

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
TUESDAY, February 24, 2026**

The Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order by Village President Tracey Mendrek on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

The Deputy Village Clerk called the roll as follows:

Committee Members Present:

Trustee Charlie Orth
Trustee Tom Whittaker
Trustee Todd Fowler
Trustee Matt Galin
Trustee Andrew Juedes
Trustee Ed Elfmann
President Tracey Mendrek

Absent:

None

Others Present:

Village Manager Patrick Brennan
Director of Administrative Services Melissa Jewett
Community Development Director Steve Guterrez
Fire-Rescue Chief Alan Berkowsky
Police Chief Mike Hutensky
Finance Director Kathleen Morley
Public Works Superintendent Matt Huebner
Deputy Fire Chief Tom Burke
Fleet Manager John Rikje
Deputy Clerk Holly Fabbri

Public Comment

Resident Chaya Rubenstein said she was speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters Winnetka-Northfield-Kenilworth. She noted that early voting had started and recommended visiting their website at LWV WNK for voting news, candidate information, and upcoming events. She said they would be hosting a spring luncheon on April 30 from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the North Shore Senior Center, Northfield, featuring Arne Duncan and Chicago CRED participants.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2026

Trustee Orth made a motion, seconded by Trustee Whittaker, to approve the Minutes from the January 27, 2026, meeting. Upon a unanimous voice vote, President Mendrek declared that the motion had passed.

Discussion of the Proposed FY27 Capital Plan

Village Manager Brennan utilized a PowerPoint presentation to outline how the Village staff plans for Capital purchases. He explained what qualifies as “capital” for Village budgeting. He said that staff annually projects the 10-year funding needs and balance but also reviews short and mid-term requirements. He explained that a 10-year plan is developed to monitor capital needs across three primary areas. He highlighted the first area, the Capital Improvement Plan, and outlined its FY27 components, which include water main replacements, road resurfacing, sewer lining, and building improvements. He said the second area was the Equipment Replacement Plan, and he expanded on its FY27 components, including police car cameras, security cameras, dump trucks, and a SCBA refilling station used to refill the breathing air tanks for firefighters. He said the third area was the Vehicle Replacement Plan, and he explained that for FY27, it includes a passenger vehicle used by the Police Department’s Public Safety Officer, as well as an administrative vehicle for Community Development needs. He stated the estimated costs were \$2,826,400 for water/sewer projects and \$2,373,880 for non-water projects, totaling \$5,200,280.

Village Manager Brennan stated that there are several anticipated future projects not currently in the FY27 budget, including the Library Expansion, Orchard Lane Parking Lot, Happ Road Improvement, and Skokie Valley Trail. He noted that the Board could amend the budget in the future, if needed, to include these projects once the anticipated expenditures were known.

The Board held a discussion and concurred with the FY27 Capital Plan as presented.

Discussion of a Recommendation to Dissolve an Intergovernmental Agreement for a Shared Ladder Truck

Fire Chief Berkowsky stated that in 2012, the Village entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Village of Glenview for the sharing of a ladder truck. He noted that staff had questioned the value of continuing the IGA, citing the ladder truck’s limited use as first-in equipment and its frequent, extended periods out of service for repairs. He explained that he was directed to evaluate whether a ladder truck should continue to be retained in the Village, so he met with the Fire-Rescue staff to gather their input and review the truck’s utilization.

Fire Chief Berkowsky concluded that continuing with the IGA was not in the Village’s best interest because the ladder truck’s availability was inconsistent, its use was infrequent, and the Village’s fleet manager was spending a significant amount of time on repairs. He also emphasized that a ladder truck is specialized equipment and not intended to serve as the first-in apparatus for an active fire, whereas Northfield’s fire engine is designed for this role. He stressed that the Village is also surrounded by larger fire departments with ladder trucks that respond under existing auto-aid agreements. He noted that the Village Managers and Fire Chiefs from Northfield and Glenview had met, and both parties agreed that the IGA could be terminated upon concurrence with the following four items:

1. Glenview would maintain ownership of the ladder trucks.
2. Glenview would waive any outstanding invoices under the IGA.

3. Both Villages would update their automatic aid agreements so that Glenview responds to Northfield with a ladder truck, and conversely Northfield responds to Glenview with a fire engine, as needed.
4. Northfield would continue to provide maintenance services for Glenview's ladder truck at an agreed-upon hourly rate, on an as-needed, as-available basis.

The Board held a discussion and agreed with the recommendation to terminate the intergovernmental agreement. The Board directed the Village Manager to proceed with the termination once auto-aid responsibilities were finalized.

Adjourn

Trustee Orth made a motion, seconded by Trustee Galin, to adjourn the meeting. Upon a unanimous voice vote, President Mendrek declared the motion passed. President Mendrek declared the meeting adjourned at 6:54 PM.