

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MARCH 11, 2014**

At 6:00pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 11, 2014 in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor McGee. Following the flag salute a moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chau, Devine, Dewees, O'Neill, Perri, Travagline
Absent: Piergiovanni

Also in attendance were Mayor McGee and Solicitor Facenda.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- Presentation Underage Drinking Ordinance – Atlantic Prevention Resources

Council President Travagline introduced Robert Zlotnick on behalf of Atlantic Prevention Resources.

Robert Zlotnick, 8 East Ridgewood Court, stated that ten other towns in the County have adopted this Ordinance, including Egg Harbor Township and Galloway. He clarified that it allows the Police Department to write a ticket for alcohol consumption. It doesn't mean that parents can't permit their own children to drink in their home in the presence of their parent. He added that once Northfield adopts this Ordinance, Linwood and Somers Point will follow and it will affect the whole Mainland Regional High School community.

Lori Smith, Coordinator of the Substance Abuse Program in Atlantic County for Atlantic Prevention Resources, stated that the Ordinance is directed at large house parties and to levy fines and it could possibly affect driving privileges.

Councilman O'Neill asked if the parents get fined.

Lori Smith stated that parents are already liable under state law; this makes the child responsible.

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Robert Zlotnick, 8 East Ridgewood Court, added that tacking on the loss of driving privileges for up to 6 months will be a huge deterrent.

Lori Smith stated it will be key to make the youth aware of the existence of the Ordinance. She noted, right now, at a large house party full of underage drinkers, the only penalty is against the homeowner. The penalty under the new Ordinance will extend to the underage drinker on private property.

Chief Robert James stated he believes the idea has merit, especially if there is a problem house. He added it will give the Police one more tool to use.

- Presentation - Solar Panel Installation at City Hall

Mike Buonasorte, a solar energy consultant representing Solar Power Now, thanked Council for the opportunity to demonstrate the potential savings the City could achieve by using solar energy rather than purchasing electricity from the electric utility. He stated that no investment is required on the part of the City but there is a minimum size requirement.

Councilman Nick Piergiovanni entered the meeting at 6:14 pm

Mayor McGee asked how long the system will last.

Mike Buonasorte responded approximately 25-30 years.

Discussion ensued, including Councilman O'Neill, Councilman Perri, Mayor McGee and Mike Buonasorte, with regard to pricing per kilowatt hour, installation prices, for which there would be no capital outlay on the part of the City, billing, insurance, maintenance costs, and the necessity to go out to bid.

Council President Travagline stated that this idea was first broached by former Mayor Mazzeo and that an exploratory meeting to discuss the matter was held with representatives from Solar Power Now, and was attended by himself, Kathi Smith, Councilman Dewees and Councilman O'Neill.

Councilman Piergiovanni asked how much of an area is needed in City real estate.

Mike Buonasorte stated approximately 30,000 square feet.

Mayor McGee asked who bears the costs, if any, associated with environmental issues.

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Mike Buonasorte stated that if there are any costs associated with erecting the system their firm would bear those costs.

Councilman Chau asked if there is any conflict with Commercial Utility Consultants.

Council President Travagline stated that Commercial Utility Consultants only affects residential service, this solar presentation is for the City of Northfield electric service.

Mike Buonasorta reviewed pricing and savings. He noted that the costs under the solar agreement, in 25 years will never reach the per kilowatt hourly rate Northfield is paying now, in 2014.

Councilman O'Neill noted that if the City funded the system, it would incur 10-20 hours per month in costs to have someone read the meters and handle the S REC's (renewable energy certificates), etc.

Mike Buonasorta thanked Council.

- Police Ordinance – Requirements for Promotion

Council President Travagline announced that he would be skipping the Police Ordinance discussion because Mayor McGee is handling it.

- Discussion of Acceptance of Credit Cards for Tax Payments

Council President Travagline shared that he was approached by a resident about accepting credit card payments for taxes. He added that he was not in favor of it as he doesn't think usage would be high enough to justify the fees, which he believes would be 3-6%.

Municipal Clerk Canesi offered that CFO Stollenwerk gave her some information about it and her opinion was that it was not worth it.

Council President Travagline asked Municipal Clerk Canesi to forward the CFO's comments to Council.

- Road Opening Moratorium Waiver for New Jersey American Water Company, as presented by Dan Kwapinski of Schaffer, Nassar, Scheidegg Consulting Engineers, LLC

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Engineer Kwapinski stated that he met with New Jersey American Water about opening a section of Putting Green Avenue. He reported that New Jersey American Water indicated the flow rate would increase three times, making the flow to the hydrants in that area much better for fire suppression, perhaps making this an emergency request.

Mayor McGee asked if the Fire Department tests the output of the hydrants.

Councilman Dewees stated he does not believe they do.

Council President Travagline stated that we need additional information, as we just received this request from New Jersey American Water yesterday. He noted that this discussion will be pushed to the Council meeting on March 25, 2014.

Mayor McGee stated that he feels the City is trying to circumvent the moratorium and colluding with the New Jersey American Water Company to find a reason to let them open the street. He added that he was at the meeting and it made him very uncomfortable.

Council President Travagline stated he too, was at the meeting and disagrees with Mayor McGee's assessment. He added he thought everything was completely transparent.

Councilman Dewees stated he is working with Engineer Kwapinski on a list of emergency sewer repairs and once the list is compiled we will use the City's Contractor for General Repairs for those repairs that need to be made.

Councilman Perri asked how the court can use credit cards and who pays those fees.

Councilman O'Neill stated he believes there are no fees on court credit card charges but he will verify that and let Councilman Perri know.

- Permanent repair on Burton Avenue in front of the Fire Station

Councilman Dewees commented that the materials being used for repairs on Burton Avenue are holding up a bit better as the weather gets warmer.

Councilman Perri noted the paving of that street is not that old.

Councilman Chau asked for clarification from Council that the intent of Council is to eliminate the Fire Department from serving as first responders.

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Council President Travagline answered that it is open for discussion. He added they are trying to determine if it is a duplication of service.

Councilman Chau stated he has invited Councilmen O'Neill and Piergiovanni to an Officer's meeting.

Solicitor Facenda announced the sheriff sale on the Cedar Bridge Road property has concluded. He added that it seems like the date has gone through and as he drove by tonight it appears repairs are already underway.

Council President Travagline announced that Council will be introducing the budget on March 25, 2014 and asked for confirmation that Council is in agreement with the budget as agreed upon at the last meeting, with a 2.3 cent increase.

Council President Travagline asked if there were any other questions regarding the agenda for the regular meeting and made assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Travagline opened the meeting to any member of the public wishing to speak on any subject.

Robert Webb, 218 West Revere Avenue, stated that the son of Mr. George Edwards, Northfield's posthumous Citizen of the Year, passed away. He added that they have secured a wooden shed with cedar shake siding to replace the shed that blew down at Veterans' Park. He asked how much clean fill is needed.

Engineer Kwapinski stated he would calculate it.

Councilman Dewees stated he has already made arrangements to purchase a new wooden shed but he will find out if the order has yet been placed.

Frank Caltabelotta, 2019 Sutton Avenue, stated his parents own Giovanni's Restaurant at 815 Tilton Road. He added that last year the Family Association of Northfield was introduced. He shared that his family was part of the pizza fund raisers for years and since the Family Association of Northfield was introduced no one has even approached them to continue to participate. He stated that he grew up in this town and feels it was disrespectful that only one business was given the opportunity to give back.

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Councilman O'Neill asked Mr. Caltabelotta if he has approached any of the organizations.

Frank Caltabelotta, 2019 Sutton Avenue, stated that he has talked to Jason Yard and was told that everything goes through City Council.

Council President Travagline stated he will advise all of the groups that Giovanni's would like to participate. He offered to bridge the gap and bring Giovanni's back. He stated he was confident that the Family Association of Northfield would welcome other businesses that want to participate.

Frank Caltabelotta, 2019 Sutton Avenue, stated that he feels it was intentional that other restaurants were excluded.

Councilman Chau suggested that Mr. Caltabelotta contact other groups as well, such as the Mother's League.

Councilman Dewees stated that Council will ensure that other restaurants are permitted to participate.

Lisa Brown, 9 Haviv Drive, commented that she does not feel the City should approach any sports organizations and tell them who to use for donations; interested vendors should attend the meetings of the groups and make themselves known. If they can beat the price given by another vendor, then let them.

Frank Caltabelotta, 2019 Sutton Avenue, stated he has tried that and has been ignored.

Councilman Perri stated that we do subsidize them, and notes the \$15,000 insurance bill. The least they can do is vendor rotation.

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

At 7:20pm on motions properly made and seconded this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC
Municipal Clerk