

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 17, 2019**

At 7:02pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. It was 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 followed by a moment of silence.

**ROLL CALL**

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

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

**READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion of Councilman Perri, seconded by Councilwoman Madden all members present were in favor of approving the minutes of November 26<sup>th</sup> and December 11<sup>th</sup> without formal reading.

Council President Lischin announced the presentations for the Mayor's Annual Holiday Light Contest.

**7PM PRESENTATION** – MAYOR'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY LIGHT CONTEST

Mayor Chau thanked all residents who participated in this program; he felt it was important to demonstrate in our community the things that people do to demonstrate a festive environment. He received an overwhelming response from businesses who donated to this contest, and as a result, everyone who participated would get not one, not two, but three prizes or more. Some prizes were valued at over \$150.00. He recognized Shannon Campbell, Deputy Clerk, who was instrumental in organizing this contest.

Deputy Clerk Campbell thanked all for participating as well, there were many repeat entrants, and a new winner this year, by 1 point.

Mayor Chau noted that there were 24 entrants this year.

Deputy Clerk Campbell announced the winners as follows, and presented those in attendance with prizes.

In the Traditional category: the Scanny Residence, 8 Julie Drive, Third Place; the Marshall Residence, 404 Chestnut Avenue, Second Place; the Gagnon Residence, 2709 Burroughs Avenue, First Place.

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Deputy Clerk Campbell noted that there was one winner in the Inflatable category: the Clark Residence, 1924 Cedar Bridge Road.

Upon accepting her prize, Mrs. Clark announced that the decorations are actually her Grandson, JJ's. He chooses a new one every year, and takes care of them, checking them daily.

Deputy Clerk Campbell announced the winners in the Car Stopper category and presented them with prizes, as follows:

The Wineland Residence, 5 Ridgewood Drive, Third Place; the DeRosa Residence, 101 Jackson Avenue, Second Place; the Albert Residence, 710 Second Street, First Place.

Mayor Chau asked Mr. Albert how they got the decorations up.

Mr. Albert responded that he owned a local tree service.

Deputy Campbell announced honorable mention to the Rinker Residence, 321 Oakcrest Avenue and the Canesi residence as well.

Councilwoman Madden drew the winner for door prize, which Mayor Chau announced as a bracelet from Sage Jewelers. Deputy Clerk Campbell read the winning name: the Rinker's!

Mayor Chau thanked all of the businesses and participants again.

Council President Lischin thanked Deputy Clerk Campbell for her hard work, and thanked Mayor Chau for the contest.

Council President Lischin moved to Committee Reports.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Councilman Perri** - Public Works, Roads, Engineering, Sewer Operations, Planning Board, Senior Citizens

Councilman Perri reported that the Senior social would be Thursday, with a Dementia Friendly presentation from Carolyn Peterson. He received several compliments regarding the Bike Path for the holiday decorations, and thanked the Road Department. The Planning Board reorganization meeting was coming up. He wished all Happy Holidays.

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**Councilman O’Neill - Inspections, Code Enforcement, Housing/Zoning, Court/Violations, FAN**

Councilman O’Neill reported on behalf of Housing and Zoning that he had visited the new complex, it was coming along; the club house should be open soon. FAN basketball season was underway.

**Councilwoman Korngut – Library, Municipal Alliance, Northfield School, Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Technology/MRHS Channel**

Councilwoman Korngut reported the Library Board meeting was this past Thursday. The Library Director provided the following numbers: attendance was 3,460; there were 1,937 items in circulation; \$393.22 in fines collected; and 41 programs with a 512 attendees. The Library submitted their budget which looked like it would be \$303,403.81, down from around \$312,000.00 to \$313,000.00. She commended the Library Director for making necessary cuts. She thanked Mayor Chau for asking her to speak at the Christmas Tree Lighting; she also thanked Councilwoman Madden and Councilman Dewees for attending. She thanked Mayor Chau, people have told her how excited they are about the Tree Lighting Contest, and they love it. She wished all Happy Holidays.

**Councilman Dewees - Buildings/Grounds, Athletic Fields, Bike Path, Parks, Playgrounds**

Councilman Dewees had no report.

**Councilman Smith– Finance/Collections, Little League/Babe Ruth, Shared Services**

Councilman Smith wanted to acknowledge the work done by Solicitor Facenda on the Shared Court Agreement; there was an article in the Press that perhaps characterized his handling of the matter poorly. Councilman Smith commented that he disagreed; Solicitor Facenda's work on the matter and his due diligence saved the residents significant amounts of money. Northfield was in a good position and he hoped the Shared Court relationship continued. He also thanked Court Administrator Donna Clark for her years of service and wished her best in her retirement.

Councilman O’Neill concurred with Councilman Smith and said Solicitor Facenda did a great job. He also thanked Court Administrator Clark for doing a great job all these years.

Council President Lischin also commented on Shared Court; he felt the agreement with Egg Harbor Township was not in the best interest of Northfield. We came together with Linwood and this was to our advantage. Linwood has the newer facility, the court space, the parking, etc. He thanked Councilman Smith and Solicitor Facenda for their hard work.

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Councilman Smith also made notice that we had a Northfield resident, Kevin Antczak who participated in several prestigious running events and did so well he was one of the best cross-country runners in the history of New Jersey; he would like to honor Kevin before the end of the school year.

Council President Lischin agreed, and said he would like to continue to encourage recognition of local residents.

**Councilwoman Madden** – Insurance and Safety, Mainland Regional

Councilwoman Madden attended the Mainland Regional High School Board of Education meeting last night, and many students were recognized, including the Marching Band, who scored so high they would be moved up to a higher level of competition. The spring musical will be Mama Mia. The January - June 2019 Safety Report was delivered and Councilwoman Madden read the following statistics from the report: 6 cases of bullying, 8 incidents of violence, 2 vandalism cases, 12 substance abuse, but this does not include vaping; 1 assault, 4 fights, and 153 incidents that resulted in student removal. The instrumental band played at the Tree Lighting and they played for the Friends of the Library; they were really fantastic. The next Mainland Board meeting will be held in January. For Insurance and Safety, Councilwoman Madden said while she missed meeting, all is fine; the next meeting would be in February.

**Council President Lischin** - Fire Department/EMS, Cultural Committee

Council President Lischin read the Fire and EMS report for November. Fire Department calls for November included: 4 total fire incidents; 7 false alarm calls; 3 good intent calls; 2 rescue incidents; 5 hazardous condition calls; 1 service call incident; 0 EMS 1st responder incidents; 1 mutual aid call; for a total of 22 dispatched incidents.

TriCare had a total of 144 dispatches: 141 calls with patients; 92 transports; 4 mutual aid calls to Egg Harbor Township; 0 Narcan administered.

Council President Lischin did not have a report for the Cultural Committee.

Council President Lischin said he would like to read a statement into the record, and read the following:

“As my last meeting representing Northfield as the 1st Ward Councilman, I would like to take a few minutes to thank and reflect on my last 5 years on Council.

1<sup>st</sup>, I would like to send some thank yous. 1<sup>st</sup> and foremost, I want to thank my wife and kids for sharing my time with the City of Northfield. The sacrifices they have

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made so I could be free to work hard for the citizens of Northfield.

2<sup>nd</sup>, I would like to thank all the friends family and residents of Northfield that have supported me over the previous 5 years.

3<sup>rd</sup>, I want to personally thank Mary Canesi for her help and guidance through the years. Without her guidance I would have been lost.

I can tell you that the state of Northfield at this moment is good, not great, but was moving in the right direction. I hope the new administration is prepared to continue the hard work to keep taxes low and keep City services at a standard we have all come to expect.

I say the state of the City is good, not great, because the City is at a tipping point for 1) keeping the City budget under control, and 2) controlling our political differences to what they are: political, not personal or religious.

Our long term costs are not under control, if we don't get our increases under control, these will end up bankrupting the City. The state legislature is not helping our cause by removing spending cap increases that have worked to keep increases to a minimum.

I have been involved in politics for only a short time, but I have been appalled by some of the election tactics of the local and national democrats. I have to say, what I witnessed in the last few election cycles was both appalling and disgusting. Mailer after mailer, social media posts, and just general disgust between neighbors. This is the shame of it all! Where has the civility and reasonable discord and discussion gone. It is a real shame things have turned so nasty, this will keep the best of the people we want to be running our City to not want to be exposed to all the abuse. I personally cannot blame anyone for not wanting to be the one exposed to all the speculation and get none of the rewards.

What I am about to say will not be popular, but needs to be said.

The city council controls approximately 30% of the tax money paid by constituents. Almost 60% is controlled by the NCS and Mainland School boards that the City Council has no control over and the other 10% goes to the County.

The public unions control most of the City budget, and purposefully make it very difficult to make any wholesale changes that will save real taxpayer money. The teachers union, government workers union, both blue collar, white collar, and supervisory unions. police union, fire union. All of these unions fight for the taxpayers to pay more and for the union members to pay less but make more money. So, the contractual obligations often out way the increases in tax revenue forcing the City to raise taxes again and again and again.

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The NCS and Mainland School boards need to be held accountable as Council is for the tax increases in our town. State funding for pre-school is a prime example. The state pays for the pre-school now, but when they pull all the state funding for this program, who will be left holding the bag for the payments? Northfield tax payers.

So, when the local government tries to make some changes, they are then handcuffed by the state legislation that protects and give special treatment to our union members. This special treatment that is law at the state level so must be followed by the local government. Hence the problem. Big government is never the answer. Big government just begets corruption in the name of legislation. This is, unfortunately, the way it has been, but it should not be.

So, with the uphill battle ahead, I started 5 years ago with a goal to empower City government, bring private business practices to Northfield. I never thought about what kind of a backlash I would get from the entrenched union members when I tried to make cost saving changes to our City. In my 1<sup>st</sup> year, I came in to Council bright eyed and bushy tailed ready and excited to get to work. I was put on as chair of Northfield Fire Department, EMS, Building/Zoning Department and the Cultural Committee. I jumped in right away trying to learn as much as I could about the departments I was now controlling. I was forced to learn about the wants and needs about the department from the very people that have the most vested interest in getting their departments the most money each year. Not a vested interest in the tax payers paying their salary and benefits.

The State says it wants to champion shared services, but every attempted shared services was met with resistance from both the unions and the state. In summary, the State legislators and unions make it impossible for our local City elected officials to do very much to make real changes. The only thing our elected officials can do is temper the union increases, but not stem the tide of tax increases. The system is made this way on purpose. The system has been and will continue to be broken.

But undeterred and with open eyes, I took on the challenge the only way I know how, head on! I started with the Construction and Zoning Departments, Fire/EMS and technology departments.

My goal was to streamline each department to help save the taxpayers money. The Building Department, Fire and EMS, Tax Office, new technology and many others things. In each and every case I was able to accomplish my goal. Some things took longer than others, but I can look back at my tenure and be proud of my accomplishments.

Moving forward, the new administration can't take their eye off the ball. The next goal should be to continue to put the taxpayers of Northfield first, while keeping as much of the services we need to keep our town, the best small town in New Jersey

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for our residents.”

He thanked everyone again for their support and time.

**MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Chau thanked Council President Lischin for his work and dedication; he did not always agree with Council President Lischin but knew his heart was in it. He wished him well, and maybe we will see him again. Mayor Chau thanked Councilwoman Korngut for taking his place at the tree lighting, adding that he heard all went well. Since the last meeting regarding the toters, he spoke with Ventnor and Brigantine, and their feedback was positive. They reported the toters have kept the city cleaner and litter is not flying around. Regarding residents who already have containers, the ACUA will trade them in, they also have yard waste stickers that can be put on them; this could be discussed further at budget time. He also recognized Councilmen Smith and O’Neill for their work on the Court, after the last meeting he took the papers to Linwood for signature. The Linwood representatives were very happy. We had a unique relationship with Linwood. Shared services don't always save money but he felt the Court would be another successful endeavor. This week the Mayor would be hosting a holiday luncheon for employees on Friday December 20, at 11:30am, all are welcome to attend. To Councilman Perri, he said we forgot to bring up a question posed by Dr. Levitt about the electrical charging stations. Dr. Levitt felt it was a technology that would start to appear here in Northfield.

Councilman Perri added that we did get a sample ordinance; it was very comprehensive.

Mayor Chau noted they were expensive, he was not suggesting the Council do it, but they were expensive.

Mayor Chau announced that tonight there would be Executive sessions for the PBA contract as well as an agreement for Chief Newman. Negotiations were very cordial, and he thanked Labor Counsel Curio for her expertise and knowledge, especially about our own contracts and labor trends in the area. He thanked Solicitor Facenda as well. He was very impressed with how our professionals and our unions worked on this. Unfortunately, due to personal commitments he would not be at the Reorganization meeting, he would be out of the country. He closed his report by saying that all of us have had the opportunity to review the RFP's for the professionals. Some were very close, only a few dollars difference. He strongly believed as Council President Lischin and others have alluded to that we have to be conscious of how much we spend. He also recognized that we have some outstanding professional staff; he had not heard any complaints from Council or members of the public about our professionals. He asked Council to think about the quality of services we've had this year and in previous years. He understood there was a new

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administration and there were politics involved, but that we must choose what is for the best.

Councilman O'Neill thanked Council President Lischin for his service. With regard to the Court, he said he gave Councilman Smith 100% credit for the Court, Councilman O'Neill had nothing to do with it. He did a phenomenal job with Solicitor Facenda, CFO Stollenwerk and Clerk Canesi.

**CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT**

Engineer Nassar reviewed the Engineer's report as previously distributed to Council. He reviewed the change orders that were on the agenda this evening. For our projects, as to fuel and asphalt prices, one was higher and one was lower than originally anticipated. We were still under the grant amounts; the differences would cover some of the testing fees. We also had a request for payment for the road program, and we were holding about \$60,000.00 for completion of punch list items. The contractor was behind. We also had the award for Fuae Avenue; he requested to proceed for design of project. He felt we may be able to add a few side streets if they were connected, as well as for inspection and testing fees.

Mayor Chau to Engineer Nassar, asked when was the handicapped ramp project going to begin?

Engineer Nassar replied he was waiting for the Atlantic County Improvement Authority to approve the documents; he would reach out to them again. The project would go out to bid in next month or so with construction beginning in March or April.

**PUBLIC SESSION/FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER**

Council President Lischin opened the public portion of the meeting for any person to speak on any subject.

Christine Taggart, 701 Burton Avenue, announced there was a house on Facebook that opened up; are we supposed to be notified if it is a recovery home. Shouldn't we be aware if it is a recovery home?

Council President Lischin asked Councilman O'Neill to assist Ms Taggart.

Councilman O'Neill agreed.

Ms Taggart asked can cars park on grass in a front yard.

Council President Lischin replied no.



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Ms Taggart asked about trash in back yards.

Council President Lischin replied that was also a Zoning issue.

Ms Taggart mentioned a home on Cresson Avenue, and said they were selling cars.

Councilman O'Neill advised he would look in to all of Ms Taggart's issues.

Ms Taggart added that she had seen people in the neighborhoods that she had never seen before.

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

**RESOLUTIONS**

Council President Lischin read the following statement: when voting on Resolutions, all matters listed under the consent agenda are considered to be routine in nature, and having been reviewed by Council, will be enacted by one motion. Any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of any Council Member and if so removed, will be treated as a separate matter. Any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of Funds.

The Executive Sessions of Council will be held at the end of the meeting, and we will come back in public session to make a comment for the record after the executive session has concluded. Any vote made on subjects discussed will be made in public”

It is possible that Council will vote on Resolutions 253-2019 and 255-2019 at the conclusion of Executive sessions this evening; these two resolutions will NOT be included in the consent agenda.

On a motion of Councilwoman Korngut, seconded by Councilman O'Neill, all present were in favor of voting on Resolutions 237-2019 through 252-2019 and 254-2019, by consent agenda.

**237-2019** Authorizing Schaeffer, Nassar, Scheidegg Consulting Engineers to Proceed with Certain Projects – Reconstruction of Fuae Avenue, FY2020 NJDOT Municipal Aid Program

**240-2019** Authorization to Hire Substitute Adult School Crossing Guard

**241-2019** A Resolution Supporting the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over 2019 Year-End Holiday Crackdown

**242-2019** Amending Resolution No. 31-2019 Recognizing Members of the Northfield Volunteer Company Ladies' Auxiliary

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- 243-2019** Amending Resolution No. 181-2019, Recognizing Members of the Northfield Volunteer Fire Company
- 244-2019** Authorizing Refund of Construction Permit Fees to Sunrun, Inc.
- 245-2019** A Resolution Authorizing a Contract with All Covered for the Purchase of Computer Hardware and Software
- 246-2019** Acknowledging Retirement of Special Law Enforcement Officer Class II
- 247-2019** Work Change Order No. 1 – Final, Reconstruction of Walnut Avenue and a Portion of Maple Avenue
- 248-2019** Work Change Order No. 1 – Final, Reconstruction of Cresson Avenue
- 249-2019** Amending Resolution No. 232-2019 Regarding Date of Hire for Part Time Construction Official
- 250-2019** Amending Resolution No. 233-2019 Regarding Date of Hire for Part Time Building Inspector
- 251-2019** Authorizing the Mayor to Complete and Submit Application to the United States Army Donation Program Seeking Donation of Combat Material
- 252-2019** A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(4), Regarding Contract Negotiations Between the City of Northfield and Mainland PBA Local No. 77
- 254-2019** A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b (8), Regarding Personnel Matters

Councilwoman Korngut motioned, Councilman O’Neill seconded, to adopt the consent agenda for Resolutions 237-2019 through 252-2019 and Resolution 254-2019.

Roll Call: Mr. Dewees – yes; Ms. Korngut – yes; Mrs. Madden – yes; Mr. O’Neill – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Smith - yes; Mr. Lischin – yes; Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE**

Councilman Smith motioned, Councilman Dewees seconded, to adopt Ordinance 14-2019, to be read by title only.

- 14-2019** Amending Chapter 61 of the City of Northfield Municipal Code,

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Entitled "Police Department"

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reading / Public Hearing / Published in the Press of AC 12/21/19*

The Municipal Clerk read the Ordinance by title, and stated that there would be a public hearing, after which the matter would be considered for final adoption, and if adopted, thereafter published. Since introduction the full Ordinance has been posted in the lobby of City Hall and on the Municipal website, and copies have been available at no cost in the office of the Municipal Clerk between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm, Monday through Friday to any member of the public who requested same.

Council President Lischin opened the public hearing for Ordinance 14-2019. Seeing no one wishing to speak, he closed the public hearing.

Roll Call: Mr. Dewees - yes, Ms. Korngut – yes, Mrs. Madden – yes, Mr. O’Neill - yes, Mr. Perri – yes, Mr. Smith - yes; Mr. Lischin – yes; Motion carried.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS** \$ 876,609.86

Councilman Smith motioned, Councilman Perri seconded, for payment of bills.

Councilman Perri suggested that if we get a hire (in the Police Department) can we get full disclosure if there was going to be a chargeback so we would know the full package.

Mayor Chau replied that we don't always know.

Solicitor Facenda confirmed that we received letters from both recent employers, both amounts were disagreed with, and smaller amounts were sent.

Councilman Perri responded, so we don't know?

Mayor Chau replied that we know, but don't know the amounts. We try to avoid this but that was not always the case.

Councilman Perri felt that Council should know it's a possibility; that's all.

Solicitor Facenda explained there were time parameters within the statute that dictate how much you would have to pay.

Roll Call: Mr. Dewees – yes; Ms. Korngut – yes; Mrs. Madden – yes; Mr. O’Neill – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Smith - yes; Mr. Lischin – yes; Motion carried.

Council President Lischin read the meeting notices and announced the Executive Session for Resolution 252-2019.

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**252-2019** A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(4), Regarding Contract Negotiations Between the City of Northfield and Mainland PBA Local No. 77

Municipal Clerk Canesi read Resolution 252-2019 by title and deferred to Solicitor Facenda for further comment.

Solicitor Facenda stated that Resolution 252-2019 was in regard to an agreement between the City and the PBA, specifically terms and conditions of agreement and whether or not same would be approved tonight. Minutes would be kept, and approved and made promptly available for public inspection when required and permitted by law. It was anticipated that council could vote tonight, any vote would be in public to consider Resolution 253-2019. Official action may be taken tonight. Council would retire to the Mayor's office and return with a statement for record or for official action.

*At 8:04pm Council moved to the Mayor's Office.*

*At 8:27pm Council returned to Council Chambers, and resumed the Regular Meeting.*

Solicitor Facenda announced that the Executive Session had concluded. Matters discussed were contractual negotiations between the City and the PBA, terms and conditions and changes between the old contract and the new one. Minutes were in fact kept they would be approved by Council and made available to the public when required and permitted by law. Council was prepared to vote on Resolution 253-2019.

Councilwoman Korngut motioned, Councilman O'Neill seconded, to adopt Resolution 253-2019.

**253-2019** A Resolution Approving an Agreement between the City of Northfield and Mainland PBA Local No. 77

Roll Call: Mr. Dewees – yes; Ms. Korngut – yes; Mrs. Madden – yes; Mr. O'Neill – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Smith - yes; Mr. Lischin – yes; Motion carried.

Council President Lischin announced the Executive Session for Resolution 254-2019.

**254-2019** A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open

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Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b (8), Regarding Personnel  
Matters

Municipal Clerk Canesi read Resolution 254-2019 by title and deferred to Solicitor Facenda for further comment.

Solicitor Facenda stated that Resolution 254-2019 was in regard to personnel matters and conditions of employment of employee Chief Paul Newman. Council would keep minutes of the executive session as required by law and would be released when required and permitted by law. Chief Newman had received a Rice notice. Council would retire to the Mayor's office and would return for a statement for the record; it was anticipated and probable that Council would consider Resolution 255-2019.

*At 8:30pm Council moved to the Mayor's Office.*

*At 8:50pm Council returned to Council Chambers, and resumed the Regular Meeting.*

Solicitor Facenda announced that the Executive Session had concluded. Matters discussed were employment matters specifically the terms and conditions of Paul Newman, Chief of Police. Minutes were in fact kept they and would made available to the public when required and permitted by law. Council was prepared to vote on Resolution 255-2019.

Councilwoman Korngut motioned, Councilman O'Neill seconded, to adopt Resolution 255-2019.

**255-2019** Approving the Terms and Conditions of Employment of Paul Newman as Chief of Police for the City of Northfield

Roll Call: Mr. Dewees – yes; Ms. Korngut – yes; Mrs. Madden – yes; Mr. O'Neill – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Smith - yes; Mr. Lischin – yes; Motion carried.

At 8:51pm, 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