

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 24, 2009**

This meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Acting Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised according to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

The flag salute was led by Mayor Vincent Mazzeo. Following the flag salute, there was a moment of silence in honor of Northfield resident Gail Franks who passed away March 16th. Mrs. Franks was very civic minded and battled cancer for many years; may her family find peace.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mr. Carew, Mr. Martinez, Mr. O’Grady, Mr. Smith, Mr. Turon, Mr. Vain, and Mrs. Kern

City Solicitor Keith Bonchi and City Engineer Matt Doran were also in attendance.

7:15PM PRESENTATIONS – MRHS EXPANSION/APRIL 21ST REFERENDA

DR. RUSSELL DEVER, Ed. D., MRHS SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Dever announced a March Madness event sponsored by the PTO and being held at the school on March 28th; this will allow residents to view the facility first-hand and aid them in consideration of the referenda slated for the April 21st ballot. There will also be a town hall meeting at the school on April 1st to respond to questions and concerns raised at previous town hall meetings. The number one concern of parents and teachers in a 2005 survey was the physical facility.

JOHN MEDICA, MRHS SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT

Mr. Medica gave an overview of the conditions at the close to 50 year-old core structure of the building, and of the three major additions that have occurred over the years. The HVAC systems are antiquated, and difficult and costly to repair. There are areas with leaks and issues with mold have resulted. In its current state, the facility can no longer be maintained using the general budget. The plans for the project have been 2 years in the making and they could not possibly foresee the current economic times. However, current bidding conditions are favorable and interest rates are low. The State-funded portion of the expansion may not be available next year if the voters defeat the referenda, and there is no better time than now to create a blue ribbon facility to match the blue ribbon staff and students at MRHS.

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DR. ROBERT BLAKE, Ed. D., MRHS PRINCIPAL

Dr. Blake stressed that improving the school is necessary in order for it to remain competitive and continue to produce quality students. Temperature issues are prevalent at the school, and the kids should be able to focus on learning. The facility should reflect the quality of the community, students, and faculty.

KIM GNIEWYK, MRHS BOARD ADMINSTRATOR

There are 3 separate ballot questions that can be voted separately. If defeated they will not be implemented.

Question 1 is for approximately \$10 million dollars for a new roof and solar panels. The State is funding 40% and there is an additional rebate of \$312,000 for the solar panels. Once functional, the district can sell renewable energy credits. The tax impact for Northfield is \$12.16 per \$100,000 in residential value.

Question 2 is \$29.7 million dollars with 35% State funding for HVAC and lighting upgrades that will translate into general fund savings of approximately 20% annually, or \$80,000. The tax impact for Northfield is \$83.08 per \$100,000.

Question 3 is a stadium turf field. Our field is a heavily used field; the negative is that because it is considered a recreational improvement there is no State aid. Tax impact is \$5.72 per \$100,000.

DR. THOMAS BARUFFI, Ed. D., SUPERINTENDENT LINWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS, INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT FOR MRHS 2009-2010

Dr. Baruffi referred to the 3 separate town hall meetings held in each of the 3 affected communities. One question has come up at every meeting; what will the school do if the referendum fails? Baruffi said they will be back in 2 years because there is really no choice. The expectations for MRHS are high; Somers Point has 47% free or reduced lunch count; the disabled population in the Linwood preschool went from 7 to 30 students in recent years. Students have more challenges than ever before and when compared to other schools, MRHS pales.

Council President Kern thanked the group for bringing their message to the community, and opened a forum for questions by Council.

Councilman Carew stated that he likes the idea of 3 separate questions, commenting on the highlights of the presentations. He endorses the project 100%.

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Mayor Mazzeo thanked the group for making time to inform all 3 communities, noting that it is no secret that residents choose these communities for the school system. He wished them the best of luck.

Councilman Smith said as a teacher at the school, he can attest to the conditions. He clarified that the estimates are from before the economic downturn, and that bids can be anticipated to be lower based on the current bidding environment.

Councilman Vain encouraged all members of Council and the public to tour the school; it is in desperate need of repair.

Councilman Turon asked about the payback for the solar portion of the project; Gniewyk replied that it is about 8 years.

Councilman Martinez commented that he was at the NCS presentation, and that he sees a huge difference from then to now. They listened to the residents and have improved their presentation. He wishes them luck.

Council President Kern announced a 5 minute break before resuming the regular Council Meeting.

AGENDA REVIEW

Council President Kern reviewed the agenda, announcing that she would be abstaining from the vote for 62-2009, and as such it will be removed from the consent agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES/ MARCH 10, 2009

Motion was made by Councilman O'Grady, second by Councilman Smith to dispense with the reading of the minutes of March 10, 2009. They have been posted, distributed to Council and are on file in the Municipal Clerk's Office. All present in favor, motion carries.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Martinez stated that there will be a meeting of the COAH committee on March 26th at 7:00pm and he will report at the next Council session. There are no Planning/Zoning Board applications at this time. At the last Council meeting a resolution was passed to participate in the Sustainablejersey™ program. There is a punch list required for participation and he would like to schedule a meeting with

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Council President Kern to discuss. At the recent NCS Board of Education meeting they announced Dr. Fipp as the new Superintendent; he offered his congratulations and wished her well.

Councilman Turon referred to the March 16th Budget Meeting as a first meeting, with the next date to be discussed. There were a few reductions made but there are more to do.

Councilman Vain attended 'Dave's Day' on March 21st at the Community School; he commended the volunteers that made the day successful. Vain said he reached out to Dr. Trocki to schedule another meeting to discuss the Burton Avenue Estates issue, but due to a death in the Trocki family it will have to be rescheduled. Condolences were extended to the family. He would like to reduce the speed limit on Burton Avenue to make it a consistent 25 mph. Recent changes to legislation make it easier for municipalities to make these changes without additional approvals. Vain has prepared information for Solicitor Bonchi and hopes to add this as an Ordinance to the next Council agenda. Mayor Mazzeo asked if a traffic study had been done in the area; Chief James confirmed that it has been done several times. James said he agrees that the change is a good idea and is reasonable. Vain added that the Happy Home Walk on April 25th will coincide with the kickoff of the Keep Kids Alive Drive 25 campaign; information is available on the NCS website, or Vain may be contacted directly.

Councilman Carew stated that the high volume of traffic at Birch Grove Park supports the recommendation for a speed limit reduction on Burton Avenue. As stated by Vain, 'Dave's Day' was a very successful event, and Carew congratulated everyone involved. April 11th is opening day at Birch Grove Park, with the fishing tournament starting at 8am. A memorial will be erected in the playground area in honor of Marie Wakefield, an area resident who bequeathed \$35,000 to the park upon her death a few years ago. Carew thanked Action Landscaping and Dave Notaro for selecting the shrubbery and instructing the Public Works staff on how to correctly plant it. He also thanked Henry Notaro for his assistance with the memorial project.

Councilman Smith concurred with the comments made by Carew and Vain about the success of 'Dave's Day', adding that over 500 people participated, including 100 students. Smith congratulated Dr. Fipp on her recent appointment as Superintendent at NCS. The school will be introducing their budget on March 30th at 6:30pm. The RFP for rescue squad services has been issued, and thus far 5 organizations have picked up the packet.

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Councilman O'Grady reported the issues with the Planning/Zoning Board section of the City website have been resolved, and the 'email your council person' function should be on-line this week. He is continuing to work with Chief James regarding upgrading the telephone service. National Library Week begins April 12th, with many events planned. O'Grady stated that COAH regulations require that we appoint a Municipal Housing Liaison, and this person must be a full or part time employee of the City. He will make a recommendation, adding that the training is free and the reporting requirement is minimal. He will find out if the liaison can be a member of Council.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Mazzeo also attended 'Dave's Day', and echoed the sentiments of others about the success of the event. Council had a budget work session on March 16th; after this 1st meeting the proposed tax increase is at 8 cents. He thanked the Governing Body and members of the public, adding that there is still work to do on further reducing this number. Mazzeo said the City must compensate for substantial losses in revenue, and reviewed current savings attributable to attrition. Mazzeo concluded his report by providing the statistics from the February Police Department report.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Kern stated that she is continuing to meet with Linwood to discuss shared service opportunities in the Court, and they will have their 3rd meeting on March 26th. The Municipal Alliance is hosting a Parent Bullying program sponsored by Atlantic Prevention Resources on March 26th from 7-8pm. The Cultural Committee's antique appraisal held on March 19th was very successful, and Kern thanked the Fire Department for setting up the room. There will be another budget work session on March 30th at 7pm, and since the April 21st Council Meeting coincides with the School Board Election, she suggested changing that meeting to April 28th. Kern also attended 'Dave's Day', and it was a wonderful event in honor of the longtime Northfield resident and Allsports member. She will be inviting Lewis' family and the committee who planned the event to the 2nd meeting in April to honor them. This week marks the 50th year in business for BF Mazzeo in Northfield; Kern congratulated Vince Mazzeo and his family for this achievement.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The City Engineer's report was provided to Mayor and Council and is on file in the City Clerk's office. City Engineer Matt Doran provided updates to the report as

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follows: work has started on the Sutton Avenue drainage basins, and should be complete by Thursday of next week. Paper and digital copies of the approved tax maps have been provided to the City Tax Assessor. Doran thanked the Police Department for their assistance with the recent closing of Burton Avenue to facilitate work on the Philmar Pump Station project. Councilman Turon requested that Doran contact the County about re-stripping the cross walks on Mill Road; Doran agreed to do so.

POLICE CHIEF ROBERT JAMES REPORT

Chief Robert James commented on our previous inability to participate in the “Copwheels” motorcycle program due to lack of donations; donors have since been found and we may be able to proceed via another program. James has been speaking with Steelman Avenue residents about summer traffic on their street that increases due to motorists cutting through this area to avoid the light at Mill Road. He has spoken with the State Department of Highway Traffic Safety; they have encouraged him to apply for grant funding to staff overtime patrols.

RESOLUTIONS/CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion of Councilman Carew second of Councilman O’Grady, all present in favor of a Consent Agenda for Resolutions 57-2009 through 61-2009 and 63-2009 through 71-2009 as follows:

- 57-2009** Request to the County for Use of Roads for Parades
- 58-2009** Final Change Order No. 1 Sanitary Sewer Repair at 2nd Street
- 59-0009** To Issue a Raffle License to the Charity League
- 60-2009** To Authorize a Reduction in Performance Guarantee and Release of Cash Guarantee for Block 78 Lot 14
- 61-2009** Release of Escrow Monies from the Planning/Zoning Board to the Owner of Block 1.02 Lots 29 and 30
- 63-2009** Amending Resolution 42-2009 to Refund of Partial Sewer Payment for Block 52 Lot 6
- 64-2009** To Authorize Cancellation of a Tax Sale Certificate

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- 65-2009** To Authorize Cancellation of 2008 Taxes (Various) Under \$10.00
- 66-2009** A Resolution Authorizing the City Of Northfield to Enter Into a Joint Purchasing System Agreement With the City of Linwood
- 67-2009** Authorizing the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract to United Computer for Comprehensive Support Agreement for the City's Computers and Network
- 68-2009** Authorizing Emergency Temporary Appropriations
- 69-2009** A Resolution Appointing Jay Hurley Of Morgan Stanley As the Approved Broker Of Record For the City Of Northfield's Deferred Compensation 457 Plan
- 70-2009** To Authorize the Hiring of a Seasonal Laborer for Birch Grove Park
- 71-2009** To Authorize the Hiring of a Seasonal Concession Stand Attendant at Birch Grove Park

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Martinez – yes; Mr. O'Grady – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Turon – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes. Motion carries.

Councilman Carew motioned, Vain seconded for adoption of resolution 62-2009.

- 62-2009** To Authorize Refund of Overpayment of 2008 Taxes Block 179.01 Lot 9

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Martinez – yes; Mr. O'Grady – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Turon – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mrs. Kern – abstain. Motion carries.

ORDINANCES

On a motion of Councilman Turon, second of Councilman Martinez all in favor of reading Ordinance 3-2009 by title only.

- 3-2009** Ordinance Providing for and Establishing Salary Ranges of Officers and Employees of the City of Northfield and Repealing All Ordinances Heretofore Adopted, the Provisions of Which are Inconsistent Herewith
*Final Adoption/Open to the Public/No Public Comments Received
Published in the Press 03/28/2009*

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Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Martinez – yes; Mr. O’Grady – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Turon – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes. Motion carries for final adoption of Ordinance 3-2009.

On a motion of Councilman Carew, second of Councilman Vain all in favor of reading Ordinance 4-2009 by title only.

4-2009 An Ordinance Providing For the Appropriation Of \$350,000.00 As A Special Emergency Appropriation For the Property Revaluation Services To Be Performed In The City Of Northfield
Introduction / No Public Input / Published in the Press 03/28/2009

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Martinez – yes; Mr. O’Grady – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Turon – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes. Motion carries for introduction of Ordinance 4-2009.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilman Turon motioned, Councilman O’Grady seconded, for payment of bills in the amount of \$3,437,587.42. Vain and Kern announced their abstention from certain line items on the bill list. Copies are on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Martinez – yes; Mr. O’Grady – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Turon – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes. Motion carries for payment of bills.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Kern opened this meeting to the public and asked if anyone from the public wished to speak.

Norman Hirschfeld, 1207 Dolphin Avenue and President of the Four Seasons Condo Association, read a letter addressed to the Mayor and Council on behalf of the residents of the Four Seasons Condo and in support of the Northfield Rescue Squad Inc.

Robert Webb, 218 West Revere Avenue, expressed dissatisfaction with increasing property taxes.

Frank Perri, 7 Haddon Avenue, President of the Northfield Rescue Squad, thanked Mr. Hirschfeld for his comments. Perri referred to a request he made at the last

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Council meeting to be able to lease/purchase a City ambulance; they have secured insurance. Solicitor Bonchi advised that the joint RFP between Linwood and Northfield for rescue squad services was amended to include Perri's ambulance lease, and that the Memorandum of Understanding has to be amended to reflect the lease. Council President Kern advised that we will add a special meeting immediately before the March 30th budget meeting to allow Council to vote on the amendment to the Memorandum. Perri asked for clarification of resolution 66-2009; Bonchi explained the cooperative purchasing process.

Seeing no others from the public wishing to speak, President Kern closed the public session.

RESOLUTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Kern announced that she requested the presence of Chief Robert James during the session. Solicitor Bonchi announced the following for the record: it is necessary for the City Council of the City of Northfield to discuss in a session not open to the public certain matters relating to the status of a tort claim notice that was filed with the City of Northfield by Daniel and Samantha Lea Rothman. Deliberations conducted in this closed session may be released when a decision with respect to the matter has been made and all rights to litigate or appeal are exhausted; provided, that material entitled to Court protection or subject to attorney-client privilege shall not be disclosed. Bonchi will be providing an update to Council with regard to the tort claim.

72-2009 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. 10:4-12 Regarding Anticipated Litigation In The Matter Of Daniel And Samantha Lea Rothman v. City Of Northfield

At 9:11p.m., Councilman Carew motioned, Turon seconded to adopt resolution 72-2009 and enter into Executive Session.

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Martinez – yes; Mr. O'Grady – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Turon – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes. Motion carries. Council remained in Council Chambers.

At 9:30 p.m. this Executive Session was adjourned and Solicitor Bonchi announced a summary for the public as follows: the Chief of Police and Solicitor Bonchi provided a report on the tort claim notice and discussion relating to the allegations made

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against the City. As this is pending litigation these discussions cannot be repeated. The minutes cannot be released until the issue is closed.

RESOLUTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Kern announced that she requested the presence of Chief Robert James during the session. Solicitor Bonchi announced the following for the record: it is necessary for the City Council of the City of Northfield to discuss in a session not open to the public certain matters relating to the status of a lawsuit filed against the City of Northfield by Stephon Lawton. The minutes cannot be released until a decision with respect to the matter has been made and all rights to litigate or appeal are exhausted; provided, that material entitled to Court protection or subject to attorney-client privilege shall not be disclosed.

73-2009 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. 10:4-12 Regarding Pending Litigation In The Matter Of Stephon Lawton V. Daniel Mitchell, Jr., Northfield Police Department, et. al.

At 9:32 p.m., Councilman Carew motioned, Vain seconded to adopt resolution 73-2009 and enter into Executive Session.

Roll call: Mr. Carew – yes; Mr. Martinez – yes; Mr. O’Grady – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Turon – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes. Motion carries. Council remained in Council Chambers.

At 9:45 p.m. this Executive Session was adjourned and Solicitor Bonchi announced a summary for the public as follows: the Chief of Police and Solicitor Bonchi provided a status report on litigation of Lawton v. Dan Mitchell and the Northfield Police Department. Information was provided to Council on the status of the lawsuit. The minutes cannot be released until the issue is closed.

Councilman Smith read the meeting notices. City Council will meet for a Special Meeting to discuss an amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Northfield and Northfield Rescue Squad on Monday, March 30th at 7:00 pm, and for budget discussion on Monday, March 30th at 7:15 pm.

On motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, Acting Municipal Clerk