

MINUTES OF NORTHFIELD VILLAGE CAUCUS MEETING 9/12/23

Those members present were Beverly Smith, Al Chircop, Keith Reed, Becky Newport, David Woodyatt, Michael Cohen, Dennis Culloton, Kathy Estabrooke, Laura Felicione, Carol Ritchell, Ericka Foster and Jerry Mulick. Guests were 2 Village Trustees Matt Galin and Todd Fowler, potential Caucus members Amanda Alpert Knight and Katie Lutz, and special guest was grade school student Caleb Cohen (Michael's son who was on school assignment to attend a well-run Community board meeting). The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM in the Park District conference room.

Upon motion made by Dennis Culloton and seconded by Dave Woodyatt, the members present unanimously approved the minutes of the 6/8/23 and 7/11/23 Caucus meetings.

TREASURER REPORT: Ericka reported that the Caucus bank account remains at \$836.36.

MEMBERSHIP: Beverly introduced Amanda Alpert Knight and Katie Lutz as potential Caucus members. They both have children in local schools, live in Northfield, have served on local school boards and the Park District Board and have had significant experience in the school teaching profession. They were encouraged to return for the next (and their second) Caucus meeting for a membership vote.

SURVEY RESULTS: Michael reported that there were over 240 residents who responded to the Caucus Survey and there were about 80 of those residents who took the time to respond to the Survey's "open ended" questions (in addition to the multiple choice questions). Many of the open ended questions dealt with such issues as improving local restaurants, Village road and walkway conditions/maintenance, legalization of gambling and cannabis, better control of type of night lighting being used by residents for security purposes, reinstatement of the former Saturday morning "farmer's market", and Village official salaries/benefits.

There was an extensive discussion about extending the August 31 deadline for residents to complete and file the Caucus survey in view of the many upcoming resident activities such as little league sports, neighborhood parties, and Halloween. A motion by Al Chircop and second by Michael Cohen to extend the survey deadline to November 30, 2023 was unanimously approved by the members.

OVERSIGHT: Dave reported that there has been increased resident interest and involvement with the personnel and issue disputes regarding the Village Board (VB), but that it seems that there has been recent improvement in the Village working environment. He said that the Village is operating within its budget and that our interim Village Manager, Tim Frenzer, has done a nice job filling in but is not interested in doing the job on a permanent basis. Dave also reported that the Village is starting to plan its 2026 Centennial celebration and that the Village expects its Cannabis operation to open for business within the next 60 to 90 days.

TRUSTEE REPORT: We enjoyed the conversation with the two trustees who were guests at our meeting, Matt Galin and Todd Fowler, who discussed the following items: That the working environment of the VB has improved; that interviewing and hiring the next Village Manager is a number one priority; other important issues are the Village library renovation plans and the possibility of selling or leasing the Village Post Office space; that Stacey has been assigned to head up these two issues as well as the Happ Road/Winnetka Avenue bridge project; that Tim Frenzer will also be assisting with these as well as other projects but that he is a part time employee; and that the Village has responded to a resident who recently stated at the August VB meeting that certain requests have not been addressed by the Village.

NEW BUSINESS: Al Chircop reported that next April the Caucus will be tasked with the selection of candidates for 3 Village trustee positions and the President position. He said that we will discuss this task with the local School Board Caucus which is suggesting we coordinate our efforts to find qualified candidates, but in the meantime all Caucus members should keep an eye open for qualified Caucus candidates. Beverly reported that the proposed "dog park" on the Park District property N and NE of Middlefork School has been put on hold pending other thoughts/proposals about how the Park District can better serve the Village's youth population. Caucus member Dennis Culloton raised the advantages of the Caucus raising funds to help with expenses of residents running for a Caucus position. Beverly suggested that we research that idea and discuss it at our next Caucus meeting.

There being no further business, a motion made by Ericka Foster and seconded by Kathy Estabrooke to adjourn the meeting was accepted by a majority of those present and the meeting was adjourned at about 8:30 PM.

Minutes prepared by Keith A. Reed, Caucus Secretary *Keith A. Reed*