

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 10, 2018**

At 6:05pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 13, 2018, in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Korngut, Lischin, Murray, O'Neill, Perri, Dewees  
Absent: Travagline

Mayor Chau, Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Nassar and Chief Newman were also in attendance.

**WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – OLD BUSINESS**

Council President Dewees deferred to Solicitor Facenda for an update on the potential land sale.

- Potential Land Sale – Update

Solicitor Facenda did not have an update; he hoped to have one after tonight's executive session.

- Request for County Assistance - Signs for the Casto House and Museum on Shore Road and Rt. 9

As to museum signs Council President Dewees advised that there was a misunderstanding about who was installing the signs; he will have Clerk Canesi draft a new letter.

- "Parks and Recreation Areas" Ordinance Changes
  - Birch Grove Park
    - Addition of Camping Fees, Rules and Regulations
    - Fee for Use of Park Center
    - Fee for Weddings and other Private Functions at Gazebo
    - Authority and Control over Private use of Gazebo
    - Insurance Requirements for Private use of Gazebo and Park Center
    - Insurance Requirements for City Events Involving Paid Performers
  - Add Veterans Park

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION**  
**APRIL 10, 2018**

- Subject to same list of prohibited activities as Birch Grove Park and 1<sup>st</sup> Street Playground

Council President Dewees moved on to the next discussion regarding Birch Grove Park including changing the fee structure to have an ordinance that included fees for use of park facilities. He asked Qwin Vitale to give an overview.

Qwin Vitale, Superintendent of Public Works, stated that he took over the park last summer, and was trying to get some things in order. The grills now have locks that require users to pay the previously established fees. Superintendent Vitale said he was looking for other ways to generate more money at the park, and one way was to increase the fees for camping. The suggested increase was based on his comparison of our rates to those of other area campgrounds. He also suggested allowing users to rent-out park center, for things such as birthday parties – he was still working on the details for that. The other suggestion was fees for the bandstand. Superintendent Vitale said he has had four requests for use of the bandstand as of today. Public Works cleans and rakes the bandstand area before an event and cleans up after - each event requires Public Works tending to the area twice. This is why he suggested fees for the bandstand.

Council President Dewees asked which bath houses were open.

Superintendent Vitale replied just the one; there was not a need for the second.

Council President Dewees asked Superintendent Vitale to elaborate regarding bath houses.

Superintendent Vitale replied that previously the bath houses were not well-maintained. This was among the chief complaints about the camping facilities. His staff has rectified that and more improvements were planned.

Councilman Dewees reviewed the balance of topics and asks Clerk Canesi to elaborate on insurance.

Clerk Canesi explained that our insurance company, the Joint Insurance Fund (JIF), recommends that vendors or groups who use City facilities obtain insurance to shift the liability to the third party; this is for the protection of the taxpayer. Somers Point and Absecon, who both allow weddings at municipal facilities, stated that they require the bride to obtain insurance naming their city as secondary insured. Whenever we have a group that requests private use of a City-owned facility they are required to provide insurance; this was not new. Groups who do not have their own insurance have the ability to purchase the insurance through the Tenant User Liability Insurance Program (TULIP). Even birthday parties at Birch Grove Park are required to have insurance. According to our records there have not been any weddings at the

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 10, 2018**

gazebo since 2012. Clerk Canesi reiterated that the insurance was required to protect the taxpayer.

Clerk Canesi also explained that the Veterans Park was not currently included under the parks and recreations umbrella. This was a change being incorporated into the proposed ordinance for Parks and Recreation.

**PUBLIC SESSION**

Council President Dewees opened the public portion of the meeting for any person to speak on any topic.

Bob Webb, 218 W. Revere Avenue, wanted the benches moved at Veterans' Park.

Council President advised that they need to be put on concrete pads.

Mr. Webb stated he also wanted the memorial removed from City Hall and moved to Veterans' Park.

Council President Dewees asked if he just wanted the plaque or the entire memorial moved.

Mr. Webb replied just the plaque; the memorial should be reserved to honor police and firemen. He said if action was not taken soon, he would finish what needed to be done on his own. He showed a stack of bills that he said showed that he paid over \$5,000.00 out of his own pocket for Veterans' Park. He noted that the gazebo at Birch Grove Park was built and painted by volunteers, but the City wanted to make a buck. Something was very wrong.

Heather Mellon, 2509 Herbert Drive, advised Council that they had a very successful egg hunt at the park. She was a member of the Friends of Birch Grove Park, and many times they would have liked to have events at the park, and insurance has been a requirement. She did not see why, as Friends of Birch Grove Park, and Cultural Committee, that for all that they do for the park, why they would have to have insurance.

Clerk Canesi clarified that Friends of Birch Grove Park and Cultural Committee do not need insurance; it is the vendors and paid performers who were required to have insurance.

Mrs. Mellon still did not feel that performers should need insurance.

Solicitor Facenda asked if Mrs. Mellon had car insurance or homeowner's insurance or has ever used it.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 10, 2018**

Mrs. Mellon replied yes, and yes, she had.

Solicitor Facenda replied, asking Mrs. Mellon if she was glad to have had the insurance when she needed it. Insurance is in place to protect the public, the taxpayer.

Superintendent Vitale responded insurance wasn't a new requirement; he asked if it was not previously enforced.

Clerk Canesi explained that insurance was always required and obtained. It had been an ongoing issue though, with the bandstand performers and with weddings.

Barbara Madden, 403 Park Lane, asked if Mr. Vitale was trying to bring revenue to the park. Upon his confirmation that he was trying to do so, she thanked him.

Council President Dewees noted that all monies received would go into the park trust.

Mrs. Madden told Council that they needed to do better with the budget.

Carol Patrick, 605 Ridgewood Drive, Chairwoman of the Cultural Committee, addressed Council stating that they don't have to be adversaries. The Cultural Committee has been managing the bandstand since 1976. They clean beforehand and after, and all are volunteers. Last week they received an ordinance, why weren't they told before tonight, when it's going to be voted on.

Council President Dewees advised Mrs. Patrick that the ordinance was not being voted on tonight, it was still being discussed.

Mrs. Patrick asserted that bands won't play because they don't want to get insurance and can't afford it for what we were paying them. She called around and most of the cities do have JIF. She said the City has deeper pockets and will get sued. She also felt that there was nothing for any Public Works employees to do, there was no grass and the park was clean.

Superintendent Vitale responded that the park was clean because his staff cleans it. They rake it, they cut the grass. He offered to stop maintaining the area for the rest of the spring and see what it looks like in July.

Mrs. Patrick stated her volunteers have done all of this since 1976, Mr. Vitale had been doing this since 2017. She asked if there were fees, who would get them?

Council President Dewees suggested a split between the Cultural Committee trust and Birch Grove Park trust.

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 10, 2018**

Mrs. Patrick felt nominal fees won't help. She asked who insures FAN.

Council President Dewees replied that the City pays.

Mrs. Patrick asked who pays for the lights.

Council President Dewees replied the taxpayers.

Mrs. Patrick expressed her concern about insurance; they can't get bands because of the insurance requirement.

Council President Dewees suggested an off-line meeting to discuss.

Mrs. Patrick was very happy with that, she wanted a cooperative relationship. She felt volunteers get no respect.

Council President Dewees disagreed; he had been a volunteer for a long time and did not share that sentiment.

Mrs. Patrick asked how many from Council had been to a concert at the bandstand or to the museum.

Several members of Council raised their hands.

Bob Webb, 218 West Revere Avenue, stated that Northfield was built by volunteers. He asked if volunteers were covered by insurance.

Clerk Canesi explained that the Cultural Committee members, including Mr. Webb, were appointed by resolution of council and are therefore were covered by our insurance.

Joyce Pullan, 605 Broad Street, said she's lived in Northfield for 86 years. She thanked Council for the beautiful card; she appreciates that. She was annoyed at the insinuation that the Cultural Committee allowed people to get married at the bandstand for free. They had followed insurance guidelines very carefully. Roy Clark puts up all banners, etc. that need to be put up out there. She hoped Council thought carefully about putting up more obstacles, it was a shame that people couldn't enjoy it even more.

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

**AGENDA REVIEW**

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
APRIL 10, 2018**

Council President Dewees reviewed the agenda and made assignments.

Councilman O'Neill asked that all resolutions be voted on separately.

Councilman Perri thanked all volunteers for all they do and have done over the years.

Councilman Lischin echoed Councilman Perri's sentiment.

Council President Dewees thanked all for coming and for their comments.

At 6:57pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk