

## MINUTES OF NORTHFIELD VILLAGE CAUCUS MEETING-- 1/30/24

Those members present were Beverly Smith, Kathy Estabrooke, Keith Reed, Dennis Culloton, Michael Cohen, Ericka Foster and David Woodyatt and Becky Newport. Guests were Charlie Orth, Chaya Rubenstein, Sue Kelly, Bob Wolf, Ed Elfmann, Libby Galin, John Donnelly and Ranjini Shankar. Attending their second meeting were Amanda Alpert Knight and Katie Lutz.

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm in the Park District conference room. Upon motion made by Dennis Colloton and seconded by Ericka Foster, the Caucus minutes from the 9/12/23 meeting were unanimously approved.

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

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS FROM OTHER VILLAGE CAUCUSES:** A number of our guests were present to describe the type of activity they have in recruiting members for their organization's boards—most of the discussion centered around the local Northfield schools and Park Board District. Generally, all those mentioned have had problems recruiting candidates from the Village's residents—an interesting observation was that the Village needs older people to serve on some of the boards like the Park District since their children are older and are big users of Park District facilities. None of the organizations do much fund raising to attract their board candidates and fundraising is not usually required unless the election is being contested resulting in a campaign by several candidates. The consensus of this conversation was that the various Village boards could help each other by being aware of what type of people and experience the various community boards are looking for and to share information to encourage prospects to volunteer to join and participate in at least one Village board activity.

**OVERSIGHT:** Dave reported on recent Village Board meetings where topics of discussion were-- development on the search for a new Village Manager, the appropriate job description language and amount of salary for such position, the Board finalizing a new contract with the Call Center and its efforts to be able to stream its Board meetings. The Village's finances seem to be in order and it has benefited from recent higher interest rates on its investments. Being the only trustee present, Charlie commented that the Village Board will be busy in March working on the Village budget and holding some public meetings to discuss same.

**SURVEY RESULTS;** Michael Cohen reported that we had about 243 responses to our recent Village survey. He thought that there were many good comments on the subjects in addition to the multiple-choice questions. It appears that the Village residents are mostly concerned about taxes, our Village Center development, increased criminal activity and compliance with building codes, but not so much with the cannabis facility being built on Waukegan Road. He said that generally only about 1/3 of our residents have much information about Village operations and that the Northfield Plan is unknown to most of our residents. Dave Woodyatt moved that we put the survey results on the website and send to the Village Board and the motion was seconded by Kathy Estabrooke. The motion was voted upon and passed unanimously. Dave thought it would be beneficial for the original Caucus Survey Committee to meet and discuss what we should do in the future with the survey results and whether we needed to review and perhaps amend the Village Platform. Beverly said we would have a survey committee meeting before the next quarterly meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Dennis Culloton reported on his Northbrook experience in fund raising to help candidates run for its village board positions. After Dave W mentioned that we haven't had

many contested elections which haven't forced candidates to fund raise, Dennis said he would give this subject more thought and get back to us in a future meeting.

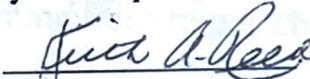
Beverly asked that all present who were not members please leave the room so that we could vote on the prospective members here tonight, Katie Lutz and Amanda Knight, in executive session. Upon a motion made by Ericka Foster and seconded by Michael Cohen, both were unanimously approved to be members. Beverly then went outside and asked that all who wished to rejoin meeting to come back in room.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Our new member Katie Lutz reported on the developments of the Village's recent meetings on the establishment of a fenced-in dog park on the Park District property just north of Middlefork School. She said that there was a lot of resident discussion on this matter and it involves several tough issues, but the matter is still being pursued keeping in mind the safety of residents, school children and the costs of alternative locations.

Kathy Estabrooke raised an issue early in the meeting addressing her concern about the lack of involvement of our Caucus members in Village Board meetings or other Village activities. Kathy presented a list of 11 questions (attached hereto) that she suggested our Caucus members study and have knowledge about since we will soon be slating 3 village Trustees and a Village President.

There being no further business, a motion made by Becky Newport and seconded by Dave Woodyatt to adjourn the meeting was passed by a majority of those present and the meeting was adjourned at about 8:45 pm.

Minutes prepared by Keith A. Reed, Caucus Secretary



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- Do you know the name of our interim Village Manager?
  - Is there a project to upgrade Happ Rd and if so, is a roundabout with a fountain included in that project? Do you know how many on-street parking spot will be lost during this project?
  - Do you know how many police officers we currently employ? Is that a full complement or are we low on staff?
  - Why have many full time village positions turned into part time positions?
  - Why are so many village employees still working from home?
  - Do you know what's going on with the library building?
  - Do you know what's happening with our legal representation?
  - Do you know the status of the crosswalk upgrade at Lagoon and Winnetka Ave? Is there a proposal to make more crosswalks in the village safer?
  - Is there a sidewalk committee? If so, are they ready to make a recommendation?
  - Are the Village finances healthy?
  - Do you know where the money is coming from to pay the Executive Director of Special Projects salary?
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