

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2024**

At 6:02pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk, Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City on January 6, 2024, and in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231.

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Councilwoman Bucci; Councilwoman Carfagno; Councilman Dewees; Councilman Notaro; Councilman Polistina; Councilman Smith; Council President Leeds

Mayor Chau, Solicitor Facenda, Engineer Mauro, and Chief of Police VonColln were also present.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Councilman Dewees had no report.

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

Councilwoman Bucci stated that the Economic Development Commission recently held their quarterly meeting; they were in favor of the rehab resolution.

**Councilman Polistina** – Finance and Collections; Inspections, Housing/Zoning; Library; Municipal Alliance Senior Citizens

Councilman Polistina had no report.

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

Councilman Smith reminded all the Northfield Community School (NCS) Board of Education has a Special Election on September 17<sup>th</sup>; information was available on the school website. School will be back in session as of Thursday for NCS and Friday for Mainland. Please be aware of pick up and drop off guidance, a video was available on the school website. He wished all the best for a successful school year.

**Councilwoman Carfagno** - Technology / MRHS Channel; Cultural Committee / Veteran Liaison; Mainland Regional

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Councilwoman Carfagno announced the next Mainland Board of Education meeting on September 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

**Councilman Notaro** - Inspections, Housing/Zoning; Sewer Operations; Northfield Sports (FAN)

Councilman Notaro had no report.

**Council President Leeds** – Fire Department/EMS

Council President Leeds thanked Clerk Canesi for getting standby coverage for the football games, there was a last-minute notice from FAN. He read the Fire Department calls for service. The new ladder truck has arrived; training of all personnel was in process. He attended a joint court meeting; they received a \$1M grant from the DCA and were deciding how to use it. The Sheriff's Department had taken over the security function at a lesser cost than the private firm.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES**

Electric Vehicles – *Councilmen Polistina and Notaro.*  
No update.

Special Events Ordinance – *Councilwoman Bucci, Councilman Dewees.*  
Councilwoman Bucci reported she was working with Clerk Canesi on the special event ordinance.

Affordable Housing – *Councilwoman Carfagno, Councilman Polistina*  
Council President announced this would be discussed in closed session.

Road Opening Ordinance – *Councilmen Dewees and Notaro.*  
Engineer Mauro had incorporated the changes and would resend them; other City officials must also review the draft ordinance, such as the Construction Official.

Council President Leeds moved to the work session topics for discussion.

**WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – ONGOING BUSINESS**

There was no ongoing business.

**WORK SESSION / TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION – NEW BUSINESS**

- Standing Item – New Grant Opportunities

There were no new grant opportunities.

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- Letter to BPU On Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind Project, Req. by Councilwoman Bucci

Councilwoman Bucci explained the request to send a letter to the BPU, she wanted the Council to send the letter. We are already seeing increases now due to use of smart meters, even for those with solar.

Council President Leeds conducted a straw poll.

Councilman Polistina would like the information in the letter vetted.

Councilman Dewees agreed with Councilman Polistina.

All others needed more information as well.

Clerk Canesi will work with Solicitor Facenda to re-word the provided letter and have a draft for the Council to review at the next meeting.

Council President Leeds moved to the slip lining project.

- Slip Lining Project – Status of Bid

Engineer Mauro reported the bid opening was held on August 28<sup>th</sup>, only one bid was received. It was \$100,000.00 over the engineer's estimate based on requirements from the County that were not known at the time. She recommended awarding anyway; she notes that Engineer DeBlasio did not charge the City for preparing that.

Councilman Dewees would like to see a breakdown of the total costs assigned to the project by the bidder.

Clerk Canesi did not believe we could require this from the bidder.

Solicitor Facenda agreed, and said the options were to accept, or reject and rebid with changes.

Council President Leeds announced Council should have received an email from the CFO; we don't have the funds to pay for this.

Clerk Canesi commented that we've had slip lining projects before; why was this traffic control plan different?

Engineer Mauro believed it was because they were County roads.

All of Council agreed to rebid the project.

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Clerk Canesi commented that if we are revising the bid specifications, the engineer would need specific direction.

Engineer Mauro recommended having an alternate bid breaking down the work based on the locations.

Councilman Dewees asked if they could meet with the County to do something different with the detour plan?

Council President Leeds asked Councilman Notaro and Dewees to speak to the County.

Councilman Dewees recused himself from talking to the County since he works there.

Councilman Notaro would reach out.

Clerk Canesi confirmed the engineer would revise the specs and they would come back to the Council for approval and then they will go back out to bid. It was important to have this ready to act on the 17<sup>th</sup>, the next Council meeting.

Solicitor Facenda added that we would reject the one bid received on the 17<sup>th</sup> as well.

Councilman Dewees, under new business, referred to the school on Oak Avenue; he would like the City to engage in discussions to purchase this, for use as a rec center, new garage for Public Works, and OEM. etc.

Council President Leeds deferred to Engineer Mauro, he believed there was grant money available.

Engineer Mauro would investigate.

Solicitor Facenda offered to get information on the property.

**REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Council President Leeds reviewed the agenda.

Council President Leeds made the assignments.

**PUBLIC SESSION / FIVE MINUTES PER SPEAKER**

Council President Leeds 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.

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Alexandra Flores, Northfield, had noticed a lot of complaints on social media regarding speeding and ignoring signs on Mt. Vernon and Jackson Avenues; she said there were kids without helmets, not just kids, not just adults. She asked what she could do.

Council President Leeds said he saw her Facebook post and reached out to the Police Chief; they have issued 60 tickets in the past three days.

She asked what it would take to get a crossing guard or a blinking light at Shore Road and East Vernon?

Councilman Dewees replied; that's a County road, so if you're suggesting a signal we'd have to petition the County.

Clerk Canesi to Chief VonColln, said she believed the school sets forth a suggested route based on where the guards are.

Chief VonColln replied yes, they do. He noted that guards are difficult to recruit. A traffic signal would be under the authority of the County.

Councilman Smith suggested she attend a County Commissioner meeting.

Councilwoman Carfagno referred to the e-bike issues discussed at the last meeting.

Chief VonColln stated that e-bikes were a problem, he would like to post signs that no e-bikes are allowed on the bike path. Anything with an electric motor is currently prohibited by ordinance, even a 'little tykes' electric vehicle. Is there an age restriction? Or would this be zero tolerance? If it was enforced as written, it would be pushing kids into the roadway.

Mayor Chau saw a grown man riding an e-bike on the Black Horse Pike with no helmet, the rider evaded police by going the wrong way through traffic. The officer did not pursue; Mayor Chau was told that pursuit is not permitted.

Chief VonColln replied that Mayor Chau was correct; under Title 39 the police cannot pursue in a direction opposite the flow of traffic.

Councilwoman Carfagno questioned the legality of multiple riders on e-bikes.

Chief VonColln said he was collaborating with Superintendent Bretones to get the message out once school was back in session.

Mayor Chau asked were helmets required on an e-bike?

Chief VonColln explained; specifically for e-bikes, under the age of 15 you must wear a helmet on a class 1 or 2, if you are over 18 you do not have to for a class 1 or

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2. If it's a class 3 e-bike all riders need a helmet.

Mayor Chau said last year, he urged the Council to pass an ordinance that allowed the Police Department to confiscate the vehicles. He asked Chief Voncolln if he knew if Pleasantville was enforcing it?

Chief VonColln advised that the Police Officer must stop at every stop sign; he has advised his officers not to engage in pursuit.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Council President Leeds 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