

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP**  
**Township Board**  
**Minutes**  
**November 14, 2017**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P.M. by Supervisor Chockley at 8350 Main Street.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE**

Supervisor Chockley provided a brief invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Marlene Chockley, Supervisor	Present
Kathleen Manley, Clerk	Present
Lenore Zelenock, Treasurer	Present
Tawn Beliger	Present
Janet Chick, Trustee	Present
Wayne Dockett, Trustee	Present
Jacki Otto, Trustee	Present

Also present:

Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Dan Willis  
Township Manager Steven Aynes  
Township Attorney Bradford Maynes  
Police Sgt. Martin Smith  
Deputy Fire Chief Chris Bishop  
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble  
Members of the community

**ADOPT AGENDA**

Beliger requested that the October 10<sup>th</sup> minutes be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

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

**FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Mary Devlin, 9211 Brookside Drive, David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, made comments about the Community Center Harvest dinner, voter turnout, length of meetings, and spending on a variety of capital items.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Board members made comments about the Library possibly removing the photocopier available to the public, the recently-passed County millage, Dockett's' paychecks, and cancelation of the last Planning Commission meeting,

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chockley supported, that attorney Maynes look into seeing if the Township may legally pay someone in advance of work being performed.

Zelenock and Chockley accepted an amendment by Otto.

- ▶ **Amended motion:** Zelenock moved, Chockley supported, that attorney Maynes look into seeing if the Township may legally pay someone in advance of work being performed, and what the requirements are regarding any taxes withheld. **Motion carried 5—1--1 on a roll call vote, Manley opposed and Dockett abstaining.**

**CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chockley invited interested residents to submit applications to serve on the Planning Commission, ZBA, and Board of Review, and she referred to the People's Express Quarterly Report. Beliger provided updated information about pending State legislation regarding installation of "smart meters."

**REPORTS/UPDATES**

*Zoning Board of Appeals.* No October meeting held.

*Planning Commission.* Chick noted the last meeting was with the Township Board on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

*Parks and Recreation.* Next meeting November 21<sup>st</sup>.

*Land Preservation.* Zelenock reported the by-laws were reviewed on November 9<sup>th</sup>, and they plan on having a public forum on ~~December~~ February 8<sup>th</sup>.

*Financial/Treasurer.* Zelenock reviewed the fund balance report and explained that rental incomes will be shown on reports after the audit is complete.

*Supervisor.* Chockley referred to her written report and called attention to home rehab programs available through the County.

*Manager.* Aynes reported the new code enforcement officer has started work, a new MDOT carpool lot is being planned near the water tower, and repaving of Seven Mile Road from Pontiac Trail to East Shore Drive is planned.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

1.

**Presentation:**

**Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS)**

Tara Tyler, Benefit Plan Advisor with MERS, reported that she had reviewed the Township's retirement plans with Township staff, and she reviewed investment options under those plans and with MERS.

2.

**Consider MERS as**

**Township's Retirement Plan Provider**

Aynes recommended that MERS be used for Township employee retirement plans due to the better returns and lower fees than the current John Hancock plans and to simplify management of retirement plans since Police personnel already use MERS. Zelenock noted that most employees are in favor of switching to MERS.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto supported, that the Township discontinue Voya and John Hancock and change over to the Municipal Employees' Retirement System ((MERS) as the Township's retirement plan provider. **Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.**

3.

**Presentation:**

**Burnham & Flower—2018 Health Insurance Plans**

Jack Schmitz of Burnham & Flower reported that the cost of the Township's health insurance plans will increase 6.14% compared the average of 8.5% for all plans. He noted there would be cost savings with an HMO rather than the current PPO, and increasing the cash incentive to opt out of insurance could also save money. Board members discussed these options and asked questions, including whether union and non-union employees could be covered by a combination of HMO and PPO plans.

4.

**Resolution 17-575: Opt Out of Hard Caps**

Jack Schmitz explained that when the State passed the hard caps legislation there was no difference in premiums based on age, but under the Affordable Care Act premiums vary widely by age.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, that the Northfield Township Board opt out of the restrictions mandated by Public Act 152 of 2011 on Public Employer's Payments for Medical Benefit Plans. **Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed. Resolution adopted.**

5.

**Health Insurance Renewal and HSA Contributions**

- ▶ **Motion:** Otto moved, Beliger supported, to renew the current PPO health insurance plan with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and to continue with the health savings account employer contributions at the same rate as 2017. **Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed.**

6.

**Employee Cash Incentive  
in Lieu of Taking Township Insurance**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, that the cash incentive in lieu of taking Township health insurance be changed to \$4,000 for all employees, with the caveat that any employee taking the cash incentive provide proof that they have other health insurance. **Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed.**

7.

**Potential Lease of a Portion of  
the Public Safety Building Second Floor**

Aynes referred to the memo of November 3<sup>rd</sup> from Public Safety Director Wagner about the inquiry from a law enforcement agency about renting a portion of the Public Safety Building's second floor for storage and offices for 8-12 employees.

- ▶ **Motion:** Otto moved, Beliger supported, to authorize Township Manager Aynes and Township legal counsel to begin lease negotiations for leasing of a portion of the second floor of the Public Safety Building.

There was discussion about any rental income being put into a restricted fund either for maintenance of the

building or for making bond payments, making sure all zoning ordinance requirements are followed, and considering all insurance requirements.

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

8.

**Horseshoe Lake SAD Refund Correction for Lupi**

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chick supported, that the Township pay Ms. Lucinda Lupi the refund for Horseshoe Lake Sewer in the amount of \$1,811.56, the refund to be paid from the General Fund. After the refund, the Township requests the Donald Lupi Living Trust return the overpaid ~~portion~~ portion of his refund to the Township.

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

9.

**Franchise Agreement  
with Charter Communications**

Aynes and Maynes explained this is a renewal of the agreement with the cable provider in the Township, such agreements are regulated by the State, and the maximum fee allowed to be charged by the Township is 5%.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto supported, that the Township renew the contract with Charter Communications and provide for a 5% franchising fee and a 0% franchising fee for public, educational, and government entities.

In answer to questions, Maynes said the fees are intended to cover Township overhead, and the contract is for 10 years. Maynes said he would have to research whether the term of the contract could be less than 10 years.

**Motion withdrawn.**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger supported, to table this matter to the next meeting. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

Later in the meeting Maynes reported that his research shows the term of the contract is mandated by the State at 10 years.

- ▶ **Motion:** Otto moved, Chockley supported, to accept the Charter Communications contract and provide for a 5% franchising fee and a 0% fee for public, educational, and government (PEG) entities, and to authorize the Township Manager to execute it. **Motion carried 5—2 on a roll call vote, Dockett and Beliger opposed.**

10.

**Civic Event Application:  
Kiwanis Christmas Tree Sales**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger supported, to ~~adopt~~ approve the Civic Event Application of the Kiwanis Club of Whitmore Lake to sell Christmas trees at 75 Barker Road from November 24<sup>th</sup> through December 23<sup>rd</sup>, and that the fee be waived. **Motion carried 5—0—2 on a roll call vote, Zelenock and Otto abstaining as Kiwanis members.**

**11.  
Snow Removal Contract**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, to enter into a contract as prepared with MMPW Services for snow removal pursuant to the snow removal guidelines in Exhibit A and authorize the Township Manager to sign the contract.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.**

**12.  
Hiring of Paid On-Call Firefighter Trainee:  
Devon Simmer**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger supported, to approve the hiring of Paid On-Call Firefighter trainee Devon Simmer, subject to background check and physical. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**13.  
Sale of Fire Equipment:  
Rescue 8-1 2006 Ford F-550**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, to approve the sale of Rescue 8-1, which is a 2006 Ford F-550, and have it listed with Fire-Tec to be sold.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**14.  
Boards & Commissions Application Form**

Chockley explained that this development of this form was prompted by the desire for the Township to eventually be certified as a Redevelopment Ready Community.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto supported, to adopt the Boards & Commissions application to be use with new and returning applicants to Township boards and commissions.

There was discussion about whether groups such as the Downtown Planning Group would use this form, the need to make it clear that specific experience is not required to serve, allowing a resume to be attached, and making sure the form is not so formal that it might discourage some people from applying. It was agreed to make changes to the draft to address these concerns.

**Motion withdrawn.**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chick moved, Zelenock supported, to approve the Boards & Commissions form with the changes discussed at this meeting. **Amended motion carried 5—2 on a roll call vote, Dockett and Beliger opposed.**

**15.  
Independent Contractor Agreement**

Otto explained this is a template to be customized depending on the contractor being covered by the agreement.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger supported, to adopt the Independent Contractor Agreement as a template.

There was discussion about the need to make it clear for future reference that this is to be used as a template, and that “contractor” and “consultant” are references to the same thing.

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

**16.  
Bills**

Dockett asked questions about several payments (movie screen rental, vehicle repairs, and credit card charges).

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Zelenock supported, to adopt the bills. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**17.  
Minutes of October 10, 2017**

Beliger and Chockley made two corrections.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto supported, that the minutes of October 10, 2017, be approved as amended. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

No comments.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Comments included urging people to support local businesses (including Kiwanis Christmas Tree sales), the cost of running the Township for this month (\$357,107.99), shortening the duration of Board meetings, and wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, that the meeting be adjourned.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 P.M.

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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 December 12, 2017.

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Kathleen Manley, 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/)