

**State of Illinois
County of Cook
Township of Northfield
Northfield Township Board of Trustees Meeting July 12, 2011**

The following board members were present:

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

Also present:

Laura Fine, Northfield Township Clerk
Patricia Damisch, Northfield Township Assessor
Peter Amarantos, Northfield Township Road District Commissioner
Wally Kehr, Northfield Township Road District Foreman
Lucinda Fuller, Northfield Township Finance Director
Mary Lou Kratochwill, Northfield Township Staff
Miguel Nunez, Northfield Township Staff
Wanda Tarnowska, Northfield Township Staff
Debbie Wierzbicki, Northfield Township Staff
Michele Wilson, Northfield Township Staff
Ashley Moore, Northfield Township Intern

Supervisor Brickman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Meeting

Approval of the Minutes of the July 14, 2011 Town Meeting

Trustee Reynolds moved to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2011 meeting.
Trustee Appel seconded the motion.

The minutes were unanimously approved on a voice vote.

Recess Town Meeting

Open Sewer Meeting

Approval of the Sewer Bills

Trustee Reynolds moved to approve the sewer bills.
Trustee Appel seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Supervisor Brickman, Trustee Appel, Trustee Blustein, Trustee McCormick,
Trustee Reynolds (5)
Nays: None (0)

Motion carried 5-0

Sewer Collection

No discussion

Old Business

No discussion

Recess Sewer Meeting

Reconvene Town Meeting

Approval of Town Fund Bills

Trustee Appel moved to approve the Town Fund bills.

Trustee McCormick seconded the motion.

Trustee Appel asked why the fee for the Sheriff's Police in June was \$450 more than it was in May. Finance Director Fuller explained the fee depends on the number of hours the officers worked plus \$4 per car hour per officer.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None (0)

Motion carried 5-0

Road and Bridge Bills

Trustee Reynolds moved to approve the Road and Bridge bills.

Trustee Blustein seconded the motion.

Trustee Reynolds asked Commissioner Amarantos why 3 different agencies are used for refuse disposal. Commissioner Amarantos explained because of EPA standards, different agencies provide different services. For example, you can't mix recycling cans with landscape debris.

Trustee Reynolds said she would like to draw the board's attention to the Road District's payroll and Robert Dunne's April-June 2011 retroactive pay raise. She noted as of April 1, Mr. Dunne's salary was approximately \$60,000. Trustee Reynolds said the taxpayers will be paying approximately \$60,000 a year for a position the board found redundant after researching it with the emergency departments in Glenview, Northbrook, Cook County Homeland Security. She said the taxpayers are paying for something unnecessary. Trustee Blustein asked if Mr. Dunne's salary is higher than the Road District Commissioner's salary. Finance Director Fuller said it could be, but she would have to check.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None (0)

Motion carried 5-0

Office Move

Supervisor Brickman reminded the board that a 'road trip' is planned for Thursday to visit 3 sites under consideration for the office move. The supervisor also said she had received a phone call from a resident who is active in the pantry, who has a line on a possible space that would need capital improvement, but it would be rent free. Trustee McCormick said since the Township pays \$5,000 a month in rent, this would be worth looking into.

Approval of Copier Purchase vs. Lease

Office Manager Wilson noted the board was given information about prices for both purchasing and leasing a new copier. Trustee Reynolds said purchasing a new copier makes her uneasy because of possible problems with copiers. Ms. Wilson said the purchase does come with a maintenance agreement. Supervisor Brickman said Ms. Wilson spoke with a department head in another municipality who strongly recommended buying over leasing. Ms. Brickman said that since the township uses a more simple copier, leasing becomes less important. Trustee Appel added that if the Township does purchase the copier, he would advise writing into the agreement that if the machine does not work for a number of hours or days, or if it is in constant need of repair, the company would replace it. Ms. Wilson said she would ask the representative she has been negotiating the purchase with if this is possible.

Trustee McCormick moved to approve purchasing a photocopier, with part of the price negotiation to include a clause regarding machine replacement in case of excessive downtime.

Trustee Blustein seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None (0)

Motion carried 5-0

Supervisor Brickman thanked Michele Wilson and Lucinda Fuller for all of their work investigating the purchase of a new copier.

Cell Phone Use During Meetings

Trustee Reynolds said during Township meetings, cell phones should be put away and inaccessible. She said board members ran for office, the meetings are important, and giving an hour of time cell phone-free is necessary. Trustee McCormick added that it would be respectful to put phones away as what the board discusses has a serious impact on the community. Trustee Appel said he disagrees and feels cell phones are acceptable in case of an emergency. Supervisor Brickman said this is a request, and it is not enforceable.

Holiday Party

Trustee Blustein said she had talked about having a Township holiday party, however

she would like to withdraw her motion as the cost is excessive.

Amendment to Ordinance by Cook County Board of Commissioners, Chapter 82 Traffic and Vehicles, Sections 82-1 through 92-193

Trustee Blustein said last month, Supervisor Brickman sent the board 2 documents regarding this ordinance. She said David Feller, the Legislative Coordinator for the Cook County Sheriff's Department attended the June meeting, but no questions were asked of Mr. Feller at that time. Trustee Blustein said she has since had a conversation with Mr. Feller to learn more about the ordinance. She explained the goal of the ordinance is to streamline the cost of enforcement for county and township roads for equipment or nuisance violations like lack of bumpers, expired vehicle stickers and repairing cars on the road. These cases are currently adjudicated by the Cook County court system, however the system focuses mainly on moving violations. She explained the proposed amendment would allow violators to appear in front of a hearing officer instead of going to court for these tickets. This would save the county both time and money. Also, once the violations are paid, 42% would go to the city, 12% to the state and 47% to the government entity where the violation took place.

Both the Township and the Road District Commissioner must sign off on the ordinance for it to become law. Trustee Blustein went on to say that Commissioner Amarantos has refused to sign the ordinance because he maintains the Road District, not the Township should enter into this agreement. Trustee Blustein noted that Township code stipulates that only the Township may enter into an agreement for police services with the county. The Township is the unit of government recognized by the county. Trustee Blustein feels that by refusing to sign this agreement, the Road District Commissioner has blocked a sound government policy and a revenue stream for the township. *(Trustee Blustein's summary of her conversation with Mr. Feller is attached)*

Employee Handbook

The board has been reviewing the proposed changes to the Northfield Township Employee Handbook. Supervisor Brickman suggested the following revisions, which were discussed:

Exempt and nonexempt employees: counsel has advised the number be changed to 2 to include the Office Manager.

The Table of Contents should be moved to right after the description of the Township. It should include the adoption date of the manual on the first page, as well as the adoption date printed at the bottom of each page.

Under Employment Status (p. 11) Supervisor Brickman noted that the trustees recommended changing the approval to being made in advance only by the Supervisor. She pointed out that the trustees told her that she should always be available by cell phone, even when she's in another meeting, which conflicts with the earlier discussion about cell phone use in meetings. Supervisor Brickman would like to see it changed to Overtime approval by the Supervisor or the Office Manager if the Supervisor is unavailable.

Time Away from Work: Military and Reserve Leave (p.19): For consistency, Supervisor Brickman suggested this notice be given to the Office Manager instead of the Supervisor as this is who all other notice is given to.

Vacation: Under eligibility, on the first line of the table, it will be added: 6-12 Months = 5 Work Days.

Personal and Sick Time (p. 19) Supervisor Brickman voiced her objection to adding an additional total six work days of paid time off. She felt the taxpayers would not approve of this. Trustee Blustein noted she checked with numerous townships in the area, and 10 days is the average amount of paid time off. She said our employees work closely with the public, including indigent people, and allowing more sick days makes sense. She added employees do not have to use their sick days. Unused sick days will roll into the IMRF and can be used towards retirement.

Office Hours (p. 13): Supervisor Brickman said by eliminating Saturdays and Thursday evenings, there will be a significant drop in the number of groups that can volunteer in the pantry. That drop may impact the community's feeling of ownership of the pantry. The Supervisor said she would like a compromise on Thursdays by staying open until 6:00 PM. Trustee Blustein said she contacted other local townships, and none have evening hours because they cannot provide security for their staff at night. Trustee Blustein spent time in the office on Thursday evenings and was wary each time she heard the building door open, especially given the indigent nature of Township clientele. Supervisor Brickman noted that the only serious problem with a client during her tenure involved a resident angry about real estate taxes, not an indigent person.

Personnel Files (p. 7) Supervisor Brickman noted her discomfort with having personnel files open to so many people. She said best practice should be limiting personnel files to a need to know basis.

Supervisor Brickman recommended the changes be made to the Handbook, and the board revisit it next month.

Pace Bus

Supervisor Brickman said the Township staff is investigating an employee's idea concerning a Pace Bus. A local company uses the bus to take employees to and from the office. Ms. Wilson in checking into whether there is time during the day that bus could be used by the township.

Matters to be Presented by the Public

Officer Manager Wilson asked if she could discuss with the board how vacation days and time off works in the office before changes are implemented. Trustee Blustein noted this was already discussed and voted on in the Human Resources Committee meeting.

Staff member, Wanda Tarnowska raised concern about the 3% across the board salary increase. She noted because salaries are no longer increased at the anniversary date, some staff members received their raise prior to that time. Supervisor Brickman explained will take a year to put everyone on the same schedule. Trustee Reynolds added that when the board came in, members did not understand anniversary raises and it caused some confusion. From now on, raises are going to take place across the board in July.

Ms. Tarnowska thanked Township intern Ashley Moore. She said Ashley has been a great help.

Old Business

Supervisor Brickman mentioned intern Ashley Moore is working out very well. They are working to expose her to the various aspects of the township.

Gayle Zalatoris created a draft structure for the Pantry Advisory Board. Trustee Blustein asked why it was recommended that 7 people instead of 5 sit on the board. Supervisor Brickman said after discussions with other not-for-profits, 7 appeared to be the optimum number of participants on an advisory board. Trustee Reynolds noted we should reach out to the community as well as pantry volunteers to get more people involved in the pantry. Trustee Blustein added there should be a geographic balance of all three communities in the Township represented on the board. Trustee Reynolds noted Ms. Zalatoris did a nice job putting the draft together. Ms. Zalatoris will more fully develop the recommendations for the August meeting.

New Business

Supervisor Brickman said the Township will now be an acceptance site for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The Supervisor said Miguel Nunez completed the training and can now take the applications directly. The Township will earn \$14 per application. She added this will be one more way to provide a service to our needier residents.

Trustee Blustein thanked Assessor Damisch for her outstanding quarterly report.

Supervisor Brickman said the Township is selling \$5 tickets for the Macy's shopping fundraiser.

Trustee Reynolds said she had the opportunity to read the reports from the Human Services agencies, and she feels it is a privilege to be part of an institution that gives out human services grants.

Trustee Appel moved to adjourn.

Trustee Reynolds seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Fine, Northfield Township Clerk

