

## MINUTES FROM NORTHFIELD VILLAGE CAUCUS MEETING (7/21/2021)

The in-person meeting was called to order at the Northfield Library at 7:05 PM by Chair David Woodyatt and the following current Caucus members were present: Keith Reed, David Woodyatt, Shelley Cohen, Kathy Estabrooke, Mark Gantner, Cricket Hauff, Ericka Foster, Al Chircop, Beverly Smith, John Goodwin. Also present were guests: Chief Bill Lustig and Melissa Morgan (Winnetka Northfield Library)

### Guest Report – Chief Lustig

Chief Lustig presented first. Chief Lustig distributed the Police Department's annual report. Chief Lustig provided a brief update on activities in the police department. He noted that the Deputy Chief resigned and he promoted new deputy chief. As a result of this, he made an additional promotion and needed to hire a new police officer. The Police Commission met and posted for a lateral police candidate. Out of nine applicants, seven were disqualified. The Department interviewed two and made a conditional offer to one. In addition, the Department has another officer out on leave due to an injury from a traffic stop. With respect to Village crime and safety, the first seven months started out well regarding car burglaries until two weeks ago when eight vehicles were stolen from Fields (five on one night and three on another night). All the vehicles were recovered out of Chicago. There were also two recent burglaries. A week ago in 2100 block of Northgate there was a daytime residential burglary between 4:00-6:00 pm at a corner house. Five days later there was a similar burglary on Latrobe between 11:30-4:00 pm. In response to these activities, the police are monitoring car dealerships and residential neighborhoods. Things have otherwise been quiet in the Village. Chief Lustig estimates that they receive 800-1000 calls per month. The Police Department also does special watches. Speeding on Willow Road will always be a problem. Chief Lustig also notes mental health continues to be a concern. The Police Department has a part-time psychologist who follows up on mental health and domestic calls. The Police Department is seeing anxiety disorders, lack of coping skills and bullying. When the Police Department receives mental health calls it can tie up an entire shift.

Chief Lustig reports that the community is generally supportive of the Police Department. All traffic stops are audio and video recorded. The Police Department does need one more officer and Chief would like to have a woman in the Department but they haven't found a female candidate. They are hoping this current candidate is successful with the psychological test. With respect to the recent residential burglaries the Chief believes it was the same perpetrators. He notes that they are in and out quickly. They wear gloves and hoodies so they leave no physical evidence and they typically head to the master bedroom.

In response to an inquiry, Chief Lustig confirmed that we have no registered sex offenders in Northfield.

With respect to Covid vaccinations, Chief Lustig explained that not all our officers, firefighters or paramedics are vaccinated. Masks are required.

### CAUCUS BUSINESS

1. Upon motion made by Cricket and second by Kathy, the minutes from the April 26, 2021 were unanimously approved.
2. Mark Gantner, Treasurer, reported that the Caucus bank account balance remained \$1,032.86 with no deposits and no expenditures.

3. Beverly Smith provided the Membership Committee Report. Beverly noted that Kathy prepared a good summary about what the Caucus does. Beverly also noted that they are working on three potential new Caucus members. Marsha Balsamo and Bill Gould requested resignation. Al Chircop moved and John Goodwin seconded. The Caucus unanimously approved.
4. Oversight Committee Report – Michael Cohen is the Chairman. Michael is going to Village Board meetings and will report back to the Caucus. Michael held a meeting of the Committee and Bill Kelly is on that Committee as well. They could use another member. The Village Board meeting last night was quiet. The Board approve roofing Village Hall. There has been an increase in Covid cases in the Village. Mosquito Abatement found West Nile in Northfield. Someone stole stop signs for cyclists and the Village contacted the Forest Preserve for new sign. The Village changed dog bite ordinance. Previously if bit someone three times the dog had to be taken out of state or put down. Now the bites include another animal not just a human. Village operated at a deficit but it was lower than expected. Pension fund is up 25.9%. Goodwin explained Board is willing to take another look at Cannabis again.
5. Communications Committee - Dennis is heading up the Communications Committee, with Larry Russell on the committee as well. The Committee does most work in second year of the election cycle. At the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Village Board it came up that the Village is interested in doing a survey as well. David met with Village Manager and Village President and the Caucus and Village agreed to work collaboratively on the survey together but officially the survey will be a Village survey to ensure separation between the Village and the Caucus. The Village is willing to have caucus involved in preparing survey. Village staff will start working on it and the Caucus will submit list of topics and questions. We have a binder with prior surveys of Caucus and Villages of Winnetka and Northfield. Kathy Estabrooke will look for a survey in her files.
6. Biennial Meeting – The Caucus usually has the Biennial Meeting quickly after selection of candidates but months before elections. If purpose of meeting is to formally introduce our candidates, seems we need to consider timing. The Caucus discussed what the purpose is, timing and format. Al and David will make a proposal and bring it back to the Caucus.
7. Friends of Northfield Foundation – There was previously a Friends of Northfield Foundation and it was a foundation vehicle that allowed residents to make tax deductible gifts to the Village. Foundation fell on hard times. Remaining funds in Foundation were shifted to the Park District Foundation. The Village has indicated a desire to revisit this type of foundation. Funds could be used for a variety of things including the centennial celebration. David met with Village Manager on this subject to and they are discussing with the Park District. Subject is on hold for now. Park District Foundation is going through leadership changes. If members have an interest they should let David know.

#### Guest Report – Melissa Morgan

Guest Melissa Morgan with the Northfield Library provided summary on Library. Melissa noted that the Library has purchased Meeting Owl; which has a virtual component which can combined an in-person and virtual participation. The library also has a Zoom subscription. Melissa is the Manager of the library and Monica is the new director. The library room that the Caucus typically utilizes has a ventilation issue, it has a musty odor. Melissa provided a history of recent changes with respect to

the Library. In January 2019, the previous Director separated. The Assistant Director was promoted to temporary interim Director. Then with the pandemic, the library closed its doors on March 14. Board reviews budget normally but given the pandemic it made no changes. The Library convened a Search Committee to find a new director. The initial interim Director went on medical leave in July. A new interim Director was appointed for July – Oct. In June 2020 trustees started a search committee and had three candidates and ultimately hired Monica. Monica's main goal is to make it a good place to work. She made some immediate changes to function efficiently. She had a compensation benchmark completed. She did benefits for all part time (15 hours) to full time. She created formal job descriptions and realigned staff to put talent and skills to use. Monica restored the Northfield branch as its own department again. She has promoted 10 individuals internally. There was a lot of attrition historically that has not been replaced. Overall, there are 39 employees down from 54 and the Northfield branch used to have 12 and now only has 7 employees. Because Monica increased salaries and benefits they could not increase hiring. The Library is currently undergoing a robust strategic plan. The last plan was 2014 with a consultant and they now have a new consultant since January who has engaged community and staff. They hope to have results in September. The Library usage is still below historical usage but there has been increased use of electronic resources. The Library started doing curbside in September and re-opened again on February 8. The Library is slowly expanding hours and in Fall they hope to have pop up story times again as permitted by staffing and ventilation.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55. Kathy moved Cricket seconded

Minutes prepared by Caucus Secretary, Ericka K Foster