

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER - 2019

Northfield Township Board

Mike Groth, Chairperson (First elected in 1996) 507-645-5063

Brian Peterson, Supervisor (First elected in 1998) 507-649-1888

Ron Sommers, Road Supervisor (First elected in 2012) 507-645-7058

Jessi Hubers, Treasurer (First elected in 2019) 612-242-8817

Diane Lyman, Clerk (First elected in 2018) 507-663-1068

Township email: northfieldtwp@northfieldwifi.com

The Township Board meets at 7:00 P.M. on the second Tuesday of each month. The known exception is the month of March. The 2020 Annual Meeting will be held on March 10 and the regular March 2020 meeting will be held March 17. Meetings are held at the Northfield Town Hall located at 10901 Jacobs Avenue. If there is a change from the regular meeting night, a notice is published in the legal notices of the Northfield News, and a notice is posted at the Town Hall.

Residents are invited to attend the monthly meetings. If anyone has a special concern to be discussed on the monthly agenda, please call the clerk by Monday noon prior to the meeting date.

Snow Season

Residents are reminded that according to MN Statute 160.2715 **it is illegal and punishable as a misdemeanor to plow, shovel, or place snow onto township roadways.** Similar rules apply on county and state roads. **Snow from your property should be plowed and stored on your own property and not pushed across roads.** Civil penalties may apply if the placement of snow creates a hazard that contributes to a motor vehicle crash or pedestrian injury. The civil penalty can extend to both the property owner and the person who places the snow.

Some reminders on Northfield Township's Snow Removal Policies.....

The township's plow usually does not go out until a snowfall has ended.

The plow will not be sent out during a time when poor visibility will make plowing dangerous.

The driver alternates starting the snow removal from one of the four quadrants of the township – north, south, east, and west. The starting point rotates with each snow event.

Salt, sand, and chips are applied, as needed, to increase the safety of the road surface.

The township is not responsible for snow thrown in driveways, damage done to mailboxes, fences, etc., due to thrown snow or equipment hitting these objects, or damage to landscaping within the road right-of-way.

Road Maintenance

Northfield Township maintains 37.85 miles of roadway. Each spring the supervisors determine which roads need crushed rock. Heavily traveled roads may need crushed rock every year, but most roads are on a two year cycle. Weather permitting, crushed rock is scheduled to be delivered and spread on roads in late May or early June, and dust control is applied as soon as possible after the new crushed rock is graded. The township has warning signs and barricades that can be put in place to alert drivers to hazardous conditions or roads that are temporarily closed. Please call one of the township officers if you find debris on the roads or other dangerous conditions so that they can resolve the problem or take action to warn others if needed.

Dust Control

Most of the roads maintained by Northfield Township have a gravel surface, and a few of the roads maintained by the county within the township also have a gravel surface. Each year, the application of liquid chloride is made available to residents to control dust. The cost of this dust control is paid by the residents requesting it. The application of chloride is scheduled after the crushed rock has been delivered and graded. Weather and gravel availability are the biggest factors in the timing of application.

In April, residents who participated in dust control the previous year are mailed information about the program. Anyone wishing to apply for dust control for the first time can call the clerk for more information. Stakes are available for marking the area where residents wish to have dust control applied. One of the supervisors rides along with the truck driver who is dispensing the liquid chloride to

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER - 2019

help with making sure that the product is applied at the correct residences.

Burning Permits

Burning permits are available on-line through the Minnesota DNR's website: www.dnr.state.mn.us/burningpermits. The applicant needs to provide their name, address, phone number, and the legal description of where the burning will take place. The legal description can be found on a tax statement or deed for the property. Information on the website will tell you how to activate the permits on the day or days when you want to burn. The permits are valid for the calendar year. If you have questions about what can be burned and when, visit the DNR's website: www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/questions.html

Driveway Permits

Permits for new driveways or additional driveways must be approved by the township board for residents who live on a road that is maintained by the township. Driveways must be built according to MN Statute 160.2715. The cost for a driveway permit in 2020 is \$100. When applying for a driveway permit, a resident must also pay a \$500 deposit. When the driveway has been completed, the driveway inspected by a supervisor and the requirements have been satisfied, the \$500 will be returned to the resident. Please call the clerk or one of the supervisors if you wish to obtain a driveway permit application.

Building Permits

Planning and zoning in Northfield Township is done by Rice County. Residents needing a building permit should contact the Rice County Planning and Zoning Office.

Wild Parsnip

In recent years, the noxious weed called Wild Parsnip has spread into many parts of Minnesota, especially in road ditches where it is often spread by mowing. It frequently spreads into adjacent grassy areas. If the weed's sap comes in contact with a person's skin, serious burning and blistering can result. In an effort to slow the spread and reduce the impact of this weed, supervisors explored various control methods. In 2017 and 2018, we hired an outside vendor to spray early in the spring.

In 2018, we began a collaboration with Bridgewater Township and, with the assistance of then Representative David Bly and others, the two townships were fortunate to secure a Minnesota Department of Agriculture grant totaling \$15,000 to allow us to adopt a stronger wild parsnip control plan. Nancy Braker, Manager of the Carleton Arboretum, and Neil Slifka of the Minnesota DNR provided assistance and with the help of a summer intern supplied by Carleton College, we surveyed infestation levels along township, county and state roadways within the two townships and entered the collected data into a computer mapping system recommended by the DNR. The survey enabled us to better target areas for spraying.

In 2019, ditches along roads maintained by Northfield Township were sprayed by a township employee using equipment that allowed us to more specifically target wild parsnip infested areas. Grant funding also helped us expand our spraying program to include infested areas along County and State road ditches within the two townships where infestations were most severe. We are optimistic about the results of our targeted control program and hope to use our mapping data to continue the program in 2020.

To assist with funding for continuation of this program, we are applying for a slightly different, larger, two-year grant for which we hope to qualify by expanding our collaboration to include Northfield, Bridgewater as well as Greenvale and Waterford Townships. We hope that the success of this program over a wider area will prompt county and state officials as well as other townships to dedicate increased effort toward the control of this troubling weed.

If residents have areas along their property where they wish to have no spraying, "Do Not Spray" signs can be purchased for \$15 per pair including 2 signs and two posts. The signs should be clearly visible facing traffic and should mark the beginning and end of the "do not spray" area. *In "do not spray" areas, the property owner is responsible for keeping the posted area clear of all noxious weeds. The township reserves the right to spray if noxious weeds in the posted area are not removed by the resident.* Please call the clerk or one of the supervisors if you wish to purchase and install these signs. Do Not Spray signs must be in place by **June 1, 2020**.

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER - 2019

Elections

The Northfield Town Hall will continue to be the polling place for Northfield Township residents for township, state, and federal elections as it has been in the past. Absentee ballots are administered by the Rice County Property Tax & Elections Department.

Primary Election – Tuesday, March 3

Township Day – Tuesday, March 10. Election of Supervisor and Clerk. Polls open 2:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Annual meeting at 8:05 pm.

General Election – November 3

Township Day in Minnesota

In 2020, the Township Election will be held on Tuesday, March 10th. To be elected in 2020 are one supervisor for a 3-year-term (position currently held by Mike Groth) and one clerk for a 2-year-term (position currently held by Diane Lyman). Filing for these offices begins on Tuesday, December 31, 2019 and ends at 5 P.M. on Tuesday, January 14, 2020. Affidavits of candidacy can be filed with the clerk at 9090 100th St. E., Northfield. Please call the clerk (507-663-1068) to arrange a time to complete paperwork. Filing fee is \$2. On March 10th, the polls will be open from 2 P.M. until 8 P.M. The township annual meeting will follow the closing of the polls.

A Note from the Clerk

Last March we said thank you and goodbye to another long-time township officer. Karen Zimmerman retired as treasurer after 38 years of excellent, dedicated service to Northfield Township. We also welcomed Jessi Hubers to the Board as the newly elected treasurer. The treasurer is a great steward of our funds, keeping books balanced and bills paid. There is so much that goes on behind the scenes to support the infrastructure and residents of our township. Your supervisors are always on call and on the lookout for the safety and well-being of our residents. I thank all of our elected officials for their service and hope you will express a word of appreciation to our current board members when you see Ron, Mike, Brian and Jessi out and about.

September 20, 2018 Tornadoes

As you are aware, Northfield Township and the surrounding area were hit by tornado activity on September 20, 2018. Damage to the town hall and

grounds was addressed and repairs made. The township was also charged with cleaning up significant debris along the roads. While we have insurance on the town hall itself, all other cleanup and restoration expenses are considered uninsured costs. After all uninsured expenses were paid, we submitted these expenses for reimbursement consideration from the State of Minnesota HSEM program. Through this program, we were eligible to receive a state-funded reimbursement for 75% of our uninsured, qualified expenses. A claim in the amount of \$49,257.50 was submitted on behalf of Northfield Township. We are pleased to let our taxpayers know that the claim was accepted and we received the full 75% reimbursement in the amount of \$36,943.13!

CENSUS 2020

Every 10 years, the federal government undertakes a full count of the population as mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The count is used not only to accurately know the number of people residing in the country, but also to allocate resources. The population of townships, counties and states found in the 2020 Census will determine their political representation, federal funding and growth opportunities for the following decade. The 2020 Census is an opportunity for communities and demographics to claim their fair share of representation and resources. The census will be available online for the first time in 2020! People can respond in one of three ways: online, by phone or by mail. The following are important dates regarding the Census:

April 1, 2020: Every home will receive an invitation to participate in the count. If you have two homes, you should complete the census in that comes to your main residence.

April 2020: Census takers visit college dormitories, senior living facilities and other large group housing to conduct quality check interviews for an accurate count.

May 2020: Census takers visit homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census. They will visit up to three times to try to count the home. They do not need to enter your home or look around inside your home to complete the census!

Late July to Early August 2020: Counting wraps up and census takers no longer go out in the field.

Northfield Township – Receipts and Disbursements for recent years

Receipts	2016 Levy - \$190,000	2017 Levy - \$205,000	2018 Levy - \$210,000
Taxes-Rice County	189,507	198,237	205,904
-State	29,500	28,052	31,624
-Northfield Annexation	0	0	0
Interest	114	50	63
Maintenance/Hall Ave. – City of Northfield	6,639	4,269	7,640
Dust Control – residents	12,612	12,500	13,211
Snowplowing/Sanding	760	155	815
Rock/Grading	2,334	515	0
Culverts/Ditch work	0	0	4,646
Dividends/Retirements/Amb refund	3,400	6,067	37
Miscellaneous, Transfers	92,436	378	22,304
Disaster assist/FEMA-State	1,459	6,745	12,293
Total	338,761	256,968	298,537

Disbursements	2016	2017	2018
Wages, PERA, Taxes	50,332	46,950	53,201
Contract Labor	5,295	13,317	7,115
Fuels	4,430	4,450	8,501
Legal, Office, Utilities	4,057	6,216	6,420
Insurance	6,890	6,099	1,746
Repairs & Maintenance	4,449	11,922	14,035
Rock	88,699	98,184	68,600
Shop Supplies	1,554	521	859
Salt and Sand, Chips	698	1,865	0
Northfield Rural Fire	26,780	29,400	29,400
Dust Control	15,088	15,970	13,481
Grader 2016/Mower 2018	184,030	0	7,500
Culverts/Bridge Sealing	198	0	130/7,265
Tree-trimming	8,805	0	8,350
Misc. (2016 Lamb Ave bridge & signs)/Roadside Vegetation	22,355	738	1,140/4,646
Capital, R&B Fund transfers	90,000	0	20,000
Total	513,660	235,723	252,389

2018 Beginning Balance Total Receipts Total Disbursements 2018 Ending Balance

\$210,266.03 \$298,537.45 \$252,389.48 \$256,414.00+