

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
Township Board
Minutes
November 10, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Supervisor Chockley via tele-conference.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE

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:

Public Safety Director William Wagner
Township Manager Steven Aynes
Township Attorney James Fink, Fink & Fink PLLC
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the community

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Scott Chisholm, Horseshoe Lake Association President, commented on the proposed Horseshoe Lake wetland preserve. Shannon Koenig commented on the AT&T contract. Nate Muchow, recently elected to the Board of Trustees, thanked the voters and the outgoing Board members.

BOARD MEMBER RESPONSE

Dockett expressed appreciation for Muchow's thanks, and he asked why Township taxpayers should give up the tax revenue from the lots that would make up the Horseshoe Lake wetlands area when use of the lake is not public. Beliger also thanked Muchow and said the new A&T contract is not in the Board packet so she is not inclined to vote for it.

Zelenock thanked the outgoing Board members, Chockley, Beliger, and Dockett, and welcomed new members Ken Dignan, Joshua Nelson, and Nate Muchow. Regarding Horseshoe Lake, she said she is in favor of adding the Township-owned lots to the land preserve to help control flooding, etc. but noted that a year ago the Board asked the Township Manager and Supervisor to discuss this with the Horseshoe Lake Association and report to the Board, but that appears not to have been done, so she does not know how she will vote. She added she did not see the

email about the new AT&T contract so is inclined to postpone action.

Chick, Otto, and Manley also thanked the outgoing Board members for their service and welcome the new member. Beliger and Chockley expressed appreciation for the show of gratitude.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Reports**
- **Check Disbursement Report**

► **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto seconded, that the consent agenda be adopted as presented.

Beliger thanked Lt. Smith for his work at Fire Station #2. Wagner, Aynes, and Chockley briefly answered questions.

Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

ADOPT BALANCE OF AGENDA

► **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto seconded, that the balance of the agenda be adopted as presented.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

1.

**Approval of Minutes:
October 22, 2020 Special Board Meeting**

Chockley corrected a misspelled word.

► **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, that the minutes of the October 22, 2020, Special Board Meeting be approved as amended.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

► **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick seconded, to ratify the motion to authorize the attorneys to proceed as discussed in the closed session during the October 22, 2020, Special Board meeting.

Chockley explained she is taking this action to affirm that motion since there was concern about whether members of the public had been able to rejoin the October 22, 2020, meeting due to technical difficulties.

Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

**Northfield Township Board Meeting
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Held via tele-conference
November 10, 2020**

**2.
Approval of Minutes:
October 22, 2020 Special Board Meeting**

Chockley made two corrections.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, that the minutes of the October 27, 2020, Regular Board Meeting be approved as amended.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

Beliger asked that the following statement be added to the record to commemorate comments made at the Board meeting of September 22, 2020:

“Beliger disclosed at the regular board meeting of September 22, 2020, that she did not solicit, nor did she accept, any contributions, gifts, endorsements, or other influence from marijuana interests. In response, Otto, Zelenock, Chick, and Manley said they did not meet with or accept campaign donations from any of the applicants.”

**3.
Approve Payment of Open Bills
(expected check run date 11-12-2020)**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick seconded, to approve payment of Open Bills (expected check run date 11-12-2020) for a total of \$139,996.37) from all funds in the Municipal Investment Fund (MIF) account. **Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.**

**4.
Hiring of Paid On-Call Firefighter**

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, to hire Kenneth Grant as a Paid On-Call Firefighter trainee at the rate of \$11.00/hour to start, contingent on passing a physical and background check.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

Wagner thanked the outgoing Board members and welcome those who were recently elected.

**5.
Conditional Use Permit for TerraFirma**

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Otto seconded, to approve a conditional use for outdoor storage of materials, in the manner noted on the Site Plan approved by Planning Commission on October 21, 2020, finding that the Conditional Use approval standards of Section 36-838 have been met by the applicant and Planning Commission has held a Public Hearing and recommended approval to the Board of Trustees.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

**6.
AT&T Metro Act Right-of-Way Permit Extension**

Aynes reported Township Attorney Fink has confirmed that the agreement in the packet is what will be approved, but the date will be updated to May 20, 2020, through May 20, 2025. Responding to a comment during the First Call to the Public, Otto said this has nothing to do specifically with 5G service, rather it allows AT&T to use the public right-of-way.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick seconded, that the Township extend the METRO Act Permit with AT&T, finding that the agreement offers fair coordinating benefits related to work within the Right-of-way, and is further supported by a varying annual payment to the Township of approximately \$10,000, and to authorize the Township Manager to execute the agreement subject to the approval of the terms of the contract by the Township Attorney, including the date on the letter.

In answer to a question from Beliger, Aynes reported that Fink said this is an extension of the existing agreement with the Township with no changes, and if the Board would like him to review it in more detail the Board can table it. Dockett said the contract concerns only the public right-of-way, not private property.

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

**7.
DTE Contract for
Community Center Parking Lot Lighting**

Chockley referred to the two options for providing parking lot lighting at the Community Center: (a) the Township purchasing the poles and having DTE install them (with maintenance falling on the Township), or (b) DTE providing, installing, and maintaining the poles in exchange for a “pole fee” which is essentially a finance charge.

In answer to a question from Otto, Chockley said the pole charges continue after the 10 year contract period, so it might cost less to pay for the poles up front if funds are available. She added there is discussion of DTE discontinuing the post charges after contracts expire, but that has not been approved.

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Otto seconded, to pay DTE to install, maintain, and operate 6 new parking lot lights at the Community Center, 9101 Main Street, Whitmore Lake, for \$22,010, and to continue with the monthly electric charges thereafter, and to authorize the township manager to sign the agreement after review and approval by the Township attorney.

In response to questions from Zelenock, Chockley said she is not an engineer, and this is what was recommended. Zelenock said there have been a lot of costs added to the total project for this building, and she would like to see alternatives to lower the cost, including putting lighting on

**Northfield Township Board Meeting
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Held via tele-conference
November 10, 2020**

the building. She said she supports the Community Center, but she is concerned about costs, and she thinks the existing two lights should not be included in this project, and more options should have been explored and presented to the Board.

In answer to a question from Otto, Chockley said the lighting was included in the original bid packet, but the bids from the four contractors who responded came back so high they removed the lighting to lower the cost. Otto asked if lighting needs to be completed as a condition of the grant. Chockley said lighting is required by the zoning ordinance.

In answer to a question from Dockett, Chockley said the cost of the lighting was \$29,900 when included in the bid.

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

8.

Resolution 20-634:

Authorization to Exceed Statutory Spending Limit to Repair Horseshoe Lake Outlet Drain

- **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, to authorize the office of the Water Resources Commissioner to exceed the statutory spending limit of fifteen thousand (\$15,000.00) dollars per year for the repair of the Horseshoe Outlet Drain in the exceeded amount of thirty three thousand five hundred (\$33,500.00) dollars with the Township portion to be \$10,050.00.

In answer to questions, Water Resources Commissioner Evan Pratt said he asking for approval of the remainder of the 2020 work, which is the additional work on Horseshoe Drain. He said most of the work done so far has been removing debris from drains and dead trees. He said he is asking at this point for approval of \$20,000 of which the Township share would be \$6,000. He said payment for this would be on the December 20-21 tax bills, and it would be about \$7-\$8 more per parcel.

In answer to a question from Dockett, Pratt said the total cost comes from the Road Commission, MDOT, and individual property owners. Dockett said he has property on the drain and it has not been cleaned for 40 years, and if the government collected money from taxpayers every year like they are supposed to, they would have all the money they need to do the necessary work.

In answer to questions from Zelenock, Pratt said they are requesting the same amount this year as last year-- \$33,500—which is more than was originally stated because the work was more difficult than expected.

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

9.

Discuss Potential Establishment of Horseshoe Lake Wetland Preserve

Chockley recalled the Board previously discussed this issue of the Township's ownership of properties within the Horseshoe Lake Association which it is paying taxes on. She said while donating them to the Horseshoe Lake Association would eliminate the tax bills for the Township, that is not legally possible.

There was discussion about the possibility of creating a wetland preserve to contain the properties, but it was noted that the Association has not indicated what it would prefer. Otto recalled the Association was concerned about the parcels being open to public access. Chockley said it appears it would be possible to include deed restrictions.

Zelenock recalled that the intent when the parcels were purchased was to help with the preservation of the lake, not to sell them to individual buyers. She said she would rather keep them and pay the taxes than sell them for private use. Beliger said if an agreement can be made with the Association to use the parcels for preservation of the lake that should be investigated.

Dockett said he would like to see a report from the Assessor about what he thinks and what the Township would be giving away to a private Association.

Zelenock said the motion made by the Board previously to have the Township Manager get input from the Association and bring a proposal to the Board should be followed. She said there was nothing in the motion about it, but the Land Preservation Committee could certainly work on this, and she would be happy to champion getting this addressed.

- **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chick seconded, to table action on the potential establishment of a Horseshoe Lake wetland preserve. |
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

TRUSTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, to accept the Trustee/Liaison Reports.

Zelenock reported she plans to reinvest two certificates of deposit that are maturing in November at a rate of about .2%, and the sewer plant bond construction account has been set up to receive the \$3.8 million in bond proceeds later this month. Dockett thanked the Clerk for all of the good information she provided in her report.

Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

**Northfield Township Board Meeting
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Held via tele-conference
November 10, 2020**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Aynes presented certificates of appreciation to Dockett, Chockley, and Beliger from the staff.
- Beliger noted a parks survey is on the website and hard copies are also available.
- Otto reported Kiwanis Christmas Tree Sales will being on November 28th at 75 Barker Road.
- Chockley announced the DDA will be having an informational meeting on November 18th at 7:00 P.M. via Zoom.

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Ken Dignan thanked the outgoing Board members for their service and said he looks forward to being part of the new Board. Adam Olney, 9315 Lakewood Court, asked about the results of the election for Library Board, thanked outgoing Board members, congratulated incoming members, and said he looks forward to being involved however he can be. Shannon Koenig thanked outgoing Board members and commented on the AT&T agenda item.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

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 November 24, 2020.

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/

Manley said Library Board results should be certified by the County and posted by Thursday. Beliger thanked those who thanked her for her service and made a statement about her beliefs about government and said she was humbled to serve. Chick thanked voters, Manley, and her assistants, Christina and Stacy, on the election. She also said she appreciated being re-elected, thanked the other candidates, thanked the outgoing Board members, and welcomed the new ones. Otto thanked poll workers and staff, thanked voters for her re-election, and said she looks forward to working with both out-going and in-coming Board members. Zelenock thanked voters for reelecting her, thanked out-going Board members, and welcomed new ones. Chockley said the Board accomplished many things which she will list in the next newsletter and said she tried her best. She said the staff are phenomenal, and thanked Board members and members of the public.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:21 P.M.