

SANDS TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Summer 2019

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

ELECTED TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

**Supervisor—Darlene
Walch 249-9945**

**Clerk—Lee Yelle
346-4423**

**Treasurer—
Justin Murawski
281-3983**

**Trustee—Justin Yelle
360-3038**

**Trustee—David Kallio
249-3418**

APPOINTED TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

**Zoning Administrator
Randall Yelle 346-4423**

PLANNING COMMISSION

**Shelley Brauer (Chair)
Justin Yelle
Aaron Burbey
Suzanne Sundell
Pamela Lajewski-Pearson**

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

**Robert Vietzke (Chair)
Shelley Brauer
David Kallio
Victoria Jenema
Jane Noe
Ron Titter (alternate)**

EMERGENCY SERVICES

**Fire Chief—Ben Yelle
236-2796**

**Assistant Chiefs
Hall #1—Andrew Sicotte
Hall #2—Terry Sleeter
360-5733**

**EMS Coordinator
Lyn Nelson
249-3392**

**Assistant Coordinator
Frank Rosado 249-3081**

We will be hosting a FREE scrap tire collection on Monday, September 9 from 3:00—7:00.

Tires 22.5 inches in diameter and smaller are accepted. Individuals may bring up to 10 tires at a time (no businesses).

This is possible due to a partnership with the Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority and a grant from Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy.

We offered a collection last year that was VERY successful and collected several thousand tires. This year's collection will be staffed a little differently and limits tires to 10 per person. We hope you take advantage of this opportunity if you have any tires laying around.



ELECTION INFORMATION

Proposal 3, which was approved by voters last year, made several changes to the State Constitution dealing with elections and voting. Some of these changes deal with voter registration. Prior to these changes, voters had to register at least 30 days before an election to be eligible to vote. Now, voters may register by mail up to 15 days before an election, and may register in person at the Clerk's office 14 days or less before an election, or even at the polls on election day (with proof of residency). Also, eligible persons are now automatically registered to vote after interacting with the State regarding driver's licenses or ID cards, unless they choose to decline.

One of the other changes from Proposal 3 allows for no-reason absentee voting. Prior to Proposal 3, voters had to fit certain criteria before they were issued an absentee ballot. Now, any voter may obtain an absentee ballot within the 40 days prior to an election. The no-reason absentee voting led our Township Clerk to create a permanent absentee voter list. Voters who wish to be on this permanent list can check the box stating so on an absentee ballot application. This does *not* mean you will automatically be mailed a ballot for each election. You will automatically be mailed an *application* for each election, which you will need to fill out, sign and return in order to be issued an absentee ballot.

Other proposal 3 changes now have the Constitution provide for straight ticket voting, require military and overseas civilians be issued an absentee ballot at least 45 days before an election, provide for the auditing of election results, and provide for a right to secret ballots.

There will be an election on August 6, 2019. Marquette County voters will be asked for a millage renewal for the Marquette County Medical Care Facility, and voters in the Gwinn School District will also be asked for a millage for the Gwinn Schools Sinking Fund. Submitted

by: Lee Yelle, Clerk

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We are desperately seeking people for substitutes on our garbage truck. We have our regular crew—one driver and two people for the back. But, when someone wants a day off or something comes up such as an injury or illness, we are sometimes scrambling to fill their spot. We would like to have a few people interested in filling in, either on an “as needed” basis, or even rotating into the schedule to work a day or two every month. We also are looking for people with a Class B CDL, or interested in getting one, who can fill in for our driver. *You do not need to be a Township Resident to work on the garbage truck.* Contact the Township office for more information or for an application.

Our Planning Commission is the board that makes recommendations as to our zoning plan, districts and ordinances, and also approves special land uses, planned unit developments, and site plans. This is a 7 member board, and we are actively seeking to fill two positions. If you or anyone you know is interested or would like to learn more about what the position entails, please contact the office or go to the Zoning Tab on our website.



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.

Monthly department reports are posted at the office. Stop in to keep updated on Township information.

The Fire Department meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 7:00 PM at Station 1. The public is welcome to attend.



Contact Us

(906)249-9169

FAX 249-2120

987 S. M-553, Gwinn, MI 49841

office@sandstownship.org

www.sandstownship.org

We are also on Facebook. Like or follow *Sands Township* for the latest news, information and updates.

BASIC HOME SAFETY TIPS

1. **Don't Neglect Safety Housekeeping.** Keep minor hazards at bay by keeping clutter away from doors, stairways or steps, and make sure all cords are out of areas of travel to avoid trips. Keep drawers, cabinets and cupboards closed when not in use. Keep things where they can be easily reached, or use a ladder or stepstool to retrieve them. Keep chemicals properly stored. Unplug appliances when not in use.
2. **Maintain Adequate Home Security.** Have smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; check the batteries and test them frequently. Have an emergency action plan for your home and communicate this plan to all family members in the house. Consider motion detector lights, outdoor cameras, and a security alarm and door locking system.
3. **Always Remember Home Fire Safety.** Never leave cooking unattended and keep stoves and counter tops free of clutter, grease and flammable objects. Set a timer while cooking. Never leave a fireplace, candles or other sources of open flame unattended.
4. **Eliminate Electrical Risks.** Replace all damaged or frayed wires or cords, and throw out old or faulty appliances. Never overcrowd electrical outlets. Only buy electrical products evaluated by the nationally recognized laboratory. All electrical systems should be installed or repaired by a certified professional.
5. **Always Practice Proper Food Safety.** Make sure your kitchen is clean and adequately maintained. Keep raw meat and fish away from veggies to avoid contamination. Thoroughly thaw frozen food before cooking, and know safe temperatures and use a thermometer to ensure food is cooked all the way. Keep hands washed when handling raw meat. Handle knives and other sharp utensils safely.
6. **Have the Necessities.** Keep typical emergency response items in an easy-to-access location. This includes a first aid kit (Band-Aids, gauze, anti-bacterial wipes, eye patches, pain reliever, etc.). Keep medicines for common ailments such as upset stomach or colds, and inhalers, if necessary. Know proper dosages, especially for children. Keep emergency numbers for contacts, doctors, hospitals, or poison control.
7. **Encourage Safe Habits.** Have open discussions and encourage safe habits. Talk to your family, visitors, and neighbors about safe habits and teach children safety is important.

GARBAGE INFORMATION—KEEP THIS PAGE HANDY

Garbage Crew Reminders:

- Have your garbage out by 5 am.
- Do not put out large items or bags heavier than 30 pounds for pickup.
- If animals get into your garbage, it is your responsibility to clean up.
- Do not allow others to bring garbage from other municipalities.
- Replace any cans that are cracked or broken.

Garbage Holidays

Garbage is ONLY affected by a holiday IF the holiday falls on a Tuesday or Wednesday.

December 24 & 25—Pickup will be Thursday & Friday (26th & 27th)

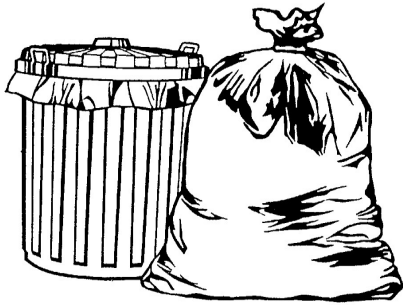
December 31 & January 1—Pickup will be Thursday & Friday (2nd & 3rd)

TRANSFER STATION INFORMATION

Our Transfer Station is available for both recycling drop-off, and waste acceptance. This service is for residents only. There is no charge for recycling, but you must separate the fibers from rigids. Waste is accepted for a charge, which starts at \$10 per truck load.

The Transfer Station does not accept household garbage, appliances with Freon, brush, concrete, or hazardous waste. And please—nothing that will smell! For questions on what is accepted or how to dispose of these items, you may call the office at 249-9169.

The Transfer Station is open every Wednesday from 4—7 PM. From January—March, it is open only the 2nd Saturday of the month from 10 AM—5 PM. Beginning in April, it is open the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month from 10 AM—5 PM, in addition to every Wednesday.



GARBAGE INFORMATION

As a Township, we are proud to provide curbside garbage pickup with our own truck and staff, and to operate our own Transfer Station and collect recyclables for our residents. Garbage service in Sands Township is paid for with a Sanitation Millage that was approved by voters in 2008. This millage covers the tipping fee for disposal of the garbage, costs for our recycling (bins and hauling fee), gas and oil for the garbage truck, repairs for the garbage truck, and miscellaneous expenses such as electricity for the Transfer Station. Wages for the guys on the garbage truck and our Transfer Station attendant, plowing at the Transfer Station, and repairs or supplies for our Transfer Station are paid for by the General Fund. The General Fund also purchased the garbage truck in 2011 and the backhoe for the Transfer Station in 2017. Construction costs for the new Transfer Station will also come from General Fund.

The amount of garbage has increased over the last few years - we collected 75 tons more last year than the previous year and so far 2019 looks to top that. The tipping fee is also rising – it went up more than 33% in the last 6 years, with another 11.5% increase expected for November. The income in our Sanitation Fund from the millage no longer covers the expenses for a year, and the fund balance is slowly being depleted. Last fiscal year, tentative numbers show our fund balance nearly \$23,000 less than the previous fiscal year. As all of our costs increase, the Sanitation millage rate is slowly decreasing. This is due to the Headlee amendment (if you remember, we had an article about this in last summer's newsletter and the Peter White Public Library brought a request for a Headlee Override to voters in 2018). The original approved millage rate was 1.0 mills, and in 2018 was at .9632 mills. This may not seem like a big decrease, but when looked at for the entire Township, it added up to a difference of almost \$3,000 last year with a millage of .9632 vs 1.0.

What does this mean? Well, the Sanitation millage was approved for 12 years, so covers through 2020. The Township Board will be watching costs and numbers closely to decide if: a) we request a renewal of the millage at the current millage rate, b) we request a Headlee Override that would bring the millage back to its original 1.0 mills, or c) go for a new millage with a higher millage rate when the current millage expires.

Operating our own garbage truck and having an approved millage saves most of our residents a lot of money compared to what people in neighboring municipalities pay for garbage pickup. When we looked into the cost of using a commercial garbage service for the Township, we discovered our costs would increase. Garbage – both the truck and Transfer Station – is by far the biggest budgeted expense for the Township. It is also something that we get the most calls about in the office, and what requires the most coordination between staff, the office, our haulers, and others to ensure it continues to run smoothly. And I think we can all agree we want our garbage picked up regularly and on time, with the process running as smoothly as possible.

RECYCLING INFORMATION—KEEP THIS PAGE HANDY

Sands Township collects recycling at the Transfer Station. We have covered roll-offs, clearly marked FIBER or RIGIDS.

FIBER—Cardboard, paper, magazines, newspaper, envelopes, etc.

RIGIDS—Plastics #1—#7 and metals (soup cans, non-returnable aluminum cans, etc.)

Reminders—We DO NOT accept plastic bags, Styrofoam, bubble wrap, used Kleenex or soiled napkins. Recyclables should be clean and flattened as much as possible. Glass is not accepted at this time.

The Transfer Station/Recycling Facility is open every Wednesday 4—7 PM and the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month from 10AM—5 PM. There is no charge to bring your recyclables and we encourage you to participate.

NEW TRANSFER & RECYCLING FACILITY

Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE – previously DEQ) sent out information regarding recycling grants this spring, and we decided to apply. Believing it was a long shot and with the deadline looming, we drafted a project narrative and drew up plans for a new Transfer Station/Recycling Facility.

The plans are for a new facility on the same property as the Township Hall, south of the playground. Not only does that bring our recycling and trash drop-off about 4 miles closer to the majority of our population, but it also puts most of our Township buildings on the same property. This new facility has room for trash, recycling, metal, and glass collection, all indoors. The bins would all be lower than the platform that users would be on while disposing, much like the trash bins at the Transfer Station currently are. But, users and their vehicles or trailers would be indoors while dropping off items. The facility will also have room to store our garbage truck, backhoe and other Township equipment. There would be an office area and an area to collect electronics for recycling, provided we can find an outlet. Included in the plan is an outdoor area for compostable items where we can hopefully create an end material available to residents for gardens and other uses.

After several conversations with EGLE, they have offered us \$221,328 in grant money for this facility. Although not as much as we had originally requested, this would cover a good portion of the anticipated costs for this new facility, with the remainder of the cost coming from the Township General Fund. On June 18, the Township Board voted to accept this money and begin the process of making this new facility a reality.

The current Transfer Station Property is next to the old Township Hall and our old Fire Station. Our plan is to sell the buildings and the property, which will help offset some of the costs of the new facility.

This is a huge project that will take a lot of coordination to finish by the end of the grant deadline. And, although this is a large expense, it will not only cut down on some current expenses, but also allow for the growth of recycling, which we anticipate happening as a result of some changes the Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority is implementing. We anticipate moving our Transfer Station and Recycling to the new building by the end of September 2020 and are excited for this project.

MARQUETTE COUNTY RECYCLING PROJECT

You may have heard about the Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority converting to a single-stream recycling program, and that they will again be recycling glass. For the last year, Authority staff and an outside consulting firm have been scrutinizing the current program, analyzing markets, running numbers, and exploring different methods to make Marquette County recycling as user friendly and cost effective as possible, while increasing participation among residents and businesses.

In early 2019, the decision was made to switch to a single-stream system, making our Authority the single-stream recycling facility for Michigan's Region 1 (the Upper Peninsula). This new system allows for the combining of Rigids and Fibers for collection and hauling. Equipment at the Landfill would separate the cardboard from other fibers, sort out the metal, and separate different types of plastics. This separation allows for maximum return when the products are shipped to market. Glass must remain separated from other recycling, but will be converted into a gravel-like product with several local end uses.

To convert to the new system, two existing structures at

the Landfill need extensive renovation, and new equipment must be purchased. Bid packets for renovations are out and the bid will be awarded on July 29. A grant was received from Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE) for \$800,000 and a no-interest loan from the Closed Loop Fund for \$3,000,000. This money is dedicated to the purchase of the required equipment. Additional funding, most likely in the form of a loan, will cover the remaining costs for renovation. This new project is expected to be in place by fall 2020.

Currently, Marquette County has a recycling rate of about 8%, with the State of Michigan at about 15%. The State is hoping to increase recycling participation to 50% statewide by 2025. The Authority is looking to lead the way, with a goal of 40% recycling rate by 2025. To do this, we need your help and support. Please contact the Township Office if you have questions about Sands Township recycling and participation. If you have questions about the Authority's project and program conversion, please contact myself at the Township Office or the Landfill directly at 249-4125.

Submitted by Randall L. Yelle, MCSWMA Chairman

TREASURER'S NEWS

2019 summer property tax statements were mailed for July 1. 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 Monday, September 16, 2019. Winter statements will be mailed for December 1.

Submitted by: Justin Murawski, Treasurer

PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

Peter White Public Library (PWPL) has much to celebrate this summer. The renovations to the building are mostly completed, and community members are invited to come explore the changes in the building. The renovations improved safety, reduced expenses for utilities, and created spaces to accommodate the needs of patrons, staff, and library programs. One change you might like is the new self-check-out stations where you can quickly check out materials. Give it a try! Of course, the circulation desk remains open to assist you as well.

Thanks to the passage of the Headlee Amendment Override and community support and donations the budget of the library is assured for now. If you wish to better understand the financial challenges and the importance of your positive votes and support for PWPL, stop in on a Tuesday and chat with the Director, Andrea Ingmire. "Director Chats" occur on the following Tuesdays this summer: June 11, July 2, and August 6. The Board of Trustees meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:00. You are always welcome to attend these meetings.

If you are not familiar with all of the programs offered at PWPL, please check out the website (www.pwpl.info). In addition to the many programs for all ages, new materials are constantly being added to the shelves. These include new fiction and nonfiction books, DVDs and Blue Rays, and audio books on CD. You can also download two applications to your smart phone or tablet that enable you to check out e-books, audio books, and videos. The application for books is called "Libby" and the application for videos is

"Kanopy." Both are free apps and available through the APP Store. Use your PWPL card to access materials for free. If you need help with these services, bring your device to the library for assistance in getting started.

Summer reading programs for children and youth "Blasted Off" on June 8th, but you can still register throughout the summer. Check the website for further information on programs for all ages. PWPL has redesigned their website to make it more user friendly. Events can now be found easily for specific dates and/or by types of events.

One of my favorite areas of PWPL is the Friends Used Book Store, which is now located just across from the Circulation Desk on the main floor. Hard-cover books are \$3; trade books are \$2; and paperbacks are \$1. They also have books on CD and DVDs available most of the time. Books are organized by topics and alphabetical order by author. This new location makes it easy to browse and find something you will enjoy. Summer is a perfect time to explore, use, and attend the myriad services and programs offered to you and your families at Peter White Public Library! Hope to see you there and thank you again for your continued support for *OUR* library! Submitted by: N. Suzanne Standerford, TAC Representative

Remember, you can call the library to check out a book, and ask them to deliver your book to the Township Office for pickup. Save yourself a trip into town!

We also have a drop box outside the office for the return of library items.

STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR TOWNSHIP

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 and postings for our residents. Monthly reports are submitted by several departments and committees and are posted in the office for public viewing. We are also on Facebook—Like our page to keep up-to-date on Township information.

CEMETERY INFORMATION



The Sands Township Cemetery is located on Miller Road. Water is available at the fire tank for plants and flowers. Please NO VEHICLES AT ANY TIME ON THE GRASS AREAS!

Lots are available at a cost of \$250 for residents, and \$350 for non residents. General cemetery maintenance is done by Nick LaMere. Graves are dug by Jamin Wonch, and Ron Tervo performs the lawn maintenance. Our cemetery sexton is Tom Redlon. For information please call: Tom Redlon, Cemetery Sexton—346-6927, or the township office.



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. **Please note—collections are May—October only.**

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

Scrap Tire Collection

We will once again be hosting a free scrap tire collection at our Transfer Station. This collection will be on Monday, September 9 from 3:00—7:00. The collection is limited to Marquette County residents (not businesses). Residents may bring up to 10 tires 22.5 or smaller. Tires may be on rims.

Tires can always be brought to our Transfer Station for a fee.

Your newsletter is paid for with your tax dollars. We welcome your opinions and comments. Please contact the Township office or a Township Official with your suggestions or topics of concern you would like addressed.

Want to Get Involved?

Are you interested in getting involved with the Township, but aren't sure how? We need subs on our garbage truck. We are always looking for people to join our Fire Department and EMS. We also can use more people on our Recreation Committee. We are looking for a member for the Planning Commission and an alternate for the Board of Review. In busy election years we are always looking for more election inspectors.

Contact the office if any of these sound like something you are interested in. If none of these sound like a good fit, but you would still like to get involved, let us know and we will see how we can use your help!

Contact Us

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FAX 249-2120

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