

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
Township Board Special Meeting
Minutes
January 27, 2015**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:48 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	Absent with notice

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink
Public Safety Director William Wagner
Township Attorney Paul Burns
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the community

ADOPT AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, that agenda be approved as presented.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No comments

**RESOLUTION SUBMITTING CONSOLIDATED
POLICE PROTECTION MILLAGE PROPOSAL**

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, that agenda be approved as presented.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

Chief Wagner explained that 4.5 mills were approved in previous millages, but he asked whether the Board would like to approve this resolution at the current level of the three millages at the Headlee Rollback level which would total 4.3022. Fink said either level would be legal. Dockett said Headlee has been around for a long time to give tax relief to citizens. Wagner said the goal is to maintain a professional police department, and it would be easier to do that with the 4.5 level. Fink said the difference between the levels is probably about \$50,000.

Dockett said these millages raise about \$1.5 million/year or a total of about \$7.5 mills. He said Headlee is the law and he would like to keep it at that level. In answer to a question from Westover, Fink said if the 4.5 mills are approved they would also be rolled back over time.

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, that the Resolution Submitting Consolidated Police Protection Millage Proposal be approved at 4.5 mills.
**Motion carried 5—1 on a roll call vote,
Dockett opposed.**

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dockett objected to holding a special meeting prior to 7:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Westover supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 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 February 10, 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/

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP Township Board Workshop Minutes January 27, 2015

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

The workshop was called to order at 7:07 P.M. by Supervisor Engstrom at 8350 Main Street.

Supervisor Engstrom led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

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

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink
Public Safety Director William Wagner
Community Center Director Tammy Averill
Township Attorney Paul Burns
Planning Consultant Douglas Lewan,
Carlisle-Wortman Associates
Members of the community

ADOPT AGENDA

Engstrom asked that Item 4 be moved to the top of the list of Discussion Items.

- **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Otto supported, that the agenda be adopted as amended.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Township Growth/Development/Master Plan. Sandy Klump, 9474 Lake Point Drive, Kelly Klump, 11658 East Shore Drive, Brad Tanner, 5115 Nollar, John Meadows, 11485 East Shore Drive, Carolyn Ottoman, 10181 Whitmore Bay Drive, (Green Oak Township), and Eric Reed, 5847 Hellner Road, and spoke in favor of changing the master plan to allow additional growth in the Township.

Ed Wojtys, 6235 Hellner Road, David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, Laura Wojtys, 6235 Hellner Road, Robin Wojtys, 6235 Hellner, and Jim Nelson, 7777 Sutton Road, spoke in favor of growth where indicated in the current master plan while preserving farmland and open space.

Cecilia Infante, 1035 E. Five Mile Road, spoke in favor of growth and urged open-minded discussion on both sides of a very complicated issue.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Township Growth/Development/Master Plan. Dockett and Engstrom spoke in favor of changing the master plan and growth in the Township.

CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fink reported:

- Development Block Grant (CDGB) project to construct sidewalks between the Township Hall and the middle school, which will be managed by the County, will be on the Board's February 10th agenda for approval.
- He was not successful in getting funding approved at the Urban County Executive meeting for a community garden in the Township, but he will try again next year with a revised proposal.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Job Description for Senior Nutrition Program Assistant

[Moved up on the agenda].

Community Center Director Averill referred to the proposed job description and asked for input from the Board. In answer to questions from Dockett, Averill said the position will be funded by the grant for program. Responding to a comment from Dockett, Fink explained that an additional \$3,000 approved by the Board for this project is discretionary funding if Averill feels it is needed.

1. Planning Commission Visioning by the Board

Engstrom explained that the Planning Commission had asked the Board to provide their views on the issue of growth in the Township. Chick, Township Board representative to the Planning Commission, stressed that this is not a discussion about the Biltmore proposal, but about growth in general. She noted that Planning Commission Chair Marlene Chockley and planning consultant Douglas Lewan were both present.

Comments included:

- Dockett and Engstrom: There is not a balance of uses in the Township.
- Engstrom: Many people in the community were unaware of the opportunities to comment on the master plan when it was being developed and do not feel comfortable speaking in public. Development in the areas so designated for commercial development in the

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Township is not realistic. Only expensive houses can be developed when so little area for small lot developments is available and that is squeezing many families out of the community. The five acre minimum lot size should be changed from 5 to 2.5 acres, the 2.5 acre district should be lowered to 1 acre, and medium density residential should be lowered to one-third acre lots. Greater setbacks from major roads would preserve rural views. Allowing more development would still leave 75% of the Township rural. The Township should look like what the residents envision. If someone can dream it, let them build it. The Planning Commission should look at planning for the Territorial and South Whitmore Lake area and work on revising the Master Plan. The Planning Commission has seemed not to do anything since the joint meeting with the Board last year and canceled two meetings at the end of the year for lack of business. There are not enough realistic locations for subdivisions with smaller than one acre lots.

- Otto: It would be good to see areas between existing subdivisions filled in, but the property owners are not willing to sell yet. The same is true for the medium-density residential (MDR) land in town and south of Wildwood.
- Lewan: At Chick's request, he explained what types of development are currently allowed in the Township per the Master Plan, and noted that residential densities can be increased by up to 150% in cluster development if certain criteria are met. He also explained that while a master plan is generally considered to be a 20 year document and the State requires review of it at least every five years, it is true that it could be reviewed every year if ideas, opinions, or conditions have changed.
- Otto: A recent Michigan Townships Association (MTA) article supported changing a master plan to respond to development inquiries. Lewan said that is common. He said it used to happen more frequently before State law changed in 2006 requiring a wider, longer public review process.
- Chick: Five acre residential is considered sprawl, and smart growth includes a wide variety of housing options, a functional mix of residential and commercial, preserving open space and farmland, and taking advantage of compact development design. Sewers are not needed for all growth. Scio Township has more population and development, but they have put most of their development along Jackson Road while still preserving open space. People on both sides of this issue can be accommodated with some compromise.
- Braun: It is good to hear that extending sewers is not necessary for residential development.
- Westover: The zoning in the Township should not be so exclusionary (five acre lots). The idea of development toward the east along North Territorial is interesting.
- Otto: Opportunities for development to the east along Territorial is interesting. Having developers pay for some amenities is attractive, and with the right development the community could still look quaint and attractive.

- Chick: A 2006 Planned Unit Development (PUD) proposal that would have preserved half the land in open space was half in the Ann Arbor and half in the Whitmore Lake school districts. A report at the time listed the tax benefits of the development based on an increase in the tax base of \$91.55 million.
- At Dockett's request, Lewan explained how the PUD ordinance allows development flexibility, but said this also has some drawbacks and there are no PUDs in Northfield Township.
- Engstrom: PUDs in other communities that are very dense and surrounded by hundreds of acres of trees look ridiculous rather than having more separation between houses. It would be interesting to see what Northfield Township's PUD ordinance allows.
- Fink clarified that a PUD can be used in any zoning district, and it is a process that allows flexibility in variances while identifying benefits that can be provided for the community in exchange.
- Regarding the Biltmore development, Lewan said in his opinion the process of revising the master plan for that purpose has been in Biltmore's court for some time, but from the comments he has heard at this meeting he hears interest in moving beyond that project.
- Chick: Regarding the comment made by Engstrom about what the Planning Commission has been doing, she said it has been revising ordinances to open up the Township to allow bigger and better things.

**2.
Prioritizing Road Projects**

Fink referred to the list of road projects presented by the County Road Commission and their request for the Township Board to prioritize these.

It was agreed that the priorities are East Shore, then North Territorial, followed by Whitmore Lake and Barker. Dockett agreed with Fink that maintaining the roads that are still in good condition should also be a priority.

Fink said he will prepare a priority list for Board review.

**3.
Board Room Construction**

Fink referred to a short list of architects for this project and explained his preference for using a construction management company rather than a general contractor because of the additional control it provides.

Braun noted that the Township offices took over space previously occupied by the Fire Department resulting in them being very cramped in the space they moved into on the Police side of the building. Fink said if a conference room is built upstairs the one downstairs could be split into additional office space. He said a long term plan for building out the second floor of the building needs to be developed. Dockett said this will cost way too much money.

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SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Township Growth/Development/Master Plan. Dale Brewer, 11548 East Shore Drive, David Gordon, John Meadows, and Jerry Webb, 285 Waterlily, made comments about growth and open space preservation.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Township Growth/Development/Master Plan. Engstrom said anyone with a large enough parcel can farm, but if they want to sell for development they can also do that, and no one's rights are being taken away. Dockett said it is almost impossible to bring sewer and other utilities to two acre lots. Chick said she believed the Master Plan was

appropriate at the time it was adopted and it is not inappropriate to change it as conditions change.

Horseshoe Lake Sewer Fund Refunds. In answer to a question from Dockett, Fink said the spreadsheet of refunds of the \$700,000 in the fund was released last week and will be available for review for two weeks. He added that if there are no issues raised by residents it will be brought to the Board, probably on February 10th, and checks will be issued to those who owned properties as of December 1, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT

► **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, that the meeting be adjourned.

Engstrom adjourned the meeting at 9:51 P.M.

Submitted by Lisa Lemble.

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Angela Westover, Clerk

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