

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
NOVEMBER 29, 2022**

At 5:59pm this meeting was called to order by Deputy Municipal Clerk, Shannon Campbell. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 8, 2022, in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilwoman Bucci; Councilman Dewees; Councilman Leeds; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Smith; Councilman Utts; Council President Polistina; Mayor Chau

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

Council President Polistina welcomed the crowd and turned the floor over to Mayor Chau.

Mayor Chau called forward Lieutenant Dettinger who was joined by Chief Newman.

6PM PRESENTATION

Lieutenant of Police, Eric Dettinger, in Recognition of 24 Years of Service

Mayor Chau welcomed all, noting it was a special night. Lieutenant Dettinger has retired. He felt Lieutenant Dettinger was the most valuable member in the department, in terms of IT and our motorcycle, he would be missed, especially in the IT area. Mayor Chau presented a clock and read the inscription. He thanked Lieutenant Dettinger for his years of service.

Chief Newman added that Lieutenant Dettinger was an asset to the department, and thanked him for his service.

Lieutenant Dettinger introduced his wife Melinda, he commented that Mayor Chau was on Council when he was hired; joking that was the last time he wore a suit. He thanked Council and members of the Department.

Council President Polistina congratulated Lieutenant Dettinger and thanked him for his years of service, he wished him good luck.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Dewees – Buildings/Grounds, Athletic Fields; Birch Grove Park, Bike Path, 1st Street Playground, Veterans Park; Public Works: Roads, Engineering

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Councilman Dewees reported the playground was just about complete, it was not quite done, he would report at the next meeting.

Mayor Chau stated the playground looked wonderful; kids were already on it.

Councilman Utts - Inspections, Housing/Zoning; Cultural Committee, Veteran Liaison, Mainland Regional; Technology / MRHS Channel; Planning Board

Councilman Utts had no report.

Councilman Notaro - Sewer Operations; Northfield Football, Cheer, Basketball (FAN)

Councilman Notaro, regarding resolution 213-2022, commended George Del Rossi on 15 years as a crossing guard. He attended the Economic Development Commission meeting, noting the Northfield Business Association was a branch of the ECD. He gave kudos to Councilwoman Bucci; it was a good program. Regarding FAN, the Peewee and JV teams won in their division of the Atlantic County Junior Football League, Varsity came close. He attended the last FAN meeting, they thanked the City for work at the field, noting they have another punch list of items for the future, some might be a safety issue, Councilman Notaro would address.

Councilman Leeds – Fire Department/EMS

Councilman Leeds gave an update on the EMS report that was not available at the last meeting. Mutual Aid into Northfield was 30, he noted an increase in the last couple of months on mutual aid out calls. He thanked ACE Hardware for their donation to the Fire Department; he thanked the fire volunteers for their time. He offered congratulations to Renee Carfagno and thanked the voters for voting for him as well.

Councilman Smith - Central Municipal Court; Little League and Babe Ruth Baseball; Northfield Community School; Shared Services

Councilman Smith congratulated Lieutenant Dettinger and Crossing Guard Del Rossi on their retirements. He attended the Northfield Community School Board meeting last night, there was not much going on, the Board approved health standards, they were published on the school website, an email was sent to parents. He congratulated the Mainland Regional High School football team, it was a hard fight and tough loss, they had an outstanding season. Regarding Shared Service, he had a conversation with Galloway regarding zoning/housing and a possible shared service with them, he was waiting to hear back.

Council President Polistina added it was a good game for Mainland.

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Councilman Smith thanked Northfield Mothers' League for their annual soup and cookies donations to residents.

Councilwoman Bucci – Insurance and Safety; Library; Municipal Alliance; Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce

Councilwoman Bucci had no update on the Library, their next meeting was next week, no update on safety. The Alliance was hosting cookie decorating Dec 17th at the Library. The EDC was meeting once a month, she was waiting on results from the focus group.

Councilwoman Bucci read the following in reply to Councilman Utts' statement at the last meeting:

“I wanted to take this opportunity to address the speech given by Councilman Utts at the last council meeting which I found very disheartening. I meant it when I said that I have enjoyed working with you this past year. You have been very supportive to me, you listen attentively to my committee reports and you have been very supportive with my initiative to revitalize the EDC. You even attended the launch and were very complimentary. That being said, you mentioned what I will call the b.s. incident in chambers in 2021 involving Councilman Leeds. This occurred prior to councilman Leeds being sworn in which took place in January of this year. So for almost a year, instead of discussing the incident with Councilman Leeds you harbored those feelings and then weaponized them against Councilman Leeds by calling him a bully, taking a stab at our former President and falsely accusing Councilman Leeds of targeting a resident because they chose to put your political sign in their yard. Your allegations are both unfounded and untrue and in my opinion very divisive. Councilman Leeds may be large in stature but he has a heart of gold and goes above and beyond when it comes to serving this wonderful community of Northfield.

There is enough ugliness and divisiveness going on in this county and this world. There is no room for that here in Northfield. We as council were elected to serve all residents of Northfield no matter what their political affiliation. Our main focus needs to be the City of Northfield.”

Council President Polistina – Finance and Collections; Senior Citizens

Council President Polistina reported that he looked at collections, we were ahead of prior years, things were trending well. Collected, taxes and sewer were around \$25,415,707.00.

Council President Polistina moved to work session, ongoing topics.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS

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- Stormwater Facilities Shared with Atlantic County–*Update if available, Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar did not have an update.

- Potential Public Auction of City Owned Property Block 66 Lot 11 – *Pending*

Council President Polistina noted we were waiting for proposals to come back.

- Changes to Sign Ordinance – *Pending*

Councilwoman Bucci noted they would push the Ordinance to 2023.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities
 - 2023 Local Recreation Improvement Grant – *Req. by Engineer Nassar*

Engineer Nassar reported on the 2023 Local Recreation Improvement Grant, he would like to apply for upgrades to the First Street Playground, he felt we should be able to get a few new pieces.

All generally agreed this was a good idea.

- Addition of Juneteenth as a City Holiday

Council President Polistina reference resolution 217-2022, noting Juneteenth came up in GWU negotiations and was a Federal Holiday. It was on the agenda to make it a City holiday so it matched the union contracts.

Councilman Utts spoke regarding the cannabis referendum; 57% voters were pro and 43% were against, he noted that 67% of voters didn't come out at all. He felt this was something in a tight budget year for Council to consider, it was going to be a tough budget cycle, he felt it was good for economic development, revenue, and jobs. Councilman Utts noted three businesses have expressed interest. He urged Council to consider.

Councilman Smith asked if he polled the ones who didn't come out?

Councilman Utts stated if voters cared they would have come out.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

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Council President Polistina reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda, noting that Resolution 220-2022 would not be part of the consent agenda and that Ordinance 11-2022 would be tabled until next year.

Council President Polistina asked if anyone wanted anything voted on separately from the consent agenda.

Council President Polistina noted the amended change to the bill list and made the assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION/ FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

Council President Polistina opened the public portion of the meeting for any person to comment on any subject, he asked that they state their name and address for the record and observe the five-minute limit per speaker.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, he closed the public session.

At 6:25pm, on a motion of Councilman Dewees, seconded by Councilman Leeds, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Campbell, RMC, Deputy Municipal Clerk