

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
Township Board
Minutes
May 26, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P.M. by Supervisor Chockley via tele-conference.

PLEDGE/INVOCATION

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 (left at 10:22 P.M.)
Wayne Dockett, Trustee	Present (Connected at 7:10 P.M.; left at 10:00 P.M.)
Jacki Otto, Trustee	Present

Also present:

Public Safety Director William Wagner
Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Dan Willis
Township Manager Steven Aynes
Township Attorney Mariah Fink
Township Manager Assistant Jennifer Carlisle
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the community

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

David Gordon, Hellner Road, made comments about 75 Barker Road, the bond for the sewer plant retention pond, and the budget. Jessica Meisner, 8176 Fair Oak Drive, Green Oak Township, commented on the sewer plant retention pond bond. Marissa Prizgint, reported on a revised Land Preservation Committee budget.

[Dockett connected].

BOARD MEMBER RESPONSE

Board members commented on all subjects brought up during the Call to the Public.

**CONSENT AGENDA:
Township Manager Update**

Aynes and Zelenock reported on how the Township offices can be staffed legally and practically and how the Wastewater Treatment Plant has been staffed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ADOPT BALANCE OF AGENDA

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Beliger seconded, that the balance of the agenda be adopted as presented.

Zelenock said the Budget discussion should be removed due to lack of adequate information. Other Board members suggested proceeding with discussion to aid in preparation of the budget.

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

ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

**1.
Minutes of May 7, 2020,
Board of Trustees Special Meeting**

Three minor corrections were made.

- **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, that the minutes of the May 7, 2020, Special Board Meeting be approved as corrected.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

**2.
Minutes of May 12, 2020,
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

- **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, that the minutes of the May 12, 2020, Regular Board Meeting be approved as presented.

Several minor corrections were made. It was noted that the excess amount being spent on road work was actually \$15,040, not \$15,140 as stated at the meeting.

- **Amended motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, that the minutes of the May 12, 2020, Regular Board Meeting be approved as amended.

Amended motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

**3.
75 Barker Road
Purchase and Development Agreements**

- **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chockley seconded, to accept the purchase agreement to sell 75 Barker Road to Munger Ventures LLC for \$112,500, and to authorize Township Manager Steven Aynes to sign the purchase agreement and development agreement, pending attorney approval.

Dockett said the Township has owned the property for a long time, it should not be sold without a vote of the people, and he is opposed to the sale.

In answer to questions from the Board, Township Attorney Mariah Fink said:

- The development agreement should address how any fees for use of the public parking spaces should be handled, how any relocation of parking spaces should be

**Northfield Township Board Meeting
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Held via tele-conference
May 26, 2020**

handled, and what percentage of any additional parking spaces created the Township would be entitled to.

- Language can be added about providing signage for the public parking.
- Construction delays are limited to specific situations per the agreement.

In answer to a question from the developer, Robb Munger, Fink said it is not the intent of the development agreement to prohibit use of the public parking by customers of the building he is purchasing. Munger objected to any additional parking he creates for a second building being reserved for the public. He said he would meet the zoning ordinance parking requirements, he does not plan on restricting the use of the spaces listed as being reserved for his tenants, he has no plans to charge for any parking, and he does not object to the Township being in charge of any fees. He also expressed concern that additional delays in the sale would hold up construction.

Dockett said revisions to these documents are making this a progressively worse deal for the Township. Chockley recommended correcting wording to indicate the building meets setback requirements.

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

Zelenock and Otto noted Kiwanis is in the process of removing their property from the building.

4.

Hiring of Paid On-Call Firefighters

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chick seconded, to authorize Chief Wagner to hire Luke King as a Paid On-Call Firefighter trainee at the rate of \$10.50/hour. The hiring is contingent on the successful passing of a physical and background check.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

5.

Farming Lease with Lee Maulbetsch to Farm Vacant Field at Fire Station #2

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chockley seconded, to approve the Cash Farm Lease for \$150 with Lee Maulbetsch for the 2020 farm season at 2727 N. Territorial, Fire Station #2, and authorize the Township Manager to sign the lease.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

6.

Process for Issuing Electronic Payments

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto seconded, to authorize the proposed procedure to allow for electronic payments for applicable Play Path purchases related to the Kaboom! grant.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

7.

**Washtenaw Urban County
Cooperative Agreement Extension**

Chockley noted this is for the information of the Board about the automatic three year extension of this agreement which is coming up.

Dockett objected to extending the agreement into the term of the Board that will be elected this fall. Beliger objected to some provisions, such as the implication that the Township police would act inappropriately regarding “non-violent civil rights demonstrations.” Chief Wagner said the police department has a policy against use of excessive force, but it appears to him that the agreement calls on the Township to adopt such a policy. Otto noted this makes the Township eligible for federal grants, and Chockley said without this the Township would get very little Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding.

- ▶ **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Otto seconded, that the Washtenaw Urban County Cooperative Agreement Extension be accepted for another three years. **Motion carried 5—2 on a roll call vote, Beliger and Dockett opposed.**

8.

Determine Type of Bond and Republish Notice of Intent to Bond for Equalization Basin

- ▶ **Motion:** Beliger moved, Chockley seconded, that the Township proceed with the advertisement for the general obligation bond for the equalization basin.

In answer to questions, Aynes said the cost of a general obligation bond would be about \$5/quarter lower for users than a revenue bond, and if any issue arises regarding deed restrictions the sale of bonds could be stopped. He noted the State is very adamant about the Township proceeding to address the pollution issues it has been cited for, and the lack of staffing in all government offices due to the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented investigation of any deed restrictions.

Superintendent Willis said most of the processes at the plant and most other treatment plants is “old technology” and the retention basin is the cheapest and fastest way to address the problem. He said he has never heard of any deed restrictions, and noted the zoning was changed to industrial in 1989. He said the two inches of rain in two days last week caused the flow to reach 1.8 million gallons causing non-compliance with State regulations again, and a retention basin would have handled the problem. Chockley noted bond rates are very favorable now.

There was discussion about the timing of sending a postcard to Township residents to meet the Township's ordinance requirements prior to taking on a debt. Chockley noted that approving this motion now will allow any referendum brought to be placed on the August ballot.

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

**Northfield Township Board Meeting
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Held via tele-conference
May 26, 2020**

**9.
Budget Discussion**

The Board and Aynes discussed the likely extent and duration of State revenue sharing cuts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, possible effects on other revenue sources, ongoing financial obligations, possible expenditures to cut and fees to increase, and the possibility of using various Township restricted funds.

It was noted a document must be ready for public review on June 9th. Suggestions for cuts included not filling the vacant front desk position as well as a general hiring freeze, no pay raises (but no cuts), savings from police services for the canceled 4th of July events, reduced ZBA meetings, eliminating some trainings and having Township Board members pay for their own, eliminating the County Clean-Up Day contribution, reducing parks and recreation funding, reducing mileage reimbursement (due to tele-conferencing), some Community Center cuts, and deferring some building maintenance. It was noted the sale of 75 Barker Road will produce revenue that can offset some revenue cuts.

Possible departmental budget cuts, including issuing a Request for Proposals for planning services, investigating returning to in-house assessing, capping professional service fees, and rebidding various contracts were also discussed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The 4th of July parade and fireworks have both been canceled due to the likely limitations of social distancing required for public safety because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A virtual event is being planned by the parade committee.
- County Clean-up Day will be June 27th.
- The Police lobby will open June 1st.
- The firefighter who tested positive for the corona virus has recovered and is back at work.

- Calls for public safety services are down, so there has been very little overtime.
- On Saturday, May 30th at 11:00 A.M. Parks and Recreation will be holding a Community Garden clean-up followed by clean-up at the Bark Park. The rain date is June 6th.

[Dockett left the meeting].

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

David Gordon, Chair of the Land Preservation Committee, reported that the committee has put plans for proposing a millage for land preservation on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but land preservation has many community benefits and is worthy of funding in the budget.

Ann Hunter, Fair Oak Drive, Green Oak Township, asked about the sewer basin bonding. Jessica Meisner, Fair Oak Drive, Green Oak Township, made comments about the proposed sewer basin and offered information about sewer plant deed restrictions.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board members made comments about various items including the County Clean-up Day, supporting local businesses, honoring service members for Memorial Day, possible sewer plant deed restrictions, 75 Barker Road, land preservation, and budget considerations.

[Chick left the meeting].

ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 5—0 on a roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 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 June 9, 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/