

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
NOVEMBER 12, 2019**

At 6:05pm this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 5, 2019, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

Solicitor Facenda announced that the recording device was inoperable due to a power surge, no audio of the meeting would be available, but there would be amplification.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Dewees, Korngut, Madden, O'Neill, Perri, Smith, Lischin

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

**WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – OLD BUSINESS**

Council President Lischin asked Councilman Dewees to speak regarding bike trails at the park.

- Bike Trails at BGP – *Signage and maps for public being developed*

Councilman Dewees distributed a slightly revised trail map from the last meeting with names for trails named after trees. He thanked Councilwoman Madden for her input. He would be meeting with the Advisory Board tomorrow. He mentioned that there would be a resident in attendance this evening who may have questions, so we would wait for that.

Council President Lischin thanked Councilman Dewees for his hard work.

Councilman O'Neill asked if any trees were removed.

Councilman Dewees replied no.

- Use-Fee Ordinance:
  - Use of Lights on Athletic Fields –*Light Fee Has Been Established*
  - Helicopter Landing Fee
    - *Recommendation from Fire Department for Stand-By Fees is Pending*

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Council President Lischin moved to discussion of the fee ordinance, and said we were waiting on the Fire Department's recommendations.

Mayor Chau said he had met with Chief Cummings, and discussions were still ongoing.

- Radio Tower, Rear of City Hall - *Solicitor/Clerk RFP Pending*

Council President Lischin asked Solicitor Facenda for an update on the radio tower at City Hall.

Solicitor Facenda reported that he received the information from the Building Department and from Councilman Perri necessary for us to move this to the next step, which would be preparation of an RFP. He noted that we would have to lease a portion of the facility for equipment.

Councilwoman Madden asked if we would get rent.

Solicitor Facenda replied yes.

Councilman Smith recalled that eight or nine years ago we investigated this when he was on Council; there was no interest at that time. He hoped that had changed.

Solicitor Facenda noted that equipment had gotten smaller, and Councilman Perri had advised that there were gaps in coverage in some areas of town.

Councilwoman Korngut asked did it cost anything to test the waters.

Solicitor Facenda replied that there would be costs to prepare the RFP and advertising cost; possibly 4-5 hours billable time and perhaps some targeted marketing.

Council President Lischin took a straw poll as to whether Solicitor Facenda should proceed with the RFP.

All members were generally in favor.

- 2020 Local Road Paving Project – *Update from Engineer Nassar*

Council President Lischin asked Engineer Nassar to comment.

Engineer Nassar reviewed possible paving locations as discussed at the last meeting. He said the area of Wabash and the bike path where people were turning around at the dead end would need curbing. He asked if Council wanted to proceed with that.

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Councilman Dewees asked if there were any drainage issues.

Engineer Nassar replied no, but we need to stop people from driving across the bike path. He also checked in to the drainage issue at Maple and Fairbanks; some of the inlets were at dead ends. He suggested connecting to the County system at that one block. He would bring the proposed budget to next Council meeting.

Councilman Dewees felt the drainage tie-in was worthwhile.

Councilman Smith suggested planting trees, in lieu of a curb, at Wabash.

Engineer Nassar suggested an area to turn around may be more appropriate.

- Military Surplus for Veterans Park – *Update from Solicitor*

Solicitor Facenda reviewed the information provided by Mayor Chau. He explained that the U.S. Army had items of surplus that they donate to municipalities for display purposes; the items are basically on loan, you don't own it, can't loan it out and can't sell it. If nothing was available you can be on a waiting list. The City would be responsible for the Army's cost of demilitarizing the piece; we have to authorize a maximum cost as part of the application. We pay for the transportation of the item to us via common carrier, the cost would vary depending on where the item is, how big it is etc. Council could request an item only in NJ, or from our general region. If no piece was available within 3 years, you have to reapply. We would need to provide G.P.S. coordinates and an aerial photo of where the item would be located. The application also requires a rough idea of the size of the area we are looking to fill.

Engineer Nassar estimated the area to be 20' x 20'.

Solicitor Facenda listed items that may be available. He needed guidance as to the type of equipment, how much Council was willing to pay, and how far away can it be.

All were generally in favor of an expenditure of \$1,000, an item from our geographic region, and an item of towed artillery as the item being requested.

**WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS**

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Nassar explained that in 2015 Council adopted a Resolution for a complete streets policy, and said this should help in getting sidewalks on Cedar Bridge, from Oak Avenue to Route 9. We have to be proactive and secure the rights of way. Engineer Nassar could identify the parcels for which we'd need rights of way.

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Solicitor Facenda would coordinate with Engineer Nassar.

Councilwoman Madden asked for an explanation of the rights of way issues.

Engineer Nassar explained the process.

Mayor Chau regarding the paving of Shepherd Drive, asked if this was this a grant.

Engineer Nassar replied yes, from a State agency.

Council President Lischin asked if there was any other new business.

Councilwoman Korngut said she received a text from the Library Director that the Library's video footage as part of the City's new virtual tour was excluded from the website.

Mayor Chau explained that he was in charge of this project, which came at no cost to the taxpayer. The final edits were made based upon time and video quality. Mayor Chau did approve the final version and would find out why the Library was not included. He noted that there were other areas that were filmed that were also not included in the final cut.

As another item of new business, Councilwoman Korngut would like to initiate discussions regarding a dog park. She thanked Engineer Nassar for meeting her to discuss possible locations.

Engineer Nassar explained that to the left of the bocce court is the area Councilwoman Korngut referred to.

Councilman Dewees asked was this the picnic area?

Councilwoman Korngut added that we may lose one bocce court and move one of the BBQ grills. There would be no increase in taxes; they would do it as they do it in Egg Harbor Township. Councilwoman Korngut would follow that model and create a 501c3, if donations were not sufficient, it would not get done. She suggested the land would be leased from the City. The dogs not yet in the park would have to be leashed at all times, and a key fob would be granted for entry. Access could be shut down to users who violate dog park policy.

Engineer Nassar pointed out that no dogs are allowed in the park.

Council President Lischin replied that dogs in the park are a major issue; a lot of the birds don't fly.

Councilwoman Korngut felt dog owners would be responsible.

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Councilman Perri added that the Council Chair and Advisory Committee should weigh in.

Councilman Dewees replied that he would fill them in tomorrow at the meeting.

Councilwoman Madden was in favor of a dog park.

Councilman O'Neill wanted to make sure they had the money to do the project before they started. If they had the funding, he'd be okay with it.

Councilwoman Korngut noted the hours would be dawn to dusk, so no lights would be needed.

Councilman Smith asked about access to the dog park, he suggested an entrance that would not require walking near the areas where children are. He noted that he saw three dogs at the park over the weekend, unleashed.

Councilman Dewees asked if a piece of City owned land near Dolphin Avenue may be more suitable.

Councilman O'Neill asked if a piece of utility company owned land at Wabash and Shepherd may be suitable, right off the bike path.

Councilwoman Madden asked if Councilwoman Korngut would be open to other locations; trying to keep it away from residential areas.

Mayor Chau asked who would keep it clean.

Councilwoman Korngut stated that people clean up after themselves, but Public Works would have to empty the trash.

Mayor Chau asked Engineer Nassar what type of substrate would be used.

Engineer Nassar replied they like different surfaces, possibly sand, but suggested it be kept natural.

Mayor Chau noted there would be solid and liquid fecal matter, which may contain parasites; with large numbers of animals the animal waste can accumulate. He expressed his concerns with regard to health and sanitation. A small area would have a chance of greater concentration.

Councilwoman Korngut acknowledged Ms Burns from the Egg Harbor Township Dog Park, who was in the audience.

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Council President Lischin invited Ms Burns to come forward.

Donna Burns, 102 Woodbury Drive, Egg Harbor Township, offered to answer questions.

Mayor Chau asked did the Board of Health or the County have to inspect the dog park.

Ms Burns replied no.

Engineer Nassar asked how the Egg Harbor Township Dog Park was run.

Ms Burns explained that they were a non-profit organization that ran the park, they had insurance. Owners and users come prepared with proper footwear. There have been no health issues. The hours are from dawn to dusk, and access was controlled via her laptop.

Councilman O'Neill asked if Ms Burns saw our proposed map, and asked how big the Egg Harbor Township Park was.

Ms Burns replied no, she had not seen our map; she described the sizes of the small and large dog parks.

Mayor Chau asked if dogs had to provide rabies certifications.

Solicitor Facenda asked if there was membership fee.

Ms Burns replied yes to Mayor Chau, and to Solicitor Facenda she said the fee was \$40 per year.

Solicitor Facenda asked for confirmation that as a 501 c3, the group had the organizational documents, by laws, etc. and insurance naming the city as additional insured.

Ms Burns replied yes to all.

Councilwoman Korngut suggested giving Northfield residents 1<sup>st</sup> priority.

Solicitor Facenda suggested she may be able to set an occupancy limit but may not be able to restrict access to Northfield residents.

Mayor Chau asked Ms Burns why she wanted to establish a dog park.

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Ms Burns explained for years she was driving 13 miles one way to the Ocean City Dog Park; she went to the township committee but they said they didn't have the money, but came up with the land.

Solicitor Facenda asked what the rent to the Township was.

Ms Burns replied \$1 per year.

Council President Lischin thanked Ms Burns for coming this evening.

**PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER**

Council President Lischin opened this portion of the meeting for any member of the public to speak on any topic; he noted a 5-minute limit per speaker.

Mark Finkel, 2006 Shore Road, said he felt dog owners were responsible. He made a humorous comment that instead of working on Shore Road, the money should be used to pay for the dog park.

David Seitman, 3 Cara Court, thanked Councilwoman Korngut for her work; she answered all of the questions he may have had. He asked if doggie bags and sanitizer would be available. He did not feel dogs would be interested in the birds at the park.

Bill Markovitch, 731 Shore Road; asked if the lease be revoked and for what reasons. Also, how long would the lease be for, had there been issues of dogs attacking each other and have there been insurance claims.

Council President Lischin replied that we don't know for Northfield, but could ask Ms Burns in regard to Egg Harbor Township.

Ms Burns explained that they allow two dogs per family, more than two costs more and the owner would have to have a 2<sup>nd</sup> person with them. Everyone signs a hold harmless agreement. There had been three issues in three years. The members are really good dog owners and behave responsibly. No insurance claims had been filed against Egg Harbor Township. There was a lot of space, 90' x 200' for large dogs and 90' x 160' for small dogs, and people come at different times. The 501 c 3 come to check the sand, rake leaves, etc... They do not have a problem with dog owners not cleaning up after the dogs.

Councilwoman Korngut added they would address violators by restricting access.

Bill Garry, 202 St. James Place, asked if there was a limit to the number of members.

Ms Burns stated not right now, but they could do that if needed.

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Mr. Garry suggested that Northfield residents use the Egg Harbor Township Dog Park and make Birch Grove Park better for the kids.

Heather Mellon, 2509 Herbert Drive, asked how close the dog park will be to the residents on that side of the park, and how noisy was a dog park.

Ms Burns replied that it was not really noisy, she pointed out that it's across the street from the Swift School.

Darren Delcher, 681 Pasadena Drive, reported that their neighborhood is still having issues with a home on Pasadena Drive. It was no longer an air b n b but it is now a sober living house. His wife saw an occupant of the home picked up in a van that said 'Behavioral Crossroads LLC' on the van. It was the Delcher's understanding that this was not a permitted use in the zone.

Mayor Chau acknowledged that Mrs. Delcher sent him an email and he would follow up with the Zoning Officer.

Councilman O'Neill replied that he was also working on it.

Mr. Delcher added that he did not have a dog but is in favor of anything we can do to get more people in the park; it was a positive thing and would make the community better. He also advocated for camping to return.

Councilwoman Korngut noted that the Egg Harbor Township Dog Park also had an age limit; visitors must be 12 years old.

Harvey Coopersmith, 1701 Philmar Circle, shared Mr. Delcher's concerns regarding the sober living home. He felt the snack bar should be open, and the campground should be sublet. He did not even know if the 6<sup>th</sup> graders go over there anymore. He offered to give names of possible campground owners to manage it.

Councilman Lischin explained that a few years ago the City went out for RFP and the end result was that the one interested party wanted the City to spend money to bring the campground up to a competitive standard.

Mary Corona, 2602 Leeds Avenue, wanted to make Council aware of how she was treated by Republican Councilman Jim O'Neill on Election Day. It was hard for them to hear as Challengers. Mr. O'Neill called the Election Board; he called Mary Canesi who explained the rules in a stern and forthright way. Behind Clerk Canesi's back he was winking and making faces. She shared that Councilman O'Neill continued to behave badly and in a disrespectful way. She should not have been treated that way. She was appalled by his behavior. He took pictures and posted them on social media to demean her. She asked Mayor Chau what his feelings were as to how she was treated.



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Councilman O'Neill replied that he felt he witnessed voter fraud. He saw Mrs. Corona almost inside a booth.

Council President Lischin said he appreciated Mrs. Corona's comments, but this was a Board of Elections matter.

Mrs. Corona felt she was mistreated by a member of the Council; she wanted Council President Lischin's opinion about how she was treated.

Council President Lischin thanked Mrs. Corona, advising that he was unable to reprimand Mr. O'Neill. Her comments would be in the minutes.

John Regina, 2115 Sutton Avenue, said he loves Birch Grove, and walks in the park often. He saw in the paper that bikes in the park would be voted on next year but the next day he saw posted signs that bikes were permitted. He urged that inner trails should be for pedestrians. He offered to help map the trails, all of them, for safety reasons. Years ago, he asked for Sutton Avenue to be a one-way street, with cars parked on both sides; it was almost impassable. He asked again now for the street to be one-way, and if not, that parking be restricted on one side of the street. He also asked for City facilities to be used by adults. He suggested the school for use by adults for activities; he also suggests the City run programs for adults at the school at night.

Councilman Dewees asked Mr. Regina to show him the trail he referred to on a map.

Mr. Regina did so.

Councilman Dewees assured that the proposal was for all bikes are to be on the outer trails; if it was an inner trail that was marked it was a mistake. He added that kids must have mounded up some dirt to do a little ramp.

Mr. Regina reiterated that the Atlantic City Press said there would be a vote next year, but the signs were up the next day.

Eileen Toland, 4304 Dolphin Avenue, said she took exception to Councilman O'Neill accusing her of voter fraud, when the Board of Elections did not. She said poll workers asked her if they had to answer questions being asked by Councilman O'Neill. Poll workers told Ms Toland that Mr. O'Neill was intimidating to them and that he was not wearing his challenger credentials. Mr. O'Neill had papers with republican names on it and was using his phone. She suggested that perhaps something could be done with the acoustics in the room, but it was a wonderful place. Ms Toland acknowledged that she broke the law. Mr. O'Neill took photos of Ms Toland as she was looking at the printed name; everyone knows what the books have in them. Ms Toland was using her phone as part of a new system to report votes

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to Trenton, and was doing so with permission. She was accused of taking information from a pollbook and was told there was a picture of her doing so. Mr. O'Neill accused her of writing in the pollbook. Ms Toland spoke to the Board of Elections. Mr. O'Neill then posted the pictures of her on Facebook; Mr. Notaro posted them on Facebook. The Board of Elections was notified, the lawyers were notified, and Mary Canesi was notified. She said Mr. O'Neill was taking pictures of voters throughout the day. Next year if any republicans want to be Challengers they better have their badges and they better have their paperwork or they won't be Challengers.

Mary Finkel, 2006 Shore Road, was in favor of the dog park but thought the area was too small. She felt her dog Daisy was entitled to go to the Northfield Park and she would like her to have the opportunity to go there. Her Luke lived in Northfield for many years and never had the opportunity to go there. They were citizens of Northfield and should have their place.

Tom Corona, 2602 Leeds Avenue, suggested splitting the Wards with the cafeteria to improve acoustics, or perhaps dividers to make it more user-friendly. He asked would anyone on Council be opposed to a volunteer recreation board. We have a lot of young families that want to get involved but don't know how to get involved. They can review everything that comes in to the park and hold events. He understood we had an Advisory Board but the meetings were not well attended.

Councilman Dewees suggested they join the Advisory Board.

Councilwoman Korngut asked was there a reason they won't join, as Councilman Dewees suggested.

Mr. Corona suggested the Somers Point model; they charge fees. Anything that was public use would be approved by the recreation board.

Mayor Chau advocated that the City needed volunteers, he urged people to get involved. In years past we had voting polls throughout the City, the school offered the facilities to have all voting in one place. The property was under the power of the Board of Education, they decide where, in the building the election can take place. He agreed with Mr. Corona that the acoustics were poor, but that is what we are given. He would hate to see voting return to being spread out in various places.

Councilman O'Neill stated that for the past few months there had been a lot of information about the park, we have the same group of people who have volunteered thousands of hours, the park was great. Could we do more? We could always do more but the park board does a great job.

John Regina stated that in the late 1970's Bud Kern died and was replaced by his brother Nick who was paid half by the City, he thought a recreation board was a

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good idea but it needed someone to be in charge, someone who is passionate and who would add way more than their salary. It may cost \$50,000 to \$60,000 to find that person but you would gain much more than that.

Eric Leeds, 802 Debra Street, said in August he suggested that the Veterans Park be named after Mr. Webb, and suggested that an armament be obtained from the Navy since Mr. Webb was in the Navy.

Mayor Chau replied that something was in the works for Mr. Webb.

Mr. Corona added that if the City created a board, he would head it; he knew four or five young families who would work on it.

Andrea Brady, 206 East Surrey Avenue, asked about the consolidation of the court, why were we giving up home rule and what was the savings.

Council President Lischin responded that it won't be voted on tonight and the savings in year one was \$40,000 to \$50,000.

Mrs. Brady asked if we were using the same prosecutor, judge, etc.

Council President Lischin replied they would all be Egg Harbor Township staff.

Mrs. Brady asked what was next.

Council President Lischin responded that we were always looking at ways to save money.

Mayor Chau commented that he understood where Mrs. Brady was coming from, but sometimes shared services don't work. In this case we had several obstacles, the Court Administrator was retiring, and the Deputy was leaving for another job. We were in a bind; we were investigating with several other communities.

Mrs. Brady asked if we were getting money back from the State.

Mayor Chau noted that we have to find our own savings.

Mrs. Brady added that if it was truly a cost savings it's great, but she didn't know how it could be.

Councilman Perri stated that all of Mrs. Brady's concerns were considered, and it was not an easy decision. In 1905, the framers of this community wanted to make their own rules and that was what we are losing, over time.

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John Ordille, 116 Fairway Avenue, thanked Council for watching over the tax dollars, adding that if you want to watch our tax dollars it could very easily be a problem at Birch Grove if not handled properly. We need to think outside the box. The dog park was a great idea. He suggested leasing the snack bar. The library could have been at the park. He offered to volunteer with Mr. Corona if it fit in to his schedule. He did want to steal thunder from any committee; he just wanted to make things better. We need to keep Birch Grove Park in City control.

Council President Lischin reminded everyone that there was an Advisory Board meeting tomorrow at 5pm. He appreciated the passion and hoped to have some volunteers.

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

**REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Council President Lischin reviewed the regular meeting agenda. He announced that Resolution 222-2019 would not be considered this evening.

Council President Lischin made the assignments.

At 7:57pm, on a motion of Councilman O'Neill, seconded by Councilman Smith, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk