

MINUTES FROM NORTHFIELD VILLAGE CAUCUS MEETING (2/15/2021)

The meeting was called to order on Zoom at 7:10 PM by Chair David Woodyatt and the following current Caucus members were present: Marco Aiello, Al Chircop, Shelley Cohen, Michael Cohen, Barnaby Dinges, Jonathan Don, Ericka Foster, Mark Gantner, Bill Gould, William Kelly, Jerry Mulick, Keith Reed, Jeannie Scully, Beverly Smith, Cricket Trutter Hauff and David Woodyatt. Also present were Charlie Orth, John Goodwin, Matt Galin and Tom Terrill.

1. Upon motion made by Shelley Cohen and second by Cricket, the minutes from the Caucus Biennial Town Meeting (10/29/2020) were unanimously approved.
2. Mark Gantner (Treasurer) reported that our current balance in the bank is \$1032.86. He said that the only annual expenditure was for our Post Office box (\$64) and we did receive a donation of \$25 from a Village resident.
3. Comments were first made by retiring Village Trustees John Goodwin, followed by Tom Terrill. John enjoyed his term as Trustee and the 32 years he has lived in Northfield with his family (his twin daughters are now 28). He had positive comments about the Village's 2040 Plan, the Village's adherence to its financial budget, the Village's concern about how the Village grows, its work on the Downtown plans and the Skokie Valley Trail. He mentioned that the Trustees are in the process of revisiting the question of legalizing marijuana dispensaries in the Village with Trustee Tom Whittiker heading up that issue again. He thought it was helpful for the Trustees to attend some Caucus meetings and most of the Village Commission meetings and he intends to come back as a member of the Caucus. Tom also was positive about the Village management team and intends to come back as a Caucus member after finishing his Trustee term. He said that he has been so impressed with the Village that he is transferring all his prescription drug purchases over to the Northfield Walgreens and he encouraged everyone to shop locally. He gave as an example of how "enlightened" the Village has been in the past by the way it has handled its Fire Department personnel through individual agreements, which permits everyone to be more flexible in their work assignments. He thinks the Village has done a good job getting grant money and in helping residents with street maintenance problems. Current trustee Charlie Orth mentioned at this point the work the Board has done to help local business owners handle the current pandemic and to plan for future business development in town. Tom pointed out that the Village has a 7.5 month reserve to meet emergencies and that's the main reason the Village has a AAA rating which lowers the cost of borrowing. Tom was very positive about Greg Lungmus being our new Village President and complimented Charlie, Tom Whittaker and Todd Fowler on their contribution during their first terms as Board trustees. Tom has long-served other communities when he was their resident, but he said that Northfield is a very special community and that it was an "honor and a joy" for him to have served as a Northfield Village Trustee.
4. David gave the membership report by stating that we had 25 Caucus members during most of 2020 but that 4 will be removed this year due to health or time commitment problems—they are John Kemper, Genie Cooper and Dave Fullerton-- and Barnaby Dinges will most likely become a new Trustee. Then if Goodwin and Terrill become Caucus members after their Trustee terms, that will bring the Caucus membership up to 23. But the consensus of the Caucus is to try to add several new Caucus members over the next year or so. David mentioned that Caucus member Beverly Smith has volunteered to help him with membership recruitment.

5. Thus, a motion made by Al Chircop and seconded by Jeannie Scully to elect the aforementioned 21 Caucus members to two year terms commencing April 2021 was unanimously passed.
6. David reported on his several conversations with Caucus members to be officers of the Caucus commencing April 2021. His recommendations based on these conversations for the officers of the Caucus starting April 2021 are the following: He is willing to serve another term as Chairman; Keith Reed would serve as Vice Chairman; Ericka Foster would be Secretary; and Mark Gantner would continue as Treasurer. Upon motion made by Al Chircop and seconded by Cricket Trutter Hauff, the motion was unanimously approved.
7. David has spent considerable time on a wide range of Caucus matters over the last two years and has had the opportunity to develop several thoughtful suggestions to clarify and improve the Caucus process. Among them are the following: The many committees listed in the Caucus Bylaws should be reviewed as to what they have done over recent years, who has actually done that work and what changes should be made to our committee system; the purpose of the Caucus Biennial town meeting should be reviewed to make it more helpful to selected Trustee candidates to get their application forms signed and to better help them understand the other election procedures and time tables; the time tables leading up to the Trustee election need to be reviewed and made more helpful to the candidates; David would like to continue to get some Caucus representation from the far SE corner of Northfield which is south of Winnetka Avenue. David also reported that Charlie Orth did a great job in helping the census bureau get a good turnout of our residents to complete the census forms—about 5534 residents did so. (Towards the end of David's comments a Caucus member asked if there was a certain number of Caucus members required by the current Bylaws—Article X of the current Bylaws was amended 10/3/2019 to remove any requirement of a specific number of Caucus members.)
8. As the meeting was concluding, Al thanked for their service our retiring Trustees (John and Tom), the three that were elected in 2019 (Charlie, Tom and Todd) and the three new Trustees who will most likely serve the Village after the upcoming election (Barnaby Dinges, Matthew Galin and Tracy Mendrek.) A motion then made by Cricket Trutter Hauff to adjourn the meeting was seconded by Jerry Mulick and unanimously approved.

Minutes prepared by Caucus Secretary, Keith A. Reed.