

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP Township Board Minutes December 8, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 P.M. by Supervisor Engstrom at 8350 Main Street.

PLEDGE

Supervisor Engstrom led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Marilyn Engstrom, Supervisor	Present
Angela Westover, Clerk	Present
Kathy Braun, Treasurer	Present
Janet Chick, Trustee	Present
Wayne Dockett, Trustee	Absent with notice
Jacki Otto, Trustee	Present
Tracy Thomas, Trustee	Present

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink
Public Safety Director William Wagner
Community Center Director Tammy Averill
Township Attorney Brad Maynes
Township Engineer Brian Rubel, Tetra Tech
Ryan Bendzinski, Bendzinski & Co.
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the community

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Minutes
- Bills

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Thomas supported, that the minutes and bills be approved as presented.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

ADOPT BALANCE OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented by consensus.

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mary Devlin, 9211 Brookside, made general comments and thanked many members of the community for their contributions. David Perry, 9411 Earhart Road, spoke in favor of preserving farmland in the township and maintaining the current master plan.

Craig Warburton, 450 W. Joy Road, made comments related to the Whitmore Lake Road sewer assessment district. David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, recalled the historical reason for requiring mailing of postcards when the Township proposes to take on indebtedness. Susan Shink, 600 W. Joy Road, said the properties in the proposed sewer district do not need sewer service and urged support of development around the lakes.

Mike McCollum, 9050 Posey Drive, spoke in opposition to the Biltmore proposal. Ralph Hayward, 1159 Eight Mile Road, said the language used on the postcard was not understandable. Faith Wheeler, 371 Grove, objected to the potential taxpayer liability for the sewer district bond. Andy Lakatos, 9249 Lakewood Drive, objected to taxpayers paying for the sewer district.

Sherry Wagar, 6431 Whitmore Lake Road, said she owns property in the proposed sewer district and spoke in opposition to it. Kittie Burkhart, 6187 Nollar Road, said Northfield Neighbors was formed over 30 years ago and is in favor of smart growth. Linda Strausbaugh, 3990 N. Territorial, spoke in opposition to taxes. Laura Wojtys, 6235 Hellner Road, said the postcard wording was unclear and taxpayers should not be liable for the proposed sewer district. Julia Henshaw, 4681 Six Mile Road, said effort should be put into improving the downtown area.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fink reported that Living Water Church has withdrawn its proposal regarding 75 Barker Road.

REPORTS

Department Heads

Police, Fire, Senior Center, Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Parks & Recreation. No questions about reports.

Other

Financial and Township Manager reports. No questions.

Zoning Board of Appeals. No meeting in November.

Planning Commission. Chick reported that the Commission has scheduled a public hearing on by-law changes made a motion to send a letter to Biltmore requesting that they submit a proposal that is consistent with the current Master Plan.

AGENDA ITEMS

1.

Time Reserved for Public Comment Regarding Township Intent to Issue Bonds for Whitmore Lake Road Special Assessment District

Fink made comments to clarify issues brought up during the Call to the Public, including:

- He understands that postcard language was not easily understood and will do better the next time such a notice is needed.
- Sewer was requested by almost all property owners in the district several years ago, and development of the Biltmore property could not be supported by this proposed sewer.

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- All of the property in this district is master planned for mixed use and much of it is zoned industrial.
- All bonds require backing by the Township and the bonds will be paid by the owners of the property in the district, There is only an extremely small chance that any expenses would end up being a general obligation of the Township, and if that happened it would be paid from the general fund.
- Biltmore has never submitted a site plan, and the Planning Commission voted to send a letter to Biltmore Development indicating that if they wish to develop land along Whitmore Lake Road they should submit a proposal that is consistent with the existing Master Plan.
- This sewer district is not related to the issue of preservation of open space and farm land.
- One member of the district is opposed and is pursuing available appeals and options.

During a period of over two hours members of the public asked questions about that information and about collection of personal property taxes, sewer plant capacity, the percentage of the plant capacity that will be used by the proposed district, the need for an overflow basin, the design of the sewer district, what the various expenses of the district are (engineering, construction, legal counsel, etc.), the make-up of the district (vacant, residential, industrial), and sewer billing errors. Fink, Board members, and legal counsel provided answers.

Members of the public also expressed concerns about the potential for future development of agricultural land as a result of this district, owners of vacant parcels defaulting on payments, and sewer bills potentially increasing to cover the cost of an equalization basin.

2.

**Resolution 15-534:
Issuance of 2016 Special Assessment Bonds**

Ryan Bendzinski, Bendzinski & Co, provided an overview of the bonds not to exceed \$800,000 for the Whitmore Lake Road Special Assessment District.

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, that Resolution 15-534, Issuance of 2016 Special Assessment Bonds, be approved. **Motion carried 6—0 on a roll call vote. Resolution adopted.**

3.

**Resolution 15-535:
Restatement of Non-ERISA Retirement Plan**

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Otto supported, that Resolution 15-535, Restatement of Non-ERISA Retirement Plan be adopted as presented. **Motion carried 6—0 on a roll call vote. Resolution adopted.**

4.

2016 Board Meeting Schedule

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Braun supported, that the 2016 Board Meeting Schedule be approved as presented. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

5.

2016 Holiday Schedule

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Otto supported, that the 2016 Holiday Schedule be approved as presented. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Dale Brewer, 11548 East Shore Drive commended the Board and Fink on their presentation about the Whitmore Lake Road sewer district. Faith Wheeler asked a question about construction details of the sewer.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Chick made comments to clarify the motions of the Planning Commission concerning Biltmore Development and amendment of the Master Plan, and she asked Fink about items billed by the Township's planning consultant.

Board members thanked all of the members of the public for their participation in the meeting and commended Fink for his handling of the public discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

Engstrom adjourned the meeting at 9:59 P.M.

Submitted by Lisa Lemble.

Corrections to the originally issued minutes are indicated as follows:

Wording removed is ~~stricken through~~;
Wording added is underlined.

Approved by the Township Board on _____, 2015.

Angela Westover, Clerk

Official minutes of all meetings are available on the Township's website at http://www.twp-northfield.org/government/township_board_of_trustees/