

SANDS TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

July 2016

OFFICE COMPLEX HOURS: MON, WED, THURS & FRI 10 AM-3 PM, TUES 1:30-6:30 PM
987 S. State Hwy M-553, Gwinn, MI 49841. Ph (906) 249-9169 Fax (906) 249-2120

Website—www.sandstownship.org E-mail—office@sandstownship.org

RECYCLING CHANGES

ELECTED TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

Supervisor—Darlene Walch
249-9945

Clerk—Lee Yelle
346-4423

Treasurer—Cheryl Schram
346-9907

Trustee—Joe Wixtrom
250-8956

Trustee—David Kallio
249-3418

APPOINTED TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

Zoning Administrator
Randall Yelle 346-4423

PLANNING COMMISSION

Ron Titter (Chair)
Joe Wixtrom Jane Noe
Shelley Brauer Russell Card
Eric Anderson
Aaron Burbey

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Robert Vietzke (Chair)
Ron Titter
Richard Nelson
Jackie Winkowski
David Kallio
Pamela Lajewski-Pearson
(Alternate)

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fire Chief—Terry Sleeter
249-9201

Assistant Chiefs
Hall #1—Lyn Nelson
249-3392
Hall #2—Benjamin Yelle
236-2796

EMS Coordinator
Lyn Nelson
249-3392

Assistant Coordinator
Frank Rosado 249-3081

I think we've all heard the phrase "A few people can ruin a good thing for everybody." Unfortunately, that is what it has come to with the Township recycling program. The service is used and appreciated by many people and the bins are overflowing before every pickup, which is done three times a week. However, they have also become a dumping ground for some people to get rid of trash and other unwanted items. We heard from our hauler that **30% to 50% of what is put in the bins is not recyclable, and is mostly garbage.**

I have seen furniture, wood, car parts, Styrofoam trays from raw meat, trays from microwaveable meals (unwashed and moldy), used Kleenex, soiled paper towel, bags of household garbage, used Q-tips, and even an afghan put in the bins, and I am not someone who does any of the sorting. There is also a lot of Styrofoam (which is not allowed even if you see a number on it) put in the bins, and cardboard boxes that are not broken down. All of this has led to overflowing bins that, when the garbage is discarded, only bring a few hundred pounds of recycling a week. The Township is now paying \$700/month for this service. It is no longer feasible to continue the program as it is now. We also realize that the bins are used by more than just Township residents, and the problem may be in a large part due people who do not live in the Township.

As a result, we are making significant changes to our recycling program. Recycle bins will now be at the Transfer Station. To collect data and verify who is using the recycling service, we'll have a separate sign-in clipboard for recycling. Recycling will continue at no cost to Township residents. Please note that fees to dispose of traditional Transfer Station materials will remain in place. We will add two additional days per month to the Transfer Station schedule to help ease the change from unmonitored to monitored access for recycling. **Transfer Station hours will now include the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm.** The down side is less convenient access to recycling. The positive side is an additional two days per month for Transfer Station access given that both services will operate simultaneously. In addition, our recycling program will be cleaned up, our costs should be reduced, and staff will no longer have to pick up and bag garbage left near the bins at the Town Hall.

Submitted by: Carolyn Kerkela, Administrative Assistant



This picture was taken in early June and shows the disrespect people have for the bins.

PUTTING OUT YOUR GARBAGE

Our garbage staff has asked a few reminders to be printed about putting your garbage out for pickup.

- Please use garbage cans if you decide to place your garbage in a container. Do not use barrels or other large containers when you put your garbage out for pickup. The garbage is too hard to remove from barrels and they are cumbersome to try and lift and empty.
- Have your garbage out by 5 am! The route begins early and you may miss us if we are ahead of schedule and you wait to put the garbage out.
- Please do not put more than 30 pounds in one bag. Anything heavier is too hard to lift into the truck and we will leave any bags that are too heavy.
- If you have items that are not allowed in the truck or are too bulky for regular pickup, please use the transfer station or call the office for proper disposal information.
- Please do not continue to use cracked or broken garbage cans. If we tag a can as unacceptable, please replace it. Garbage gets stuck in broken cans and is hard to remove.

2016 Garbage Holidays:

4th of July (pickup July 5 & 6)

Labor Day (pickup September 6 & 7)

December 26 (pickup December 27 & 28)

January 2, 2017 (pickup January 3 & 4)

Thank you. We enjoy serving the Township residents and appreciate your cooperation. Submitted by: Jim, Jim and Ken

WEED CONTROL ALONG M-553

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will be doing weed control along M-553 this summer. They use two different types of herbicides—one for weed control and another for brush control. The weed control is sprayed from a truck and covers an area of about ten to twelve feet on both sides of the road. The brush control is applied manually in areas where brush is growing.

MDOT tries to control roadside vegetation in order to promote visibility, manage invasive weeds, keep drainage

ditches free to reduce chances of flooding, and to enhance surface drainage.

Please keep the weed control in mind if you choose to pick blueberries near M-553. There are very few, if any, places where berries grow this close to M-553.

This weed control is done in even-numbered years. Additional information is available in the office regarding the types of herbicides used and the process by which they are applied.

Submitted by: Randall Yelle, Zoning Administrator

HERE WE GO...AGAIN

Carolyn Kerkela, Administrative Assistant, will be welcoming Baby Kerkela #2 in November. When Baby Ella was born in 2014, the Board approved a maternity leave plan that included the baby coming to the office. That was not only wonderful for Carolyn and Ella, but was welcomed positively by the public. Some people still come and ask where the baby is. This same plan has been approved again.

Township office hours will be maintained by hiring a temporary assistant through Manpower. Carolyn has written a procedures manual so the temporary assistant can be as effective as possible, especially for the most critical services. However, please be patient if our temporary assistant has to put you on hold or call you back later with the answer to your question.

After six weeks of leave, Carolyn will return to work part-time, taking two weeks to transition back to her regular schedule. The temporary assistant will work during this transition to fulfill regular office hours. As she returns to work, Carolyn plans on bringing Baby Kerkela #2 to the office. This arrangement worked very well before and we anticipate similar results this time.

So, stop in to conduct Township business or just to say hi and welcome the new addition to the office. You may find a sign on the inner office door indicating that Carolyn will be back in five or ten minutes – we all want those diapers changed in a timely manner! We whole-heartedly welcome the new baby and look forward to having mom Carolyn back in our township office just after the New Year with her new baby.

Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Personnel Committee

MILLAGE RENEWAL

The General Operating, Recreational Facilities, and the Peter White Library millages all expire the end of 2016. The Township is asking for a renewal of all three current millages. The request for renewing these millages will be on the August 2 Primary Election ballot. Submitted by: Lee Yelle, Clerk

ELECTION NEWS

With the upcoming elections, it is hard to turn on your TV, open a newspaper, connect to Facebook, Twitter, or other social media, or even drive down the highway without some sort of campaign message. But, did you know you can also get voting information online or from your SmartPhone? Check out the Michigan Voter Information Center at Michigan.gov/vote to

- View your sample ballot
- Find out if you are registered ***You must be registered at least 30 days prior to an election to be issued a ballot.*
- Find your voting location (All Sands Township residents vote at the Township Office Complex).
- Track your absentee ballot
- Get more information and answers to common questions.

**Primary Election—
August 2**

**General Election—
November 8**

You can also call the Township office for answers to questions related to the elections. Polls are open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Please be prepared to show Photo ID at the polls. Submitted by Lee Yelle, Clerk

TAX ASSESSOR OFFICE HOURS

A representative for property tax assessment is available at the Sands Township office complex on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. Sands Township contracts with Marquette County for property tax assessment. While citizens can get information about their property tax assessment at the Marquette County Office building, our assessor, Ms. Jackie Lykins, offered to have office hours in the Township. Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Supervisor

TREASURER'S NEWS

2016 summer property tax statements were mailed June 29. If you have not received your statement or if your statement went to your escrow company and you would like a copy, please call the office. To avoid interest or penalty, summer taxes must be postmarked or paid in the office by Wednesday, September 14, 2016.

Submitted by: Cheryl Schram, Treasurer

TRANSFER STATION INFORMATION

Many calls come in asking "What can I bring to the Transfer Station?" An easier way to answer that question is to give a list of **items NOT accepted:**

- Shingles
- Brush or Yard Waste
- Appliances with Freon (unless they have been tagged that Freon is removed). This includes refrigerators, freezers, window air conditioners, water coolers and dehumidifiers.
- Concrete or Cement
- Household Garbage

Electronics are accepted, although we recommend recycling instead. Please call the office for information.

Charges begin at \$10. Check and cash accepted (Please—no bills larger than \$20). Tires are accepted, with a charge per tire: Auto Tire (any size) without rim—\$3, Auto tire with rim—\$10, Heavy Duty Truck Tire without rim—\$10, Heavy Duty Truck Tire with rim—\$20.

As reported on the front page of this newsletter, our recycling bins will now be at the Transfer Station. There is no cost to Township residents to participate in recycling, however there will be a sign-in sheet.

The Transfer Station will be open on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 4:00 – 7:00 pm and on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. These hours are effective during April through December. From January – March the Transfer Station has been open only one day per month, but we will review those hours in late Fall based on Transfer Station and recycling use data.

The schedule is on our website, or you can call the office.

The Transfer Station is located on the East side of M-553 and South of the fairgrounds on County Road ND (Flodin Rd). It is across from the Mini Movers office (formerly Mattson's Auto). Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Supervisor

SILVER CREEK TO M553 CONNECTING ROAD AND TOWNSHIP ROAD MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

We've made significant progress toward our goal of constructing a road connecting M553 to Silver Creek. Permanent rights-of-way have been secured, including the one required for property owned by Marquette County. Sands Township is collaborating with the Marquette County Road Commission (MCRC) for engineering and design work which will provide specific details and enable us to seek competitive bids for construction. When looking at building a new roadway up from a two-track trail, the design process becomes very important. As with any construction project, the foundation is critical and roads are no exception: success of the surface layer hinges on what lies below. Therefore, we want an accurate, detailed design which takes into account factors such as gradient, drainage, and base materials underlying the road. While we had considered the possibility of construction in 2016, it is more feasible and cost-effective to slow the project down, working through the design phase this year and looking toward construction in 2017.

In collaboration with MCRC, the Township Board has also been developing a rolling 5-year plan to help prioritize maintenance for roads throughout the township. Maintenance options vary depending on the condition of the road surface. The MCRC manages the bidding process for road maintenance, ranging from crack sealing through resurfacing. Sands Township participates in routine maintenance to help ensure that we garner as much service life as possible from our roads. At their June meeting, the Sands Township board reviewed bids provided by MCRC for maintenance on roads listed in year one of the 5-year plan. For the summer of 2016, we plan to crack seal several roads paved within the past four years. The crack seal process keeps water from seeping into the pavement causing deterioration, especially during freeze-thaw cycles. Roads slated for crack seal are Station, Taylor, Yelle (one section), Youngs and Flodin. The Board also reviewed roads needing more intense maintenance and the plan is to resurface the paved portion of Laramie Road (approximately 2/10 mile) and about 1.7 miles of Old 553. Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Supervisor

OLD TOWN HALL AND FIRE STATION UPDATE

In our last newsletter I described the condition of the old town hall and fire station buildings. While investigating the status of the buildings' interiors, we discovered that not everything had been cleaned out when the new town hall and fire station were occupied over fifteen years ago. Of course the most important items, such as official records and office files, were moved. However things like obsolete law books, old tax rolls, and broken equipment had been left behind.

Over the winter months a small crew of staff undertook the task of sorting through what remained in the buildings, cleaning out trash, old papers and books, and disposing of metal at the transfer station. Material pertaining to the old school was saved as were the Grange items. Maps and unique documents with historical information

were moved to the current town hall for inclusion in our permanent records.

The next step will be to inventory items which may have potential use and present a list to the Township Board for review. This list will contain a description of each item and its condition. Items include some wooden chairs, a bench, an upright piano (with most keys not functioning), and old file cabinets. Sands Township has a policy regarding the disposition of assets no longer needed and the Board can decide how best to liquidate usable items from the old town buildings. Once that process is completed, we'll move on to determining the most appropriate future for the buildings themselves. Background on the condition of the buildings can be found in our January 2016 newsletter which is available at our website.

Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Supervisor

COME JOIN US—GET INVOLVED

Are you looking to get involved in your community? Do you have courage, dedication, and a desire to help others in need? If that sounds like you, have you considered becoming a volunteer firefighter? Sands Township is in need of firefighters for both Station 1 and Station 2. The Fire Department Auxiliary would also welcome people looking to become involved.

No experience is necessary. We will train the right people. If you are interested in seeing what the department is all about, you are welcome to attend a meeting. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 7:00 at Station 1 (Crossroads Station). Applications are available at the Township office and from any fire officer. Submitted by: Terry Sleeter, Fire Chief



PWPL Library Update

Ah, summer in the Upper Peninsula! Many U.P. residents prefer to vacation in the winter and have a “staycation” in the gorgeous summer months. A “staycation” means enjoying your leisure time with family and friends by exploring the adventures near your home. Peter White Public Library (PWPL) is the perfect place to begin your “staycations” as it offers special programs, current and classic books, digital materials, and resources on almost anything of interest to you. The staff at the library will assist you in finding exactly what you want, or you can simply explore the library in person or online. And, your ticket to exciting “staycations” is already paid for through the annual millage in Sands Township, i.e., you can pick up your library card with no additional charge!

For those who love to read, good books abound in paper, digital, and CD copies. The biggest problem seems to be so little time to read them all! Need help in finding the ones you most wish to read? PWPL offers a variety of ways to support readers of all ages. First, each month stop by and pick up a free paper copy of the *Book Page*. This newspaper-style publication offers names of new books; book reviews and summaries; categorized lists of books such as books on cooking, mysteries, selections for book clubs, etc. You can also sign up for free email alerts from PWPL that list and give short summaries of new books the library acquires. For your convenience, there is a Dropbox for returning library materials at the Sands Township Hall, which is emptied on Wednesday afternoons.

If you prefer to share reading experiences with others, check out the variety of reading programs offered. Students of all ages sometimes find summer days can seem long as their usual routines change. The library has “Summer Reading Programs” for students of varied ages—all free of charge. For example, July 12th “Sciencepalooza with the Michigan Science Center” will feature hands-on science activities for all ages; July 27th “Fairy Tale Challenge” provides games and activities based on classic fairy tales for ages five & up. These are just two of the special programs featured in July, and these types of programs continue weekly throughout late August.

Other regular youth programs occur at preset times across the year such as “Book Babies,” “Family Films,” and “Super Saturdays.” Check out the PWPL website (www.pwpl.info) for a complete listing; look for the PWPL Summer Newsletter which should come to you in the mail, or stop by the library and pick up brochures about programs of interest.

If you need information about resources in the community, the library is a great place to begin. Brochures about a wide range of service organizations and topics are available free of charge. A few examples recently available are *Autism Benefit: Information for Parents*; information about prescription savings cards; *Michigan Energy Options*; and careers in electronics through the U.S. Air Force.

If you need information, resources, or book suggestions, the friendly staff at PWPL are always willing to help. The treasures available are too numerous to mention, but it is easy to check out all the library has to offer for yourself. Make your “staycation” interesting, rewarding, and adventurous. Begin at Peter White Public Library!

Peter White Public Library has a new Director, who began this summer. Ms. Andrea Ingmire has worked as a Library Director for over ten years in various libraries in Indiana, including most recently in Greensburg, Indiana. Ms. Ingmire and her family have family ties to Michigan and have recently moved to the Marquette area. She looks forward to sharing her expertise and ideas with PWPL staff and patrons. In the PWPL Newsletter (Summer 2016) Ms. Ingmire stated “progressive, active, community minded libraries will not only survive, but thrive,” and she gave examples of programs in which she has been involved that met these criteria. Stop in and welcome Ms. Ingmire to the community!

Submitted by: N. Suzanne Standerford, Township Advisory Council Representative

Township Board meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM.

Minutes are posted at the Township Office and Fire Hall #2. Approved minutes are available on our website.

The public is welcome to attend all meetings.

Check out our website for the latest Township information!

www.sandstownship.org

Here you will find approved board minutes, zoning information, the transfer station schedule, garbage holidays, facility rental information, and a News page with the latest information for our residents.

Monthly reports are submitted by several departments and committees. These reports are posted in the office. Check them out to see what is happening in the Township.



NEWSLETTER

987 S. State Hwy M-553
Gwinn, MI 49841

Striving to protect your water & environment

HELPFUL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR TOWNSHIP ENCLOSED

Hazardous Waste Collection

The Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority holds several FREE Household Hazardous Waste Collection dates throughout the summer. For information and a list of items acceptable for this collection, please go to www.mcswma.com, or call the Landfill at (906) 249-4108.

The Marquette Service Center is located at 850 W. Baraga Avenue, behind the Waste Management facility. Collection dates and times are July 6 (4:00—8:00), August 20 (9:00—1:00), September 14 (4:00—8:00) and October 12 (4:00—8:00).

The West End Transfer Station is located in West Ishpeming, just west of the DNR field station on the north side of U.S. 41. Collection dates and times for this facility are July 13 (4:00—8:00), September 21 (4:00—8:00), and October 5 (4:00—8:00).

If you have hazardous waste, please take advantage of this free service and keep the harmful chemicals from entering the Landfill or our environment.

Your newsletter is paid for with your tax dollars. We welcome your opinions and comments. Please contact the Township office or a Township Official

Contact Us

(906)249-9169

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