

**Northfield Township Board Meeting
Notes of Regular Meeting
Public Safety Building; 8350 Main Street
February 14, 2012**

Dockett, Chief Wagner said the Township's fuel provider gives the Township an annual rebate based on the prior year's purchases.

In answer to a question from Iaquinto, Wagner said he has not received information about the reason the Township did not receive grant funds applied for.

- *Senior Center.* Director Laity referred to her written report. Dockett thanked her for the use of medical equipment he borrowed from the Center following a recent hospitalization.
- *Wastewater Treatment Plant Report.* Superintendent Hardesty noted that he has gotten some quotes for repairing a pump, and the lower bid is \$5,730.
- ▶ **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Iaquinto supported, to allow for payment of up to \$5,370 to Hydro Dynamics for repair of a pump at the wastewater Treatment Plant.

Dockett asked whether a new pump should be purchased. Hardesty said he considered that, but the cost would be about \$,8000, and after this work is done it will almost be a new pump.

Dockett thanked Hardesty for repairing the roof at 75 Barker Road.

Regarding the sludge hauling contract he signed earlier in the year, Hardesty said he was not aware he should not have done that. He asked whether he should consult with the Township attorney about voiding the contract. Stanalajczo questioned whether the contract is valid because it was not approved by the Board. He suggested that Hardesty get additional bids and bring them to the Board for approval.

Manning said she signed the contract last week after it had been signed by the contractor. Dockett said she should not have done that.

Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.

Supervisor's Report. Mozurkewich read her written report. Dockett said he would like to have these reports included in the Board packet. In answer to a question from Dockett, Mozurkewich said the plans she referred to for Speedway and the mini-storage business are building additions.

Downtown Development Authority. Mozurkewich said the DDA has not met.

Zoning Board of Appeals. Stanalajczo noted no meeting has been held since the last Board meeting.

Planning Commission. Iaquinto reviewed the written annual report from the Commission. He also asked the Board to confirm informally that it would still like the

Commission to prepare a Capital Improvement Plan for the Township. The Board confirmed that.

He also reported that the Commission is considering billboard regulations, in particular electronic signage. He asked for input via phone or e-mail. He said the Commission would also like input about whether zoning ordinance enforcement should continue to be done on a complaint basis or whether a systematic zone-by-zone enforcement effort should be undertaken. Mozurkewich said she would like to see this discussed in an open forum, rather than having Board members send comments to Iaquinto. Iaquinto said he will report whatever comments he receives to both the Board and the Commission.

Dockett said the Commission has been working very hard and doing a good job. Iaquinto said this is a good, cohesive Commission that has done a lot of work.

**1.
Township Finances**

Bond counsel Robert Bendzinski said his firm has been working as the Township's financial advisors for many years. He said they were counsel for both the 2001 General Obligation unlimited tax bonds in the amount of \$3 million as well as the 2002 \$3 million limited bonds which financed the Public Safety Building. In answer to a question from Mozurkewich, Bendzinski confirmed that the obligation for these bonds stems from decisions made by a prior Board.

Dockett said the people of Northfield Township voted to spend \$3.8 million for the Public Safety Building, then the Board borrowed another \$3 million, then borrowed another \$500,000. Bendzinski said on a 9/13/1999 special election ballot the question was whether \$3.8 should be borrowed to be used toward the cost of one or more public safety buildings, and that was approved. He said that then allowed the Township to levy an additional millage to pay for that. He said if the taxable value of property decreases, the millage increases.

He said before the issuance of that \$3.8 million in bonds, the Board proposed the issuance on 9/5/2001 of an additional \$3 million bond issuance subject to a referendum, but no referendum was brought so the bond issuance proceeded. He said Dockett was correct that the Board also agreed with the Building Authority to borrow an additional \$500,000, and that also proceeded in the absence of a referendum.

In answer to a question from Mozurkewich, Bendzinski said that **at that time the Building Authority consisted of Sam Iaquinto, Melinda Vachow, and James Purrington.**

Stanalajczo said an increase in the millage was not approved by the Board with the other millage rates in June. Bendzinski asked how the debt service payments were made. He said that should be approved as part of the other millage rate approvals, but he does not think the Township

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is in violation of any law. He said he does not think the Board has to go back and amend that at this point, but the Board should consult with attorney Burns.

Bendzinski said he has been discussing refinancing both the 2001 and 2002 bonds to save the Township money. He said as of 2/8/12 the savings would be about \$32,000. He said his son, Ryan, will continue to work with the Township on this in light of the currently very favorable interest rates. Mozurkewich said she appreciates Bendzinski looking out for the Township's interests.

Stanalajczo thanked Township Controller Rick Yaeger for supplying information to the Board about the Township's investment funds. He said he would like to see the quarterly reports put on the Township website so residents can see where their funds are invested and what the rate of return is. He said previously there was no one reporting to the Board about this. He said the Board is responsible for determining where funds should be invested, and the Treasurer is responsible for carrying out those plans. Yaeger said the Board approved an investment plan several years ago, and that is what is currently being followed. Stanalajczo asked for a copy of that. He said all of these questions stem from the reference in the audit report about Township funds being at risk.

Yaeger said the Township's funds that were invested under the umbrella of Muni-vest were never at risk; he said the Townships that were in trouble gave money directly to an individual, rather than a clearinghouse as Northfield Township did. Iaquinto recalled that the Board directed the Treasurer to pull the Township's funds from Munivest just before it collapsed. Yaeger again said the Township's funds were not held by Muni-vest, so they were not at risk.

Mozurkewich recalled that investigators met with the Clerk and Treasurer at that time and she notified the auditor of that meeting. She said she learned then that the funds were never at risk, but there was a desire to not be even remotely associated with the Munivest name, so the funds were moved.

Iaquinto said it would be proper for the Board to approve an investment policy annually and receive quarterly reports. Stanalajczo also asked that the complete Board be notified of any investment changes. Yaeger said that is not possible because decisions sometimes have to be made quickly, always within the established guidelines. Stanalajczo said that is fine, but he did not even know that such a policy existed.

Manning said it is the Treasurer's responsibility to invest the Township's funds, and the Treasurer pulled Yaeger into that process because of his experience in that area.

Iaquinto asked that all Board members be provided with a copy of the policy now and the quarterly reports from this point on. Yaeger said there would be no problem doing that.

Training Requests

Mozurkewich questioned whether approval of these funds would be a violation of the Board's own policy. Dockett said Wagner polled the Board in advance. Mozurkewich noted that the policy proposed by Stanalajczo and approved by the Board requires that all training that takes place off-premises needs to be approved in advance. Manning said exceptions are often valid.

Mozurkewich asked who Wagner talked to about attending this conference. He said he did not talk to the Treasurer or to Mozurkewich who was not in the office. He said he discussed it with other Board members by phone. Mozurkewich said she is available 24/7 by phone. She asked if doing this kind of phone poll is a violation of State law. Iaquinto said he does not think it is. He also said he believes as Interim Township Manager Wagner had that authority. Mozurkewich said if that is the case he did not need to conduct a telephone poll. She said she would like to ask the Township attorney for an opinion about the legality of this and for him to conduct an Open Meetings Act seminar with the Board.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Stanalajczo supported, that the items in the Consent agenda be approved.
Motion carried 4—1 on a voice vote, Mozurkewich opposed.

In answer to a question from Iaquinto, Mozurkewich said she voted against this, including one item she had requested, because she was not in favor of all of them.

Bills

In answer to questions from Dockett:

- Lt. Greene said the vehicle repairs listed are for vehicles the department is keeping, not for a vehicle it plans to dispose of.
- Manning confirmed that the payment to Lucas Baker was for legal fees for the Grand Sakwa case. Mozurkewich said this was for preparation of briefs in the appeal Grand Sakwa has filed. Dockett said he would have expected to get an update on this.
- Manning explained that payments were made for refund of taxes as the result of tax tribunal cases.
- Lt. Greene said the \$1,100 payment to Washtenaw County was for the annual radio maintenance fee.
- Chief Wagner confirmed a \$6,900 repair and maintenance expense was approved by the Board at a previous meeting.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Stanalajczo supported, that the bills be approved as presented.
Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.

Iaquinto suggested that item 3, Discussion on Township Manager Duties, be moved up to follow the Presentation on Township Government to avoid keeping the visiting Township Manager waiting any longer.