

**State of Illinois
County of Cook
Township of Northfield
Northfield Township Board of Trustees Meeting July 14, 2009**

Attendance

The following Board members were present:

- Jill Brickman, Supervisor
- Brendan Appel, Trustee
- Carol Blustein, Trustee
- Karen McCormick, Trustee
- Mary Reynolds, Trustee

Also present:

- Laura Fine, Northfield Township Clerk
- Scott Spears, Northfield Township Attorney
- Patricia Damisch, Northfield Township Assessor
- Wally Kehr, Northfield Township Road District Foreman
- Lucinda Fuller, Northfield Township Staff
- Michele Wilson, Northfield Township Staff
- Doug Gerleman, Northfield Township Collector-Elect

The following Northfield Township residents were present:

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Brian Appel | Suzanne Curtis | Cynthia Fricas | Brian O'Donnell |
| Nadia Appel | Thomas Curtis | Lee Goodman | June O'Donoghue |
| Jen Belkov | Gary Edmonds | Gabriel Green | Margaret Parcels |
| Darcy Blustein | Dane Edmonds | Brad Hartman | Cindy Parker |
| Donald Brayer | Bob Essak | Bruce Horigan | Jim McNeely |
| Yale Brody | Judy Essak | Jack Hotaling | Thomas Norton |
| Catherine Caporusso | Barry Flemming | Timothy Hubbard | |
| W. R. Coulson | Mary Flemming | Joseph Hunter | |
| | H. G. Frank | | |

The following nonresidents were present:

- J. Hunter, Des Plaines
- Tara Hunter, Des Plaines
- Todd Shields, Pioneer Press

Supervisor Brickman called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes Of June 9, 2009 Meeting

- Trustee Appel moved to approve the minutes.
- Trustee Blustein seconded the motion.

Trustee Reynolds noted that under the item 'Township Ethics Commission' the statement that Trustee McCormick 'was uncomfortable that the recommendation [of Mr. Levin] was brought up at the cusp of the old board and not now' should be attributed to Trustee Reynolds.

Trustee McCormick added that she asked for the opportunity to meet with Mr. Levin, and Supervisor Brickman suggested that the trustees get CVs from both of the candidates instead of meeting with them.

Trustee Appel added that he thought one head of the commission would be better than having co-chairs.

Trustee Appel also inquired under sewer collections if there are any legal procedures to collect past due bills and if attorneys' fees could be collected as part of any lawsuit. Attorney Patt said it was expensive to do that, but he would get Trustee Appel the citation from the statute. Trustee Appel said he had yet to receive the statute. (Attorney Spears provided him the information at the July 14 meeting.)

The minutes were unanimously approved as amended on a voice vote.

Recess Town Meeting

Open Sewer Meeting

Trustee Blustein moved to approve the sewer bills.

Trustee Appel seconded the motion.

Trustee Appel asked about the line item for phone service. Supervisor Brickman explained this is for an emergency phone. Road District Foreman, Wally Kehr, added the systems are monitored by an alarm that calls a service if there is a problem.

Trustee McCormick inquired about the line item for attorney's fees. Supervisor Brickman explained this fee is to place a lien on the property before it is sold, so when it is sold the title can't be cleared without payment. Otherwise we would have no recourse.

Trustee Reynolds asked about the Greenwood Lift Station Rebuild Project. It was explained by Mr. Kehr that this is a new project to rehabilitate the Greenwood lift station. Construction has not begun, as we are waiting for the permit from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to start work. Berryman Equipment Company is the project engineer. They maintain the stations. They deal with the alarm systems. Trustee Appel asked if we have fully funded the project. Supervisor Brickman said we have authorized the project.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Appel, Blustein, McCormick, Reynolds, Brickman (5)

Nays: None (0)

Motion carried, 5-0.

Bid Openings for Replacement of Underground Sanitary Sewer Lines

Mr. Kehr opened the bid envelope and reported the following 3 bids for the sanitary main behind Glenwood and Crowley Park:

Insituform: 1,300 feet of 15 inch pipe at \$48 per foot for a total of \$62,400. 13 services at \$225 each for a total of \$2,925. The grand total is \$65,325. Included with the bid is a cashier's check for \$7,500.

Visu-Sewer of Illinois: 1,300 feet of 15 inch pipe at \$49.50 per foot for a total of \$64,350. 13 services at \$200 for a total of \$2,600. The grand total is \$66,950. Included with the bid is a cashier's check for \$6,695.

American Pipe Liners: 1,300 feet of 15 inch pipe at \$58 per foot for a total of \$75,400. 13 services at \$125 for a total of \$1,625. The grand total is \$77,025. Included with the bid is a cashier's check for \$15,000.

Supervisor Brickman explained the board will review these bids and typically award the project to the lowest bidder pending staff and legal review. These are all companies the Township is familiar with, and the low bidder is one with which the Township has done quite a bit of work.

Trustee McCormick moved to accept the bid from Insituform pending review.
Trustee Appel seconded the motion.

Trustee Appel asked if it is possible we would need more than 13 services. Mr. Kehr explained that the number was established prior to going out to bid. Similar projects have been done in the Township in the past and they stay true to the estimation of services. Supervisor Brickman explained a camera is put through the sewer and you can watch the tape and manually count the number of necessary services.

Trustee McCormick asked if the bill can go over the amount that is in the contract. Supervisor Brickman explained they can charge \$225 (the service fee noted in the bid) for another service.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Appel, Blustein, McCormick, Reynolds, Brickman (5)

Nays: None (0)

Motion carried 5-0.

Reconvene Town Meeting

Town Fund Bills

Trustee Blustein moved to approve the Town Fund Bills.
Trustee McCormick seconded the motion.

Supervisor Brickman noted on page 2 of the Certificate of Payables, the mileage to the Bloomington TOI Conference goes to Karen McCormick, not Kathy McCormick. Trustee McCormick is working with Ms. Fuller to ensure the hotel bill for the Fairfield Inn is not charged to both Trustee McCormick and the Township.

Trustee Blustein inquired if it would be more cost effective to buy supplies from one vendor and keep an inventory instead of purchasing as needed. Supervisor Brickman explained the Township falls under the bulk purchasing contract from the Northwest Municipal Conference. It does not matter if we purchase in bulk, as the Township receives their pricing.

Trustee McCormick asked who sets the mileage standard. Supervisor Brickman explained it is set by the IRS. It is currently .55 per mile.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Appel, Blustein, McCormick, Reynolds, Brickman (5)

Nays: None (0)

Motion carried, 5-0.

Road and Bridge Bills

Trustee Reynolds moved to approve the Road District Payables.

Trustee Blustein seconded the motion.

Trustee Reynolds asked Mr. Kehr about the nature of the overtime for a number of people in June. Mr. Kehr explained it is for lift station work, the recycling event and working on the maintenance of the sanitary sewers on Saturdays. The Sanitary District will reimburse for the sewer work. Ms. Fuller explained the Road District is contracted to do that work, and it is paid at overtime rates. The reimbursement is done quarterly.

Trustee Reynolds also asked about the seasonal workers for the month of June. She inquired about the application and the hiring process of these workers as nothing is listed on the website. Mr. Kehr explained that this would have to be answered by Commissioner Amarantos, as he does the hiring.

Trustee Blustein asked about the \$29 Capitol One credit card fee and why the township has a card with an annual fee. Mr. Kehr explained that this would have to be answered by Commissioner Amarantos. She also asked about the \$70 fee for a meeting at Johnny's. Mr. Kehr explained that this was an annual meeting with the Cook County inspectors in order to improve our Township's working relationship. Trustee Reynolds said she understands the importance of these good relationships, but she feels the taxpayers should not pay for this. Trustee Appel added that the trustees on the board have attended conferences where the township paid for our lunch, and he feels the \$70 is very cost effective. Trustee Blustein later added that these conferences are for educational purposes, and the trustees give about six unpaid hours of their personal time to attend the meetings.

Trustee McCormick inquired about the elm removal. Mr. Kehr explained the Road District is very proactive about keeping up the removal so it does not become a growing problem. Elms often require removal because of Dutch Elm Disease.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Appel, Blustein, McCormick, Reynolds, Brickman (5)
Nays: None (0)
Motion carried, 5-0.

Approval of Appointments to the Township Ethics Commission

Trustee Appel asked about the nature of the nominating process. Attorney Spears explained under the Township Ethics Ordinance, the Township Supervisor has authority to make the nomination with the advice and consent of the trustees.

Trustee McCormick asked Attorney Spears if it would be possible to get a copy of the ordinance. The Trustees received the information about an Ethics Advisor, not an Ethics Commission.

While Attorney Spears was researching his answer, Supervisor Brickman recommended we table the discussion and come back to it. The board moved on to:

Matters presented by the public

All comments focused on the proposed Ethics Commission:

Mr. Bill Coulson spoke on behalf of Mr. Joel Levin. He said Mr. Levin is an extraordinary man. He feels having a former U.S. District Attorney to chair an Ethics Commission would send a strong message. Having a former federal prosecutor would show you are serious about the commission.

Mr. Tim Hubbard said he is concerned about Ms. Caporusso's association with a group called Code Pink. He believes some of the actions of this group are theatrical and unacceptable. He said Americans have the right to protest, but they must stick within the bounds of what he refers to as reasonable. Because she is associated with this group, he feels she would not be qualified for the position.

Mr. Lee Goodman of Northbrook asked Ms. Caporusso if she ever participated in any theatrical protests with Code Pink. Ms. Caporusso stood up, identified herself and answered, 'no.' Mr. Goodman said you cannot be guilty by association. He said he knows Catherine and feels she has a lot to offer. He suggested putting both candidates on the board as they both appear qualified.

Mr. Joseph Hunter said Mr. Joel Levin is qualified to do the work of the ethics commission as he has experience rooting out corruption. He feels who you are associated with when it comes to ethics is important, and he does not like Code Pink.

Mr. Don Brayer inquired about the purpose of the Ethics Commission. Ms. Reynolds stated that it will end nepotism in Township hiring. Supervisor Brickman explained her broader view that it is to promote and ensure ethical behavior and enforcement across the Township. Based on their resumes, he feels Mr. Levin would be a better candidate than Ms. Caporusso due to the number of years of experience he has had.

Mr. Jack Hotaling said Joel Levin is a person of great quality, and he urged the board to nominate Joel.

Mr. Bruce Horigan asked if this is a paid position and the length of the term. Supervisor Brickman explained it is unpaid and up to the board to decide the length of the term. Because it is a commission it would involve more than one person.

Mr. Hubert Frank said we are missing the point. He said we have many other problems, like unemployment, and it is his impression from the board that some of the jobs are not being posted. He thinks that's an ethical issue, and the people are demanding change. For the Commission, he would like to see co-chairs tried.

Mr. Doug Gerleman, Collector-elect who will be sworn-in in January, is concerned about an e-mail written by Assessor Damisch and sent out by Trustee Appel that 'warned' people that the township is now run by democrats. He says it makes it seem like warfare is going on behind closed doors. He said we need to refocus our energies on the social service agencies and the board needs to come together. He said we can't go wrong as both candidates are Cum Laude Harvard graduates, and he would lean towards a collaborative effort.

Supervisor Brickman said she is working towards collaboration on the board. She added neither of the people mentioned have a township e-mail, and she should have no control over what elected officials send out in personal e-mails.

June O'Donohue is not comfortable with the choice of Ms. Caporusso. She would prefer to see someone who did not run for office head the commission, as she believes this is not objective.

Cynthia Fricas said she has had bad experiences with co-presidents and one person would be able to accomplish more.

Tom Curtis feels Ms. Caporusso would bring bias to the board, although he says he has not met her.

Brian O'Donnell said Ms. Caporusso's association with a group called Citizens of Illinois should disqualify her because of accusations of voter fraud against that group.

Catherine Caporusso defended her record. She explained her involvement in Code Pink involved marching in a parade with her six-year-old daughter. She said she is interested in serving on this committee because she is an employment lawyer, and one of the purposes of this committee is to look at employment practices. She has worked as a co-president before with a positive outcome. She says her interest is in public service, and she wants to make sure Northfield Township has ethical employment practices.

Supervisor Brickman said she has never spoken to Mr. Levin about his politics, and this position is not a 'political plum.' She said she resents any implication of that, as that is not how she operates. She is not questioning Ms. Caporusso's qualifications. Her reflections are upon Mr. Levin's qualifications.

Trustee Appel added that although he does not know Mr. Levin he would like to see a nonpolitical person on the commission.

Trustee McCormick said she is comfortable with both candidates. Politics aside, Ms. Caporusso is an employment lawyer and that is a part of the focus of the commission.

Trustee Reynolds said this board is in the position of having the best of both worlds. Mr. Levin is an expert in financial fraud, and he would come to the commission with a background of a prosecutor. Ms. Caporusso has handled employment and civil rights cases, discrimination cases, sexual harassment and retaliatory discharge. These are all issues that have the potential of coming up with an ethics commission. These two individuals are the perfect mix.

Attorney Spears recommended we table the issue until he can research the proper procedures on how to create an Ethics Commission under a township.

Trustee McCormick requested the research be made available with enough time to review it before the next meeting.

Old Business

No Report

New Business

Trustee Reynolds asked if the township has applied for TOCC membership. Ms. Fuller said she would do the research and report back to the board.

Trustee Appel raised the issue of the Trustees signing a form for the Illinois Civil Justice League to pledge to reverse lawsuit abuse. He said a representative from the group approached him with the form. Supervisor Brickman explained that in order to take action, this would need to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Trustee Blustein inquired if the food pantry receives donations from Kraft. Supervisor Brickman explained the pantry has tried repeatedly to solicit donations from Kraft.

Trustee Blustein also would like to give additional information to the Road District about the findings, health information and alerts of the North Shore Mosquito Abatement District.

Trustee Appel asked the board to move the next meeting to Wednesday, August 12. The board agreed.

Trustee Blustein moved to move into executive session.

Trustee Reynolds seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes: Appel, Blustein, McCormick, Reynolds, Brickman (5)

Nays: None (0)

Motion carried 5-0.

Executive Session

The Town Meeting reopened.

Trustee Appel asked Attorney Spears about video recording township meetings.

Attorney Spears answered the meeting is open to the public. Many of the trustees and the supervisor voiced concerns that snippets of the meetings could be misused.

Attorney Spears said he would look into the subject and report back to the board.

Trustee McCormick moved to adjourn.

Trustee Blustein seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

The Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Fine
Township Clerk