained how streets are chosen.

Robert Webb, 218 West Revere, agreed with Mr. Chau regarding the sign ordinance enforcement. He also stated he thought too much money is spent on Birch Grove Park and further expressed his dissatisfaction with Egg Harbor Township dispatch. He also stated concern that Police officers are not at City Hall where they should be but are on the road.

Erland Chau, 1001 Shore Road, urged Council members to attend New Jersey League of Municipality meetings. He also suggested the City consider more shared services.

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

At 7:41pm on motions properly made and seconded this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC
Municipal Clerk