

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP

Township Board

Minutes

October 22, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 P.M. by Supervisor Chockley at 8350 Main Street.

PLEDGE/INVOCATION

Trustee Beliger 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, Trustee	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 Paul Burns
Planning Consultant Paul Lippens, McKenna
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the community

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Sam Iaquinto, 9876 Main, Mary Devlin, 9211 Brookside, Amy Scholl, 648 Jennings, David Gordon, Hellner Road, Shannon Koenig, Main Street, Margaret Riddell, 65141 W. Eight Mile, Carl Watkins, 438 Jennings, and Stacy Sloan, 9972 N. Main, commented on the marijuana proposal on the November 5th ballot.

Mary Devlin also commented on the proposed Coyle Road property sale. David Gordon referred to a variety of issues, including the length of the agenda, the suggested survey about the sewer basin, and use of the North Village site.

BOARD MEMBER RESPONSE

Board members comments on the proposal for a survey about a sewer basin, financial disclosures required of candidates for elected Township offices, Northfield Township's record of fiscal responsibility, the marijuana proposal on the November 5th ballot, Township service to the public, the length of Board agendas, getting public input on various issues, and future use of the North Village site.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Minutes of October 8, 2019, Special Meeting**
- **Minutes of October 8, 2019, Regular Meeting**
- **Senior Nutrition Program Contract Extension**
- **Township Manager Update**
- **Correspondence**

The Board made three minor corrections to the minutes and briefly discussed the change in the County's contract for the Senior Nutrition Program. Aynes, Willis, and Burns answered questions about the requests for reimbursement for sewer backup costs. Dockett said the Township should pay 100% of the damages to private property caused by the sewer backup.

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Otto seconded, that the Washtenaw County Dept. of Community & Economic Development contract be reviewed by the Township Attorney before it is signed by the Township Manager. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

Board members asked that the sewer backup at 9121 Lakewood be an agenda item for the next Board meeting, and that the Township Attorney's legal opinion concerning reimbursement for damages and the Township's policy regarding sewer backups be included.

Maegan Spiny, owner of 9121 Lakewood, described the damages to her home and effect of the sewer backup on her family.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Manley seconded, that the consent agenda be adopted with the corrections to the minutes, and to receive the Township Manager update. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

ADOPT BALANCE OF AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion #1:** Chockley moved, Manley seconded, that the balance of the agenda be adopted as presented.
- ▶ **Motion #2:** Zelenock moved, Otto seconded, that the meeting end by 9:30 p.m. **Motion carried 5—2 on a roll call vote, Beliger and Chockley opposed.**

Motion #1 carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

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**PRESENTATION:
Washtenaw County Road Commission
Governance**

County Commissioner Susan Shink presented information about the possibility of the County making governance changes, including:

- Expanding the Road Commission from 3 to 5 members.
- Changing from appointed to elected Road Commissioners.
- Transferring Road Commission Board duties to the County Board of Commissioners

She said two public hearings (October 23rd and November 6th) about these possible changes are scheduled. She said one of the reasons these changes are being made is due to public complaints about and lack of responsiveness by the Road Commission. She cited removal of landmark trees on Mast and North Territorial Roads and spraying of herbicides at road intersections as recent examples.

In answer to questions, Shink said increased responsiveness to citizens and a slight cost savings would be benefits of transferring duties, and the County does not have the ability to change the length of Road Commission terms. Township Board members expressed opinions, including that Road Commission members be elected and/or that their duties be transferred to the Board of Commissioners.

Shink added that she is on the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, and she would welcome contact from Northfield Township about partnering with the County for development of the North Village park.

ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

1.

Resolution 19-612: 2019 Master Plan

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick seconded, to adopt Resolution 19-612.

Board members made comments including that the changes made since the last time the Board considered this were not provided to the Board in the manner set out in Board policy, some statements are repeated in various sections, the entire plan is restrictive without any description of what is allowed, and some wording seems too strong.

Motion carried 4—3 on a roll call vote, Zelenock, Beliger, and Dockett opposed. Resolution adopted.

2.

Resolution 19-615: Establish North Village Park for Public Use in Perpetuity

- **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, that the Board adopt Resolution 19-615 to establish North Village Park for public use in perpetuity.

Lippens said this is being proposed now by the North Village committee to preserve the town green and lakefront areas in light of the interest by at least two developers in developing the balance of the property. Burns said deed restrictions for designating land for public use in perpetuity are very specialized, it will need to be done with care, and the Board should have a legal description to consider as part of an action of this type. Lippens said the resolution would be establishing policy and direct staff to carry through on the plan to designate the land for park use, and striking the phrase "in perpetuity" at this point would not affect that goal.

- **Motion #1 to Amend:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, to remove the wording "in perpetuity" from Resolution 19-615. **Motion #1 to amend carried 5—2 on a roll call vote, Zelenock and Dockett opposed.**

- **Motion #2 to Amend:** Beliger moved, Otto seconded, to replace "approximately 4 acres" to "a minimum of five acres."

There was discussion about whether this action is premature and whether the acreage for park should be increased.

Motion #2 to amend carried 5—2 on a roll call vote, Zelenock and Dockett opposed.

Amended motion carried 5—2 on a roll call vote, Zelenock and Dockett opposed. Resolution adopted.

- **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chick seconded, that the North Village committee contact Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation to see if they are interested in partnering with Northfield Township to build a park on the North Village park site. **Motion carried 6—1 on a voice vote, Dockett opposed.**

3.

Building/Planning/Zoning Study to Consider In-house Personnel

[Discussed out of order after Item 5].

Board member comments included:

- The first step should be to review the Township's fee schedule to find out why there is an operating deficit.
- The Township should consider using Carlisle/Wortman—as some other Townships do—for permitting services.

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- The building department is losing \$50,000 per year and the County will handle all permitting at no cost.
- Township residents would have to travel to the County office for permits if the Township did not provide the service, but many services are offered online.
- It would be good to know how other Townships handle permits. [Aynes said probably two-thirds of townships use the County].
- It would be useful to have a flow chart showing what the process would be using the County vs. the current process, and what are the respective timelines are.

Lippens said McKenna provides these services for townships without running a deficit.

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chick seconded, to look at the fee structure under the current structure to make sure the Township is no longer running a deficit, to be done by the first Board meeting in January or sooner, to be led by the Township Manager.
Motion carried 7–0 on a voice vote.
- ▶ **Motion:** Otto moved, Zelenock seconded, to form a committee to look at the building department fee schedule analysis, staffing analysis, workflow, and outsourcing, consisting of the Township Manager, the Controller, and two Board members.
Motion carried 7–0 on a voice vote.

Beliger and Zelenock agreed to serve.

**4.
Resolution 19-613:
Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget Amendment #1**

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chick seconded, to table Resolution 19-613, Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget Amendment #1. **Motion carried 7–0 on a voice vote.**

**5.
Health Insurance Plan Renewal**

- a. Resolution 19-614: Medical Insurance Opt-Out of Hard Caps.
- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, to adopt Resolution 19-614: Medical Insurance Opt-Out of Hard Caps. **Motion carried 6–1 on a voice vote, Dockett opposed. Resolution adopted.**
- b. Approve Health Insurance Plans for 2020.
- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, to approve health insurance Plans for 2020.

Chockley said the plans are same as the current ones. Dockett said dollar amounts should be always presented in dollars, not percentages. Aynes recited the old and new dollar amounts for each plan. Zelenock said she cannot tell if there will be a budget increase based on that information because the percentage increase may be within the increase planned for in the budget. Otto noted

that out-of-pocket costs increased slightly for some of the plans.

Motion carried 5–2 on a roll call vote, Zelenock and Dockett opposed.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto seconded, to determine Township Contributions to Employee Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) to be the same as 2019. **Motion carried 7–0 on a voice vote.**
- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chockley seconded, that the meeting be extended to 10:00 P.M.
Motion carried 7–0 on a voice vote.

**6.
Thomas Duke Contract Extension
for Sale of 75 Barker Road**

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Otto seconded, to accept the contract extension for sale of 75 Barker Road. **Motion carried 4–3 on a roll call vote, Chick, Zelenock, and Chockley opposed.**

**7.
Purchase Offer for Township-Owned Property:
Coyle Road**

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved to accept the Purchase Offer for Township-Owned Property on Coyle Road.
Motion died for lack of second.
- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, to reject the Purchase Offer for Township-Owned Property on Coyle Road.

There was discussion about items on the site that need to be removed, including vehicles. Aynes recommended against accepting the offer due to the price being too low. He said he will follow-up with the ordinance officer.

Motion carried 7–0 on a voice vote.

Zelenock said there should be a no trespassing sign on this site. Dockett said a For Sale sign would be better. Aynes said he will handle that.

**8.
Township Office Closure December 23-27**

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Manley seconded, that the Township Offices be closed December 23 through 27, 2019.

Otto said this does not give staff enough notice of this to allow them time to manage their paid time off. Aynes said all staff are in support of this, and the Board wants staff to use up their paid time off. Manley said this is good for staff morale, and it would make Northfield Township competitive with other township offices that are closed

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that week. Chick said this does not serve the community well; Dockett agreed. It was noted the office is already scheduled to be closed December 24 and 25.

Motion failed 3—4 on a roll call vote, Chick, Dockett, Otto, and Zelenock opposed.

- **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Manley seconded, that the Township Offices be closed December 23, 2019.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

9.

Request to Create A Retention Basin Survey

- **Motion:** Otto moved, Zelenock seconded, to table the request to create a retention basin survey.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Trunk or Treat will be held at North Village Park from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 27th. Otto requested that political material on Proposal 1 not be distributed due to it being a children's event. Burns said political speech is the most protected form of speech, so a prohibition would be questionable.
- A Chili Cook-off will be held at Living Water church on November 2nd, 11:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.
- Whitmore Lanes will have a ribbon cutting on October 25th from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- George Brown, Shady Beach, said he should be informed as Clerk of the Horseshoe Lake Association about properties within the association that are sold at tax sales. He also commented on growth in the

Township and the proposal to allow marijuana businesses in the Township.

- Margaret Riddell commented on marijuana businesses in the Township and the size of the North Village park.
- Amy Scholl commented on Township services and commercial marijuana businesses in the Township.
- David Gordon commented on the North Village park size and development, and suggested that the Board hold a public question and answer session.
- Jim Nelson, 7777 Sutton Road, commented on the size of the North Village park and allowing marijuana businesses in the Township.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Comments included:

- If a developer cannot afford to pay for the North Village site the Township does not need them.
- The Board will accept the outcome of the marijuana ballot initiative on November 5th.
- Absentee ballots are available from the Clerk's office, and the office will be open Saturday, November 2nd from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
- Thanks to the members of the community who have a genuine concern for the welfare of the Township.
- The Board should consider a survey on some specific topics.
- Residents are always welcome to call the Supervisor on her cell phone with any concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:42 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 _____, 2019.

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/