

# NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP Township Board Minutes May 12, 2015

## CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 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	Present
Jacki Otto, Trustee	Present
Tracy Thomas, Trustee	Present

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink  
Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent  
Tim Hardesty  
Public Safety Director William Wagner  
Police Lt. Tim Greene  
Township Attorney Brad Maynes  
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble  
Members of the community

## CONSENT AGENDA:

- Minutes
- Bills
- Authorization for Settlement  
**(Goldbrick v Northfield Township)**

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, that the items in the consent agenda be approved as presented. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

## ADOPT BALANCE OF AGENDA

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Thomas supported, that the balance of the agenda be adopted as presented. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

## FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

**Master Plan Amendment/Community Survey.** Mike Cicchella, 7789 Sutton Road, Ed Wojtys, 6235 Hellner Road, Craig Warburton, 450 West Joy Road, and Thomas Zelenock, 1440 Six Mile Road, made comments in support of the current master and involving the community in the proposed revision, including in development of the community survey.

## BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dockett objected to the short notice of the special Board meeting the previous Friday and to the potential loss of tax revenue if the State purchased property at Eight Mile Road for construction of a parking lot during US-23 construction. Otto commented on an emailed question from a voter prior to the May 5<sup>th</sup> election about the public safety millage.

## CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Insurance Loss Run Ratios.** Fink referred to loss run ratios for the Townships liability insurance coverage since 2009-10 and noted that this shows the insurer has paid out or reserved for claims only 13% of the premiums paid.

## REPORTS

### Department Heads

**Fire.** Chief Wagner read the summary of the April, 2015, departmental report. He also reported a regional grant in the amount of \$392,754 had been received for all County fire departments for mobile training, and Northfield Township's portion is about \$1,090.

**Police.** Lt. Greene read the departmental summary for the month of April. He also made short presentations about the online citizen police reporting system and the crimemapping.com site which are available through the Township's CLEMIS membership.

**Wastewater Treatment Plant.** Hardesty referred to his written report. There were no questions.

**Senior Center.** Engstrom referred to Averill's written report.

## Other

**Financial.** Engstrom referred to Braun's written report.

**Township Manager.** Fink referred to his written report and added:

- The agreement for farming of Township land surrounding Fire Station #2 will be renewed without objection from Board members.
- Liability insurance renewals are coming up. Last year's renewal saved \$21,000 over the previous year, and there will be no increases this year due to a three year rate guarantee unless coverages are changed, so he will be signing the renewal contracts.
- In answer to a question from Dockett, Fink said if the Board wishes to discuss the Library allocation fee that could be done at the workshop session.
- It would be appropriate to allow for some fees to be waived administratively when appropriate and equitable.

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- Civic event permit fees are waived inconsistently per current policy, so a review of that is appropriate.

Dockett said he believes that if vendors are charged fees the Township should not waive permit fees for those events. He also said the planning consultant contract should be put out for bid. It was agreed to add discussion of the planning consultant contract to this agenda.

Otto suggested for a variety of reasons that Kiwanis be removed from Fink's list of groups to be represented on an economic development subcommittee. Chick agreed.

*Zoning Board of Appeals.* No meeting was held since the last Township Board meeting.

*Planning Commission.* Chick reported that the Commission met on May 6<sup>th</sup> and discussed the proposal from Cobalt to conduct a community survey.

*Parks and Recreation.* Thomas referred to the Manager's Report.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **1.**

#### **Sewer Use Ordinance Agreement**

- **Motion:** Chick moved, Engstrom supported, to approve an amendment to Chapter 32-48(b)(1), establishing rates of the Northfield Township Municipal Code for unmetered customers. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

### **2.**

#### **Civic Event Application: 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade**

Chief Wagner said he sees no issues with this year's application. Engstrom noted this will be on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July starting at 10:00 A.M. Wagner noted the fireworks and the run will be on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, and school district is planning a carnival at the middle school on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday July 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup>.

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Braun supported, that the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Civic Event Application be approved as presented. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

### **3.**

#### **Resolution for Road Closure: 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade**

- **Motion:** Thomas moved, Chick supported, that the Resolution Regarding Temporary Road Closure requested by the Kiwanis of Whitmore Lake Auxiliary be adopted. **Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.** **Resolution adopted.**

### **4.**

#### **Civic Event Application: 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks Display**

Chief Wagner DNR said he has met with this group a couple times, this will be pretty much the same as last

year, but he does not know if the DNR permit has been granted yet.

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Otto supported, that the Civic Event Permit for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks display on July 3, 2015, be approved, subject to DNR approval. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

Fink said he has been to a lot of fireworks displays in a lot of big cities, and the display he saw here last year was phenomenal and the best time he has ever had at such an event.

[Thomas left the room at this point].

### **5.**

#### **Resolution for Road Closure: 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks Display**

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Otto supported, that the resolution to close the road for the Fireworks Display on July 3<sup>rd</sup> be approved. **Motion carried 6—0 on a roll call vote.** **Resolution adopted.**

[Thomas returned at this point].

### **6.**

#### **Resignation of Front Desk Clerk: Mary Kendall**

Fink noted Kendall will be staying on until the end of May and has indicated she is willing to work occasionally during staff vacations, etc. Dockett agreed she would be valuable to have in such situations.

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, that the resignation of Mary Kendall be accepted with regret. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

### **7.**

#### **Resolution: Budget Amendments**

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Braun supported, that the resolution for the budget amendments for fiscal year 2015 be approved as presented.

In answer to questions from Otto, Fink explained the changes being made related to personnel and the costs of small claims actions. Braun and Fink said Township staff are doing a very good job of collecting delinquent taxes. Braun said she will prepare a report for the next meeting, and Fink said this sends the message that the Township will be diligent about collecting taxes due.

**Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed. Resolution adopted.**

### **8.**

#### **Planning Commission Survey**

- **Motion:** Chick moved, Engstrom supported, to approve contracting with Cobalt Community Research for the purpose of executing a citizen survey for Northfield Township at a cost of \$16,832.

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Dockett said he would have preferred to get at least three bids. Fink noted that the Township's planning consultants sent out requests to seven survey firms they were aware of and only one proposal was submitted. He said the Planning Commission directed the planner to do that and Fink was not involved in that process.

The Board discussed the merits and cost of increasing the number of surveys to be mailed from a sampling to the entire voter list and the desire for the questions to be phrased without bias so that a true representation of resident desires is achieved. Thomas said although he would have preferred to see more proposals he is inclined to approve this request by the Planning Commission. Dockett requested a roll call vote.

**Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed.**

The Board agreed that the first draft of survey questions should be prepared by Cobalt and submitted by Cobalt directly to all Board members; and before the survey goes out it should be approved by a vote of the Board.

**9.  
Civic Event Application Fee**

Fink referred to his memo of May 7<sup>th</sup> recommending that fees be waived for all or none of the non-profit applicants, rather than the current policy which exempts only the Homecoming and 4<sup>th</sup> of July parades.

Dockett said the \$100 fee is not a lot of money. Otto said each of these events has expenses. Fink said the cost of reviewing any permit probably exceeds the fee, and some of the reviews cost many times that amount. Thomas said it is unlikely that the Township would be flooded with event requests if the fee was waived for all non-profit events. Fink said more than the review costs cannot be charged, but less or nothing can certainly be charged, and it should be based on what is fair, appropriate, and equitable. Dockett said the time spent reviewing applications can be seen as the Township's contribution to these events.

- **Motion:** Otto moved, Chick supported, that the fee for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks civic event permit be waived and refunded for 2015.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**
- **Motion:** Otto moved, Chick supported, that civic event permit fees be waived for all non-profit organizations.

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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.

Fink asked that action be delayed until an ordinance has been prepared that can be adopted.

**Motion withdrawn.**

**10.  
Resolution: Poverty Exemption**

Chuck Steuer pointed out a needed correction. Chick questioned whether the wording regarding required personal identification should be clearer.

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Thomas supported, that a Resolution Amending the 2015 Policy Guidelines for Property Tax Poverty Reductions be approved with the corrections, "...15% *over* the federal policy threshold..." and in item 4, the wording be changed to "... *or other photographic identification as allowed by statute*."

**Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote. Resolution adopted.**

**11.  
Planning Consultant Contract**

- **Motion:** Chick moved, Braun supported, to allow the Township to issue a Request for Proposals for a planning commission consultant.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Joan Steuer, 760 Six Mile, said fees should not be waived only because someone complains loudly or talks to a Board member. Mary Devlin, 9211 Brookside, said the efforts of the Board at transparency should not be questioned. She noted that no development proposal has been submitted to the Township by Biltmore.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Dockett noted that the cost of running the Township in April was \$296,120.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Engstrom adjourned the meeting at 9:13 P.M.

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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/](http://www.twp-northfield.org/government/township_board_of_trustees/)