

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
AUGUST 29, 2017**

At 6:08pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

**ROLL CALL**

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

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

Council President Dewees welcomed all to the meeting and asked Solicitor Facenda to speak regarding the land sale.

**WORK SESSION TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- Potential Land Sale - Update

Solicitor Facenda heard back from Mr. Sykes, who believed he could assist with the information needed. Solicitor Facenda would follow up and advise.

- Bus Shelters

Solicitor Facenda referred to documents sent to Council that contained the draft easement, shelter agreement, etc. He had heard some comments from the Board of Education with regard to the easements, but had not heard from Dr. Antebi. He hoped to have on the Council agenda for September 12, 2017.

Councilman Perri asked about insurance.

Rich Gerber, Risk Management Consultant (in audience) stated he would only need a copy of the resolution after it had been adopted so the shelter could be added to the City's inventory.

- Request for Sewer Service to Pleasantville Resident

Council President Dewees referred to a request for sewer service from a Pleasantville resident, and asked Councilman Perri to explain.

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Councilman Perri explained that the resident had a force pump but has had issues. She wanted a gravity feed to tie into our station. There were concerns and issues that needed to be addressed, including the franchise, fee collection, did we need a TWA permit, did anyone else also want to tie in, there were legal issues, did we want the responsibilities, etc.

Solicitor Facenda commented that if she did not pay the bill, we cannot lien the property. He asked Councilman Perri if there was an upside for us.

Councilman Perri replied no, not really.

Council President Dewees asked Council's opinion.

Councilman Travagline suggested that if the homeowner incurred all fees, legal, engineering, etc. he would have no objection.

Councilman Piergiovanni agreed.

Councilmen Lischin, Murray and Council President Dewees agreed that if the City would incur no cost, they would be fine with it as well.

Municipal Clerk Canesi suggested an escrow account be established for our fees.

Solicitor Facenda agreed and asked who Council would like to respond to the resident.

Councilman Perri replied that he and Clerk Canesi would handle it.

Councilman Perri asked if Council would approve the request for to get our experience rating from state health benefits; the request had to be on Council letterhead.

Clerk Canesi noted that we had already done so; her authority was sufficient to request the information from state health benefits.

**AGENDA REVIEW**

Council President Dewees reviewed the agenda. He asked that Resolution 173-2017 be voted on separately from the consent agenda.

Councilman Travagline noted that Mr. Sheeran was in the audience regarding the 13U request, and asked if Council had any questions for him.

Seeing none, Council President Dewees began to make the assignments.

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Councilman Perri questioned Resolution 170-2017.

Clerk Canesi explained that two firms requested to be considered for the position. Council would need to discuss which firm name they would like in the Resolution.

Council President Dewees continued making assignments and stated that he would let Mr. Gerber make his presentation, and then Council would discuss the municipal prosecutor.

Rich Gerber, Risk Management Consultant, advised Council that he was in the process of taking a class, Risk Management Consultant Accreditation, this was the first time offered and was just approved by the Department of Insurance. Mr. Gerber noted that the approval of the library internship was up to Council, the JIF had weighed in on the matter. In regard to certificates of insurance, Mr. Gerber explained his recollection as a former member of Council whereby in certain situations such as the Mothers' League Egg Hunt, the Council declared it a City event by Resolution, because the event benefitted all of the children in Northfield. That event would then be covered by the JIF under our insurance, but that would be about the only time he could recall a COI being waived, but it was of course Council's decision.

Mr. Gerber cautioned Council on comments, including opinions that they make on social media because these can result in liability for the City. He further stated that elected officials should not be in the court room during Court because their presence can be perceived as affecting the outcome.

Mayor Chau asked how elected officials could evaluate performance of the individuals if they can't be there.

Mr. Gerber replied that the JIF asks that you rely on the professionals who deal with the individuals on a regular basis; such as the Chief of Police, Judge, and Court Clerk.

Mayor Chau asked about Planning Board.

Mr. Gerber suggested that if an individual recuses themselves, they should not just leave the dais, they should leave the room.

Solicitor Facenda added that if you're an interested party you have a right to say something as a member of the public, but said he would not go out of his way to comment on every application. There were distinct branches of government, legislative, executive and judicial, and each should be allowed to do their job.

Mr. Gerber closed his presentation by stating that if you have a question in your minds as to whether or not you should do a particular thing; then you probably shouldn't. That's just a general observation. Mr. Gerber stated that Peter Miller from

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Egg Harbor Township went to a presentation and wrote a paper on it called “Before, During and After”, regarding a return to work program. Mr. Gerber distributed the paper to Council. He thanked Council for their time.

Council President Dewees moved to discussion of the appointment of municipal prosecutor.

Councilman Travagline said the solicitor recommended Mr. Alsofrom.

Solicitor Facenda clarified that Mr. Alsofrom had been filling in for a few months, and believed he had been doing so without incident. He confirmed with Clerk Canesi.

Clerk Canesi replied that she had spoken with the Court Administrator, Donna Clark, who advised that she would be happy with either firm.

Council President Dewees asked Mr. Bonchi, in the audience, to answer a few questions.

Mr. Bonchi introduced himself and explained that he used to be the City’s Prosecutor but when court went to day court from evenings he could no longer commit. He had been an attorney for 34 years, and if he was not able to make a session, Mr. Ballak who had been an attorney for 16 years would fill in for Mr. Bonchi. He assured Council that Northfield was not getting a rookie. The 3rd person, Elliot Almanza, was also highly qualified. He himself couldn’t promise to be here every Wednesday; if Council was looking for only one person he would withdraw the application. However, he advised that all 3 attorneys were highly qualified and hard working. If Council wanted the same person here every week, there would be no hard feelings. He noted that normally each matter was resolved in a single court session, so continuity should not be an issue.

Mayor Chau felt that Mr. Almanza would be an asset because he spoke Spanish. Mayor Chau noted his concern about having a consistent prosecutor, however in all of his years as an elected official, there had been prosecutors and solicitors who had not been able to make it, and they had always provided a qualified replacement. He advocated for Mr. Bonchi because he was a Northfield resident and his firm was in Northfield.

Councilman Lischin felt that we should leave the fill-in person in place because we are going to be putting this back out for RFP at the end of the year.

Councilman Murray liked Mr. Bonchi’s firm.

Councilman Perri, Travagline and Piergiovanni felt the City should retain the status-quo.

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Councilman Piergiovanni noted we could revisit it in three months.

Council President Dewees liked Mr. Bonchi's firm.

Solicitor Facenda suggested voting on Resolution 170-2017 with a name, and if it failed, vote again with the other name.

Clerk Canesi noted that if 170-2017 failed, that it would be done, and that a new Resolution, 179-2017 would need to be added.

Councilman Travagline noted that Mr. Grasso, the 10U applicant was in the audience.

Council President Dewees asked Mr. Grasso if he'd like to speak regarding his application.

Mr. Grasso explained that the team was trying to nail down field use for the fall and spring seasons.

Council President Dewees felt the team should submit two applications; he asked when the season ended.

Mr. Grasso replied that the fall season would end in October.

Clerk Canesi suggested amending the application to show the end of the fall season, and Mr. Grasso could resubmit a new application for the spring season.

Council President Dewees asked for an end date.

Mr. Grasso requested November 30th, to be safe.

Council President Dewees noted that with this resolved, 173-2017 as amended, would stay on the agenda.

Mr. Grasso thanked all.

Councilman Lischin asked Mr. Sheeran how many Northfield kids were on his team.

Mr. Sheeran advised that 5 out of the 9, he thanked Council for considering his application and would continue to work hard to keep the fields nice.

Mayor Chau asks about lights and bathrooms explaining that the doors have been left open and the lights left on.

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Mr. Grasso assured Mayor Chau that he would make sure lights get turned out.

Council President Dewees noted that the bathrooms would be closed.

Councilman Perri questioned Mr. Sheeran regarding the fees to play.

Mr. Sheeran explained the fees and noted that the fall season was a condensed season.

**PUBLIC SESSION**

Council President Dewees opened the meeting to public.

Alicia Garry, 202 St. James Place, had questions regarding the bike path and asked if there were benches available.

Council President Dewees explained that the City recently installed several new bench pads and that any that were empty were available.

Mrs. Garry noticed that some of the benches have items placed on them and flowers and plants around them.

Clerk Canesi explained that the intent of the bench program was that the bench itself would be the memorial, the City owns the benches, the sponsor is responsible for the plaque should it become damaged. Clerk Canesi stated that in the past, Mayor Chau discussed adoption of an Ordinance regarding placing items on and around the benches but it has never been pursued.

Mrs. Garry commended the Council for advocating children wearing helmets; she wanted to know what the consequences were for not wearing a helmet.

Solicitor Facenda noted that was an enforcement issue for the Police Department.

Pete Brophy, 11 Twelve Oaks Court, said he lives along Bike Path and has seen increased activity of cars driving on the Bike Path.

Mayor Chau advised that he had also seen this.

Mr. Brophy thought the intersection of Zion and Fuae was causing confusion; the cars he sees on the bike path are always driving north.

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

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At 7:10pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk