

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD COUNCIL, SEPCIAL MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 15, 2011**

At 4:30pm, this meeting was called to order by Mary Canesi, Municipal Clerk. It was properly advertised according to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

The flag salute was led by Mayor Vincent Mazzeo. Following the flag salute a moment of silence was observed

ROLL CALL

Present: Mr. Dewees Mrs. Kern, Mr. Perri, Mr. Polistina, Mr. Smith, Mr. Vain, Mr. Carew (*via telephone*)

Mayor Vincent Mazzeo, City Engineer Matt Doran, and City Solicitor Keith Bonchi were also in attendance.

Municipal Clerk Mary Canesi called for a motion to elect a Council President for this evening. Motion made by Councilman Vain and seconded by Councilman Polistina to elect Councilwoman Cindy Kern as Council President for this evening's meeting. All present in favor.

Council President Kern announced that Mr. Carew would be participating in this meeting electronically, by telephone.

RESOLUTION

Councilman Polistina motioned, Councilman Vain seconded to adopt resolution 150-2011.

150-2011 A Resolution Providing for an Executive Session Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (b) (4) Regarding Contract Negotiations with Mainland PBA Local No. 77

The Municipal Clerk read Resolution 150-2011 by title and announced that the solicitor would explain the subject matter to be discussed, as well as when material may be released, if it may be released.

Solicitor Bonchi announced that Council would be going into closed session to discuss the police contract negotiations, specifically, the issue is whether or not to agree on a Memorandum of Understanding. If Council does nothing, it is his understanding that the matter will go to arbitration as will a no vote on resolution 151-2011. Council will discuss the MOU in private; since the discussion will

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involve strategy the minutes may never be released. Any agreement will be voted upon in public session.

Roll call: Mr. Dewees – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Vain – yes; Mr. Carew – yes. Motion carries.

Northfield Police Lieutenant Daniel Mitchell identified himself for the record, and pointed out a typographical error in the MOU; he said the last page of salary guide should have an effective date of 1/1/13.

Council President Kern requested that Mitchell clarify the correction with Councilman Polistina before the start of the closed session. She also explained that Councilman-elect Jim O’Neill and Councilwoman-elect Brown would be invited into closed session as is customary so that they can be up to speed on issues when they are sworn in January.

Mitchell asserted that if Brown and O’Neill are invited into a closed session, the meeting then becomes public, as they have not yet been sworn. At 4:35pm, Kern called for a brief recess to allow Solicitor Bonchi to research the matter.

At 4:36pm, Kern reconvened the meeting and Bonchi announced that he had reviewed statute; Brown and O’Neill are not just any members of the public, they were elected by the public and have the right to be kept abreast of ongoing issues. Bonchi does not believe their attendance opens the meeting to the public. They will be subject to confidentiality rules, and they cannot participate, they can only watch.

At 4:38pm Council left the dais and entered the caucus room and the closed session began. City Labor Attorney Larry Pepper was also in attendance.

At 5:23pm, the closed session was adjourned and Bonchi announced a summary for the record as follows: during the executive session Council deliberated the merits of the Memorandum of Agreement. The Council-elect personnel did not participate. A public vote will be taken so the outcome will be apparent momentarily. Discussions of strategy will not be released.

Councilman Polistina motioned, Dewees seconded, to adopt resolution 151-2011.

151-2011 A Resolution Approving an Agreement between the City of Northfield and Mainland PBA Local No. 77

Councilman Carew commended the Mayor and Council on a thorough process and thanked Council and the PBA for their patience.

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Councilman Perri thanked Council and the PBA for due diligence and hard work. In hard economic times it is difficult to make certain percentages what they were in the past. The problem he has is that we are facing an arbitration deadline. He is also not looking to lay off police officers. It is a very difficult decision that may ultimately result in layoffs. He wants to make the public aware of Council's situation and what it may mean in 2012-2013.

Mayor Mazzeo thanked the PBA and Council; it was a long road to get here, and he hopes we can all work together here to keep the town the way it is. He understands that everyone has families to raise, but Council has a job too, and it has to be about compromise.

Councilman Polistina said he appreciates everyone's work on this contract over the past year. He hopes we can maintain services and our budget, and control costs to residents. Council has created savings in certain areas so we can carry things forward in the future. As Councilman Perri said, arbitration does not lend itself to our benefit

Roll call: Mr. Dewees – yes; Mrs. Kern – yes; Mr. Polistina – yes; Mr. Perri – yes; Mr. Smith – no; Mr. Vain – no; Mr. Carew – yes. Motion carries.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Kern opened this meeting to the public and asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. Seeing no one, she closed the public session.

Councilman Smith read the meeting notices.

At 5:32pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk