



Bridgewater Township Newsletter

June 2019

Assessments for Storm Damage

On June 12, the Town Board discussed the issue of assessments for the storm cleanup in late 2018. There were many thoughtful comments and suggestions from a significant number of residents. We concluded that these severe weather events are occurring more frequently and consequently we should prepare to deal with them in a more organized fashion than hit or miss assessments that are bound to be unfair to some residents.

Therefore, we decided there will be no special assessment. We also passed a resolution authorizing the formation of a Natural Disaster Relief Fund for the Township. It will be funded through the annual levy and state grants.

Incorporation Study

On June 12, the Board approved a resolution authorizing the drafting of an application for incorporation. The same resolution says that no decision will be made on whether to submit the application until September of this year. Over the next two months, we will be meeting with neighborhood groups and owners of large tracts of farmed land. If there is a group that would like to meet with a supervisor to discuss incorporation, contact the clerk at clerk@bridgewaterwp.org. The meetings are intended to inform everyone about why this is being considered and the consequences if the township does incorporate; and to surface problems that incorporation might cause. These may be reasons to not incorporate.

It has become obvious in the last several months that both cities oppose incorporation. Representatives of Northfield and Dundas have not been willing to talk with us about the problems an incorporated Bridgewater would cause. The Supervisors have made an effort to understand the situation of each city if Bridgewater incorporates and our analysis has been presented in several public meetings. We have also been clear that if incorporation would cause serious problems for either city, we would certainly consider that as a reason to not incorporate. It is not in the Township's interest to diminish the economic vitality of the region.

On June 18, the Northfield Council held a closed meeting announced as: "*Consideration of pending or threatened litigation concerning the incorporation of Bridgewater Township and/or possible responsive City boundary adjustment petitions.*" There is no pending litigation between Northfield and Bridgewater so the City is considering initiating litigation. We have no idea what would be the basis for a complaint against the Township. Following the closed meeting of the Northfield City Council, a resolution was passed by the City authorizing the City Administrator to develop a proposal for a five-year extension of the Orderly Annexation Agreement with the provision that Bridgewater Township agree to not seek incorporation.

NORTHFIELD ANNEXATION AGREEMENT

The Orderly Annexation Agreement between Northfield and Bridgewater expires at the end of this year. It has worked well for 20 years. In July 2018, the Township Board sent a resolution to the Northfield Council requesting that we open negotiation on a successor agreement. We received a response in February 2019 in which the Northfield Council indicated its interest in developing a new agreement. The Council named a negotiating team and designated three members of the Council as observers. Since then we have had one meeting in early April. In that meeting, Northfield did suggest extending the current agreement for one or two years to give ourselves time to work through various issues. We have also had a letter from the negotiating team requesting that the Township cease considering incorporation as a condition of moving forward with the

annexation agreement discussion or extending the current agreement. We politely refused. As of this date no further discussions on the annexation agreement are scheduled.

Comprehensive Plan

The Township's Comprehensive Plan is undergoing a thorough revision. The final meeting covering Transportation will be held on Saturday, June 29th. The meeting will begin at 9:00 am and end at 11:00 in the Bridgewater Town Hall at 500 Railway Street, Dundas.

Building Permits

Permits for remodeling and new building are required in the township. Permits are available online at our website: bridgewatertp.org. Building inspections are being handled by Inspectron. If you need an inspection for a current building project, please call 651-322-6626 to set up an inspection time.

Planning and Zoning: Jim Braun – 1-800-851-3383 (or bridgewaterpermits@gmail.com)

Septic: Darrel Gilmer – 651-775-6118 (or dgilmerexc@yahoo.com).

Noxious Weed Control

Supervisor John Holden is continuing to oversee the control of noxious weeds in Bridgewater Township. In partnership with Northfield Township and Carleton College, efforts are being made to implement the best methods to reduce the presence of noxious weeds, especially Wild Parsnip. An intern from Carleton College is working with volunteers to visually review all township road ditches and map the presence of noxious weeds. Selective spraying and mowing will be done by the township after confirmation of the areas that are infected. We would like all residents to notify the township if you see any areas that are in need of treatment.

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