

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
NOVEMBER 23, 2021**

At 6:04pm 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), 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 November 23, 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 November 23, 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/85401524181> or by telephone using One tap mobile +13126266799,,87247599860# or direct dial +1 312 626 6799 using Meeting ID: 872 4759 9860. 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 November 23, 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

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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.

Council President Polistina asked for a moment of silence for Kyle Buckberg, a former First Baby of Northfield, who recently passed away.

ROLL CALL

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

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

Council President Polistina referred to Executive Order 242 and mask mandates. Mayor Chau had deferred to the Council at the last meeting with regard to continuing the mask requirement. We would still observe social distancing, however masks would no longer be required by visitors or employees, if vaccinated. Those unvaccinated should still wear them; masks would not be required, but were suggested.

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Mayor Chau confirmed that he would like the Council to decide.

Council President took a straw poll. All members of Council were in favor, with the exception of Councilwoman Madden.

Council President Polistina announced Committee Reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Councilman Perri reported there was an Alliance meeting, with Shannon Campbell, the new Coordinator. It was a good meeting; a lot was discussed including funding that had been cut because there were less fines. The budget was around \$4,000.00 for this year. Sergeant DiMarco had some interesting plans. He wished Shannon well.

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

Councilman Utts had nothing to report.

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

Councilman Notaro reported that FAN held their final home game last weekend, they made good revenue from the snack bar. All levels have progressed to move on to the championships. He thanked Inspira for their efforts as well.

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

Councilman Dewees reported the irrigation at the sports buildings and bathrooms had been shut down for the year. The museum would be painted by a contractor, likely in the spring.

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

Councilman Smith attended the Northfield Community School Board of Education meeting, students were there in person to receive achievement awards, a sign that things were heading back towards normalcy. He received notification regarding shared County Court that the Sheriff's Department would provide security.

Councilwoman Madden – Insurance and Safety; Library; Mainland Regional

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Councilwoman Madden had nothing to report for committees.

Council President Polistina – Finance and Collections; Municipal Alliance

Council President Polistina had no report. He thanked Councilman Perri for his report on the Municipal Alliance and thanked Shannon Campbell for accepting the Coordinator's position.

Council President Polistina 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 that public notices were mailed on November 22nd and we will go before the Board in December. Solicitor Facenda and Engineer Nassar would appear on the City's behalf.

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

Engineer Nassar received an email from NJDOT regarding the drainage; they claimed to be unaware we were waiting for them to respond.

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

Council President Polistina announced there was nothing new to report.

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

Councilman Perri reported he would have something for the next meeting.

- 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 reported the Fire Department was still working on the specifications.

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- Potential Public Auction of City Owned Property Block 66 Lot 11 – *Pending/Habitat for Humanity*

Solicitor Facenda would have a recommendation for the next meeting.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

Council President Polistina moved to New Grant Opportunities.

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities
 - LEAP Grant - Support of County Acquisition of TMA's on Regular Agenda
 - LEAP Grant – Any Other Suggestions for Projects

Tim Kreischer, Shared Service Coordinator for Atlantic County, introduced himself. He had experience with shared services as a local elected official. He explained that truck mounted attenuators absorb the impact of a collision when road work was being done. The County was buying three at no cost to the municipalities, Public Works would just have to pick them up at the County Public Works yard on Dolphin Avenue. The County was applying for a grant, which if approved, would fund 75%, along with the cost of three arrow boards.

Councilwoman Madden asked, was there any cost to Northfield?

Mr. Kreischer replied, no, just time and gas to pick them up.

Councilman Dewees asked, is this free standing, or truck mounted?

Mr. Kresicher replied they were free standing; they could attach to your vehicle.

Councilman Dewees asked, did we have to modify our equipment to accommodate them?

Mr. Kreischer did not believe so, no. He offered to answer any questions about the LEAP grant program.

Seeing no suggestions for any other LEAP projects, Council President Polistina moved to the reorganization meeting date.

- Selection of Reorganization Meeting Date – Suggested Date Tuesday, January 4th

Council President Polistina announced the reorganization date as Tuesday, January 4th.

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Clerk Canesi reminded all that there was no workshop meeting for the reorganization meeting, the meeting would begin at 7pm.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

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

Council President Polistina made the assignments.

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.

Elizabeth Loftus, 102 Oxford Circle, stated she'd sent an email to the Council and would like to read that email. She thanked Councilman Perri for his many years of service, she thanked Councilwoman Madden for her service as well. She was disappointed and perplexed in the direction the majority of Council had chosen, with opinions going back and forth. She thanked Councilman Dewees for his opposition. Recently, two cannabis proponents were not reelected; the voters have spoken with their message that they are not favor of it. She read an excerpt of a Press editorial. She urged Council to listen to the voters, offer alternatives to our youth, and lessen the burden on law enforcement officers. Once committed, those in business would remain. She thanked Council for listening.

Kim Paccitti, 243 West Mill Road, stated she lived across the street from the American Legion. Since they moved there in 2018, there has been loud music coming from the Legion almost every weekend. She had called the police but had been told there was no noise ordinance. She would like to know from Council if there was anything that could be done. She had spoken with Mark, who runs the Legion, and he had been receptive to her suggestions to address the issue. She didn't think it should get to this, but if it doesn't stop, possibly the American Legion should be fined as well.

Mark Doherty, 405 Chestnut Avenue, was here tonight speaking in his capacity as Commander of the American Legion post. He appreciated those who had come out tonight to voice their concerns. The post was formed in 1941, membership had declined from 100 to close to 40 with only two who were active members in that they participate in the management of the facility. They have tried various fund-raising activities over the years but many were labor intensive, with rentals being the most common form. Chief Newman advised Mark in 2018 that there was a history of noise complaints; Mr. Doherty was unaware. Chief Newman and Mr. Doherty worked together on a rental agreement; he distributed copies to those in attendance in the audience and to the Council. There were no further complaints that year. There were no rentals at all in 2020 due to Covid. The Legion had to make a very expensive roof

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repair, so when rentals came back they were very happy. Until two weeks ago, when Mr. Doherty was notified by Chief Newman, there had been no new complaints. New changes to the agreement include earlier closing, users must be done by 10pm and out by 11pm, as opposed to 11pm and midnight. Also, if the police respond, the tenant forfeits their security deposit. The problem becomes enforcement. The police can't force the tenants to do anything. Mr. Doherty could shut the power off. If this didn't work, he would have to go another route. They decided they would no longer rent on holidays, with the exception of Thanksgiving this year. Mr. Doherty was open to suggestions and would continue to make changes until it was under control. This year they had 104 rentals and only two noise complaints. Civic groups meet there, Mothers' League meets there, the Red Cross holds blood drives, etc. He urged others to voice their concerns and pledged to continue to work on the issue.

Solicitor Facenda asked if Mr. Doherty had gotten much push back on the \$300.00 security deposit?

Mr. Doherty replied no, because in theory, they were getting it back.

Solicitor Facenda offered that Mr. Doherty may wish to increase it, with an escalating retention scale for late departures.

Council President Polistina thanked Mr. Doherty for coming out and for his responsiveness.

Mr. Doherty added that Chief Newman had been phenomenal.

Solicitor Facenda announced that Chief Newman was correct, enforcement of the noise ordinance was very difficult, Council had examined this exhaustively. To a woman in the audience who mentioned a fist fight, Facenda stated that this was an offense the police could issue a summons for, and if they don't, a witness can as long as they know who the individuals are.

Mr. Doherty noted he had considered no DJs, but then people just bring sound systems. He had also contemplated no music at all.

Councilman Dewees asked, minus the noise, what about a nuisance complaint?

Solicitor Facenda replied there were statutes and ordinances that cover nuisance and prohibit disorderly conduct. It was hard for a citizen to address this.

Justin Vinci, 247 West Mill Road, lived there for four years and it had been a problem. What the Paccitti's said was true, it was an ongoing situation that needed to be addressed. He supported the Legion, but something had to be done. Perhaps the tenant users weren't from around here and didn't care. He felt the recommended changes were a good step. Many wanted to come but couldn't because of the seating

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restrictions. He also cited safety concerns. There had been two accidents, including one where a truck drove through the front door of a residence. The late at night party goers let children run in the street. Something needed to be addressed. He reiterated that he doesn't want anything bad to happen to the legion.

Tom Paccitti, 243 West Mill Road, stated traffic was an issue. Accidents that involved a car hitting his home, and damaging his front porch, were due to the handicapped parking in front. Cars go 40mph, and more. He urged the relocation of the handicapped spot, and prohibiting U-turns with signs. When tenant-users unload, the cars are half on the sidewalk and half in the street. He suggested blinking yield signs during parties. Residents don't want anyone to get hurt. He appreciated the changes Mr. Doherty had made. They were used to the loud music, but once it gets past a certain time, it's ridiculous.

Mayor Chau asked Mr. Doherty the length of an average party.

Mr. Doherty explained there wasn't one, they can come in and or start whenever they want; the only time constraint was at the end.

Mayor Chau shared that he had seen a police officer on duty at a party, he offered that Class II officers were less expensive.

Mr. Paccitti noted that parking for the American Legion was across the street; it gets hectic.

Councilman Dewees reminded everyone that Mill Road was a County road, so requested changes would have to go through the County. He did not think it would be unreasonable for a pedestrian crossing sign, and no U-turn signs.

Mr. Paccitti noted flashing stop signs in Linwood. He suggested a flashing yield sign.

Councilman Dewees clarified he was suggesting a button activated signal.

Clerk Canesi read the following letter sent via email by Karyn White to be read at tonight's Council Meeting:

"I respectfully offer the following comment on the issue of the legalization of the sale of marijuana in the city of Northfield. I had hoped to attend the meeting in person. However, when I checked the city website on Monday night, it indicated that no seats were available to appear in public, due to Covid limitations.

I oppose the legalization of the sale of marijuana in the city of Northfield. I have obtained 31 signatures on a change.org petition opposing the legalization of the sale of marijuana in the city of Northfield. Most importantly, I am respectfully requesting that this important decision be postponed until January when the two new city

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council members, who were duly elected in the November election, are sworn in to office.

I do not believe that two lame duck members of the present council should be permitted to vote on such an important decision as this. The voters have spoken. The new council should vote on this issue. Thank you all for your time and consideration on this matter. It is appreciated.

Karyn White
232 Davis Ave
Northfield”

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

At 6:57pm, 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