

**REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD  
TUESDAY, April 20, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.**

As provided for by public notice, the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Northfield was held remotely via Zoom due to the COVID-19 crisis. The Regular Board meeting began at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 20, 2021. President Frazier called the meeting to order and asked the Clerk to call the roll.

PRESENT:    President       Joan Frazier  
  
                  Trustees       Charles Orth  
                                  Todd Fowler  
                                  Greg Lungmus  
                                  Tom Whittaker  
                                  Tom Terrill

ABSENT:                       John Goodwin

ALSO PRESENT:               Attorney Buzz Hill

I.   Consent Agenda Items: Village President asked the Clerk to read the Consent Agenda items into the record. Those were reported as follows:

1.    Approve the Report of Proceedings from the March 16, 2021 Village Board meeting.
2.    Bills and Disbursements from March 1, 2021 to March 31 2021 in the amount of \$387,638.77.
3.    Annual Appointments - Approval of a resolution appointing Steven Noble as the Treasurer for the remainder of 2021.

President Frazier indicated that VM Sigman said there were no written comments on this matter. She then asked if anyone listening electronically wanted to comment.

Trustee Lungmus made a motion, seconded by Trustee Fowler, to approve Consent Agenda items 1 through 3.

Upon the following roll call vote, a motion to approve Consent Agenda items 1 through 3 was approved.

AYES: Orth            NAYS: 0            ABSTAIN: 0            ABSENT: Goodwin

Fowler  
Lungmus  
Whittaker  
Terrill

**CONSIDERATION OF AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE FY2021/2022 VILLAGE BUDGET**

Trustee Terrill made a motion, seconded by Trustee Lungmus to approve an ordinance adopting the FY2021/2022 Village budget.

Finance Director Cratty stated that the Village operated under the Budget Officer System and was required by state law to adopt a Budget Ordinance before the start of the May 1, 2021 fiscal year. The proposed FY2021/22 Village Budget represented the input of the Village Board, the public, and staff during the Budget preparation process, including the March 2, 2021 Budget Workshop/Committee of the Whole meeting and the Public Hearing held on March 16, 2021. The only changes made during that process were the inclusion of \$30,000 for business support initiatives and \$10,000 for emergency animal control. Also, staff was given direction to operate the 50/50 parkway tree grant program with no cap on participation. Any costs above the \$5,000 budgeted for this purpose would be paid from reserves. Revenues and expenses were anticipated to continue to be impacted by COVID this next fiscal year. The Village will continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments as necessary.

President Frazier indicated that VM Sigman said there were no written comments on this matter. She then asked if anyone listening electronically wanted to comment.

President Frazier requested a roll call vote to approve an ordinance adopting the FY2021/2022 Village budget.

AYES: Orth                      NAYS: 0                      ABSTAIN: 0                      ABSENT: Goodwin  
Fowler  
Lungmus  
Whittaker  
Terrill

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING APPENDIX D TO REFLECT THE CHANGES TO THE WATER AND SEWER RATES EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2021**

Trustee Orth made a motion, seconded by Trustee Fowler, to approve an ordinance amending Appendix D to reflect the changes to the water and sewer rates effective June 1, 2021.

Finance Director Cratty noted that the proposed FY2021/22 Budget called for the implementation of the 15.5% increase in the water/sewer rate contemplated in the FY2020/21 budget. Although approved last year, the change was never implemented due to COVID-19. The

proposed increase was necessary to cover operational, maintenance, capital, and wholesale water costs. If approved, the new rates will take effect June 1, 2021, and will increase the current water/sewer rate from \$9.09/100 cubic feet to \$10.50/100 cubic feet, the water only rate from \$6.51/100 cubic feet to \$7.52/100 cubic feet, the minimum water and sanitary rate to \$38.50/month, minimum water only rate to \$27.60/month, and the sanitary rate to \$43.40/month. Additionally, to help residents adjust to the new rate structure, reduce water loss, and improve service, the Village will move to monthly water and sewer billing effective May 1, 2021.

President Frazier indicated that VM Sigman said there were no written comments on this matter. She then asked if anyone listening electronically wanted to comment.

President Frazier requested a roll call vote to approve an ordinance amending Appendix D to reflect the changes to the water and sewer rates effective June 1, 2021.

AYES: Orth                      NAYS: 0                      ABSTAIN: 0                      ABSENT: Goodwin  
Fowler  
Lungmus  
Whittaker  
Terrill

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 4, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, RE-ESTABLISHING A FOREIGN FIRE INSURANCE BOARD**

Trustee Whittaker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Fowler, to approve an ordinance amending Chapter 4, Boards and Commissions, re-establishing a Foreign Fire Insurance Board.

Attorney Hill noted that every non-Illinois fire hazard insurer who writes insurance within Northfield is required to pay a Foreign Fire Insurance Tax amounting to 2% of the total insurance written here. This money is collected by the State and then paid to the Village. Pursuant to statute, how that money is used is within the discretion of a Foreign Fire Insurance Board (FFIB), made up of the Fire Chief and active firefighters. For reasons lost in the mists of time, and again pursuant to statute, the Village Board has no control over the expenditure of these funds, except to require, by ordinance, that the funds be spent for the benefit of the Department. The statute requires that the FFIB have 3-7 Board members. The state legislature has pre-empted home rule municipalities from going outside the parameters of the statute. Trustee Whittaker recently brought to our attention that Northfield does not have a Foreign Fire Insurance Board (FFIB) Research indicated that the Foreign Fire Insurance Board was disbanded about 20 years ago. Payments continued to be made by the state and the funds were accounted for in a separate fund and used only for Fire Department purposes. The establishment of the FFIB is important and the process to do so includes the adoption of an ordinance to establish the Board and account for the money in a separate fund (as we have always done), and require the Fire Chief to hold an election for the FFI Board membership.

Attorney Hill stated the FFIB will consist of 3 voting members with the Chief as an ex-officio voting member and two others. The FFIB members will be elected for 4-year terms,

except that the initial membership will call for one member to be elected to a 2-year term so that the terms can be staggered. Once established, the FFIB must establish a priority list of equipment and/or services that it wishes to purchase with the funds. The funds may be rolled over from year to year to accumulate necessary funds for a purchase that will exceed the annual amount collected. The priorities on the list may be changed from year to year.

President Frazier indicated that VM Sigman said there were no written comments on this matter. She then asked if anyone listening electronically wanted to comment.

President Frazier requested a roll call vote to approve an ordinance amending Chapter 4, Boards and Commissions, re-establishing a Foreign Fire Insurance Board.

AYES: Orth                      NAYS: 0                      ABSTAIN: 0                      ABSENT: Goodwin  
Fowler  
Lungmus  
Whittaker  
Terrill

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chaya Rubenstein, President of the Winnetka, Northfield, and Kenilworth League of Women Voters thanked President Frazier, Trustee Terrill, and Trustee Goodwin for their service. She thanked everyone involved in the New Trier vaccination program and noted that it was a wonderful community effort. She remarked that their next board meeting will be held on April 21 via Zoom and their annual meeting will be at the end of May and everyone is invited to both. She remarked that the Northshore Record News was having a pizza fundraiser and recommended patronizing the Northshore Pizza Company on May 12 since they would be giving back 20%.

President Frazier stated that this was her last meeting. She thanked outgoing Trustee Tom Terrill for his service and for being a liaison to the Police Pension Board, as well as his invaluable help on the Comprehensive Plan. She thanked outgoing Trustee John Goodwin for his service and for being a liaison on the Architectural Commission. She noted that Trustee Goodwin also worked on the Skokie Valley Trail project where they were able to move the needle after 20 years. President Frazier thanked Village Manager Sigman for all of her fabulous work for the Village and for helping them through the pandemic. She thanked Village Attorney Hill for his wealth of knowledge and being the perfect counsel for Northfield. President Frazier thanked Chief Nystrand for being amazing whether it was putting out fires, driving an ambulance or snowplow, and fixing water valves and water mains. She commended Chief Nystrand for a job well done keeping the Village's roads cleared quickly in the winter and keeping Northfield beautiful and well maintained. She thanked Tom Burke for all of his incredible work on MABAS and vaccinations. President Frazier thanked Chief Lustig for being such a caring police chief and for his countless hours of dedication. She thanked Community Director Steve Gutierrez for his hard work with the community and commissions and for keeping the businesses updated on the grants and loans available during the pandemic. She thanked Finance Director Steve Noble for his return and having a solid background and knowledge of Northfield's financial affairs. President Frazier thanked the Director of Administrative Services Melissa Jewett for doing a

wonderful job on so many different projects in good humor and being instrumental in getting so many people vaccinated.

President Frazier sent well wishes to the trustees, noting that they were working with a great staff. She commented that each trustee brought a different talent and unique perspective and wished them personally and professionally all the best.

## **Department Updates**

### *Administration*

VM Sigman reported as follows:

A warm welcome back to Steven Noble as he has graciously come out of retirement and returned to Northfield as an interim consultant with Lauterbach & Amen. This change was made to allow L&A to transition Kyle Cratty to clients closer to his home. Along with Steve, another L&A employee will be assigned to Northfield and will be working with Steve to eventually transition to the Finance Director position. This plan will ensure a great continuity of service while allowing us to plan for the future.

### *Community Development Department & Building Department*

Director Gutierrez reported as follows:

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) will hold a meeting on May 5. They will consider a request at 318 Latrobe Avenue for a north side yard 5.32-foot variation from the required 15 feet resulting in a 9.68-foot setback to allow for a hot tub. The ZBA is the final decision maker on variations. There was notable development activity, including the interior and exterior renovation plans, at 436 W. Frontage Road for the plastic surgeon group at Werner Institute who are in the process of making a tired building look very attractive. The United Vein Center at 622 Willow Road was doing an interior build-out and expected to open soon. The Business Support initiative was still in the investigative stages regarding a gift card program.

### *Finance Department*

Finance Director Cratty reported as follows:

Through February, the Village's revenues were a little over \$8.2 million which was \$500,000 below budget but in line with the modeling that was done earlier in the year. Overall expenditures were \$9.4 million which was \$29,000 below budget for the year so staff continues to do a good job of keeping expenses down. The return on investment on the Police Pension fund was 20.93% and if it remains at this rate, it could help make up for losses as a result of the timing with the last fiscal year and COVID.

### *Fire-Rescue & Public Works Departments*

Chief Nystrand reported as follows:

The fire department responded to 92 calls for service and continued to supply members to assist the MABAS Division 3 in administering vaccinations at New Trier West High School. COVID numbers continued to increase so they continuously ordered PPE supplies for

employees. On March 28, Squad 29 responded to a fire in downtown Winnetka and on April 2, Squad 29 responded to a fire in Evanston.

Public Works repaired numerous water main breaks, read water meters, and repaired several water valves. They have started spring clean-up, restoration, and landscaping activities throughout the Village.

Trustee Whittaker thanked the fire department for a job well done in helping assist the MABAS vaccination site.

*Police Department*

Chief Lustig reported as follows:

The Northfield Police Department was awarded a plaque for Excellence in Law Enforcement Policy Management from Lexipol since they completed all of their training. It was Bicycle Safety week, so the Officer Friendly's were at the schools teaching kids about bike safety. The police assisted Jewel-Osco and MABAS Division 3 with providing security at New Trier West High School where they administered the vaccines.

Trustee Orth inquired about car thefts in Northfield. Chief Lustig stated that there were no incidents in the last several weeks.

Trustee Lungmus asked if the suburbs were on alert after the guilty verdict at the Derek Chauvin trial earlier that day. Chief Lustig replied that the North Shore and State were on stand-by and if anything escalated, they would close down the entrances to the expressways.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business or issues to come before the Board, Trustee Lungmus made a motion, seconded by Trustee Orth to adjourn the meeting.

Upon the following roll call vote, the motion was approved.

AYES: Orth                      NAYS: 0                      ABSTAIN: 0                      ABSENT: Goodwin  
Fowler  
Lungmus  
Whittaker  
Terrill

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.