

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

At 6:04pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 11, 2025, and in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

Council President Pro Tempore Dewees led the flag salute.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Mayor Chau

Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Mauro, and Sergeant Czaplinski (for Chief of Police VonColln) were also present.

Council President Bucci moved to Committee Reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Councilman Polistina announced we were in the midst of budget meetings with the next one scheduled for next week; there was considerable work to do. All Council members were encouraged to review their areas carefully. Affordable Housing was moving forward, the Committee had another meeting last week to review the upcoming deadlines. The Committee would meet routinely in the near future to monitor critical dates. The Senior luncheon was held on February 6th, he would attempt to meet with the group every two months and include programming when possible.

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

Councilman Dewees did not have a report.

Councilwoman Kern – Northfield Sports (FAN)

Councilwoman Kern reported on behalf of FAN that the Annual Jim Hoopes and Karen Devinney awards were in progress, a \$500 grant would be presented to one male and one female Northfield student, for high school seniors. See any FAN

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

member for details. She also noted there were openings on the FAN Board. Basketball was winding down and we'll be on to spring sports.

Councilwoman Carfagno asked Councilwoman Kern if she could find out if family members can be present when awards were presented?

Councilwoman Kern replied, yes; she would follow up.

Councilwoman Bucci – Insurance and Safety; Planning Board; Economic Development / Chamber of Commerce

Councilwoman Bucci announced that our JIF contract was up next year, she had discussed this with Clerk Canesi. She believed they provided great programs for us as well as dividends, adding that new carriers very often give a great rate in the first year only. We would more than likely stay with the JIF. She did not have a report for Planning Board or Economic Development.

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

Councilman Smith reported the Shared Court was operating smoothly. Northfield Little League and Babe Ruth just had their closing dates, but Councilman Smith was certain late registrations would be accepted. The Northfield Community School Board of Education meets this Monday. He offered condolences to the family of MRHS retiree and longtime resident Bob Roesch who recently passed. Mr. Roesch was a well-respected member of the Mainland faculty. He was a wonderful man; Councilman Smith attended the services.

Councilwoman Kern added that Mr. Roesch was a long-time coach for football, baseball, and soccer, and she agreed with Councilman Smith's sentiments. He was wonderful man.

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

Councilwoman Carfagno congratulated the Mainland Boys and Girls swim teams on their recent victories. The next Mainland Regional High School Board of Education meeting is February 24th. She met with the Cultural Committee; they reviewed details for the upcoming flea market and provided the new phone number for museum. The 4th of July Parade was coming up, the rain date will be the 5th, and registration information will be available on the City website. The Cultural Committee is seeking nominations for the 1st Baby, Citizen of the Year and Mr./Mrs. 4th of July. Anyone who has information on the 1st baby is asked to contact the Cultural Committee. Councilwoman Carfagno announced the details for the upcoming Northfield Mothers' League Spaghetti Dinner; tickets were available from Councilwoman Carfagno or Councilman Dewees.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

Councilman Notaro - Sewer Operations; Inspections, Housing/Zoning.

Councilman Notaro did not have a committee report for the Building Department, Engineer Mauro would give an update on sewer projects.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Electric Vehicles – *Councilmen Polistina and Notaro.*

Solicitor Facenda advised that he should have the ordinance for the next meeting.

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

Councilwoman Bucci thanked Clerk Canesi for her hard work on the ordinance. It has been circulated to all departments; Solicitor Facenda has the ordinance for review.

Road Opening Ordinance – *Councilmen Dewees and Notaro.*

Councilman Notaro noted the ordinance was on the agenda tonight; the only change is regarding the fees.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS

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

Councilman Dewees would forward information to Council this week.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Clerk Canesi stated that as she'd mentioned at the budget meeting, she would be applying for a grant for document imaging for the records in the building department.

- Amending Time Duration for Special Sales – Land Use Code

Council President Bucci deferred to Clerk Canesi.

Clerk Canesi announced that a local business contacted Council President Bucci regarding the duration of time that a business could have an outdoor sale of goods on their property. The recommendation was presented to the Zoning Officer, and the Solicitor. An amendment to the ordinance is on the agenda this evening, changing the duration of a special sale from 10 days to two weeks and reducing the frequency for such sales from five times a year to two.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

- Designation of a Portion of Lake Avenue as a 'No Parking' Zone

Clerk Canesi explained the location of this street and that it is very narrow; there is a new home being built on what was formerly a wooded lot. Some residents had expressed concern to the Inspections Department Supervisor that the construction vehicles on the street have been making passage difficult. The Supervisor recommended that the Council consider making one side of the street 'no parking.' As with all such recommendations, Chief VonColln reviewed the request and confirmed that the clearance was minimal; he did recommend that Lake Avenue, between Maple and Evergreen be 'no parking' on the North side. The Ordinance to affect this change is on the agenda tonight for introduction.

Council President Bucci asked Councilman Polistina or Councilman Dewees to speak regarding union negotiations.

Councilman Polistina reported they had a union negotiation meeting today; afterward, Clerk Canesi had relayed a request to Councilmen Dewees and Polistina, and Labor Counsel Curio, that had been presented to her by other governing body members asking for an update to be provided to the full Council, in closed session, at the next Council meeting following any union negotiations committee meetings. Councilman Polistina said he felt it was a good idea to keep the members of the governing body who are not on the negotiations teams informed. He said that going forward, the committee would get updates from labor counsel and share them with the other members of Council.

Discussion ensued; the initial conclusion was that the negotiations team members would update members of Council individually, as opposed to closed session discussion.

Councilman Smith commented and said this request was borne out of discussions that he and Councilwoman Carfagno had. To Councilman Polistina, Councilman Smith asked, are you saying there would be closed session discussions at Council meetings, or one on one?

Councilman Polistina replied we could do it in a closed session, yes.

Councilman Dewees believed that would be close to the end, not after each meeting, not during the 4-5 negotiations sessions, not a Closed session discussion after each of them.

Councilman Smith said he didn't want to wait until we have an offer for an update.

Councilman Polistina added that we'll have adequate time to prepare a report for the Council, the next meeting isn't until March.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

Clerk Canesi asked for clarification, she believed Councilman Smith wanted a Closed session discussion, but Councilmen Polistina and Dewees are saying they would inform Council individually?

Councilman Polistina would check with Labor Counsel but does understand Councilman Smith's point that everyone will hear the same thing all at once.

Councilwoman Kern felt the committee wanted to talk to Council individually because we can't meet together and give an update, then have a closed session before any decisions are made. Was that correct?

Councilman Polistina replied, yes.

Councilman Dewees added that was his intention.

Councilman Smith felt Council should all be together, not necessarily after every negotiation session, but all should be in the same room so all are hearing the same thing.

Councilman Polistina suggested, for this negotiation, we'll meet in Closed session and if it becomes too cumbersome, we'll meet individually as suggested. He believed in transparency.

Councilwoman Carfagno also felt the group needed updates before the vote on any final agreement.

Councilman Smith was trying to avoid coming in being asked to vote on a final agreement but with having no information at all up to that point.

Councilman Dewees felt all seem to agree about transparency, but how do we want to do that? He believed the time to share is when an offer was ready.

Councilman Smith felt it may be too late to offer input at that point.

Councilman Smith suggested a review in closed session before negotiations begin.

Councilman Smith added it didn't have to be a set schedule.

Solicitor Facenda reminded all that any Council member can add an item to the agenda.

Councilwoman Carfagno suggested a closed session at the March 4th Council meeting for an update on the Blue-Collar negotiations.

All members present were in favor.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

Councilman Dewees, under New Business, reported that on Fuae Avenue between Mt. Vernon and Jackson, where the store is or was, that Public Works has had complaints about trash and as a result the trash cans have been removed. There are now multiple commercial vehicles and there is a parking lot across the street; Councilman Dewees believed there is a lease.

Solicitor Facenda advised that no payment nor lease was received as far as Solicitor Facenda was concerned.

Councilman Dewees asked who maintained the area?

Solicitor Facenda believed the City always has. He could look at parking restrictions.

Councilman Dewees would talk to the Chief of Police.

Councilwoman Kern asked had the resident been approached; maybe they don't know they are causing a problem?

Councilman Dewees did not know.

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, she asked that all persons state their name and city of residence for the record and observe the five-minute limit per speaker.

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

At 6:39pm, on motions properly made and seconded, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk