

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
OCTOBER 7, 2025**

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 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; Council President Bucci.

Absent: Councilman Smith; Mayor Chau

Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Mauro, and Chief of Police VonColln were in attendance.

6PM RECOGNITION/COMMENDATIONS: Captain Scott Pollak and Patrolman Christian Gansert

Council President Bucci announced due to the absence of Mayor Chau, she had the honor of making the presentation.

Council President Bucci thanked everyone for coming and read the following statement: “First, I want to say on behalf of myself and City Council, we all recognize and appreciate the dedication and services that our men and women of our Police Department provide. We all know that their job responsibilities can be difficult not only for themselves but also for their families and personal lives. Tonight, it is my privilege to recognize and present a letter of commendation to two of our police officers. What they had to respond to represents professionalism, training, and decision-making process in addressing a potentially dangerous situation.”

Council President Bucci called forward Captain Pollak and Chief VonColln. She read the following commendation:

“Captain Scott Pollak has had a long and distinguished career with the City of Northfield Police Department. He was hired as a patrol officer in June 1999, made Detective in 2003, was promoted to Sergeant in 2007, to the position of Lieutenant in 2023, and most recently to Captain in 2024.

This evening, however, we are recognizing him for the extraordinary actions undertaken by Captain Pollak on a single day in August of this year.

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It was on August 24th that Captain Pollak was riding his bicycle on the Atlantic City boardwalk – as he does often. This Sunday was different, however, in that as he rode, he came upon two males involved in a physical altercation. Captain Pollak got off of his bike and attempted to deescalate this potentially violent situation, when suddenly, one of the individuals involved drew a knife and advanced on the other man involved, who was an off-duty ACPD Lieutenant. Captain Pollak drew his off-duty weapon and gave verbal commands to the assailant, who began to retreat, dropped the knife, and ultimately ran off of the Boardwalk where he attempted to hide.

If Captain Pollak had not been there and had not acted as quickly and competently as he did, the aggressor may have stabbed the ACPD officer. Captain Pollak was credited by that officer for saving his life. The accused male was arrested and taken into custody by ACPD and multiple charges were filed.

Even though off-duty, Captain Pollak did not hesitate. His quick thinking and training made all the difference in this situation. Actions like this show a deep commitment to public safety that goes beyond a job description. Thank you, Captain Pollak, for a job well done and for your incredible courage and selflessness.”

Captain Pollak thanked all.

Council President Bucci called forward Patrolman Gansert. She read the following commendation:

“Officer Christian Gansert began his career with the Northfield Police Department as a part time Special Law Enforcement Officer, Class II, in September of 2019. In February of 2020, he was promoted to Patrol Officer.

It was on June 12th of this year, at approximately 9pm when Patrolman Gansert observed a group of approximately six individuals operating dirt bikes and electric bikes in a reckless and dangerous manner. The group was traveling northbound in the middle of New Road, performing wheelies and other stunts, creating a serious hazard for the motoring public.

Patrolman Gansert attempted to initiate a motor vehicle stop, but the individuals refused to comply. Instead, they continued to operate their bikes recklessly, performing wheelies, swerving in the roadway, and riding on the sidewalk. Due to the dangerous conditions created by the riders, Patrolman Gansert deactivated his emergency lights and discontinued the attempted stop to avoid further risk to the public. He observed the E-bike riders continue towards Pleasantville, and while doing so, saw one of them filming themselves and his police patrol unit on their cellphone.

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With the assistance of Detective Matthew Locotos, Officer Gansert initiated an investigation, including visiting Wawa stores on New Road in Northfield and Somers Point looking for video evidence of these E-bikes and their riders. He was able to locate video footage of the suspects, and based prior knowledge, Officer Gansert believed one of them could be Joseph Griffin. He continued with his investigation and identified Joseph Griffin's Instagram account, which included a video-post of these E-bike riders eluding and filming Officer Gansert in his Northfield Police vehicle. An arrest was made and Joseph Griffin was charged with numerous motor vehicle offenses as well as the third-degree charge of eluding police.

We are enormously proud of Officer Gansert. The exceptional qualities he displayed exemplify the highest standards of the law enforcement profession and brought this case to a resolution resulting in a positive outcome for our community. Thank you, Officer Gansert, for your judgment, perseverance, dedication, and diligence."

Patrolman Gansert thanked Council for their support, it meant a lot and made it easier to do their job.

Referring to Officer Gansert's decision to end pursuit in this instance, Chief VonColln said, as has been discussed in the past, this is the wave of the future, following at a safe distance. He applauded Patrolman Gansert and Captain Pollak, and thanked Detective Locotos for his assistance.

At 6:09pm, on motions properly made and seconded, all members present were in favor of a short recess.

At 6:13pm, Council President Bucci resumed the meeting and moved to Committee Reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Councilman Polistina reported that Trunk or Treat was this weekend; it was amazing, there were over 2,000 participants. He thanked the organizers, Shannon Campbell, Guy DiMarco, members of the Police Department, Municipal Alliance, Public Works, the Fire Department, and Mary Canesi. It was such a nice family event.

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

Councilman Dewees reported Public Works was doing clean up at the campground area, and cleaning storm sewers in the vector truck.

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Councilwoman Kern – Northfield Sports (FAN)

Councilwoman Kern announced the Cardinals played Lower Cape May and all four levels won their games. She attended the Atlantic Cape Community College event commemorating the anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War; she was so glad she attended and thanked them for the invitation. She attended the Volunteer Fire Company Car Show, it was very well attended and offered congratulations to them.

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

Councilwoman Bucci gave kudos to all involved in Trunk or Treat, it gets bigger and better every year. Regarding insurance, Clerk Canesi was working on the EPL/POL updates, as required every two years. She explained the current vacation carryover policy and new JIF language that requires vacation carryover only if the employee couldn't use the time due to business demands, this only applies to non-union employees. She asked did we want to keep the max 5-day carryover or leave it unlimited. She asked for a straw poll to retain at max carry over of 5 days.

All members present were in favor.

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

Councilman Smith was absent.

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

Councilwoman Carfagno attended Trunk or Treat, the weather amazing, she thanked everyone who made it an awesome event, there were lots of children. The car show was amazing as well, including some new cars. She participated in the NJ Run For the Fallen in Ocean City, as she was unable to attend here. It was the most amazing event she's been to in a while. They honored seven individuals; our stop is in memory of Atlantic City resident Eric Rivera. Many attended here at City Hall, kudos to all who supported the event and she encouraged all to support it in the future. The Mainland Regional Board of Education meeting is scheduled for October 20th at 6pm, and the prom is scheduled for June 6th. The Cultural Committee Flea Market would be held on November 4th, tables were available for \$25. They were looking for members; she spoke with Mrs. Shenkus at Northfield Community School, and she has some interested students. They'd like to resume trips to the museum. Councilwoman Carfagno has contacted Mainland to see if any honor society students were interested as well. She read the Fire Department report for September. They recently assisted the Make a Wish Foundation with getting a patient to the beach.

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The Fire Department was requesting to replace our extraction equipment and looking to replace a 37-year-old apparatus. Hayrides are October 10th and 11th from 4pm until 9pm with a rain date of the 12th.

Council President Bucci asked if there was any update on the anniversary celebration?

Councilwoman Carfagno replied; they are working on it as well as on the by-laws for the Cultural Committee and a Resolution to add new members.

Councilman Polistina noted the 25th Anniversary of 9-11 would also be in 2026.

Councilman Notaro – Sanitary Sewer Operations; Inspections, Housing/Zoning.

Councilman Notaro advised the intersection of Zion and Shore was closed down over the weekend due to a sewer line break, Public Works addressed it right away. It looked like we would end up with a full repair of that section, he should have an update tomorrow.

Engineer Mauro added that her concern was that the pipe may not be able to be slip lined without collapsing and a full pipe replacement would be recommended, from Davis to Shore. More updates to come. Superintendent Boyd was in talks with the emergency contractor to get a price. We would get a credit on the slip lining contract for the work that won't end up being done.

Councilman Notaro congratulated all on Trunk or Treat, it is one of the nicest events we do in this town.

Council President Bucci moved to ad hoc committee reports.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Regulations regarding Keeping of Chickens – *Councilwoman Carfagno, Councilman Notaro*

Councilwoman Carfagno was hoping to have something for the 21st.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS

- Future Amendment to Bulk Waste Collection Rules – Councilman Notaro

Councilman Notaro has a meeting this Thursday and will try to get something together.

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- Draft Ordinance Regulation of E-bikes, Etc.– *Introduction Slated for 10/7/25 Regular Session*

Council President Bucci announced that the e-bike Ordinance is on the agenda this evening for introduction.

Solicitor Facenda added that it took some time to put together. Clerk Canesi gave us a really good start, he thanked her for that.

WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

Engineer Mauro recommended the Council look at the I-Bank for sanitary sewer repairs, she would comment more during her report.

- Increase in Tax Map Revision Fees for Certain Planning Board Applicants

Council President Bucci referred to a potential increase in fees collected for tax map revisions, CFO Stollenwerk has proposed an increase to \$225.00 which would cover the fees going forward. This has been \$100.00 since 2001.

Council President Bucci took a straw poll vote, it was unanimous, all present were in favor.

Clerk Canesi would have an ordinance for introduction at the next meeting.

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.

Don and Lisa Edwards, Northfield, were asking for help with the Good Shepherd Church, behind their home. For past 8-9 years he has been asking if the doctor's office can legally use the parking lot at the church by giving a donation. He referred to an old pharmacy that was not allowed to do that. He referred to minutes from a meeting that says it's not allowed. Ex-Chief Newman said it's not allowed. He has a statement from church's lawyer that says there is no official contract. Mr. Edwards and his neighbor spent \$10,000.00 in legal fees fighting the doctor's office recently. He believed the latest approvals from 2024 include statements that are not true - they

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don't have as much parking as they claim to have. The spaces are non-conforming with ADA, and there are only 44 spaces; they need 54 and claim to have 55. He claimed setbacks are required; it is only 17 feet from the parking lot to his property and should be 25. They were supposed to be putting in parking blocks but they did not. The lady in the Code Enforcement office has been very helpful. The parking spaces are unevenly sized. They got a permit to cut two trees down, but the reason on the permit was false.

Solicitor Facenda asked what approval he was reading from?

Mr. Edwards advised Council that the church sold the property to fund improvements. Mrs. Edwards added they sold to a builder to build two homes.

Mrs. Edwards stated the issue is the parking at the existing church, part of the subdivision plans referenced parking at the church.

Councilman Notaro confirmed the issue is that the parking at the church is being shared with another business.

Solicitor Facenda asked Mr. Edwards if he spoke with Zoning Officer Nassar?

Mr. Edwards replied, no, he spoke with Jessica in the Construction Office.

Councilman Notaro asked if it was unlawful for one business to share parking with another business?

Solicitor Facenda replied, if they have site plan approval to do it that way then yes, if they don't then no.

Councilman Notaro asked can we reach out to him?

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

At 6:43pm, on motions properly made and seconded, all members present were in favor of adjourning this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk