

Norwood Township Board of Trustees Meeting
Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2020 Approved Minutes
Norwood Township Historical Society Schoolhouse

Call to Order – Meeting called to order at 7:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance – by all present

Roll Call – Warner-present, Freds-absent (accessible via phone), Ridenour-present, Smolenyak-present, Spilis-presnet, Deputy Clerk/Recording Secretary Jones-present

Approval of October 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes, MM by Warner to approve minutes as presented, 2nd by Spilis. Motion carried 4-0.

Public Comment related to Agenda –

Vince Currier, Norwood Township Resident, asked the Board to table the EMS Contact with Torch Lake EMS until it can go to Public Comment so the Township residents can get some research done on this subject.

Dan Riley, Norwood Township Resident and Charlevoix City EMS member and Charlevoix Township Fire Department Member, stated that changing over to Torch Lake Township EMS was a terrible idea as they only staff one ALS unit and Charlevoix can staff at least two. He said he understands it is due to financial reasons but feels Charlevoix can give the best care and equipment for Charlevoix. Riley also presented a letter to the Board from MCD Contacting, LLC that stated MDC suggests Norwood Township stays with Charlevoix EMS due to response time to the north end of the Township. (This letter is attached to the minutes).

David Behling, Norwood Township Resident, stated he appreciates the Board’s role and the work that has been done researching this issue and that it is a financial decision. Behling said he agrees that Charlevoix EMS needs to be managed in a better way but would like to have Norwood look at the possibility of an Authority. He wants the Board to make sure they have the information about where the backup units would respond from if the primary unit is not available. He said they staff out of the Bellaire department and feels Torch would assess additional fees for staffing additional EMS personnel. Behling encouraged Board to look at options to serve the Township in a better way.

Approval of Agenda – MM by Warner to approve Agenda, 2nd by Smolenyak. Motion carried 4-0.

Supervisor’s Report –

Supervisor gave status on the progress of the Township Hall. He stated they have placed the ground tubes and the cost is around \$3,000 which became less labor intensive. Swanson’s K & D will be doing backfill by the end of the week. The plumbing lines are in and approved and the concrete will also be done by the end of the week. The building package is expected on January 4, 2021.

Supervisor reported that the retaining wall for the Gross' property has been completed and Bruce Banwell from Earthworks was in and out in three days. After he was complete, he laid 20yds of Stone in the parking area and near the launch and dropped limestone boulders on beach to keep vehicles off beach. The \$10,000 guarantee check was returned to Paul & Nancy Gross since work was completed without damage to beach.

Board of Review will meet December 8, 2020 at the Township Hall at 9:00am unless otherwise designated.

Supervisor received an email from Nakwema Trailways and he read this at the meeting. Ridenour stated he only received the letter at 4:30pm today. The letter is attached later in the minutes.

Treasurer's Report –

Fund Balances: as of 10/31/2020	General:	\$ 49,584.40 (Chx State Bank)
	Vanguard:	243,751.40
	Total:	293,335.99
	Road:	40,033.07
	Emergency:	47,317.00
	Phragmites:	8,262.90
		(includes \$1,405 for Frank Hamilton fund)
	Tax Fund:	19,079.84

Smolenyak reported on the following:

Settlement has been done for tax fund for Summer taxes.

Audit material has been given to Bascom & Kammerman.

Finalized migration of emails from Revise to Rackspace for emails. Rackspace bills only on Credit Card so further discussion this this under New Business.

Discussion on newsletter that will be included in winter tax bills.

Clerk's Report –

Preapproved: \$ 156.00 (GLE)

Unapproved: \$ 5,411.43

Totals: \$ 5,567.43

MM by Smolenyak to approve Clerk's Report to pay bills but Warner asked for a discussion on the Beckett & Raider billing for \$660.50 as he felt they had not done that much work since that last billing cycle. Smolenyak said she would hold that check out until that was reviewed further. Two pending invoices were discussed, the Charlevoix EMS bill and an invoice for the loan payment to Charlevoix State Bank for the new Township hall. Both will be paid pending further review in December. **MM by Smolenyak to approve Clerk's Report to pay bills as amended, 2nd by Warner. Motion carried 4-0.**

Clerk Freds will be on vacation from November 19 through November 29, 2020 and will be back in office on November 30, 2020. Smolenyak also reminded Board and Township Residents that there is a drop box at the Township Hall for taxes.

Trustee's Report –

Warner reported that there were two Planning Commission Meetings and the second meeting was for a combination and split for Lauwers on Lake Shore Dr.

Warner also stated there was a discussion regarding the camping problems there are in the Township and there will be work on the Camping Ordinance. There will be further discussion on this later in the Agenda.

Spilis reported he is working on quotes for the Township Insurance Package. Currently the Township is with Peterson-McGregor in Traverse City. Spilis said he is getting a quote from the current carrier and MRM Agency who specialized in municipality insurance. The renewal is on February 1, 2021 so the quotes should be done for the January Board meeting for a presentation of quotes.

Spilis received a call from AT&T regarding the alleged claim for the breaking of the line in Clipperview so Spilis gave them insurance contact information.

Spilis asked Board and Township residents to review Senate Bill 431 which would eliminate the authority of Townships for Sand & Gravel operations. This is being opposed by the MTA.

Spilis stated there will be upcoming MiOSHA inspections on Township Municipalities

Spilis reported there are Community Energy Management Grants available and he will email this information to Supervisor Ridenour

Zoning Administrator's Report-Supervisor stated the ZA report is on-line.

Supervisor noted at this time that there are electrical issues at the Township Hall so he will contact Electrician to find out what the issue is and get it taken care of.

Old Business –

Torch Lake Ambulance/EMS Contract-

Supervisor reported that the City Council is voting on the cancellation of the EMS Contract between the City of Charlevoix and Norwood Township at the City Council meeting tonight November 16, 2020. Board will vote on an EMS resolution at the December 21, 2020 Township Board Meeting to start a contract beginning January 1, 2021 with Torch Lake Township EMS.

Supervisor gave a presentation to the audience to explain why Norwood Township has to explore other options for EMS/Ambulance services and that Norwood Township has been working with Torch lake Township. Ridenour stated that it is the City of Charlevoix that is getting out of managing the ambulance business and is going to an Authority. There is very little detail on how this would work. There will be an election probably in May of 2021 to vote on a Milage to support the new Authority. With the new authority it will automatically cancel Norwood's existing contract and then Norwood Township would have to agree to go with the new contract as an authority. Norwood is requesting to cancel the existing contract by December 31, 2020. Current contract would require six months noticed but since the existing contract has not been honored, we are asking to be done by December 31, 2020.

Spilis gave example of response times to different areas of Norwood Township from both Charlevoix EMS and Torch Lake EMS.

Warner stated Charlevoix EMS has not followed through with the information requested regarding EMS budget as well as the expenses for Norwood Township and if there is not a change Norwood will have to ask for more taxes from the residents.

Designated Assessor Resolution-

Resolution presented that Appoints the County Assessor for Norwood Township if the Township's Assessor cannot pass audit. **MM by Warner to approve Resolution, 2nd by Smolenyak. Roll call vote: Warner-aye, Ridenour-aye, Smolenyak-aye, Spilis-aye. Motion carried and passed 4-0.**

New Business –

Park Improvements/Rules and Regulations-

Discussion on options to control crowd issues at the Norwood Township Park and Beach. There needs to be identification for the north end of the beach like there is on the south end with limestone rocks. This will prevent vehicles from driving on the beach. This will allow for access for canoes and kayaks only. Discussion on how there needs to be a larger sign for park rules and to put security cameras on new Township Hall. Discussion on the traffic speed on Lake Street and possibly putting in a flashing light. Warner stated he would like to see rocks put in to prevent the vehicular traffic on the beach and more signs posted with rules.

Smolenyak did feel speed limit signs have make a difference on the Lake Street traffic, feels additional rocks being placed would be helpful and a deterrent from parking on middle grassy section between park and beach. She would like to see two more signs with rules posted other than what is on the current restroom building.

Warner will get contact information to Supervisor for additional signs for Park and path area and Ridenour will get quote from Bruce Banwell of Earthworks for more rocks.

Assessor Department Buyups-

Smolenyak said this should be Equalization, not Assessor. Discussion on purchasing aerial maps of the Township which Supervisor felt would be good for the Zoning Administrator. The Cost would be \$2,019.00 and 25% down would be required then balance would be due after the next fiscal year. Smolenyak was concerned if they were more current than Google Earth. Spilis stated he was not in favor of this if the maps were not going to be used that often. Warner stated maps can be purchased from the USDA Farm Service Agency and felt it was not feasible for the Township to purchase aerial maps from Equalization. Smolenyak stated she will call Emily at Equalization and see if there would be any benefit for the Township. Further discussion tabled to December 21, 2020 Board Meeting.

Electronic Meetings Remotely under Act 228-

Proposal from Township Attorney Graham for \$300.00 to write up procedures for Act 228 which is a law for Zoom Meetings for public attendance.

MM by Warner to approve cost of \$300.00 to have Attorney Graham to write up procedure for Act 228, 2nd by Spilis. Motion carried and approved 4-0.

Camping Ordinance and Definitions Revisions-

Supervisor Ridenour and Treasurer Smolenyak attended November 9, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting regarding Camping Ordinance. Discussion that Sections 311, 311B and 312 need to be combined and revised by the Township Attorney. Supervisor Ridenour and Planning Commission Chairman Kolka have been discussing and will meet with Attorney.

Emails/Revise-

All emails have been migrated from Revise to Rackspace. Revise was charging \$1,008 per year for twelve emails and Rackspace charges \$433 per year. This includes updating security settings. Smolenyak advised if traveling then use Rackspace application for email.

Credit Card-

Discussion on obtaining a Credit Card for the Township. This will only be used for larger purchases or for any bills that can be auto pay such as the Rackspace invoices. A resolution will be presented at the December 21, 2020 Board Meeting. Smolenyak will send in application so it will be available when Resolution is presented and approved.

Announcements & Correspondence –

Next Township Board Meeting will be December 21, 2020. It will be posted on the web site whether meeting will be held electronically, at the Township Hall or the Historical Society Schoolhouse.

Smolenyak announced that the Charlevoix Public Library will be closed until at least December 9, 2020 due to COVID. Jones stated the new computer will be up and running by the next Board meeting. Ridenour read letter from Manthei Development Corporation regarding EMS support. Letter attached to minutes.

Public Comment –

Jim Schlappi, Norwood Township Resident and retired Charlevoix City Police Officer after serving for 26.5 years. Schlappi stated he felt the decision of the Township to change to Torch Lake EMS was not a benefit of Norwood Township as a whole. Schlappi said he recently found out that Torch Lake EMS has two units, one ALS and one BLS. One unit is 12 years old and the other is 20+ years old. He said the cost of a new ambulance is approximately \$250,000 if not more and is worried Norwood would have to absorb the cost of a new ambulance when needed. He went on to say that Torch Lake EMS is part of the Antrim County EMS Authority and would need to draw from Torch Lake, Bellaire and Mancelona and asked who would pay for new ambulances when needed and if the cost will get shifted to Norwood Township. Schlappi stated he work on Charlevoix EMS years ago but when Charlevoix went to ALS they offered 24 hour personnel so costs increased. In order to get Paramedics to work the City had to pay out more for personnel. Schlappi asked if Torch Lake EMS will get burned out due to the additional runs to Norwood and if so will they ask for additional funds. He also stated that he feels in a year or two all EMS costs will increase including personnel and the replacement of equipment. Schlappi said he googled miles and minutes for response times from both Charlevoix and Torch Lake:

Township Hall (Torch Lake 12 miles 14 minutes)(Charlevoix 10 miles 12 minutes)

Old Orchard/Faculak (Torch Lake 13 miles 14 minutes)(Charlevoix 7.8 miles 12 minutes)

MDC (Torch Lake 16 miles 17 minutes)(Charlevoix 3.8 miles 7 minutes)

Haggards (Torch Lake 17 miles 18 minutes)(Charlevoix 2.6 miles 5 minutes)

So he is concerned about response times and miles to calls throughout Norwood Township. Also concerns about the response time if law enforcement requested additional EMS personnel on scenes. Schlappi also pointed out that Banks Township has a mutual aid agreement with Charlevoix Township and if EMS is needed who responds to the scene. Schlappi felt the Township Board should go back to the City of Charlevoix to rectify the financial problems between the two entities. Schlappi thanked the Township for their time involved with this issue and for the time to speak about it.

David Behling spoke again stating he wished there would have been more information and communication on this issue but appreciates the time and work the Township Supervisor and Board has put into this. Behling stated he went on to Torch Lake Township's web site and said the information on the web site was poor and not updated. He feels the honeymoon phase will end at the signing of the contract and would like Norwood to look into this a little further.

Vince Currier spoke again and asked Supervisor to talk to City Manager, Mark Heydlauff, and sit down and work things out.

Ridenour responded by stating he felt this would not change things as the City has already decided to go to an Authority so in effect they have cancelled Norwood Township's contract.

Schlappi feels the City Manager is looking for the best solution for both sides.

Matt Umulis, Norwood Resident and City of Charlevoix Police Officer, stated he feels the age of the equipment that has been purchased by Charlevoix EMS is not fair or accurate as stated by the Supervisor.

The supervisor again stated that the Township will need to approve one mil for fire and one mil for ambulance service if they decide to stay with Charlevoix EMS currently it is 1 mil for both.

Behling stated that the Township should investigate how EMS authorities work and propose they ask for better accountability by Charlevoix to stabilize costs.

Courier again stated that the Township board should use resources and investigate more on how changing over to Torch Lake EMS will work for Norwood Township.

Ridenour stated that the citizens of Charlevoix should demand an independent audit of the EMS system to figure out why there is such a deficit to the EMS budget.

Dan Thorp, Charlevoix Township Fire Chief, was concerned that if there was a structure fire in Norwood Township and Torch Lake EMS was on standby for the structure fire would there be enough personnel to go to another EMS call if need be.

Ridenour stated that the torch Lake Township administrator would be at the December board meeting and encouraged residents to attend this meeting.

Shari Jones, Norwood Township resident, Norwood Township Recording Secretary and Deputy Clerk, understood the concerns of the residents but also felt the residents should look at why Norwood Township is looking into another EMS system. Jones said that she was on Charlevoix EMS for several years and feels there is no reason Charlevoix EMS should not divulge the statistic on the runs for Norwood Township. This should be done for accountability. Jones was also concerned about the response time from Torch Lake but at the same time knows that the Township board would not make a hasty decision without looking at all the facts. Jones also stated she was concerned about the costs with Charlevoix EMS and feels that money is being wasted by ambulances sitting around and running all the time. Jones noted that when she was on Charlevoix EMS everyone responded from home or they

staged at the City Hall Fire Department to cut down on response times this did not waste money while rigs were running.

Smolenyak noted that these EMS issues have been addressed at the Board Meetings over the past six months and the minutes from board meetings are posted on the Township website for all to view so this is not a new issue for the Township as people have suggested.

Spilis stated he appreciates the passion of the residents of the Township but also noted that the Township board is doing the best they can to lookout for the residents of Norwood Township. Spilis stated the Township board must deal with the facts at hand.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by Shari M. Jones, Recording Secretary