

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
NOVEMBER 26, 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.

**ROLL CALL**

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

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

**6PM – ATLANTIC COUNTY UTILITIES AUTHORITY**

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill deferred to Mayor Chau to introduce the ACUA Presentation.

Mayor Chau announced that he asked the ACUA to speak to Council regarding the possibility of purchasing trash totes for residents; he had been looking at this for many years. Many Atlantic County municipalities have taken advantage of the grant.

Brian Lefke, Vice President, Solid Waste Division, stated that the available grant was for recycling totes, not trash. He introduced President Rick Dovey, President, and Gary Conover, Solid Waste Director. He explained the primary benefit was improving the recycling rate; Northfield was number one in Atlantic County at 50% but can always do better. He believed Northfield could go 10-12% higher with the totes. The totes were also cleaner; the lids reduce wind-blown matter and keep contents dry, which was important when selling the recyclable materials. The totes also made it easier for workers, and each cart had an RFID chip, so they can be tracked if lost or stolen. The trucks were equipped with readers so it can be determined if a collection had occurred. He explained the proposal which included partial grant funding. The carts could be customized as to color, and would be stamped "Property of City of Northfield".

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill asked if there was a reason we were looking at recycling vs trash totes?

Mr. Lefke replied that grant funds were not available for trash right now.

Mr. Lefke explained that the vendor would need a staging area for the carts; 3,100 carts would be distributed. Some residents have complained that the 96-gallon carts

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are too big, and while there are 64-gallon carts available but not sure if that would be a good idea for Northfield. Council may want to wait and see. Grant funds were not available for the smaller carts.

Councilwoman Madden recalled a newspaper article that residents were not happy with the larger toters and shared her personal experience with cans and lids being strewn about on trash day.

Mr. Lefke, as to the cans and lids, replied that was their fault and they will correct that.

Mayor Chau noted that he was an early advocate of recycling and continued to promote it through recycling promotions and contests. He had heard that cans and lids were blown around, and are often damaged and need to be replaced. He explained that the new toters had a flip-lid that did not detach from the can, and were very durable.

Councilwoman Madden asked how this would affect taxes.

Mayor Chau asked Mr. Lefke to explain.

Mr. Lefke explained there would be a five-year extension to our contract and paid over five years. He noted that there were about 300 carts that had already been purchased.

Councilwoman Madden noted that much less is recyclable now.

Mr. Lefke added the carts come with updated information to remind people of what can be recycled; they have a robust public education program as well.

Councilman Smith felt this was a burden to taxpayers and seemed to benefit the ACUA. He asked how this benefitted Northfield.

Mr. Lefke explained that less trash would be going in the landfill and there would be less cost to dispose of it.

Councilman Smith felt our costs were rising exponentially.

Councilwoman Korngut was concerned about people who would complain that they spent \$65 at Lowes and now have to use another container. She acknowledged the benefits of using the can.

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill asked about the cost of our annual recycling contract.

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Mr. Lefke advised that our contract was around \$145,000.00.

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill stated that, theoretically, a 10% savings could reduce that number by \$14,500.

Mr. Lefke replied, that it could, theoretically.

Councilman Perri asked if Clean Communities money be used for this.

Mr. Lefke did not believe so.

Mayor Chau asked how many homes were there and how many have the toters now.

Mr. Lefke replied there were 3,100 total and 319 have them now.

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill suggested CFO Stollenwerk look at the numbers and calculate a breakeven point, it was possible they could pay for themselves in 7 or so years.

Councilwoman Korngut asked the life span of can.

Mr. Lefke responded around 7-10 years.

Councilwoman Korngut replied we may be repeating the process again.

Mayor Chau felt the landfill was a concern in Atlantic County, space is finite. Not just in the County but in the State. The less we put in there and the more we recycle the less we put in the landfill.

Councilwoman Madden did not see the connection between the bins and increase in recycling. She had a bin with a lid and reiterated that we were recycling less.

Mayor Chau added that others may not be as diligent and knowledgeable as Councilwoman Madden. He felt the bins encouraged people to recycle. He recognized that the City must decide if we want to spend that much money and to evaluate what we'll get out of it. He encouraged input from the community if we moved forward.

Councilman Smith asked how many men worked per truck now.

Mr. Lefke replied two.

Council Smith asked if this minimized their manpower.

Mr. Lefke replied that a cart versus two or three containers was quicker.

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Councilman Smith added that this also meant less workers compensation and less time lost. He reiterated that this benefited the ACUA. He would feel better if the ACUA would partner with us. Was there any way the ACUA would contribute to it; he would feel better about if the ACUA were contributing.

Councilman Smith asked if there were other grants available.

Mr. Lefke replied there were not to his knowledge at this time; he suggested that Councilman Smith may want to reach out to Brigantine or Ventnor.

Councilman Smith asked had tipping gone down in these towns.

Mr. Lefke reported that recycling had increased. Trash was going up in all towns, which was the dilemma.

Councilman Perri asked did the ACUA include our commercial accounts in town, or was that separate. Were commercial carts available?

Mr. Lefke replied this included commercial and yes, there were commercial carts in use in town and they were encouraging more use.

Councilman Perri liked the carts; they kept the rain and moisture out and kept animals out. He was more in favor on the trash side, because we are paying on tonnage. There were no tonnage fees on recycling. He was not totally opposed to it; it does keep the city cleaner.

Councilwoman Madden asked how long the grant was in effect.

Mr. Lefke replied it was indefinite.

Mayor Chau thanked Mr. Lefke.

Mr. Lefke introduced Joe Pantalone, Vice President Wastewater Division.

Mr. Pantalone referred to past discussions about evaluating the gravity line on Shore Road to their pump station, the contract had been awarded and the work would begin soon. It will be coordinated with the Police Department because it involved traffic.

Mayor Chau referred to the report made at a recent meeting whereby he explained to the Council his tour of the pumping station. It was very informative.

Mr. Pantalone thanked Mayor Chau, he encouraged all to visit; they were proud of their operation and what they do for the environment.

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

Council President Pro-Tempore O’Neill asked Mayor Chau to speak regarding the Fire Department stand by fees.

- 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*

Mayor Chau distributed a proposal from the Fire Department to the Council.

Councilman Perri questioned the recommendation that no charges be assessed to the non-profits.

Mayor Chau cited the helicopter landing at the school.

Councilman Perri replied the school was not a non-profit.

Council President Pro-Tempore O’Neill asked Council if the fee appeared to be in order.

All were generally in favor; there was discussion about waiving fees for non-profits.

Clerk Canesi advised that CFO Stollenwerk had expressed concerns about waiving fees for non-profits; she suggested that Stollenwerk be consulted.

Council President Pro-Tempore O’Neill agreed.

Solicitor Facenda asked if he should proceed with the fee ordinance.

Council President Pro-Tempore O’Neill advised him to wait for CFO Stollenwerk to comment.

- Radio Tower, Rear of City Hall - *Solicitor/Clerk RFP Pending*
- Military Surplus for Veterans Park – *Update from Solicitor*

Solicitor Facenda reported he was working on the RFP for the tower and would work with the engineer on the military surplus agreement.

- Proposed Dog Park – *Requested by Councilwoman Korngut*

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Councilwoman Korngut reported that she was at a meeting of the Advisory Board and they were receptive to the idea of the dog park; she was continuing to look at locations for the park.

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

- Selection of Date for Council Annual Reorganization Meeting

Council President Pro-Tempore O’Neill moved to the selection date for reorganization meeting.

Councilwoman Korngut saw Clerk Canesi's suggestion; she was not in favor of waiting until the 7th. She preferred the 1<sup>st</sup>.

Councilman Perri replied that any time was good for him.

Councilwoman Korngut then replied that she preferred the 2<sup>nd</sup>; she wanted it sooner than later.

Councilman Smith preferred the 7<sup>th</sup> but could be available the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Council President Pro-Tempore O’Neill polled Council; not all agreed. He asked Clerk Canesi what would be best for City operations.

Clerk Canesi explained she could swear people in on January 1<sup>st</sup> if that was a concern. Many times the oaths of office at the Reorganization meeting are ceremonial. At the Reorganization meeting Council also chooses their Council President; that would also delay committee assignments. She chose the 7<sup>th</sup> because it was a Tuesday and because it’s a predictable date for the public. Council can choose any date within the statute’s timeframe.

All discussed and the 7<sup>th</sup> at 7pm was chosen.

Clerk Canesi would prepare the advertisement.

- Introduce Ordinance to Create Position of Police Chaplain – *Requested by Chief Newman*

Council President Pro-Tempore O’Neill asked Chief Newman to speak regarding the Police Chaplain position.

Chief Newman explained the statutory authority which allowed the position to be created and lists the array of services that could be provided by the chaplain; they have no police authority and they don't interfere with police work or give press releases. They simply give support to the police; another way they support the police

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was as part of the Law Enforcement Resiliency Program, created by the Attorney General. Certain situations can take an emotional and mental toll on an officer, leading to a host of other problems. Chief Newman had an individual in mind, if the ordinance passed, but the long term would like to invite other clergy members to be part of a call-list. He was not trying to push one religion over another; this is just one component of a resiliency plan going forward. He appreciated Council's support and offered to answer questions.

Councilman Perri was in favor, it sounded great.

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill thanked Chief Newman for his time and effort.

- Resolution 235-2019, Adoption of NJ Citizen Participation Plan – *Solicitor Facenda to Explain*

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill asked Solicitor Facenda to speak regarding the Citizen Participation Plan.

Solicitor Facenda explained that in 2012 or 2013 Northfield joined a regional team consisting of various agencies and shore municipalities; the purpose was to support post-Sandy efforts and potentially those associated with future potential natural disasters. We had been asked to adopt a Citizen Participation Plan, which gives our residents the opportunities to participate. If the City wanted to be involved, we had to adopt this plan so all residents have an opportunity to participate; we had to do certain things including advertise for grant opportunities, he listed other required tasks.

**REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill reviewed the regular meeting agenda and made the assignments.

Solicitor Facenda added Resolution 236-2019, authorizing an Executive Session to update Council on Shared Court based on recent developments; Resolution 234-2019 would not be moved until after the executive session.

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**PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER**

Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill 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.

Bill Garry, 202 St. James Place - wanted to talk about the dog park. He liked dogs but did not have one. The article in the Press made it seem like it was a done deal. He felt Councilwoman Korngut did a disservice by not discussing it with the Council. He appreciated Engineer Nassar donating his time, but Council heard about it for the first time when the plan was completed. He was not fond of putting dogs where we put children; he was concerned about a dog coming off a leash or pulling through its collar. The liability of the non-profit would end when the dog was not in the dog park. This is why dogs were not allowed at the park. There was a small segment of the community that was in favor of it, but would guess that there were more that were not. Egg Harbor Township had a lot of property. Margate and Brigantine had dog parks but wish they didn't. Council should do their due diligence. He cited people that walk their dogs on the bike path don't clean up after them. He did not feel adding dogs was an amenity. The dog park five miles away is looking for more members. He felt more research was needed and that City Council felt blindsided by dog owners who were in favor; we should provide appropriate recreational facilities for our kids before we provide recreational facilities for our dogs.

Mayor Chau asked Mr. Garry about the other towns. What had he heard?

Mr. Garry had heard from residents of these towns; the noise, the waste, dogs getting loose. He would be talking to the elected officials of these towns.

Alicia Garry, 202 St. James Place – stated she was an advocate of recycling. The toters were easier to maneuver than the cans. When it gets windy the regular bins in her neighborhood cause the milk cartons etc. to blow around and in her yard. The toters kept neighborhoods cleaner. She has never had her toter blow over. As to the dog park, she did not know a lot about dog parks, it appeared that it was "a go". She also recommended that research be done. There were two sides to the story. She had friends that go to Margate dog beach and love it, but she lived by the bike path. She also cited that people don't pick up dog waste on the bike path. She did not know who would monitor; who would pick up dog waste in the park. Was a dog park going to bring people back to the park and make it what it used to be? She wasn't sure. It would bring a certain population. On the bike trails, were they going to be groomed?

Councilman Dewees stated that they would be cleared and maintained.

Mrs. Garry was concerned about roots.

Councilman Dewees noted that there was one trail that had roots and it was taken out of the program.



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Eric Carrier, 606 W. Mill Road – was in favor of bike trails at the park. He was a dog owner and dog lover. He was not in favor of a dog park, he had been to many dog parks, he referred to the dog beach at the Ocean City Bridge, dogs were off leashes and dog waste was not picked up.

Councilwoman Korngut did not want to go back and forth, but for the record, everyone on Council can tell you that they knew about the dog park and no one was blindsided. She put a call out on Facebook and spread the word, she did not control who showed up. Just like tonight you are free to express your opinion. It was not a done deal; no vote had been taken. Engineer Nassar had offered to help at no cost, and he kept his word. Everyone knew they can vote however they want. Nothing was done, discussions would continue.

Councilman Dewees replied that his mind was not made up, he knew about the proposal but was surprised that one location being scouted was in Birch Grove Park and he, as Council Chair, was not consulted. He did not feel blindsided though. Other locations were being looked at. Whether it passes remained to be seen, but in Councilman Dewees' opinion it was not a done deal.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill closed the public session.

At 7:16pm, on a motion of Councilman Perri, seconded by Councilwoman Madden, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk