

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
OCTOBER 26, 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 October 26, 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 October 26, 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/84970313083> or by telephone using one tap mobile +16465588656,,84970313083# or direct dial +1 646 558 8656 using Meeting ID: 849 7031 3083. 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 October 26, 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 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.

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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 Smith; Councilman Utts; Mayor Chau.

Absent: Council President Polistina

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

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees announced Committee Reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

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Councilman Perri thanked all for Trunk or Treat, it was a great event. He recognized the passing of Judge Broome, and offered condolences to the family. The Broome legacy lives on in his sons. Engineer Nassar would report on slip lining; there were few problems but nothing major. The ACUA had made some progress with Monday pick-ups; he hoped they would get back on schedule soon.

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

Councilman Utts reported Business Administrator Canesi had been diligently working to fill the vacant Zoning and Code Enforcement positions, including a creative solution to move Code Enforcement to the Police Department, like Linwood had done. She had also been working on sharing some service with Pleasantville. Business Administrator Canesi had been working to fill gaps in the interim. The Veterans Administration Clinic would come before the Planning Board next month.

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

Councilman Notaro reported he was unable to attend Trunk or Treat but it was a very successful event; he thanked Deputy Clerk Shannon Campbell, Public Works, the Police Department and Fire for their hard work. He also recognized the passing of Judge Broome. He heard concerns from a resident of Mill Road regarding noise at the American Legion; he spoke to Chief Newman and he would work on addressing it.

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

Councilman Dewees echoed the comments that Trunk or Treat was a great night, he thanked all involved.

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

Councilman Smith reported the Northfield Community School Board meeting was last night, it was very quick, there was not much to report. Councilman Smith's daughter Quinlan Smith was student of the month. He echoed the sentiments regarding Judge Broome, he had many years of service and a great contribution to the community. He also acknowledged the passing of Hap Appleget, a long-time volunteer for the City.

Councilwoman Madden – Insurance and Safety; Library; Mainland Regional

Councilwoman Madden attended the Library board meeting last week, she read

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library statistics for September and October: attendance for September 493, October was 192; material circulation for September was 1408, October 573; e-books 63 and 54; audio books 58 and 38; fines and fees collected was \$189.15 and \$76.33. The Library was closed for two weeks for a flooring project. It was now complete and looked beautiful; the Library staff worked very hard on the project. Councilwoman Madden attended the Mainland Regional High School Board of Education meeting. The October students of the month were: Madison Siglin – 9th Grade, Vitchyena Exantus -10th Grade, Jack Walcoff – 11th Grade and Camryn Dirkes – 12th Grade.

Mayor Chau, with regard to a recent Covid-related cancellation of a football game, asked Councilwoman Madden if the school made a new policy.

Councilwoman Madden was unaware of it, she couldn't comment.

Councilman Perri asked for an explanation.

Mayor Chau replied; he heard that last week's football game was canceled due to Covid. He was wondering what was being done to keep students safe.

Council President Polistina – Finance and Collections; Municipal Alliance

Council President Polistina was absent.

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees moved to old business.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS

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

Solicitor Facenda reported the application was filed and believed it would be before the Planning Board on December 2, 2021.

- 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*

Council President Polistina was absent, there was nothing new to report.

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

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Councilman Perri reported he had language for sump pumps, he would get it to the Clerk's office to be sent to Solicitor Facenda.

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

Engineer Nassar did not have an update.

- Potential Acquisition of Fire Truck – *Bid Specifications Pending from Chief Cummings*

Councilman Notaro did not have an update.

- Potential Public Auction of City Owned Property Block 66 Lot 11 – *For Future Meeting, Awaiting Response from the City's Planner*
- Business-Friendly Changes to Sign Ordinance

Clerk Canesi noted that comments were supposed to be sent to Council President Polistina. Since he was not here Council could discuss at the next meeting.

Councilwoman Madden asked for update on the cannabis ordinance, she felt time was of the essence.

Councilman Utts stated that all of Council should have gotten an email from a Linwood resident who wanted to open an upscale business in Northfield. The application process begins November 9, 2021. Councilman Utts had forwarded parameters to Council President Polistina and Councilman Perri. Councilman Perri was favor and Council President Polistina was out of town. Councilman Utts hopes to have an ordinance on the next agenda. The Linwood woman believed she could generate \$15,000.00 in revenue to Northfield; Councilman Utts did not know if that was accurate. There were still things to consider, such as would cultivation be allowed? Councilman Utts was not sure about that. He asked Council to think about how many licenses the Council thought they want to accept, etc.

Councilman Notaro believed getting the ordinance right was important.

Mayor Chau noted that he had shared sample ordinances with the Council, from other towns.

Solicitor Facenda clarified that the Committee was formed. He heard tonight that Councilman Perri was in agreement. Solicitor Facenda did not know what was to be drafted; was the Committee presenting to the Council, or was Solicitor Facenda incorporating the recommendations into a draft?

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Councilman Notaro asked if an applicant puts Northfield on their application, and Northfield did not work out, could she change it?

Councilman Utts replied yes, but it was time consuming.

Councilman Perri noted that there was a tobacco shop near Rose's Garden Grill, in a neighborhood, with hookahs on their signs.

Clerk Canesi commented that tobacco sales were a permitted use in the C-B zone.

Councilman Utts felt cannabis would stimulate other job categories as well, electricians, plumbers.

Councilman Smith read from an Atlantic City Press editorial that advocated amending cannabis laws before damage was done. He cited several statistics that indicated cannabis legalization has had a negative impact on states where it had become legal. Councilman Smith did not think revenue was worth sacrificing our children. That we would go against health experts, against our own Law Enforcement experts, boggled Councilman Smith's mind. Councilman Smith did not want it in Northfield.

Councilwoman Madden stated that what Councilman Smith read was an opinion. Alcohol and vaping were a problem. This was not for children.

Councilman Smith replied; facts bear out that once children see it is legal, they think it's okay for them too.

Councilman Perri noted there were programs to address that; education.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees moved to New Grant Opportunities; he noted there was a resolution on tonight's agenda for the Fire Department to apply for a grant.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees asked all to refer to their agenda packet.

Councilman Smith asked for an update on the lot on the corner of Dolphin Avenue.

Councilman Notaro replied that Clerk Canesi was waiting to hear from Habitat for Humanity.

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Council President Pro Tempore Dewees announced that Resolution 180-2021 would not be moved tonight, it was not necessary.

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees asked if had everyone reviewed the information with regard to 184-2021? If all are okay with it, then we can include it as part of the consent agenda.

Councilman Perri replied that he would like the final document.

Clerk Canesi advised it was provided along with the agenda.

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees confirmed all were okay, we will not need the Executive Session for 184-2021. He also announced that 185-2021 and 186-2021 would not be moved because we did not get information from Government Workers' Union.

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees made the assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees 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.

Kim Betesh, 102 S Iroquois Avenue, Margate, stated she owns a business 801 Tilton Road. Announced that she just came back from world's largest cannabis conference. She suggested Northfield may want to put out ordinances based on type of license, if something changed Council was not changing the whole ordinance. She was not telling Council how to do their job, just thought it may be easier. She noted there were significant compliance requirements. She recommended the City hire an auditor to ensure we are getting our taxes. She believed the carbon scrubbers were not what they need to be for grow facilities. Mrs. Betesh did not smoke but believed in the value of cannabis.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Council President Pro Tempore Dewees closed the public session

At 6:43pm, on a motion of Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Perri, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk