

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP

Township Board

Minutes

May 24, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Supervisor Engstrom at 8350 Main Street.

PLEDGE

Supervisor Engstrom led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Marilyn Engstrom, Supervisor	Present
Angela Westover, Clerk	Absent with notice
Kathy Braun, Treasurer	Present
Janet Chick, Trustee	Present
Wayne Dockett, Trustee	Present
Jacki Otto, Trustee	Present
Tracy Thomas, Trustee	Present

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink
Township Attorney Brad Maynes
Township Engineer Jacob Rushlow, Tetra Tech
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the community

ADOPT AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Thomas 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, commented on various recent community events, including the opening of the expanded library. Tawn Beliger, 8365 Earhart Road, urged people to observe Memorial Day.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dockett expressed serious concern about having enough parking at the Township Hall for the next election.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

1.

Washtenaw County Road Commission Maintenance Agreement

Fink recommended approval of the agreement and the information in his memo of May 19th, noting the focus is on tending to areas that will be affected due to the planned US-23 construction.

- ▶ **Motion:** Thomas moved, Chick supported, to approve the Washtenaw County Road Commission maintenance agreement as presented, and to direct Chief Wagner and Howard Fink to apply those funds pursuant to the memorandum dated May 19, 2016.

Dockett called for a roll call vote.

Motion carried 5—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed.

2.

Hiring of Firefighters

- ▶ **Motion:** Chick moved, Otto supported, to approve hiring Mark Richards and Jacob Donner as Firefighter Trainees contingent upon passing background checks and physicals. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1.

Property Acquisition from Tax Sale

Fink explained that the cost of acquiring even small properties from the County at tax sale can be \$1,000 or more because of the large number of fees and charges involved, but properties that do not sell can be deeded back to the Township by the County, and in that case the cost could be somewhat lower. He said while he feels the right thing to do is to purchase the properties in the designated parkland areas before they go to tax sale, he said the more critical issue is to establish a policy about purchasing these properties in general. Dockett objected to subsidizing the County by spending \$1,124 to purchase an underwater lot assessed at \$300.

The Board agreed Maynes should research what the Township could be forced to pay to take title to these properties.

2.

Van Curler Property

Township Engineer Jacob Rushlow referred to his proposal of May 18th to perform soil borings and an environmental analysis as part of the due diligence of purchasing this property. Trevor Clements of Tetra Tech explained the types of materials he will be testing for on the site and answered questions about potential concerns including an underground fuel tank on an adjoining site.

Dockett objected to this proposal because Tetra Tech was hired as the Township engineer without a bid process. Fink recommended approval of the proposal.

- ▶ **Motion:** Engstrom moved, Braun supported, to approve the OHM proposal for the soil boring and Phase 1 environmental assessment as presented in the letter dated May 18, 2016.

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Public Safety Building; 8350 Main Street
May 24, 2016**

Dockett called for a roll call vote.

Motion carried 5—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed.

The Board discussed (a) potential uses for the property, including a lakefront park, beach, band shell, boardwalk, fishing dock, sports fields, and private development, and (b) ways to get input about this including holding public forums, contacting other communities that have had public/private developments, and researching grants.

Fink said he will work on getting word out to the public asking for input including setting up a website, and asking the Township's planners to prepare a proposal for public planning/design sessions, etc.

**3.
Fiscal Year 2016/17 Budget**

Fink reviewed the proposed budget and May 24th memo from the Township Controller. He noted that the Township's income has exceeded expenses and the fund balance has increased over the period of this Board's tenure. He said the fund balance will be reduced slightly this year due to expenditures on items such as the purchase of the Van Curler property. He noted the budget includes at least a 3% cost of living increase for all administrative staff, including himself for the first time since his hiring.

Fink responded to questions about proposed salary increases and said Police and Fire budgets will be available by the next meeting.

**4.
Fee Schedule**

Fink recommended reviewing fees annually prior to budget preparation. He referred to the list of administrative fees and recommended an increase in plan review fees and

solicitation fees to cover costs. He also noted tax abatement application fees and pass-through costs are included for the first time.

Dockett said the \$100,000 balance in the building department fund indicates those fees are too high. Fink said unaccounted for costs—such as the department paying rent to the Township—are being addressed and digitization of department records needs to be done.

**5.
Downtown Development Authority
Liquor License Billboard**

Fink referred to the proposed billboard to be used to advertise the DDA's attempt to get more liquor licenses in the Township. Several Board members said they do not want to use billboard advertising for this and proposed using different avenues such as informing brokers for such things.

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mary Devlin thanked the Board and Fink for their work. Chuck Steuer, Six Mile Road, said there is not enough permanent parking on the Township Hall/Public Safety Building property for the public events held in it and he commented on the purchase of the Van Curler property and Township fees. Tawn Beliger commented on Public Safety Building parking, Township fees, bidding on contracts, and use of taxes collected.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dockett noted the Board meeting scheduled for election day, November 8th will have to be changed. Engstrom thanked Fink for the construction of the new meeting room with improved acoustics.

ADJOURNMENT

Engstrom adjourned the meeting at 8:51 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 14, 2016.

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/