

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
NOVEMBER 10, 2020**

At 6:02pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 11, 2020 and on November 7, 2020, 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, the previously advertised November 10, 2020, 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 social distancing requirements related to Covid-19, there are limited seats for in-person attendance by members of the public. Visit the November 10, 2020 date on the events calendar page of www.cityofnorthfield.org determine current availability for this meeting. 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 2:00pm on November 10th, 2020. 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/89112041847>; or by telephone using one tap mobile +13017158592,,89112041847# or +1 301 715 8592 using meeting ID: 891 1204 1847. 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 scampbell@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 at the rear 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 November 10, 2020.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

Municipal Clerk Canesi read the following statement:

“Due to social distancing requirements related to Covid-19, there are limited seats for in-person attendance by members of the public this evening. For this reason, 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 and 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.

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 FB pages, and were published in the Press of Atlantic City. The full text

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of the public meeting notice has been posted at the entrances 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."

ROLL CALL

Present (in person): Councilman Dewees; Councilwoman Madden; Councilman O'Neill; Councilman Smith; Councilman Utts; Council President Perri; Mayor Chau

Absent: Councilwoman Korngut

Solicitor Stein and Engineer Nassar were also in attendance.

Chief Newman was present via Zoom.

Council President Perri welcomed everyone including those on Zoom. He gave a great thanks to our frontline workers who were keeping us going during this pandemic.

Council President Perri moved to old business.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – OLD BUSINESS

- Radio Tower, Rear of City Hall– *In person presentation TBD*

Council President Perri reported correspondence was sent out to an individual whom he had not been able to get back to.

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Engineer Nassar announced that he received an email today from the contractor for the handicap ramp and they were having issues because of the tower, he asked if we really needed to keep the tower?

Council President Perri replied that he had discussions this week with Clerk Canesi; it does not look like there was another site here that could house it, but it was preexisting nonconforming.

Engineer Nassar noted that the current tower would have to be replaced with a taller tower which would require additional approvals. It would also require cabinets, site plan approvals etc. and would require Planning Board approval.

Council President Perri felt other suggested locations would be too close to residential homes.

Engineer Nassar responded that if we take the tower down it would be extremely costly, but we have to build around it, he could try to get some numbers.

Council President Perri asked for Council's opinion.

Councilman Dewees believed we should remove the tower and focus on the handicapped ramp; there may be some companies that want to recycle it and may remove it at reduced costs.

Councilman Utts agreed with Councilman Dewees.

Councilwoman Madden asked would there be any value in the metal?

Councilman Dewees replied, yes, it would be recycled.

Councilman Smith stated he would like more information; was the adjustment to the plan more expensive than taking down the tower; was it a danger to anyone as it is?

Council President Perri replied we don't really know; we haven't had it inspected.

Engineer Nassar replied there would be no additional cost for the adjustment, the cost would be with the removal.

Councilman Utts replied, but more expensive down the road.

Engineer Nassar responded, yes.

Councilman Dewees added that if the structure becomes compromised in the future it could be an issue.

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Councilman Smith asked if there was any evidence of that?

Council President Perri reiterated that it hasn't been inspected; he asked Engineer Nassar to get costs for removal. He also asked for specifics of difficulties the contractor was having.

Engineer Nassar replied some of the roof structure between the tower and the building, a change in the roof line. He did not want to hold up the project but two weeks may not be an issue.

Council President Perri asked Engineer Nassar to put something together so we can look at the costs.

- Proposed Dog Park – *Council President Perri*

Council President Perri moved to the dog park; since the last meeting he had some reservations because the Advisory Board was not in favor, comments from the public, and other concerns. He said he would entertain this but he was not really in agreement, now that the Advisory Board and Council Chair were not in favor. He also felt some of the language in the lease agreement needed to be more in favor of the City, as opposed to the tenant.

Councilman Dewees asked had the 501c3 been formed?

Council President Perri replied they were holding off to see what we were going to do.

Councilman Dewees recalled a few meetings ago it was supposed to have been formed.

Councilman Dewees asked for straw poll to put the issue to bed.

Councilman Utts suggested Council wait until Councilwoman Korngut was here.

Councilman O'Neill stated if you don't have buy-in, it will never work. Even Councilman O'Neill had seen issues where there was 75% buy-in and things fell apart. The park was 100% not for it, so Councilman O'Neill felt it would fail. He felt they needed to look at another spot. He shared a recent encounter with a resident at Wawa who was opposed to the dog park, and another resident who was in favor. Younger parents have shared their discomfort with dogs near their young children. Residents have shared concerns with dogs barking near their homes at all hours. It was a good idea, in the wrong spot.

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Councilman Dewees said he understood Councilman Utts' concern, but we've talked about this for several months, and given the fact that the 501 had not been formed, he was asking for a vote tonight.

Councilman Smith had stated previously that he did not object but was reserving comment until the Advisory Board weighed in. He saw the point in not putting it in that location, based on all that has been said.

Councilwoman Madden agreed we should not vote in Councilwoman Korngut's absence.

Councilman Dewees reiterated the question. How can we move forward if the 501c3 has not even been formed yet?

Council President Perri called for a voice vote to not move forward; Councilman Utts abstained, Councilwoman Madden voted no, all others agree to not move forward with the dog park.

- Offer to Donate Private Property to the City – *Update if Applicable, Councilman Smith*

Councilman Smith did not have an update, he advised we could remove it from the agenda for now and revisit later.

- Zion Road Pump Station Easement – *Update from Council President Perri*

Council President Perri asked Engineer Nassar to comment.

Engineer Nassar explained that our equipment was on private property and we discussed an easement; Councilman Dewees suggested subdividing the property and the owners were not in favor. Engineer Nassar had a conversation with the County, and the County Engineer felt it was more appropriate to have a dedicated easement, to the County, for the right of way. The owners of the property would be compensated, but instead of an easement, it would be in the form of a right of way.

Council President Perri asked Solicitor Stein to comment.

Solicitor Stein stated the dollar number can be moved over; it was originally double. The property owner has no interest in selling because that would affect the overall lot size, etc. If the County can do that and the numbers don't change, then the concerns about owning it or not owning it, go away. Solicitor Stein's only concern was timing of the project.

Engineer Nassar would contact the County Engineer and Attorney and discuss it with the owners.

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Councilman Dewees asked the location of the new can station.

Engineer Nassar replied it would be on top of the existing can station; similar to Davis Avenue.

Discussion ensued between Engineer Nassar and Solicitor Stein.

Council President Perri asked Engineer Nassar if his recommendation was to hold off on 176-2020 until the next meeting?

Engineer Nassar replied, yes.

- Cedar Bridge Road Drainage – *Update from Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar reported that Public Works cleaned the system from the school to Juniper; they found a line that may be connected to the State system. One resident was having a problem with water running onto his property. It seemed the property owner's driveway was pitched backwards and the property is lower than the street; it collects runoff partially from the street and partially from other houses. One solution was to build a small berm but you are still going to have water because the property is lower than the street by close to eight inches. It was a low area. He did not think the municipality wanted to start building curbs and drainage systems to solve a problem that can't be solved; it is the way they built these homes.

Councilman Utts asked if a berm would help?

Engineer Nassar replied yes, but we don't want the responsibility to maintain it. He reiterated the driveway has no 'lip' and was pitched backwards.

Councilman Utts questioned, so he needed to reconstruct his driveway?

Engineer Nassar replied yes, and install curb. But that was not the responsibility of the municipality.

Councilman Smith asked Engineer Nassar if he had approached the homeowner?

Engineer Nassar responded, no, he was waiting for direction from Council.

Councilman Dewees asked if there was enough room for a stone bed; could that create a parallel parking situation and alleviate the water?

Engineer Nassar believed that may make the problem worse.

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Council President Perri suggested Councilman Smith contact the owner, since he took the original complaint.

Engineer Nassar offered to accompany Councilman Smith.

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

Engineer Nassar reported he received an email from an environmental stormwater specialist with NJDEP; she asked various questions and asked for records. Engineer Nassar responded with an explanation as to why it was an issue with the State's system and was awaiting a response. He would send another request to her for an update.

Council President Perri asked if they came up with anything on their end?

Engineer Nassar replied, no.

- Oxford and Bay Force Main Break – *Update from Engineer Nassar, requested by Council President Perri*

Council President Perri moved to Oxford and Bay Force Main Break.

Engineer Nassar advised he had spoken with Superintendent Vitale; he was in contact with Lafayette. The original work was done by Kline and they are of course out of business. Engineer Nassar also spoke with the County. They were working on having it taken care of.

- Emergency Medical Services – *No Update*

Clerk Canesi advised that Linwood advised that they had not yet advertised the RFP.

Councilman Smith asked if it expired at the end of the year.

Clerk Canesi advised that the contract ends February 28, 2021.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Mayor Chau asked Engineer Nassar or Clerk Canesi to update Council regarding the Bike Path Grant.

Engineer Nassar reported that he and Clerk Canesi were working on the application, he explained the highlights which included enhanced safety, widening, realignment of certain areas, improved beacons, lighting, and possibly eventual goal of

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connecting to the County Bikeway to Buena Vista Township. Clerk Canesi was helping with writing our position.

Mayor Chau thanked Clerk Canesi and her office for coordinating getting letters of support.

Clerk Canesi stated that we have received some wonderful letters from Mainland Regional High School, including the Chief Administrative Officer and from the Athletic Director, as well as several local businesses and residents who use the bike path. We received an incredible show of support, she thanked the community.

- Lisa Lehne-Gilmore, Aktion Club - Grant Opportunity

Clerk Canesi advised that she had spoken with Mrs. Lehne-Gilmore several times today; Mrs. Lehne-Gilmore, did call again late this afternoon and advised that she would not be pursuing the grant at this time. She and her group did not realize how much needed to be put together in such a short timeframe. Clerk Canesi did tell her we appreciated her passion and interest. Mrs. Lehne-Gilmore shared that she would attend a future Advisory Board meeting and would advise us if she found another opportunity.

Councilman Dewees noted that the next Advisory Board meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 18th. He asked Clerk Canesi to reach out to her and let her know the date.

Councilman Utts advised that he had already told her and she was aware of it.

Council President Perri confirmed that the deadline was tight.

Clerk Canesi did look at the grant application and felt it would take two months if she, Canesi, had attempted it. It's a huge undertaking.

- Policy Addressing the Protection and Safe Treatment of Minors – *Clerk Canesi*

Clerk Canesi reported that our insurance company had come up with a uniform policy that covers the safe treatment and protection of minors; it was a policy that was drafted by an outside consulting firm. JIF member entities have been provided with the model policy and asked to implement by the end of the year. She was working with labor counsel on some of the items that don't apply in Northfield. It will be implemented by the end of the year; she hoped to have a draft of the policy for the meeting on the 24th with the hopes of it being on for approval at the meeting on December 15th.

- 2021 Professional Services Qualifications – *Clerk Canesi*

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Clerk Canesi announced that she had emailed all of Council the professional services qualifications. She needed to know if anyone had any interest in changing anything?

Council President Perri asked for discussion; no changes were proposed, he directed Clerk Canesi to move forward.

Clerk Canesi stated that at the last meeting, Council authorized the CFO to apply for a grant for the Local Government Emergency Fund which is the CARES Act Funding. Our allocation was roughly \$113,000.00. That application was submitted, and we did receive information late this afternoon that the DCA requested that we amend our budget now to account for that allocation. We won't get the money until early 2021. She asked Council for approval to add Resolution No. 178-2020 to amend the budget to include those funds, to this evening's agenda.

Council President Perri asked for discussion; there was none. We would add Resolution No. 178-2020.

Seeing no other new business, Council President Perri asked all to take out their agendas.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Perri reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda and made the assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Perri 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.

Marlene Pontari, 9 Leslie Lane, announced that she drives to the Ocean City Dog Park. Parking is an issue, as is trash. She did not want to see that in Northfield. She had lived here for 52 years. On Burton Avenue, we have the farm market, the fire station, the football field. Do we need a dog park? The residents of the area would have to deal with all of the additional traffic. She was not opposed to dogs. She thought the park was meant for children. She felt the presence of dogs was a liability issue. We may even need more police; she sees more police in the vicinity of the Egg Harbor Township Dog Park a lot.

Via Zoom: "Alica Garry, 202 Saint James Place - Great job, thank you for installing electrical outlets to remainder of light posts along bike path Tilton to Dolphin! Will the outlets be hot 24/7? Is there any safety/security lock on the outlets to prevent injury or public usage? Has anyone had a chance to check run off at 1st street playground and unlevel ground for safety? Is the split rail around drain enough of a

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safety barrier as anyone can get through the rails? Is this JIF compliance for safety as ground is a significant drop, and when it rains and collects water is this safe for anyone to be walking on? Should the whole area be fenced off? What if any update on who is covering next years increased cost of crossing guard salaries? Again, this will fall on the taxpayers either way. Thank you for your responses.”

Councilman Dewees replied that he would check as to outlets being hot 24/7 and would get back to Mrs. Garry. As to safety, they are at the top of the poles and difficult to access but he had not seen them yet.

Clerk Canesi stated that she and Engineer Nassar visited the First Street Playground and the JIF Safety Inspector would be coming on the 19th of November. It’s a drainage swale, there’s a split rail fence, you can’t get into the basin itself. She deferred to Engineer Nassar.

Engineer Nassar confirmed it is a swale, and said when it rains it connects the park to the drainage. The elevation had to be lower in order to collect the runoff. He did not think it could be regraded, but it had been there for some time.

Council President Perri noted that one part of her question was in regard to it being dangerous.

Engineer Nassar replied the ground is a bit soft when wet, the opening was small, maybe a cat could get into it but not a child.

Council President Perri added that it was overflow, it doesn't work unless the road floods. The ground was secure. The JIF inspector would give his opinion but at this point in time it was safe.

Mayor Chau responded to the question about crossing guard salaries; we have applied for a grant but it would not pay for the entire costs. We were trying to get enough money to cover this year, until the end of December. He asked Council to think about January to the end of the school year; Mayor Chau had suggested to Superintendent Bretones that if the City was not going to cover the middle shift next year, he would appreciate that we give sufficient notice so the school can prepare the proper notifications. He asked Council to think about January 2021.

Council President Perri felt that was going to be up to the next administration; we can meet with CFO Stollenwerk about this year's funding. Maybe during the Reorganization meeting we can make it a standing item on the work session. He recommended discussing it at Reorganization and getting CFO Stollenwerk’s advice. Mayor Chau felt it was an important issue for this municipality and the school.

Council President Perri asked if we were still at an impasse with the school?

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Mayor Chau replied, yes.

Council President Perri thanked Mrs. Garry for her comments.

Mayor Chau thanked and acknowledged Heather Mellon and Eileen Pantalena, both of whom were in the audience, for their years of service as crossing guards.

Seeing no others wishing to speak, Council President Perri closed the public session.

At 7:00pm, on a motion of Councilman Dewees, seconded by Councilman Smith, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk