

CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION JANUARY 21, 2025

At 6:01pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 6, 2024, and in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Chau led the flag salute.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilwoman Carfagno; Councilman Dewees; Councilwoman Kern; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Polistina; Councilman Smith; Council President Bucci.

Mayor Chau, Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Joseph Mohnack (from DeBlasio and Associates), and Chief of Police VonColln were also present.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Polistina – Finance and Collections; Library; Municipal Alliance; Senior Citizens; Affordable Housing

Councilman Polistina reported the library was continuing to do interior updates and are working on their budget. Their account balance is \$238,000.00. Regarding Seniors, he has been working to get meetings going again, he was planning a luncheon for February and would hopefully have some routine programming.

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

Councilman Dewees announced that E and L Tree Service started trimming trees in Sutton Woods. The steps behind the police department need work and Superintendent Vitale was looking into that. Superintendent Vitale met with Mr. Smith to go over disc golf and was working on a schedule to help out. He noted someone planted a tree on the ice at the park, he was working with Superintendent Vitale and Solicitor Facenda to prohibit water activity. Regarding Argo Lane, Councilman Dewees would be meeting with the Engineer to get an easement for fire trucks to have safe passage; he would keep the Solicitor updated.

Councilwoman Kern – Northfield Sports (FAN)

Councilwoman Kern, regarding FAN, travel and recreational basketball was going well, the new president for FAN was being installed and meetings would begin soon.

Councilwoman Bucci – Insurance and Safety; Inspections, Housing/Zoning; Planning Board; Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce Finance and

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JANUARY 21, 2025**

Collections; Inspections, Housing/Zoning; Library; Municipal Alliance Senior Citizens

Councilwoman Bucci announced the Planning Board was putting the final touches on the Master Plan, she would be attending the Atlantic County Economic Alliance meeting on Wednesday night.

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

Councilman Smith reported the shared court with Hammonton Court was up and running, he asked Chief VonColln to comment.

Chief VonColln noted that the transition went smoothly and everything was going well. He explained the 'drop box' for file uploads so our files don't leave this building.

Councilman Smith continued; Little League was moving forward with their meeting schedule; he would like to see regular meetings scheduled this year. Northfield Community School's Board of Education meeting is scheduled for next Monday; Councilman Smith's daughter would be receiving the student of the month award.

Councilwoman Carfagno - Fire Department / EMS; Technology / MRHS Channel; Cultural Committee / Veteran Liaison; Mainland Regional

Councilwoman Carfagno reported the next Mainland Board of Education meeting was tonight; the Cultural Committee Flea Market is May 5th. She created a new flyer for the Hometown Heroes banner that was provided to Solicitor and Clerk and she was working with Councilman Dewees to get it up and running this spring. She thanked all first responders for their efforts in responding to a structure fire shortly after Christmas. The Fire Chief and Captain decided in July that the Fire Department would respond to all unconscious persons calls 7 days a week. She read the Fire report for end of the year.

Councilman Notaro - Sewer Operations

Councilman Notaro did not have a committee report.

Council President Bucci asked Councilwoman Carfagno to come up with a description for the responsibilities of the Veteran Liaison, as there is not one currently.

Councilwoman Carfagno agreed.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JANUARY 21, 2025**

Electric Vehicles – *Councilmen Polistina and Notaro.*

Clerk Canesi explained she was working on the ordinance with the Solicitor regarding some statutory language.

Special Events Ordinance – *Councilwoman Bucci, Councilman Dewees.*

Councilwoman Bucci was still working on the ordinance.

Road Opening Ordinance – *Councilmen Dewees and Notaro.*

Councilman Notaro did not have an update.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS

1. Engineering Projects

- a. Sanitary Sewer Main and Manhole Rehabilitation
- b. NJ DOT Juniper Drive Project
- c. 2024 Local Recreation Improvement Grant for parking improvements
BGP

Councilman Notaro addressed Joseph Mohnack from DeBlasio and Associates and asked him to follow up with Engineer DeBlasio regarding email exchanges in which Councilman Notaro had requested certain emails related to costs associated with the sanitary sewer slip lining project.

Engineer Mohnack replied that some activities were being completed during the day and changes in traffic control measures will significantly reduce the cost of the project.

Councilman Notaro reiterated that he would like Engineer DeBlasio to forward the emails previously referenced.

Councilman Smith noted the original estimate was \$255,000.00, the bid came in at \$355,000.00, but new estimate was \$325,000.00. He asked why we were so 'off' on the original estimate? He asked why was the most expensive component on the project 'traffic control'? He felt it seemed excessive.

Engineer Mohnack replied that at night the cost is significantly higher.

Councilman Smith asked what exactly are they doing?

Engineer Mohnack explained that at night there was a higher requirement for cones, flaggers, detour signs, etc.

Councilman Smith asked \$75,000.00 worth of cones and signage?

Councilman Notaro added it was the manpower and the signs throughout the town, moving them and putting them back. He asked if the estimate would come down once Shore Road was carved out?

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JANUARY 21, 2025**

Engineer Mohnack replied their estimate was as good as the lowest bidder as well.

Councilman Smith noted the Juniper Avenue project, a \$300,000.00 project, and that allocated \$10,000.00 for traffic control.

Councilman Dewees added, it's detours and signage.

Councilman Smith reiterated that it's a \$65,000.00 difference for signage; it seems excessive.

Council President Bucci asked aren't the requirements set by the County? It is their mandate.

Engineer Mohnack replied, yes.

Chief VonColln explained it was his opinion that having officers there would allow traffic direction, as opposed to 75 different signs.

Clerk Canesi suggested a straw poll to see if Council wanted the resolution to stay on the agenda this evening.

Clerk Canesi explained the resolution was to authorize the engineer to proceed with revising the bid specs, after that, Council would receive and review them and approve them or not by resolution.

Councilman Notaro felt the project needed to be done soon.

A majority of Council was in favor of moving on Resolution 54-2025.

Clerk Canesi moved to items 1b and 1c under the work session topics, if approved, resolutions would be on the next agenda.

Clerk Canesi explained item 1b as the NJDOT project for Juniper Drive, the City would be required to fund \$154,000.00. Council needs to decide if they want to fund the project.

Councilwoman Kern asked if we don't fund the project would we lose the grant?

Clerk Canesi replied; we would have to revise the scope of work.

Councilwoman Carfagno asked if we could reduce the scope?

Engineer Mohnack replied, if you reduce the scope you'd be starting or stopping in the middle of a city block.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JANUARY 21, 2025**

Councilman Smith noted this was a heavily trafficked road with a lot of cars, he asked Public Works Supervisor Boyd (in audience) for the condition of the road?

Supervisor Boyd replied that Forrest Drive is worse than Juniper but Juniper is heavier traveled due to the proximity of the school.

Discussion ensued amongst several Councilmembers.

Council President Bucci took a straw poll vote.

All members present were in favor of proceeding.

Clerk Canesi announced she would have a resolution on the next agenda to approve the authorization for DeBlasio and Associates to proceed with the project and noted that this work would likely need to be done when school was not in session, due to heavy parking in the area and proximity to the school.

Clerk Canesi moved to item 1c, the 2024 Local Recreation Improvement Grant. This grant is for the parking associated with the future pickleball and basketball courts. She explained the amount that needed to be funded, and the process.

Councilman Dewees was opposed; it was something we've been planning on, pickle ball and basketball, they may never happen. He felt we should hold off on it.

Councilman Notaro asked if we could do a different project?

Clerk Canesi, deferred to the engineer, the grant application was submitted and approved.

Engineer Mohnack replied, they have had success in getting grant deadlines extended as well as in changing scope.

Councilman Dewees felt parking was not desperately needed right now.

Councilman Polistina asked the engineer to request a grant extension.

Council President Bucci took a straw poll, all were no.

Clerk Canesi confirmed there would be no resolution on the next agenda for item 1c.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
JANUARY 21, 2025**

Clerk Canesi announced we were under a deadline for the next round of LRIG Funding. Between, Clerk Canesi, Council President Bucci, and, the Engineer's office they managed to get the items on the agenda tonight in order to meet the grant deadline of January 31st.

Councilman Dewees apologized for being the reason for the delay. He thanked Clerk Canesi.

- Prohibition of Certain Activities in and on the lakes at Birch Grove Park

Council President Bucci noted that Councilman Dewees addressed the prohibition of certain activities at the lake during his Committee Report.

- Definition of Veteran Liaison Committee Responsibilities

Council President Bucci noted that earlier in the meeting, she had asked Councilwoman Carfagno to come up with definition of duties of veterans' liaison.

Councilman Smith suggested a semiquincentennial event to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the formation of the United States, he offered to chair the committee. Councilwoman Carfagno wanted to participate as well.

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council President Bucci reviewed the agenda and made the assignments.

PUBLIC SESSION / FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER

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

Councilman Polistina announced that we lost Don Vass last week, Mayor of Linwood for over 20 years, he was a pillar of his community. He offered condolences to the family.

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

At 6:41pm, on motions properly made and seconded, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk