

**REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020 - 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 due to the COVID-19 crisis. The Regular Board meeting began at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2020. The meeting was called to order by President Joan Frazier. The Village Clerk took the roll call.

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

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:	Attorney Everette M. Hill Dave Woodyat Chaya Rubinstein
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I. Consent Agenda Items: Village President

1. Approve the Report of Proceedings from the March 17, 2020 Village Board meeting.

2. Approve the Bills and Disbursements from February 29, 2020 to March 24, 2020:

General Fund	\$261,169.43
Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Fund	6,253.07
Water and Sanitary Sewer Fund	96,773.54
Storm Sewer Improvement Fund	366.00
Capital & Equipment Fund	4,555.21
Police Pension Fund	202.00
2019 Bond Project Fund	<u>35,858.06</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$405,177.31</u>

3. Approve the following Board and Commission re-appointments:

<u>Board of Police Commissioners – Term: 3 years</u>	<u>Term</u>
G. Kirk Bennett	5-1-20 to 5-1-23

Police Pension Board – Term: 2 years
Donald Whiteman

Term
5-1-20 to 5-1-22

President Frazier thanked Mr. Whiteman and Mr. Bennett for donating their time to the Village. Don Whiteman was Village President and Kirk Bennett was head of Plan & Zoning for many years. She thanked them for agreeing to continue to serve the community.

Trustee Terrill made a motion, seconded by Trustee Whittaker, 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:	Terrill	NAYS: 0	ABSTAIN: 0	ABSENT: 0
	Orth			
	Fowler			
	Lungmus			
	Goodwin			
	Whittaker			

CONSIDERATION OF AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE FY2020/21 VILLAGE BUDGET

Trustee Orth made a motion, seconded by Trustee Terrill, to approve an ordinance adopting the FY2020/21 Village Budget.

Finance Director Steve Noble indicated that the ordinance before the Board is an estimate of Village revenues and sets the Village spending limits for

in all Village funds for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2020. The budget was distributed to the Board and community in late February. The Board held a budget workshop on March 3, 2020 and a public hearing on March 17, 2020. Due to COVID-19, much has changed since the budget was developed. Obviously, the COVID-19 emergency will impact our revenues and expenses and staff will have to monitor the situation closely and will likely have to make adjustments once more detailed information is available. The ordinance satisfies the Village's statutory requirement and it will be filed with the Cook County Clerk upon its passage.

Village Manager Stacy Sigman said that Kyle Cratty will be the Village's new Finance Director. He starts with Lauterbach & Amen on May 1st and will spend his first day at the Village on May 4th. President Frazier said that Director Noble's departure is impeccably timed as she believes next year will be challenging financially.

President Frazier requested a roll call vote to approve an ordinance adopting the FY2020/21 Village Budget.

AYES: Terrill
Orth
Fowler
Goodwin
Lungmus
Whittaker

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 0

CONSIDERATION OF THE EXECUTION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION, DUE TO COVID-19 IN THE VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD UNTIL MAY 19, 2020

President Frazier said the situation has not changed since the April Board meeting and the Village is still dealing with the COVID-19 crisis. Over the past month, there were a few times when she exercised her emergency authority. VM Sigman has updated the Board on these as part of her daily update. Examples include easing some of the rules on liquor for curbside pickups. The liquor hours were amended for Mariano's and allowed them to sell when seniors are shopping. She eased the regulations on temporary signage put a hold on shutting off water due to no payment while the pandemic is still active. She indicated she appreciated the authority to help things run more smoothly

Village Clerk Sigman read the oath: President Frazier, do you solemnly affirm that this is your declaration of emergency in your capacity as the Village President of the Village of Northfield and that the matters upon which you base this declaration are to the best of your knowledge, true and correct." President Frazier said "I do."

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dave Woodyat asked if Saturday's Village cleanup day was still planned. VM Sigman indicated that Waste Management temporarily postponed that. Once the crisis has passed they will reschedule it and will likely be in the fall. Notice has been posted on the website and staff will put out additional information.

Chaya Rubenstein, 315 Linder Avenue, said she wrote a letter about face masks. She then read the letter: "Dear President Frazier and Village of Northfield Officials and Village Board of Trustees. Given the dangers that the rats spread the coronavirus, I would like to request that the Village of Northfield, joining with the towns, Village of Skokie, Glenview, Cicero, Highland Park, Wilmette, Niles, Northbrook, Evanston, Oak Lawn, and Oak Park; propose and vote to mandate the wearing of masks in all Northfield public places, including outdoors. I, and others, have been finding grocery shopping, and there is a two week delay at some stores for curbside pickup, one being at Mariano's, to be an unpleasant and perhaps hazardous activity. My husband and I went during the designated "senior and medically vulnerable" morning hours. All

seniors we saw were not only wearing masks, but gloves. Mariano's who usually has cart sanitizers was out of them. However, other young shoppers, and I am not referring to people in their teens and 20's, these were people in their 40's and 50's and we had to assume they were there due to being in the "medically vulnerable" category. If so, not only were they putting the seniors at risk, but most definitely themselves. Additionally, although Mariano's has done a great job in marking line distances, people there (most likely due to habit and not pernicious behavior) ignored this and started to load items on the conveyor belt. I politely reminded one such customer to "step back" and she obliged but she wasn't wearing a mask either. The Stay and Home Order has worked well. We are so fortunate in that Northfield is small enough and has plenty of room for people to walk outside or bike, keeping in compliance with social distancing. However, when we have to be in a grocery store, buying gas, not so much these days, or in a hardware store erring on the side of caution, wearing masks is best. That having been said, too, it's no longer a question of mask scarcity, it is so easy to make a cloth mask without being able to sew. In fact, due to a lack of cart sanitizer I observed, it would be nice to go one step further and mandate gloves for all shopping excursions (although these are more difficult to get, but people can wear their winter gloves and then you just wash them in the machine). Northfield could be a first here. In any event, please consider this request (and I am sure there have been others). From speaking to people, I am fairly certain the number of seniors I know and other people, will go shopping in those suburbs where mask-wearing has been mandated. Thank you for serving the people of the Village of Northfield and thank you for your time and consideration and may you and your family stay healthy and safe."

President Frazier said she thinks about this every day because it is difficult. There is a pandemic and she doesn't make decisions lightly. She gave this one a lot of thought. She feels that compelling people to wear a face mask is pretty intrusive and she is hesitant, as a minor governmental official, to take that step. The majority of local municipalities have not issued such an order. She has a lot of respect for our Governor and the State Public Health Department. They have careful and scientifically based decisions and she has followed their lead. She could go even further and ban curbside deliveries, in store shopping, and the like and then people would be even safer, but it's a balancing act. So far, she doesn't feel compelled to impose more stringent mandates than those issued by the Governor. She is quite sure that he is coming closer to ordering people to wear face masks while engaging in essential activities and Northfield will follow. She believes that 95% of the people in town are following the CDC guidelines. She encourages people each and every week in her Monday update to do so. She talked with Mariano's about wearing face masks and they voluntarily agreed to require that their

employees to do so. Melissa DeFeo received a call from an angry woman who said she went there today and they didn't have the masks on. Ms. DeFeo contacted a Kroeger employee who is in charge of these things who said they are required to wear face masks. President Frazier then went over to Mariano's herself and she saw that they are all now wearing face masks. Mariano's is doing a lot to help. The communities that have been mandating face masks have not been enforcing that. Even if she issued the order, we would still have the same number of people that don't comply. She feels that most people are responsible and are following the guidelines and that our local stores are doing their best to follow the CDC and State guidelines. At this point she doesn't feel compelled to go further than that.

Department Updates

Administration

VM Sigman reported as follows:

The COVID situation is keeping our teams very busy. All of the major functions of the Village continue to fully operate. Our buildings remain closed to the public and are being staffed primarily from home. Everyone is operational and most important, our life safety teams are here and have done an amazing job keeping up with all the calls for service. The Village's first priority is making sure residents and our team members are safe.

She spoke with Kyle Cratty who will be our new Finance Director and he will be starting with Lauterbach & Amen on May 1st and then he will be reporting in to Northfield on May 4th. We are still working on how to transition him due to the current crisis.

Community Development Department & Building Department

Director Gutierrez reported as follows:

The Architectural Commission will be meeting on May 11th to review a proposed sport court at 24 Meadowview Drive. This will entail a 40 x 70 foot volleyball court which we consider a sport court due to its size and the potential for its use with groups of adults versus something that the kids might play around in. Using a zoom video conferencing platform is being considered for that meeting. In order for us to be able to show the plan, this platform would be needed. Staff is excited about this.

Wintrust Bank should be starting their footings and foundation this week or next. Staff has also been keeping in touch with the business community and is coordinating information on state, county and private foundation loan and grant programs. A lot of information has been

posted and we regularly send out emails to our businesses. Overall, businesses that he has heard back from are holding their own and are cautiously optimistic that they will weather this storm. We are impressed with their fortitude and their creative ways of going about their business in this environment.

An application was received today for a parking variation for a 2 story office building that is currently vacant but a medical use is looking at half of the building and renting out the other half. The building is located at Ash and Frontage Road. They have decided to keep the medical portion of the building under 5,000 square feet and so it will not require a special use. They will need a parking variation.

The owner of 470 Valleyway is requesting an extension of their special use deadline. They received a special use for an oversize garage in 2019. The deadline for the one year issuance of a permit is coming due and they would like an extension, due to the fact that the owner has run into some financial changes from the crisis. President Frazier has agreed to review that under her emergency authority.

Remotely working from home has gone well for his department. They are almost paperless except for the old files. They have the processing of paperless permits down pretty well. In March, the level of permits was about the same as it was in March, 2019.

Trustee Orth asked Director Gutierrez the status of Heritage Trail Mall. Director Gutierrez said the last time he spoke with the owner, she planned on moving forward.

Trustee Whittaker said he drove past Wintrust and said it looked like they were making significant progress. All the gravel is down and compacted. He talked to a couple of business owners who said that Director Gutierrez has been fantastic in reaching out to the business community and they are very grateful for that. President Frazier also thanked Director Gutierrez with all the information from the feds, state and county on the grants. He has organized all the information and is passing it on to the businesses. She appreciates all the work he has done on that.

Finance Department

Finance Director Noble reported as follows:

The Finance Department continues to perform its essential functions despite everyone working remotely. They have been able to keep up with payroll, paying the vendors, water billing and bringing in cash receipts. As mentioned, there has been a lot of building permit activity in just the past couple of days and making payments online has worked well. Working remotely, they have taken the opportunity in the Finance Department to streamline some of their

operations. They are hoping that some of the things they have done will be carried forward once we're back in the office. They have been able to eliminate some unnecessary steps.

The packets contain the financial reports for February 29th which seems like ancient history at this point because so much has changed. As of February 29th, things were proceeding as planned. We haven't received any information yet from the state or payments from the state that would reflect a COVID-19 experience. He received sales tax information in April, but that was for January sales. It will be a couple of months before we can see and measure the impacts of this emergency.

Trustee Whittaker echoed Director Noble's sentiment on the permit process because he has been dealing with it for tree removal and it has been seamless in accommodating different avenues for communicating back and forth. What the Village has done has made it convenient for the community to do things to carry on with projects that need to be done.

Fire-Rescue & Public Works Departments

Chief Mike Nystrand reported as follows:

They have responded to 86 calls for service since the last meeting. On March 20th, they responded with a squad and himself to respond to a fire in downtown Winnetka. On March 26th, squad responded to a house fire in Evanston. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic is occurring all the normal things they deal with are still going on. They continue to work with MABAS Division 3 and MABAS Illinois for all kinds of COVID response issues as well as supplies. They are currently in good shape with the personal protective equipment (PPE) with gloves and N95 surgical masks, but are running low on gowns. Statewide, there are 129 firefighter paramedics in quarantine as of yesterday. 381 firefighter paramedics have been cleared by testing and/or quarantine completed. There were 151 positive COVID-19 cases since March 17th. Two of those people passed away in Chicago. There have been 510 firefighters infected since March 17th. 23 department are currently infected and 107 departments throughout the State of Illinois have been infected by the pandemic since March 17th.

Public Works Director Mike Nystrand reported as follows:

They have installed flags in town. There were a couple of sewer backups that the crew rodded and repaired. There was a water main break and some pre-salting and spraying of the streets prior to a couple of snow events. The Public Works employees have been a big asset in assisting the fire department in picking up COVID items such as the N95 masks. Northfield was the station that all the other departments in the Division came to pick up all their N95's once they were finally released. Practicing appropriate social distancing and PPE guidelines Public

Works will start restoration of all water main break repair areas, cutting grass and general landscaping activities.

Trustee Whittaker commented that he has run into some firefighters from the surrounding communities and they are very impressed with how prepared the Village of Northfield is. They are envious of how well protected the members of the Northfield Fire Rescue. He thanked Chief Nystrand and the Fire Department as well as the Public Works Department. Chief Nystrand said he appreciated that and noted that VM Sigman had mentioned in one of her updates was that Medline has been a great resource for them.

President Frazier thanked Chief Nystrand and all the guys for being so courageous for being on the front lines and transporting patients, because you don't know what you're going into when you go into people's homes. She speaks for everyone that we all appreciate your work.

Police Department

Chief Lustig reported as follows:

For about a month, he has been watching the traffic culture on Willow Road. There were people drag racing down Willow Road so the officers are monitoring Willow as well as the side streets. Crime started an uptick and there was a Porsche stolen on North Happ and three car burglaries. They are back hitting all the villages. They are monitoring the house burglaries as well as the gas station burglaries which are also on the uptick.

Stepan has made donations of PPE's which has been wonderful. They have made hand sanitizers and Northfield was able to share that with five other villages. Residents have been donating masks to the police and fire departments and to other residents. They have been very lucky internally and continue to monitor COVID-19. The building and the squad cars have been sanitized twice within the past month.

Trustee Orth said the presence the police have on Willow Road from Lagoon to the west end of the border makes a difference. He noticed that speeding cars will slow down when they see a squad or drone. They are happy to see the job that the police force is doing during these tough times.

Trustee Whittaker thanked Chief Lustig for showing up to his son's birthday which was posted on Facebook which had almost 560 views and positive comments for the police department.

President Frazier also thanked Chief Lustig for all the work he is doing in dealing with the public on a daily basis because his people don't know about dangers they might have to face with COVID-19.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.