

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD BUDGET WORK SESSION
JANUARY 30, 2012**

At 4:00pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised according to Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mrs. Brown, Mr. Dewees, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Perri, Mr. Polistina, Mr. Vain, Mr. Carew

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Mazzeo; following the flag salute a moment of silence was observed.

Council President Carew turned the meeting over to Councilman Polistina, as Finance Chair, Mayor Mazzeo, and CFO TC Kay.

Polistina offered his own assistance or that of the CFO if anyone needs it.

Mayor Mazzeo stated that the Library is no longer part of the municipal tax levy; it is now listed separately. We do not yet know our state aid figures. The City has to set up a Trust for health benefits. The state's deadline for budget introduction has been extended until March 9th and final adoption until April 20th. Mazzeo provided a general overview of the Police department budget. He said Council will have to decide if they want to continue having MRHS video tape its meetings; last year we gave them \$1,500. He noted the Library's return of funds in past years and said we need to discuss capital projects for 2012 as well. The 2% cap this year only gives us \$163,604.71.

CFO Kay stated that state aid figures will not be available until after February 21st. Councilman Perri questioned that even without Library we are at a \$400,000 over last year's budget. Kay replied that we can't answer that question yet. She continued with an overview of the budget, and said as part of a three year cycle, that Northfield is ineligible for self exam of our budget this year, and as such must have DCA approval to adopt budget. She reviewed a 3-year trend of 2009-2011 and provided a general overview of known increases in expenses, including a new postage meter and folding machine. She provided a general overview of each department and suggested adding a separate line in each budget for overtime; our payroll company already provides it, so it should not be difficult to do. Kay continued to review the budget, and explained the long term effect of creating a sewer utility; she said benefits, wages, etc for the sewer department would be outside the cap, and if you can show that the sewer department is self liquidating, you won't need the 5% down payment for any capital projects. Kay said she is not sure we have enough budgeted for gasoline. The PFRS and PERS figures look a lot better than anticipated.

Northfield's Auditor, Ken Moore from Ford, Scott and Associates, was in attendance and commented on Kay's suggestion of creating a separate line item for the Sewer department; we may have to allocate costs differently, and it would be a one-time

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adjustment pulling all the costs out. He is not sure of any positive net effect on the budget.

Council President Carew said Kay needs to meet with remaining department heads, and meet with the auditor.

Mayor Mazzeo referred to the ACUA's contract proposal to collect yard waste for the City for 9 months. Carew replied that Dewees will look into the ACUA, and that he Mazzeo and Carew will meet to discuss the Mayor and Council budget.

Councilman Perri noted that historically during budget meetings, he is used to seeing line-to-line comparisons with percentages of change, including revenues and tax increases. He commented that his statement is not intended to fault the incoming CFO, that it is just the transition. Kay replied that she will create that form so Council will have it in advance of the next meeting. Moore added that he will assist with that. Perri said he also wants to see overtime for the year, and savings overall with the ACUA contract.

Councilman O'Neill said he wants to see 'live' comparisons, in Excel, as numbers change. Kay replied that she will do that for the next meeting. Carew stated that historically that is what we do. O'Neill said for the overall phone bill we are overpaying and that we don't need T1 lines. We should explore options of going to Somers Point for dispatch. Mazzeo added that there is also County- wide dispatch on the horizon.

Northfield Police Chief Robert James spoke, and said he has concerns with the way Somers Point operates versus how we operate; additionally they cannot come close to what we pay. O'Neill said if we stay with Egg Harbor Township, we should ask them for a discount, especially if we are bringing them Linwood.

O'Neill said for IT services, he would like to see if the school will take on our IT support at a cost of \$100 hour for 100 hours of tech support. Councilman Vain commented, saying we asked them a while back and that the school was unable to address our needs during the day. Vain said as Council liaison for shared services, he wants to attend the meeting with the school.

O'Neill said he wants to have Atlanticare pay us for utilities, etc. Polistina replied that he met with Atlanticare last week and that discussions are in progress for them to do so. Chief James added that Linwood's contract with Atlanticare has been amended to include a utilities payment.

O'Neill said if we moved our postage to Edmunds we would be paying 30-40% less. CFO Kay replied that we are already using a bulk permit; it is in use now for sewer bills and tax bills. O'Neill said he would like us to utilize copier service contracts that are based on a per-copy fee, and that he would like to see standardized equipment in all offices. The Municipal Clerk stated that the City's main copier, in the Clerk's office is in the 3rd year of a per-copy contract.

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Councilwoman Brown provided an overview of the budget for the Violations department.

Councilman Dewees said All Sports has been offered a 40' x 60' x 10' trailer free of cost, but need to figure out how to get the trailer here from Smithville. It used to be a meeting room for a real estate developer. Brown said that All Sports should bring us a proposal to move it, and asked why there is a budget line for them for \$13,000. Carew explained that the City provides the infrastructure, and many years ago they requested additional funding to supplement funding for their expenses. O'Neill said he wants to bring back coin drops as a fund raising mechanism for local groups. The Municipal Clerk explained that a local ordinance must be adopted first.

Auditor Ken Moore suggested staying on top of the capital projects plan and budget. Carew explained the capital budget process and the cyclical nature of some of the costs.

Perri said he will provide the ACUA's wastewater fees packet to the CFO and asked for an update on the increase in Fire department expenses. Polistina explained their request for increase in staff, saying that 4.2 men are needed for 24/7 coverage of one man per shift. Perri urged the mandatory use of our volunteer squad.

Council President Carew opened this meeting to public. Seeing no one wishing to speak, he closed the public session.

Councilman Vain read the meeting notices.

At 5:55pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk