

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
Township Board Meeting
Live Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2015

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

The meeting 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	Present

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink
Public Safety Director William Wagner
Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent
Tim Hardesty
Township Attorney Paul Burns
Members of the community

ADOPT AGENDA

Dockett asked that Board Member Comments be added following the First Call to the Public.

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Thomas, that the agenda be adopted as amended.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mary Devlin, 9211 Brookside, called attention to the Elevate Concert Series and Kiwanis Rummage Sale, and commented on the early adjournment of the last Board meeting.

Marlene Chockley, Planning Commission Chair, provided an update about development of a citizen survey and asked for Board approval to proceed.

David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, commented on potential uses for the second floor of the Public Safety Building, and he said he would be sending as list of questions he would like answered publicly.

Jim Nelson, 7777 Sutton Road, commented on making improvements to the sound system in the meeting room.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dockett said he has not gotten information about the cell phone stipend and audit contract items that are on the agenda, and asked for an update on the citizen survey.

CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

None. [Manager Fink announcements]

AGENDA ITEMS

1.

**Fees for Civic Applications
for Non-Profit Organizations**

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, to approve Ordinance 15-45. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote. Ordinance adopted.**

2.

**Civic Event Application:
The Chamber Artisans Market**

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Chick supported, to approve the Civic Event application for the Chamber of Commerce Artisans Market.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.
- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Otto supported, to waive the \$100 civic event application fee for the Chamber of Commerce Artisans Market.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

3.

Cell Phone Stipend

Fink explained Wastewater Treatment Plant staff are asking to be given a stipend for use of their personal cell phones rather than carrying both a personal and Township-owned phone. He said the proposed policy would cover all non-Police Township staff who use their cell phone for Township work. Hardesty said \$35/month is the current cost for Township phones, and it would save the cost of purchasing replacement phones.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chick moved, Otto supported, to allow a cell phone stipend for administrative employees only at a cost of \$35/month.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

4.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Equalization Tank

[Hardesty explained](#) that he had brought up the need to plan for a sewage equalization tank in light of the new development coming into the Township. [Brian Rubel of Tetra Tech said](#) an equalization tank would be helpful for the existing plant and for future development, and he suggested engaging in a planning process. The Board discussed costs and other issues.

[[Rubel: Township is already over?committed by 2,800 REUs](#)]

- ▶ **Motion: Otto moved, Chick supported**, that to accept the proposal to complete a design for an equalization tank for \$23,500; of that amount \$14,000 from the previous capacity inventory project will be applied to these services, with the unbudgeted \$9,500 possibly requiring a budget amendment. **Motion carried 6—1 on a voice vote, Dockett opposed.**

5.

Audit Contract

Fink recommended approval, noting it is a three year agreement with no cost increase during that period, and it may be canceled by either party with 90 days' notice. Dockett said this should be put out for bid and the Board discussed the pros and cons of that. [[Chick asks about, Fink discusses professional services and relationships, costs of dumping](#)]

- ▶ **Motion: Otto moved, Braun supported**, to accept the contract from Pfeffer, Hanniford, and Palka with the annual rate of \$18,000 for the years 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Dockett called for a roll call vote.

Motion carried 6—1 on a voice vote, Dockett opposed.

6.

Cell Tower Contract

Fink explained this is a 25 year lease for Verizon Wireless to place a cell tower at Fire Station #2 with \$18,600 annual payments to the Township with a 3% yearly escalation. Burns said there are clauses in the agreement he does not recommend, but Verizon will not consider additional negotiations. The Board discussed the pros and cons of the proposal, including the long length of the lease, potential other uses for the land, and new income to the Township. [Fees sum to about \$680,000 over 25 years]

No action taken. [[Fink asks for direction](#)]

7.

Salvage Inspections Contract

Wagner reported that within the last hour the person involved in this contract indicated he does not want to work for the Township.

8.

Resignation of Front Desk Clerk Lisa Bradford

- ▶ **Motion: Engstrom moved, Chick supported**, that the resignation of Lisa Bradford be accepted with thanks for her service. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.** [[Wayne Dockett reports on his conversation with Bradford](#)]

9.

Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Request to Waive Address Application Fees

Wagner explained that MDOT needs several addresses for installation of new traffic management systems that will be used on US-23 per DTE requirements.

- ▶ **Motion: Chick moved, Engstrom supported**, to accept the request from the Michigan Department of Transportation that \$50 fees be waived for addresses for active traffic management information systems along US-23. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

10,

Northfield Township Area Library Request for Reimbursement of Building Permit Fees

In answer to questions Fink confirmed that the \$3,400 being waived covers the cost of staff reviews, but not inspection fees. Several Board members noted that the Township has already waived \$7,000 zoning application fees for this project.

[[Manager Fink discusses cost structure and allocation of building permit fees](#), commercial building permit review outsourcing.

No action taken.

11.

Fire Department Request for New Hire: Robert Wales

Wagner said Wales is the son of another firefighter, but will serve in a different platoon.

- ▶ **Motion: Chick moved, Westover supported**, to hire Robert Wales for firefighter training contingent upon passing background check and physical.

8:26 p.m. review motion

Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1.

Board Room Construction

Fink reviewed past discussions about creating a meeting room in the second floor of the Public Safety Building and said after being approached by several Board members to continue looking into this he developed a bare bones estimate of \$55,000 which he reviewed in detail. Board

Northfield Township Board Meeting
Live Meeting Minutes of Workshop Meeting
Public Safety Building; 8350 Main Street
September 22, 2015

members asked questions and made comments and asked Fink to put this on the next agenda for action.

2.

Downtown Planning Group

Fink recalled that during the last discussion the Board indicated they would like this group to have a larger number of members and to include people who previously have not been involved with Township government. He said he and the DDA chair are suggesting a 15 member group to be led by the two of them. Board members recommended that "average" citizens who are not business owners be included, and that it be community driven without having the Township's planner participating.

It was agreed to place this on the next agenda for action.

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Jim Nelson commented on plans for the audio and video system in the proposed new meeting space.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board members commented on Jim Nelson's recommendations for the sound system for the proposed meeting room, the proposed citizen survey, the approach being taken to developing the citizen survey, plans for moving the Township's bank accounts to a new bank, and the success of the Police and Fire open houses.

[Wayne Dockett initiated a discussion of the Cobalt Survey and the Planner's analysis of the two previous Surveys. See below for the transcript.]

On behalf of the Planning Commission Chick asked each Board member to send her three questions they would like to see included in the citizen survey.

Engstrom adjourned the meeting at 9:08 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/

During the 9/22/2015 Board Member Comments, Wayne Dockett initiated a discussion of the Cobalt Survey and the Planner's analysis of the two previous Surveys. This is the transcription of that conversation. Various names are highlighted. Those are clickable links to video at the point where that comment began.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

[Dockett](#): "One question I have is what's gonna happen with the \$17,000 for the survey? Are we gonna continue the survey? Does anyone know how that's gonna work, or is that up to the planning commission?"

Engstrom: [interrupting] Yeah Janet Could you

Dockett: Have they already billed for the total \$17,000? If we're not gonna have them finish, I guess? I don't know."

Engstrom: [to Chick]: Maybe you could fill him in

Chick: [unintelligible]

Engstrom: Oh; Ok. Do you have anything else?

Dockett: no

Engstrom: Ok. Great; I've got a bunch of stuff too but maybe what you're [to Chick] gonna say will answer a lot of my questions

[Chick](#): Well yeah, I kinda wanted to respond to Mr. Dockett and also some of the comments Chair Chockley spoke to. They haven't gotten anything. I think they've gotten a little bit. Howard, have they been paid anything? They haven't gotten \$17,000.

Dockett: No, they got \$8,000 something.

Chick: Right, Ok. So, they are still working on the survey. Um, at our last planning commission meeting, the planning commissioners, ah, received a list of, ah, not a list of... You haven't seen this cause this is working information from the planning commission that we are considering sending to Cobalt to have them develop questions, but, a lot of the commissioners on the planning commission were thinking that they wanted to shrink it down a little bit... just a, just a few to the point questions to get answers to that we didn't get from the previous two surveys. I went through both surveys myself. I read them back to front twice now and I did see some things missing out of both of them. One in particular and I'm probably gonna hear about it but on the second survey 77% of the respondents said that they wanted more single family homes on one acre or less but what we neglected to ask them was where they wanted it. So that would be a question that we would want to put on the survey. Um, and then on the first survey there was no demographics relating to where the, uh, respondents lived that answered that survey so we don't know where the skew might be on that either. So anyway, we do want to go forward with it. The planning commission has asked to postpone it until they can review everything that they've been given so far, um, and come up with some questions on their own that they are asking, in fact they asked me to ask you all if you could please think of three questions that you need answered that would help you in making decisions for the community. Just that, each one of us send them three questions that you would like because they would like to get some buy-in from you, and some input from you rather. The problem with Cobalt, and I didn't see it at first but I've been seeing it as we've been going through this process is that they were getting a different direction from the board than what they wanted to see. They're getting another direction from the planning commission on what they wanted to see. [And](#) then they're getting additional information so they're a little confused about exactly what we wanted to ask the public. So, we're kind of going back to square one now. And we're gonna let them go through the process the way they typically go through the process when they do a survey. So, that's kind of an update on where we're at with that. [What](#) they did send out... I think you all saw something so far was to... We asked them to send us something. They sent us something. But those three questions on there were questions that came up from the planning commission. But that is not the end of the survey process. So, there's more to come, so yeah, they would like to hear from you too please.

[Docket](#): I know there's other people wanna ask but didn't the new planner say that it was unnecessary, that they?

Chick [interrupting] The new planner gave

Docket [continuing] Didn't she say that at the meeting?

Chick She gave an opinion. She qualified it by saying that it was just her judgement or her assessment. She was willing for anybody to argue that point

Dockett: I just

Chick: Yes, she did, she did. um,

Dockett: [unintelligible]

Chick: No, it's not over.

Dockett: Thank you

Chick: We took her opinion under advisement and we're going forward with the survey.

Engstrom: Kathy, did you

Braun: I just have two comments. One is this civic applications event permit. On page two it says, is the organization a non profit. If yes attach a copy of the sales tax exempt certificate. There's no [waves document] There's nothing attached, so... I don't know that our ... and then my second thing is just to let the board members know that we're meeting tomorrow with First National bank on M-36. We're, if there are no glitches, move the township banking to First National. It's a local bank. They serve Livingston County. They have eight branches. They have a drive-through. They want our business and they're local. Rick, Pam, Howard will be in a conference call; we'll meet with them tomorrow, show them what we've got. I'm hoping that it all works out. They'll give us a proposal and... I'm not looking at this as a proposal to turn down but as a proposal to be tweaked so that it works the way we want it to.

Dockett: I've used; I've moved to them too and they're fantastic. Very good.
[Nodding of heads]

Engstrom: Angie, anything for Board Member Comments? Jackie?

[Otto](#): No, other than the Fire and Police Department Open House was wonderful.

Engstrom: Tracy?

Thomas: No comments

[Engstrom](#): No? Alright, I have just a few. Jim, thank you for your input on the tech video equipment stuff. I'm sure when we get to that point it would be great for you to give us the input on that. I do have one suggestion though, for our meetings, before we get started you have the audio on, so, ... you can hear all kinds of people's conversations and stuff [snip]

[So](#), a lot of the things you've talked about already. I had a bunch of notes here on the whole survey thing. Yeah, I mean it's just taking way too long. I think there's too many people involved too. I. You know I like your idea of giving us just on three questions, you know, and then we're out. Y'know I don't think we're ever gonna satisfy all the trustees and all the commissioners on what the survey should look like. Um, I thought it would, when we agreed to pay for this, I thought it was specifically just for the question of growth and it appears that the survey has grown into [gestures broadly] y'know,

Chick: Master plan

Engstrom: right! And I don't think that was what the whole idea was. It was to find out, "do we want growth and do we?" **We do know we want growth.** And, y'know, what Howard sent out this afternoon, later on this afternoon, I don't know if everyone got it but, y'know the, they broke up the township in the northeast and all that, I think it's a great idea in theory but y'know you can't ask people to answer the question of where it should be cuz many people are uh don't know about the sewers and septic and roads and the lay of the land and wetlands. I think that's a job that us as elected officials and appointed need to make those decisions on the wishes of the residents.

Chick: That's what it is; it's a wish. If you could see it where would you like to see it and where? You know, where would you like to see it given all things being equal?

Engstrom: Right. But

Chick: Everyone in the township knows where the roads are. I mean.

Engstrom: Right, but if someone said ok, let's have the respondents say let's put it right here on the north part of southeast section, I mean, it's not feasible.

[Chick](#): But if if somebody wants to see it there,

Engstrom: Well they won't, that's why you have a planning commission.

Chick: laughs

Engstrom: If 90% of your respondents put it right there, what are you guys gonna do?
[laughs all around]

Engstrom: Uh. My other, only just thought, and it's been on here before, is this, the quarter acre. Many people do not know what a quarter acre is. You know I sold real estate for twenty-eight years. It's easier to just to say, would you like to see a subdivision?

Chick: My thought was, you know, if you had a subdivision, I live in a subdivision; it's 44 houses. So we've got subdivisions that are - no I'm just saying - people don't understand. They might know I see a subdivision of 44 houses and what that looks like and how many people are there or you see a subdivision of like 800 houses and what that looks like and how many people are there, so to me it's like more not that we could put visuals in there but if you ask somebody if you want to see a subdivision how many homes would you like to see.

[Otto](#): So I just this weekend, for the first time I've seen a subdivision, a subdivision with 2 to 5 acre parcels. And it was an actual subdivision.

[Engstrom: Oh, they exist.]

Otto: Yeah, I know they do.

[Engstrom: but]

Otto: I was very surprised to see them.

[Engstrom: How old were they and where was it?]

Otto: Um, it's up by Northville. Northville area.

[Engstrom: It was an older development, correct? Yes.]

Otto: Well, no, not older. No, it was rather new. I would say probably not more than ten years old.

[Engstrom: On 2 to 5 acres. Which one are you talking about?]

Otto: It's off of Seven Mile.

[Engstrom: Maybury Crossing?]

Otto: Right by Maybury area... I don't know it was... I was out at the orchard out there...

Engstrom: No, those are all, they're not

Dockett: People all know what a quarter acre is

Engstrom: You said 2 to 5 acres?

Otto: Yeah

Engstrom: Those were developed and bought long before land values

Otto: They still have the development sign out there so that's why I knew that it was 2 to 5 acres.

Engstrom: Um. I'm sorry, you...

Dockett: You said people didn't know what a quarter acre was.

Engstrom: Right, quarter acre, thank you. [laughs] But you'll maybe, you'll break it down a little bit, you know, just or, you know we only have a few subdivisions in the, in this township, so, you know

Chick: That was the planning commission's thought was to simplify it so that people actually could answer the question and understand what you're asking them

[Engstrom](#): Right. Just on my other comment was... I watched on uh the Planning Commission meeting I was really disappointed with the Planner's presentation. Um, did she come up with that on her own or did she, was she asked for...

Chick: She was not asked. She decided that was what she wanted to look at. She did a comparison of the two and came to her own conclusions based on her evaluation of what she was looking at. But like I said there were some things missed and uh...

Engstrom: Yeah. You know, for being new, I don't think she has all the, all the facts and data and thoughts of what

Dockett: **Kinda pushy**

Engstrom: **You said it; thank you Wayne.** [laughs]

[Motion to adjourn](#)