

# NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP

## Township Board

### Minutes

#### January 28, 2020

#### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M. by Supervisor Chockley at 8350 Main Street.

#### INVOCATION/PLEDGE

Trustee Chick 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:

Public Safety Director William Wagner  
Township Manager Steven Aynes  
Members of the community

#### FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

David Gordon, Hellner Road, commented on the Town Hall meeting held earlier in the month, the Township website, doing an energy audit of Township buildings, residential growth, business development, and sustainability issues.

#### BOARD MEMBER RESPONSE

Board members:

- discussed how to estimate potential residential growth figures and the effects on the Township, and whether to ask the Township planner to work on that.
- proposed investigating the cost of adding solar power to the Township hall and fixing the HVAC system.
- thanked Township staff Emily Hofsess, Mary Bird, Jennifer Carlisle, and Steven Aynes, as well as Paul Lippens of McKenna Associates for their assistance with managing marijuana business applications.
- objected to the characterization of some rental property owners as "slumlords" in a memo to an attorney from the Township Supervisor.
- brought up the need to address radon in the Community Center.
- noted there is an April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for a park grant application.
- discussed a purchase offer for 75 Barker Road which will expire on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

- confirmed Board review of Board goals and projects on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Township Manager Report**
- **Correspondence**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, to receive the Township Manager report.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

There was no correspondence.

#### ADOPT BALANCE OF AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Manley seconded, that the balance of the agenda be adopted as presented.
- ▶ **Amendment to motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, to amend the agenda to add item 1C, "Possible Action: Selection of Attorney." **Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed.**
- ▶ **Amended motion:** Chockley moved, Manley seconded, that the balance of the agenda be adopted as amended. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

#### AGENDA ITEMS

1.

#### Interviews for Township Legal Services

1. *The Plato Law Firm.* Edward Plato introduced attorneys Jessica Bond and Jerry Fischer with his firm and referred to his written proposal. They answered questions about a variety of topics, including their familiarity with marijuana business law in the state, their knowledge of Northfield Township, difficult cases they have handled, the advantage of using a small firm, their experience with different areas of the law (e.g. contracts, personal property tax collection, zoning, regulation of wetlands, litigation), and their proposed contract for services.

2. *Fink & Fink, LLC.* Jim Fink introduced himself and Mariah Fink, his niece, who is a municipal attorney who is not with his firm, but works with him on some matters. He noted the firm has six other full- and part-time attorneys and he referred to his written information. He answered questions about a variety of topics, including dealing with disagreements with clients, the amount of work the firm does with local courts, and the experience his firm has with various areas of the law including zoning issues and writing ordinances, filing cases to collect personal property taxes, real estate contracts, and law enforcement.

**Northfield Township Board Meeting  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Public Safety Building; 8350 Main Street  
January 28, 2020**

He said the Township should chose attorneys they feel comfortable with, whether that is his firm or another.

*3. Possible Action: Selection of Attorney.*

Board members briefly discussed the two firms, noting that both are excellent, which is why they were recommended to the Board by the subcommittee, and gave reasons for preferring one over the other.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto seconded, that Fink & Fink be selected as the Township’s attorneys.  
**Motion carried 4—3 on a roll call vote, Chick, Manley, Beliger opposed.**

**2.  
Minutes of January 7, 2020, Special Meeting**

Two corrections were made.

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Beliger seconded, to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2020, special meeting as amended.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**3.  
Minutes of January 14, 2020, Town Hall Meeting**

The list of those “also present” was corrected.

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chick seconded, to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2020, Town Hall meeting, as amended.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**4.  
Minutes of January 14, 2020, Regular Meeting**

Dockett referred to a January 14<sup>th</sup> discussion about the cost of the photocopiers approved at the December 10, 2019, Township Board meeting. He noted the approved cost was \$11,809.34 per year for three years, for a total of \$34,582.02.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2020, regular meeting as presented.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**5.  
Resignation of Leisa Devaney, Front Desk Clerk**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, to accept the resignation of Front Desk Clerk Leisa Devaney with regret and to thank her for her service.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**6.  
Proposal for Website Update**

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Manley seconded, to table the proposal for website update until more options are presented.

There was discussion about what the Board wants to accomplish with the website, what residents want to get from it, and how much of the maintenance can be done by Township staff. It was agreed that Board members will send their comments to Aynes by the end of the week.

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

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Manley seconded, that Board members send their comments about website services to Township Manager Aynes by the end of the week. **Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.**

**7.  
Draft Board Policy on Reading Letters from Citizens During the Call to the Public**

Chockley read the proposal prepared by Aynes.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, that the Board of Trustees adopt the proposed policy on reading letters from citizens during the Call to the Public, to be applicable to the February 11, 2020, Board meeting and to subsequent Board meetings until amended or repealed, striking the wording, “Written communications should be kept to 2 pages or less.”
- ▶ **Amendment to motion:** Beliger moved, Zelenock seconded, that the motion be amended to also strike the wording, “If a citizen sends a letter or other form of communication to be included in the packet, the manager should review it to ensure there is no profanity, personal attacks, or threats, and take appropriate measures as necessary.” **Amendment to motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**
- ▶ **Amended Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, that the Board of Trustees adopt the proposed policy on reading letters from citizens during the Call to the Public, to be applicable to the February 11, 2020, Board meeting and to be subsequent Board meetings until amended or repealed, striking the wording “Written communications should be kept to 2 pages or less” and “If a citizen sends a letter or other form of communication to be included in the packet, the manager should review it to ensure there is no profanity, personal attacks, or threats, and take appropriate measures as necessary.” **Amended motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**Northfield Township Board Meeting  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Public Safety Building; 8350 Main Street  
January 28, 2020**

**8.  
Draft Board Policy on  
Sharing Minutes During Call to the Public**

Chockley read the proposal prepared by Aynes.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, that the Board of Trustees adopt the policy on sharing time during the Call to the Public to be applicable to the February 11, 2020, Board meeting and to subsequent Board meetings until amended or repealed, eliminating the wording, "Written communications should be kept to 2 pages or less."

The Board discussed possible options, such as allowing a spokesperson for several people additional time.

**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The DDA is holding a Meet & Greet at the Library from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM on January 29<sup>th</sup> for business owners to network with each other and to provide feedback to the DDA.
- The next question and answer period for the public with the Board will be at 6:00 PM on February 25<sup>th</sup>.
- The Northfield Township Historical Society will be holding a potluck dinner at 6:00 PM on February 4<sup>th</sup> at

---

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 \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

the Community Center with a speaker from Firefly Preservation Consulting.

**SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Marissa Prizgint, 32 Schrum Drive, and David Gordon commented on the policy about reading letters from citizens during the Call to the Public.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Board members responded to comments about the policies regarding input from the public, offering suggestions for alternate ways for residents to be heard, noting there has been a three minute speaking limit for at least 12 years, and noting the email address to reach all Board members and Aynes is [boardoftrustees@northfieldmi.gov](mailto:boardoftrustees@northfieldmi.gov). They also discussed next steps for hiring a new front desk clerk, and noted over \$150,000 was received in application fees for marijuana businesses.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 P.M.

---

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/)