

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF COOK
TOWNSHIP OF NORTHFIELD
Northfield Township Board of Trustees Meeting June 9, 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

Eric Patt, Northfield Township Attorney

Peter Amarantos, Northfield Township Highway Commissioner

Lucinda Fuller, Northfield Township Staff

Michele Wilson, Northfield Township Staff

Cathy Baker, Northfield Township Resident

Jeff Hershman, Northfield Township Resident

Muriel Lazar, Northfield Township Resident

Bjorg Luppino, Northfield Township Resident

Karen Nystrom, Northfield Township Resident

Patricia Damisch, Northfield Township Assessor

Supervisor Brickman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Prior Minutes

Minor changes were made to the minutes from the May 12 meeting. Trustee Blustein pointed out the spelling of her name in the attendance is 'Blustein' not 'Blustein.'

Trustee Reynolds pointed out the date on the Road District's capital outlay budget should read February 28, 2013 instead of 2015.

Trustee Blustein also asked why we approve the sewer certificates in the middle of the Town Meeting and if this could be changed. Supervisor Brickman explained that this is not statutory but precedent, and it can be changed. Attorney Patt said it is a tradition, so an open forum can be available before public input.

Trustee Appel moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Trustee Reynolds seconded the motion.

The May minutes were unanimously approved on voice vote.

Supervisor Brickman recessed the Town Meeting and opened the Sewer Meeting.

Approval of the Sewer Bills

Trustee McCormick moved to approve the sewer bills.

Trustee Appel seconded the motion.

Trustee McCormick asked what the differences are in the various labor categories. Ms. Fuller, Northfield Township Director of Finances, explained 'Town Labor' is sending out bills and maintaining accounts, including office work. 'Road Labor' is the actual work of the crews going out to the sites. 'Administration Labor' is the paper work done at the Road District. 'Town' is clerical and financial.

Trustee Blustein asked about benefits for elected officials. Ms. Fuller explained Social Security, Medicare and Federal withholding taxes are taken from the checks of the Highway Commissioner, Trustees, Supervisor and Clerk. This also includes the IMRF for the supervisor.

Trustee Appel suggested that the line item be changed to 'Taxes and Benefits' since all the other benefits are taxes.

Trustee Appel asked about the Commonwealth Edison charge. Ms. Fuller explained this covers the three lifting stations and power to run the pumps. It also generates a Nicor bill. Commissioner Amarantos explained that the pumping stations are heated by natural gas with an emergency back up.

Trustee Appel also inquired about payments to Orange Crush. Commissioner Amarantos explained that this is the black top company.

Trustee Appel also asked about the landscaping around the pumping stations. Ms. Fuller explained the charge goes through October.

On roll call vote, the sewer bills were approved as follows:

Yea: Trustee Appel, Trustee Blustein, Trustee McCormick, Trustee Reynolds, Supervisor Brickman Yea: (5); Nay (0); the motion was carried.

Sewer Collection for May 2009

Trustee Reynolds asked if there is a budget for the sanitary sewers. Ms. Fuller said there is no formal budget. Supervisor Brickman explained there is pre-approval for non-emergency expenditures. Sewers are different than other budget items because they are subject to emergency problems.

Trustee Blustein asked if there are problems with sewer bill collections and how people are billed. Supervisor Brickman explained that it is an annual bill. If it is not paid a lien is put on the property and we get paid when the property is transferred. Most collections are \$200 to \$300, however one property had been delinquent for 20 years and owed \$5,000. Attorney Patt explained the best way to handle a nonpayment is to sit and bide your time until someone tries to refinance or sell, then the township will collect the money. Trustee Appel asked about the legal procedurs to collect the bill. Attorney Patt said it is expensive, and he would get Trutee Appeal the citation to the statute.

Ms. Fuller explained about 10% of the bills are one year overdue. The bills are sent out in January and due in February. Some pay for the entire year, others pay quarterly. This is a private entity and not taxpayer money.

Trustee McCormick pointed out the large reserve, about \$2.5 million, and Supervisor Brickman said that there are projects coming up that will put a dent in the reserve. Bid Opening began a few months ago for the first project. There are three major projects we hope to get to.

Reconvene Town Meeting

Approval of Town Fund Bills

Trustee Reynolds moved to approve the Town Fund Bills.

Trustee McCormick seconded the motion.

Trustee Appel asked if the Central Management Service covers everyone in the office and how often we check the price of health insurance. Ms. Fuller said it does cover everyone in the office. She said we are in the process right now of checking prices and should have the results in the next few months

Trustee McCormick asked about the Northwest Municipal Conference dues. Supervisor Brickman explained this is the council of government for the north and northwest suburbs. It has a purchasing cooperative that gives us good pricing on everything from phone services to salt to Road District vehicles. It also lobbies for townships and municipalities. Commissioner Amarantos added it gives our Township direct access to people who take care of the public good.

Trustee Blustein asked about the \$8,500 in audit services. Ms. Fuller explained it is the second payment. We are required to be audited every year, and the first payment was \$8,000. The same firm also provides an audit on the food pantry for a smaller amount.

Vote: Town Fund bills were approved unanimously on roll call vote as follows:

Yea: Trustee Appel, Trustee Blustein, Trustee McCormick, Trustee Reynolds, Supervisor Brickman Yea (5); Nay (0)

Road and Bridge Bills

Trustee Blustein moved to approve the Road District Bills as submitted.

Trustee Reynolds seconded the motion.

Trustee Reynolds asked Commissioner Amarantos why several people had overtime in May. Commissioner Amarantos said it was for sanitary sewer work.

Workers go out on Saturdays to clean the sanitary lines. However, the Town Fund is reimbursed by the Sanitary Fund for the overtime.

Trustee Appel asked about the fee for the Recycle Program brochure.

Commissioner Amarantos explained that it is a design fee, and we will also have a printing fee. Changes will be made for small cost in the future. People who come to the event will get the brochure, and it will also be handed out at many community events. Supervisor Brickman added that it gives resources for items our program cannot take.

Trustees Blustein and McCormick had questions about the health insurance program. Supervisor Brickman and Ms. Fuller explained that it is a single policy negotiated for the township and the Road District employees. The plan is tied into the State of Illinois plan. The Township employees pay a portion for their policies, but the Road District employees do not. This can be done because they come out of different budgets.

Trustee Reynolds raised concerns about an estimation of \$15,000 for three seasonal workers, but over the last couple of months, \$17,000 had been spent. Commissioner Amarantos said that there is no itemization of salaries in the Road District budget. There is a lump sum for \$378,000 for salaries in the budget.

Trustee Appel asked Commissioner Amarantos about the web design, and Trustee McCormick asked when it will be done. Commissioner Amarantos said it will be about a month. It will have videos about what happens to paper and paint. It will also provide information about services and dates for programs.

Trustee Blustein asked the Commissioner the best way to get a message to him. He said he checks the office e-mail on his I-Phone while in the field.

Motion to approve Road District bills passed unanimously on roll call vote as follows:

Yea: Trustee Appel, Trustee Blustein, Trustee McCormick, Trustee Reynolds, Supervisor Brickman Yea (5); Nay (0)

Adoption of the Prevailing Wage Ordinance

Attorney Patt explained this is required under Section 9 of the Prevailing Wage Act. The Department of Labor sets the standards and the units of local government must adopt it. All the wages are listed in the document. It essentially covers any public workers unless it is for pure maintenance.

Trustee Blustein made a motion to adopt the Prevailing Wage.

Trustee McCormick seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously on roll call vote as follows:

Yea: Trustee Appel, Trustee Blustein, Trustee McCormick, Trustee Reynolds, Supervisor Brickman Yea (5); Nay (0)

Township Ethics Commission

Supervisor Brickman asked for ratification for Mr. Joel Levin to chair the Ethics Commission. Trustee McCormick proposed considering Catherine Caporusso as chair and the possibility of co-chairs. Supervisor Brickman explained she prefers one person to be in charge, and she thinks we would be fortunate to get Mr. Levin for the job. Trustee Appel also feels there should be one head of the commission rather than two. Trustee McCormick feels we would also be fortunate to have Ms. Caporusso, as she does not have much information about Mr. Levin. She said she was uncomfortable that the recommendation was brought up at the cusp of the old board and not now. Trustee Reynolds added that she feels the same. Trustee McCormick suggested a few options; we could vote on it, or table it and think about it. Trustee Reynolds added that she wants to be comfortable with the decision as this is an important role. Supervisor Brickman agreed with tabling the decision and providing more information about the candidates to the board. Trustee McCormick asked for the opportunity to meet with Mr. Levin. Supervisor Brickman was not in favor of this, and she agreed to send curricula vitae for both candidates to the trustees prior to the July meeting.

Matters to be Presented by the Public

Mr. Jeff Hershman, a 20 year resident of Northbrook raised concerns about renters in his area who don't maintain their property. He said his area has no sidewalks or gutters, and people park all over the lawns and gravel. He would like to see a white line on the sides of the streets so people don't park on the lawns or grass, however to get this done it would require an ordinance. He added Wally and Pete have been very helpful and responsive to his concerns. They have taken care of many of the problems he has encountered.

Northbrook resident Karen Nystrom attended a J-CARES meeting (Jewish Community Abuse Resources Education and Solutions), a domestic violence awareness group. The program reaches people throughout the Chicago area. She recommended the Township contact this group for the Domestic Violence Awareness Program in October.

Old Business

Commissioner Amarantos said United Cerebral Palsy takes the recycled computers from the recycle program and reuses them. He is trying to work with the sheriff's office to help build a partnership for identity theft and shredding.

Supervisor Brickman is working with District 225 on a new lease. The township's lease has historically been four years, but the District has presented a three year lease. She explained it is custom for the lease to go along with the term of the elected officials, but she wanted to run it across the board before she went into further discussions with the district. The board agreed that four years makes sense.

New Business

Trustee Blustein asked if we could become members of TOCC. She explained a meeting she attended with Trustees McCormick and Reynolds was very educational. She said one of the benefits of TOCC would be a new directory it is compiling of townships, jobs, and e-mails that we would be able to use as a resource. Supervisor Brickman recommended talking to Ms. Fuller to see if we can put it in the budget.

Supervisor Brickman said she is working with West Deerfield Township, and we have the opportunity to participate in a Disability Awareness Seminar for local chambers of commerce. It would focus on working with employees and customers with disabilities in a sensitive way. If we participate, we can invite three chambers to the breakfast event at the end

of July, with our costs not to exceed \$500. It would be very useful for local businesses, and it is much inline with what the work of the Township. We would expect about 200 people. The trustees were in favor of the opportunity.

Trustee Blustein asked about the pantry numbers, and Supervisor Brickman explained there are 503 households using the pantry, and that number is growing. There is a bit of a delay because people who now need services don't know how to use the social service network. She said we would not be surprised to see more growth due to the delay.

Trustee Blustein moved to adjourn.

Trustee Appel seconded the motion.

On Voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Fine
Secretary of the Meeting