

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 29, 2015**

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 February 14, 2015 in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

ROLL CALL

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

Mayor Chau, Solicitor Kris Facenda and Engineer Kwapinski were also in attendance.

- Appointment of Clerk / Administrator

Council President Travagline stated that Council has discussed for several years the options of hiring an Administrator. He had a recent meeting with Mayor Chau, Certified Finance Officer Dawn Stollenwerk and Clerk Canesi. They discussed options for managing the City more effectively. Council has done a good job of working with the supervisors but it is time to take it to the next level; Council Members are part time and we need someone who is here for the majority of the work day. The City is not ready to take on a person at a salary of \$120,000.00 to assume these responsibilities. They discussed making the Clerk a Clerk/Administrator; this will give the Clerk more authority in ensuring that things run as smoothly as possible. Clerk Canesi has also requested a salary increase; she provided comparative information in terms of what Clerks in other towns are paid, whether the town has a Business Administrator, population etc. The conclusion was that she is making approximately 20% less than her counterparts in other towns; she is underpaid.

Mayor Chau reiterated that comparatively, our Clerk is underpaid. This proposal will allow the Council to carry out their responsibilities through the Clerk.

Councilman O'Neill stated that he is in favor of the Clerk/Administrator, but asked Solicitor Facenda if the Clerk and the Administrator conflict in any way.

Solicitor Facenda did not see any conflict.

Council President Travagline asked if there are any questions; he noted that the salary will be structured to weight the salary increase towards Clerk. Going forward, the stipend for administrator can be eliminated. He believed we need more authority

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here; Supervisors are doing an excellent job but they need to be accountable to someone. Supervisors need to be rewarded too; we need someone here every day.

Councilman Perri stated he was here when we had an Administrator for 6 years, and it was at will. Delineating the at will employee from the tenured employee will be important.

Council President Travagline commented that the Clerk is right in there with the negotiations and has done an excellent job. She has been patient with the economic times and it is time to compensate her for it.

Council President Travagline conducted a straw poll, all Council present were in favor.

Clerk Canesi noted for the record that the Deputy Clerk did issue her a rice notice and it was signed.

- Municipal Aid Grant Applications – Engineer Update

Engineer Kwapinski distributed a draft of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan report. He recently met with Councilman Dewees, Mayor Chau and Council President Travagline to discuss the plan and some upcoming Municipal Aid grant opportunities that are a good fit with the plan. He noted that the Department of Transportation recently opened the bids for the Route 9 sidewalk projects and they are working on the contract for the apparent low bidder, which came in at \$1.1 million dollars.

At 6:21pm Mayor Chau left the room.

Engineer Kwapinski distributed and reviewed the draft plan; he referred to sidewalk projects and the need in the areas near the community school.

At 6:22pm Mayor Chau returned.

Council President Travagline recalled that the County advised us to hold off on seeking easements from Mill Road residents.

Engineer Kwapinski reviewed the Safe Routes to Transit grant and possible projects, there are several areas in need of ADA compliant crosswalks, upgraded signage at crosswalks, re-alignment of the bike path at Dolphin Avenue and some associated sidewalk improvements, etc. The bicycle and pedestrian plan report is in draft form and should be in final form as a next step. He asked that input be routed to him and he will pass it along to the steering committee.

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Council President Travagline noted that this document will be a blueprint for our future.

Engineer Kwapinski stated that the City has applied for grants in the past and has not been successful; the grant money is hard to get and this plan will help.

Mayor Chau recalled prior issues with cars parking too close to the crosswalks on the bike path and creating a visibility hazard he asked if these issues will be addressed in the plan.

Engineer Kwapinski stated that striping can be included.

Councilman Perri also noted that there is a need for lighting in some areas. There are crosswalks that are dark at night.

Engineer Kwapinski stated that lighting was not mentioned in the plan, but it can be added. The grant applications are due October 20th so he would like a recommendation from Council so he can prepare the applications for approval at the next meeting.

Engineer Kwapinski advised Council that in the very near future, South Jersey Gas' contractor will be paving parts of Steelman, Cornwall, and East Rosedale.

- COAH Consortium

AGENDA REVIEW

Council President Travagline reviewed the agenda.

Solicitor Facenda explained the resolutions and shared service agreements that are in the agenda packet. The City is involved in some litigation and we need to finalize our COAH obligation. Our legal counsel arranged for us to have an opportunity to participate in a shared service agreement that retained an expert from Rutgers University to prepare a statewide report that included Northfield's obligation. Unfortunately this gentleman had a stroke and a new firm has to be retained as his replacement. We have a resolution to join the consortium, and then amend the agreement to name the new firm. Our legal counsel highly recommends that we join this consortium.

Council President Travagline had received several complaints about a business near Chestnut Avenue; he went over to the location and spoke with a resident of the area to explain what the Council could offer as a remedy. He noticed that the area of Chestnut Avenue West of Route 9 was very tight. He suggested that the Council make that street no parking since there was going to be a new parking lot.

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Mayor Chau commented that he had the Police Department look at the situation and they came up with a similar recommendation that included part of Maple Avenue as no parking as well.

Council President Travagline stated Council may wish to seek residents' input as to whether it is only no parking during certain hours, etc.

Mayor Chau explained the electrical outlet that will be put on the new parking lot so that the diesel trucks no longer have to run for the refrigeration units inside the trucks to run. The Planning Board will memorialize the resolution this Thursday.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Travagline opened the public session.

Bob Webb, 218 West Revere Avenue, stated that Council should be more participative with the programs put on by volunteers at the park and at the museum; Councilman Perri and Councilman Dewees are the only ones there. Former Councilmen Vain and Polistina also participate. The volunteers at the park and the museum should be recognized. He believes that too much money is spent on fields. Mr. Webb reiterated that his street needs to be paved. He would like to see Council to do more for Veterans Park and would like to see the Acting Chief and other acting positions in the Police Department become permanent.

Mayor Chau spoke regarding Veterans Park and stated that we do need to move on this project and get this resolved. The City needs to find the additional funding to get the project complete. In regards to the acting positions; Mayor Chau stated that he would be the first one to make these positions permanent but as we are all aware, we are in the middle of a lawsuit and on the advice of legal counsel, we are not taking any actions until the suit is resolved.

Mr. Webb commented that if a man volunteers for an active duty assignment, and leaves the department hanging, it is wrong. He thanked Mayor Chau for putting the photographs up at City Hall.

Brian Livesy, 529 Chestnut Avenue, requested that the speed limit be lowered at Mill and Zion Road. There are overgrown hedges at the location that the property owners should trim to enhance safety. He also asked that rumble strips be used as drivers approach a crosswalk. He addressed his concerns regarding Mazzeo Produce where there was a refrigerator truck idling for 18 hours. It was still running when Mr. Livesy left to come to this meeting. The vegetation is gone making the residential buffer nonexistent. He commended the Police Department for writing citations and for documenting that the noise is going on well past midnight.

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Councilman Lischin asked if there is a no idling ordinance.

Mr. Livesy stated that the refrigerator unit is considered separate. He asked who is handling the bike path plan.

Council President Travagline advised Mr. Livesy that Councilman Dewees is the Chairperson for the bike path. He explains that most of what he's suggested is part of the plan but advised Mr. Livesy to email Councilman Dewees with any suggestions.

Lisa Brown, 9 Haviv Drive, asked for update on lawn signs.

Solicitor Facenda advised Mrs. Brown that he is working on a revision to the sign ordinance; there are unique constitutional issues and he will have a draft for Council for the next meeting.

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

At 7:11pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk