

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**December 17, 2019**

At 6:07pm 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 Council President Pro-Tempore O'Neill.

**ROLL CALL**

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

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

*Mayor Chau arrived at 6:14pm.*

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

- Use-Fee Ordinance:
  - Fire Department, Stand-By Fees

Council President Lischin asked Solicitor Facenda about stand by fees.

Solicitor Facenda asked if all of Council received an email from Municipal Clerk Canesi regarding the financial impact of the stand by fees.

All members present had no objections; Council President Lischin asked Solicitor Facenda to prepare an ordinance for the next meeting.

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

Solicitor Facenda advised that he prepared a Request for Information (RFI); he felt it may be premature for an RFP at this point. He had conferred with Councilman Perri. Solicitor Facenda explained the RFI seeks information from potentially knowledgeable individuals. The antennae would be rented; we would need a pad site for equipment. Council needed to decide if this was feasible; would the equipment hold an antenna. The parking lot housed the public safety departments; he was not sure how disruptive that would be. We would need to get a handle on the fair market value. Tenants could sublease so Council would want to negotiate the best possible deal for the City, such as a percentage of any rent from subleases. He listed various other elements that needed to be considered, including other municipal considerations, state and or federal approvals, and any possible collateral benefits.

*At 6:14pm Mayor Chau arrived.*

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**December 17, 2019**

Solicitor Facenda continued with items that needed to be considered including fencing, lighting, security issues, insurance, etc. He guessed we may get a consultant who wanted to come in and give a pitch during a meeting. He noted that Councilman Perri recalled the Planning Board had contracted with some sort of professional in this area, at some point. Solicitor Facenda had asked Planning Board Secretary Robin Atlas for contact information for that person.

Council President Lischin asked that any Councilperson with questions or recommendations should share them with Solicitor Facenda.

Councilman Perri asked Clerk Canesi to confirm with all departments that they are not using the tower.

Clerks Canesi replied that she had confirmed with Police, Fire and OEM that they are not using it; she offered to reconfirm.

Councilman Perri was satisfied if it had already been done.

- Proposed Dog Park – *Requested by Councilwoman Korngut*

Council President Lischin asked Councilwoman Korngut to speak regarding the dog park.

Councilwoman Korngut explained that the site originally proposed was no longer being considered and she had identified another spot in Birch Grove Park, as well as another location at Dolphin Avenue and Harvey Drive which had been suggested by Councilman Dewees. Engineer Nassar and Councilwoman Korngut met at the Dolphin Avenue location and it was not preferred; it would be more costly, there would be grading issues and tree removal. She was still considering the other location at Birch Grove Park.

Councilman O'Neill said he thought dog parks were great; his neighbors take their dogs to the Egg Harbor Township dog park. He had received feedback from residents that if our park was not equivalent to the Egg Harbor Township dog park, they would continue to use the Egg Harbor Township dog park. He had also received feedback from residents of Northwood Court that they don't want the dog park near their homes.

Councilman Dewees clarified that they were not going to be clearing trees.

Councilman O'Neill suggested getting public feedback before proceeding; he did not want to build a dog park and find out people don't want to go to the dog park.

Council President Lischin reminded everyone that this would involve the 501c Corporation that will be funding it.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**December 17, 2019**

Councilman O'Neill also wanted to make sure we had enough volunteers to manage it, long term.

Council President Lischin replied this was very preliminary; we are just picking a location, the non-profit has not even been organized.

Councilman O'Neill reiterated that he wanted to be sure the people who will be using it will use it where it is being planned to be installed.

Councilman Dewees replied that the City's liability before the visitors get to the dog park needed to be examined.

Mayor Chau suggested the non-profit be responsible to build it and maintain it, including replacing the substrate.

Solicitor Facenda commented that Council could make the non-profit responsible for whatever they want.

Council President Lischin asked that the item stay on the work session agenda for further discussion at the second meeting in January.

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

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Council President Lischin asked Engineer Nassar about the outcome of the paving grant.

Engineer Nassar replied that we did receive it, in the amount of \$290,000.00; there will be minimal cost to the City.

Council President Lischin thanked Engineer Nassar.

Council President Lischin announced that Congressman Van Drew wanted to come to a Northfield City Council meeting next year, with details yet to be determined.

There was no other new business.

**REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Council President Lischin reviewed the regular meeting agenda and made the assignments, noting that Resolutions 253-2019 and 255-2019 would not be included in the consent agenda.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**December 17, 2019**

**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 five-minute limit per speaker.

Jean Lawless, 720 West Mill Road, wished all a safe and healthy holiday. Prior to the recent paving of Mill Road, she had a U-turn driveway but no sidewalk. With the sidewalk now, her driveway was shortened and it was more difficult to use. She brought a sample of a large stone that was in the 'so-called top soil' that was put in between the sidewalk and the curb. Mrs. Lawless said she'd spoken with an inspector who advised that Mrs. Lawless would get crushed concrete, which has not happened. She mentioned a large coil of wire that she believed was a trip hazard. She also recently had a sanitary sewer clog that she claimed a plumber told her was caused by sand and debris in the pipe, as a result of road construction. She would go to the County with this same information.

Councilman Dewees suggested that Mrs. Lawless also mention the sewer clog as a claim when she contacted the County.

Council President Lischin stated that he would have Engineer Nassar follow up with the County as well.

Council President Lischin asked Councilman Perri about the sewer clean-outs.

Councilman Perri replied that Public Works did raise some.

Darren Boyd, Public Works employee in attendance in the audience, commented that the clean-out mentioned was not one that was raised.

Peter Brophy, 11 Twelve Oaks Court, asked what evidence there was that made us think that dog owners in Northfield wanted a dog park. What made Council think that residents were okay with using a portion of Birch Grove Park for this? He suggested that the Bike Path was already used for walking dogs. What would a dog park have that the Bike Path did not? The Bike Path was a social artery in our town. Were we going to ask the residents first if they wanted us to take a piece of Birch Grove Park for a dog park, or were we just going to do it?

Council President Lischin replied that Mr. Brophy made good comments. He said a dog park was brought up by Councilwoman Korngut based on feedback from dog owners.

Mr. Brophy suggested making it a ballot question.

Mayor Chau felt if we did go to that expense, he suggests it be a non-binding referendum. He added that he has had a few people call him in favor of a dog park.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**December 17, 2019**

Mr. Brophy felt a dog park would have heightened interest in the beginning, but that as colder weather sets in, it will be used less. He felt complaints would end up with calls to the City Clerk's Office.

Mayor Chau advised that it had been said that the City would not handle complaints.

John Regina, 2115 Sutton Avenue, said was in attendance regarding the community school and that he had spoken with school representatives about adult activities. Since that time, he had spoken with his brother, as well as with Councilman Perri. The school advised that the school was available after March, and that to play pickleball or other activities, they would just need to provide insurance. Mr. Regina said he was taken aback about the insurance; he spoke with Councilman Perri and found out that the way it was handled in Somers Point was that the school board booked the adult activities, so there was no need for insurance. He asked that the Council liaison approach the school.

Council President Lischin advised that the Council can only make suggestions to the school.

Mayor Chau recalled that Mainland Regional used to have adult programs, coordinated by an employee who was paid using the fees collected for the activities. The school board would have to create the program.

Mr. Regina referred to the trails that had been identified for bike use at the park; he felt many were not suitable for mixed use. Some had roots and if someone was injured how would an ambulance get to them? He felt trails would be safer if they were not mixed use. Mr. Regina thanked Councilman O'Neill for getting the bridge fixed. He offered to walk the trails with members of Council.

Mayor Chau stated that he would walk with him. He asked Mr. Regina to leave his phone number with the City Clerk.

Mr. Regina wanted to create a sense of community in Northfield. He was in support of a dog park for that reason.

Councilman Perri asked for the title of the woman at the school that Mr. Regina spoke with.

Mr. Regina replied that she had many titles, one of which was community education and recreation.

Councilman Perri noted that the school had the right to sanction the activities, which made insurance inclusive. They may have to charge a fee.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**December 17, 2019**

Mr. Regina had played pickle ball in numerous towns; he had never been asked for insurance.

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

At 6:52pm, on a motion of Councilman Perri, seconded by Councilman Dewees, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk