

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP

Township Board Workshop

Minutes

March 24, 2015

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

The workshop was called to order at 7:00 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
Township Attorney Brad Maynes
Township Engineer Brian Rubel
Members of the community

ADOPT AGENDA

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

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mary Devlin, 9211 Brookside, thanked Averill and those at the Senior Center, and made comments about Proposal 1 regarding road funding and sales tax. Dale Brewer, 11548 East Shore Drive, made comments about the sewer capacity report and the Whitmore Lake sewer assessment district. David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, made comments on Township spending related to growth: for sewer repairs and expansion, Public Safety Building lighting and a meeting room, and local road maintenance.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dockett said he will be voting against State Proposal 1 because it will raise sales tax forever. He also agreed that the Whitmore Lake Sewer district should not be delayed any further. Fink said a critical easement is required for this project and he anticipates that will be signed this Friday which will allow the project to move forward.

CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fink reported that the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has indicated that if the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) advisory committee does not approve the Active Transportation Management (ATM) part of the US-23 project (additional lanes to be used during heavy traffic periods) MDOT will pull the \$60 million of the \$80 million designated for that part of the project and use it for other projects in the state. Dockett said if that happens the Township should not pay any more dues to WATS.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1.

Annual Report from Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC)

Roy Townsend, Managing Director of the WCRC reviewed the written report and noted that the 2015 matching program will provide \$25,000 for road projects and about #13,700 for drainage management projects in Northfield Township. He noted the Township needs to inform the WCRC by May 22nd how they would like these funds spent.

WCRC Foreman Mike Mastie reviewed proposed local road projects, including those involving shared costs with neighboring townships. Fink said Township roads are in better condition this year than last so perhaps the best approach is to use funding for limestone on various roads. Townsend noted North Territorial from Spencer and Earhart will be rebuilt starting in May or June using the .5 mill raised by the County Board using Public Act 283.

Otto said the County needs to maintain ditches better to protect the investment made in creating them. Dockett said the WCRC needs to better supervise the work done by subcontractors.

2.

Sewer Capacity Study Presentation

Township Engineer Brian Rubel of Tetra Tech reviewed the capacity study and said:

- This is a very concise evaluation of commitments the Township has made regarding sewers, not a master plan.
- Northfield Township has two agreements with Green Oak Township: A 2001 agreement for 124 Residential Equivalent Units (REUs) on the north side of Whitmore Lake (about 20 of which have been added since then), and a 2004 agreement to provide 200,000 gallons/day

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for an area around Silver Lake Road. The total of these is 873 REUs or 227,000 gallons/days.

- The Township has commitments to four special assessment districts (SADs): Lake Point, North Territorial, Seven Mile Road, and Whitmore Lake Road, and the remaining commitment in excess of those that have already hooked up is 1,865 REUs and an additional 485,000 gallons/day.
- The total remaining commitment for capacity to Green Oak Township and the four SADs is 2,738 REUs and 700,000 gallons/day.
- A 2002 agreement rescinded a prior commitment to Hamburg Township.
- Because water gets into the system for 100-200 hours per year, building storage allows the excess at those times to be treated later over a longer period of time.
- The current capacity of—and the State permit for—the WWTP plant is 1.3 million gallons/day (MGD), and if storage during wet times were available the capacity could be increased to 1.5 MGD. The State requires that when treatment reaches 85% of capacity—which would be 1.1 MGD for the WWTP today—additional capacity must be built or storage must be provided.
- The current 365 day average being treated is .7 MGD, but in the spring it is closer to .9 MGD, so an additional .2 MGD or 800 REUs could be handled without additional storage or .4 MGD or 1500 REUs with building additional storage.
- A 2002 Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) policy requires sewer systems to handle a 3.9" storm in one day, which means Northfield Township's WWTP would have to build 1.7 million gallons of storage for its current operations and to serve for many additional years.
- Storage could be above or below ground, could be made of steel or concrete, and would require upgrades to pumps.
- It has been challenging for the WWTP plant to handle peak flows, so the storage tanks would be useful immediately and may be necessary after another 200 or so REUs are added.
- With only 800-1500 REUs available before capacity must be increased, but having commitments for an additional 2,738 REUs, the Board needs to consider what its policy will be regarding proposals for additional growth in the Township.
- Next steps include investigating financing for the tank and considering increasing connection fees to cover this cost.

Fink noted the vast majority of the capacity already committed in Northfield Township is in the North Territorial SAD, but that area may not develop fully for decades, so the question is whether all or some of the capacity for that development should be reserved or whether it could be used by developments in other areas. He said there is no right or wrong answer to this, but if the Board were to decide that WWTP capacity should be reserved for all of the commitments, that would mean implementing a development moratorium until the plant

capacity is increased. He said what is done in other communities can be looked at for guidance.

Rubel said Saline is facing this same issue, and they are considering providing service to new development beyond their current commitments, and would use the connection fees toward future plant expansion.

In answer to questions, Fink and Rubel said:

- There is no end date for the commitments to Green Oak Township.
- Land is available to expand the WWTP.
- Advantages of above-ground tanks include easier inspection and maintenance.
- If a storage tank were built today but not used for five years it would still have great value at that time.

**3.
Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Request for
Rebuild of Tertiary Sand Filters**

Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Hardesty said the tertiary sand filters are at the end of their life, and while it will be expensive, the Controller confirms funds are available. He asked that this project be put in the next fiscal year's budget. Dockett said he will not support a project without other bids being sought.

**4.
Board Room Construction:
Construction Manager Quotes**

Fink referred to three quotes provided for construction management for the board room project. He recommended using DeMattia Construction LLC because of their experience with small projects of this type, and said his second choice would be Shaw Construction. Dockett noted the third bidder indicates they will not be available this spring so there are actually only two bids.

In answer to questions from Otto and Dockett, Fink said a \$150,000 estimate has been given for the project, but he thinks it can be closer to \$100,000. He explained that the construction manager method is more transparent than using a general contractor, and the actual cost cannot be known until a construction manager is hired and bids are requested.

It was agreed additional information should be presented at the next workshop meeting.

**5.
Code Enforcement Contract Renewal**

In answer to questions, Fink said the contract provided is unchanged from the one currently being used. He referred to his memo and said the Board needs to set code enforcement priorities, and once that is done enforcement would be done without bringing individual cases to the Board. Otto said serious cases of blight are most important

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to her. Fink said that is what Lenaghan has been focusing on. Dockett said the Township should leave people alone. Braun said Lenaghan's work probably follows the complaints he receives. Fink said that is exactly right and gave a couple examples.

Otto suggested that Lenaghan be scheduled to have Lenaghan present information at the next Board workshop session about the work he has been doing without providing details about the people or property owners involved. Dockett said the Board and the public should be given details. Fink said that would not be appropriate.

**6.
Board Retreat Goals Discussion**

Postponed.

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

David Gordon expressed concern about the expenses the Township would incur to build a sewer retention tank and/or to expand the wastewater treatment plant if development is allowed outside the areas where sewer service commitments already exists. He also objected to spending money on construction of a Board meeting room.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dockett said he is not in favor of spending money on a Board room, and he encouraged voters to reject Proposal A on the May ballot. Otto announced two Kiwanis events: an Easter egg hunt on April 4th, and a pancake breakfast on April 25th to support the 4th of July events.

ADJOURNMENT

Engstrom adjourned the meeting at 9:45 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 _____, 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/