

# SANDS TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Winter 2020

**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](http://www.sandstownship.org) E-mail—[office@sandstownship.org](mailto: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**  
**Suzanne Sundell**  
**Pamela Lajewski-Pearson**  
**Cory Bushong**

## **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

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

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**Fire Chief—Andrew Sicotte**

**Assistant Chiefs**  
**Hall #1—Ben Yelle**  
**236-2796**  
**Hall #2—Terry Sleeter**  
**360-5733**

**EMS Coordinator**  
**Lyn Nelson**  
**249-3392**

**Assistant Coordinator**  
**Frank Rosado 249-3081**

## **We will be hosting a Township Open House on Wednesday, January 29 from 4:30—7:00.**

We will have several tables and displays of information, along with elected and appointed Township officials and employees available to answer questions and provide information on our Township services.

Garbage Pickup Information \* Decipher Tax Bills & Assessment Notices \* Learn About Recycling \* Check out the Facility Available to Rent \* Learn about our Cemetery \* Check if you are Registered to Vote \* Request an Absentee Ballot \* Zoning Questions \* Review our Ordinances \* Share Your Opinion on Issues \* Review our Road Repair Plan \* Census 2020 Information \* Learn about our Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Services \* Learn about Recreational Opportunities \* Ask Questions About Sands Township \* Find Out How You Can Be Involved

We welcome everyone—residents, business owners, and neighbors to stop by and see what Sands Township has to offer.

## **NEW RECYCLING AND TRANSFER FACILITY**

Late last summer, we were awarded a grant from EGLE for \$221,328 towards a new Recycling & Transfer Facility. Our current system of two covered roll-offs outside at the Transfer Station is not efficient, and we had been researching more economical ways to offer recycling to our residents. The transfer station building itself is also no longer meeting our needs as well as we hoped, and this grant was an opportunity to design a facility to meet our needs.

The new facility will have indoor collection bins for trash, recycling, glass & metal. The structure will also house our garbage truck and backhoe loader. If we are able to find an outlet, we would also like to be able to collect other items for recycling (electronics, batteries, etc.). Future plans also include accepting compostable yard waste and brush, which could be turned into an end product residents could use in gardens and other projects.

The new facility will be located on the same property as the Township office and park, although it will have a separate entrance from M-553. The land was cleared this fall, and the site is prepared for when the snow melts and weather allows for construction to begin.

Bittner Engineering was awarded the bid for engineering, and we will be seeking bids this winter for a contractor for the project. The intent is to have the new facility operating by September 2020. Once we are fully moved to the new facility, we will put the other property up for sale.

## WINTER POWER OUTAGE TIPS

The heavy snow before Thanksgiving left many of our residents without power, some for several days. While you cannot avoid emergencies like this, there are ways to ensure your family and home are prepared and stay safe.

### Before a Power Outage:

- Have flashlights and a battery powered radio available, along with extra batteries.
- Review your home—know how to shut off water valves, learn how to open an electric garage door manually.
- Have an emergency heating source and fuel available. Make sure the area is well ventilated.
- Have spare drinking water available for people and pets. If you suspect you may lose power, fill your bathtub and other spare containers with water. Pouring water from the tub into the bowl can flush the toilet.
- Go over emergency information with family members. Have an emergency kit prepared.
- Discuss any medications that need refrigeration with a pharmacist. Have a plan and extra batteries for any medical devices that need power.

### During a Power Outage:

- Dress in layers, including a hat, to stay warm.
- Unplug appliances and turn off lights to protect electrical overload when power is restored.
- Keep the refrigerator door closed as much as possible. Move milk, meats, cheeses, etc. to the freezer. If the freezer is only partially full, group items together to keep each other cold.
- Hang blankets or cardboard over windows for insulation. Find a well-insulated room for living until power and heat is restored.
- Check on neighbors, especially the elderly and others who may have special needs.
- If you have an alternate heat source, make sure things are ventilated properly. If you have a generator, make sure it is used properly.

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.

\*March 2020 meeting changed to the 3rd Tuesday (March 17th), due to conflict with Presidential Primary election

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.**

## 2020 Election Information

2020 will be a busy election year! The Presidential Primary will be Tuesday, March 10. This is considered a "Closed Primary" and voters must choose if they would like a *Democratic*, *Republican*, or *No-Presidential* (local issues only) ballot. You do not register to vote for a certain party ahead of time, but must declare at the polls which type of ballot you would like. The primary election will be August 4, 2020 and the general election will be November 3, 2020. Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on election day.

There have been several changes to election law in the last couple years, one of which allows for no-reason absentee voting. That means that any registered voter may request an absentee ballot up to 4:00 p.m. the day before an election. Sands Township now has a permanent absentee voter list. **This does *not* mean you will be automatically be mailed a ballot for each election. You will automatically be mailed an *application* for an absentee ballot** for each election, which you will need to fill out, sign and return in order to be issued an absentee ballot. Absentee voters will see a change this year in the envelopes used to receive and return the ballots. The State has worked closely with the Post Office to create an envelope that should eliminate some of the problems currently encountered with ballots in the mail system.

Voters may register to vote by mail up to 15 days before an election, or may register in person at the Clerk's office 14 days or less before an election, or at the polls on election day (with proper proof of residency). To find out your registration status, track your absentee ballot, or preview a ballot for an upcoming election, please go to [Michigan.gov/vote](https://Michigan.gov/vote). Submitted by: Lee Yelle, Clerk

## 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, with a fee structure outlined below. We accept cash or check; if you pay with cash—please bring small bills.

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 recycling,

what is accepted at the transfer station, or how to dispose of items not accepted, you may call the office at 249-9169 or go to our website [www.sandstownship.org](http://www.sandstownship.org).

The Transfer Station is open every Wednesday from 4—7 PM year round. Weekend hours from January—March are the 2nd Saturday of the month from 10 AM—5 PM. Beginning in April, it will be the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month from 10 AM—5 PM, in addition to every Wednesday.

## TRANSFER STATION FEES

Beginning December 1, a new fee structure took effect at our Transfer Station. This was put into place after a careful review of our costs, and discussion on the different types of materials and loads being brought to the Transfer Station. The original fee of \$10 per load was set 1992 and had remained relatively unchanged the entire time, although some larger loads were charged more and a very small load may have been charged less. Over the last 27 years, costs for hauling and disposal of the trash, wages, electricity, and other expenses have increased. The landfill tipping fee has increased almost 50% over the last 5 years. With only factoring in the cost to haul a bin to the Landfill and the average tipping fee per bin, it costs an average of \$450 to haul and dispose of 1 bin of trash. That does not take into account wages, expenses for the backhoe and other equipment, or other operating costs of the Transfer Station (plowing, electricity, etc.). Based on figures from January through September, we collect an average of \$218 per bin. It has come to a point where we could no longer support trash collection at the Transfer Station without increasing the disposal fees.

Because we do not have a scale or a way to charge an exact amount, this fee structure is based on volume/estimated weight. Large items (couches and other furniture with metal inside), items not easily crushed (wood or building materials), or heavier items (shingles or drywall) may be charged more.

Load	Fee*
1 or 2 small items, car trunk	\$5
3 or more smaller items in a car, truck, or trailer	\$10
Small pickup, SUV, Van, or small trailer	\$15
Medium trailer, regular size pickup	\$20
Large trailer, long box pickup	\$25
Box trailers or dump trailers	\$25 and up
Metal or Recycling	No Charge

When hauling to the Transfer Station, please have cash or check available. We do not accept cards. And please—small bills only. It can be difficult to make change for large bills.

## MARQUETTE COUNTY RECYCLING PROJECT

An already tenuous recycling market took a hit when China announced it would no longer accept recycled plastics. Fluctuating fiber markets, no outlet for glass recycling at all, and Marquette County's rural location also created struggles for local recycling.

Enter Recycle 906, a recycling plan tailored to the U.P.'s small population and location. This plan is the result of consideration and careful analysis by the Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority, and collaboration with local elected officials. It creates one larger recycling plant, located at the Marquette County Landfill, to collect, sort, and process recyclables to prepare them for market.

The new program will make our Landfill the recycling center for all of Michigan's Region 1 (Upper Peninsula). The program will accept single-stream recycling (mixed papers, cardboard, plastic, metal), as well as glass, and talks are underway with other counties in Region 1 about agreements to receive their single-stream recycling.

Remodeling plans for two existing structures at the Landfill are in place, with renovation set to begin January 2020. The single-stream recycling program and glass processing is expecting to be in place and operational by October 2020.

Part of the Recycle 906 program allows for the accepting and processing of glass, which is expected to be operational by October 2020 also. The Authority is partnering with Michigan Tech University regarding possible uses of the product in concrete, countertops, black top, chip seal, sand-blasting material, and other. Representative Cambensy is looking into possible state monies to help with research.

Please contact the 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 Randy at the Township Office or the Landfill directly at 249-4125. Submitted by Randall L. Yelle, MCSWMA Chairman

### Garbage Holidays

Garbage is affected by a holiday **ONLY IF** the holiday falls on a Tuesday or Wednesday. The only holiday for the 2020 garbage schedule is Wednesday, November 11 (Veteran's Day). Pickup will be Tuesday as usual, and Wednesday's route will be picked up on Thursday, November 12.

### Garbage Crew Reminders:

Please shovel out your cans and keep your garbage area clear. Place cans or bags where they are visible with snowbanks, such as the far side of your driveway from the direction we approach.

Have your garbage out by 5 am.

Do not put out large items or bags heavier than 30 pounds.

Replace any cans that are cracked or broken.

## 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.

A cemetery subcommittee closely reviewed our existing Cemetery Ordinance last summer and recommended several updates. A public hearing was held regarding the updates, and the amended Ordinance was approved in January. The ordinance is available at the office for review.

Submitted by Tom Redlon,

## TREASURER'S NEWS

2019 winter property tax statements were mailed for December 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 penalty, winter taxes must be paid by Friday, February 14. All 2019 taxes must be paid by Monday, March 2, 2020, or will be sent to the County as delinquent.

Submitted by: Justin Murawski, Treasurer

## ROADS & ROUND-ABOUT 2020

Each year we make progress on our plan to maintain our roads. We partner with the Marquette County Road Commission (MCRC) who manages and oversees projects for all the townships. Projects currently submitted to MCRC for estimates include chip & fog seal for Sicotte, Linda, Curtis, Jack and Sheryl; crack seal for Dahlstrom, Miller and part of Yelle Road; and paving a portion of Silver Creek Road. How much of this work can be accomplished in 2020 will depend on cost estimates for each piece of the project. We attempt to complete as much work as possible, but sometimes a portion of the work needs to be deferred due to total cost. We also have to see how the new section of Silver Creek holds up because we have a maintenance obligation with MCRC. We're hoping the double chip seal put on the new portion of Silver Creek holds up well since that should reduce our maintenance costs. The double chip seal is a collaborative experiment between Sands Township and MCRC and while other counties downstate have used that method, we aren't sure how it will work with our winters. We have a 5-year road plan and hold to it as much as we can, barring unforeseen problems that demand attention.

We've also had many questions about getting a round-about at the CR480 and M553 intersection. This is a complex proposal which would involve the township, MCRC and MI Department of Transportation. Round-abouts are expensive so funding is a significant issue. We are compiling information and sketching out strategies so the township would be in a position to move forward if an opportunity opened up. Those opportunities could include MDOT preparing for an overlay project near the intersection, grant availability, township funding, and community support. A round-about is definitely a long-range project. Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Supervisor



## PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

It is December as I am writing this article, and winter has arrived in force. The snow is piling up already, and it reminds us all that we need to find ways to enjoy this beautiful season. Peter White Public Library offers many ways to stay busy and to enjoy the winter.

You can order books to be picked up and returned at the township hall. Choose the books you wish to check out online ([www.pwpl.info](http://www.pwpl.info)) and put a hold on the books. If the books are available, it takes about two days for processing. Delivery to the township hall will be on the next Wednesday. Bring a photo ID to pick up your materials and stop by during township business hours (Wed., 10-3). You can return materials such as books, CD's, and DVD's in the Dropbox located in the township parking lot for pickup on Wednesdays.

A new service at Peter White is the "Library of Things." This is a collection of several "things" that have been donated to the library across the years. They are now available for check out. These are non-book items and the collection continues to grow. Borrowers must be at least

**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.**

18+ years old and have a valid library card to use this service. One set of popular items currently available is 30 vintage Wilton Cake Pans in holiday, book character, and cartoon character shapes. The pans are housed on the first floor near the vending machines. There are also two "Kill-a-Watt" meters to check the energy consumption of appliances. Additionally, there are five 1980's vintage Polaroid 660 Land Cameras, which develop pictures within a minute. Film for these would need to be purchased online or in area stores. Other items include framed art prints, telescopes, a digital microscope, and two ukuleles. Stop by and check out the growing collection housed on the first floor behind the circulation desk.

Peter White Public Library offers many wonderful ways to enjoy the winter including music programs; book groups; children and teen programs; help with technology questions; genealogy help; a meditation class; and a used book store. Check out the busy library schedule at their website. Enjoy this winter by taking advantage of the many programs, services, and materials available at your public library! Submitted by: N. Suzanne Standerford, TAC Representative

## STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR TOWNSHIP

Check out our website for the latest Township information—[www.sandstownship.org](http://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.

For last minute information such as weather related closings, garbage pickup changes, office closures and other information, we will try to update the outgoing phone message when possible, especially if the office is closed. We will also try to update Facebook and our website. For garbage delays due to weather, TV6 will also be notified.

## CENSUS 2020—WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Every 10 years, the U.S. conducts a census to determine the number of people living in the United States. This information determines how many seats your state gets in Congress, and the data is used to draw boundaries for state and local legislative districts and school districts. This information also helps communities create jobs, provide housing, fund K-12 education, prepare for emergencies and build schools, roads, hospitals, and libraries.

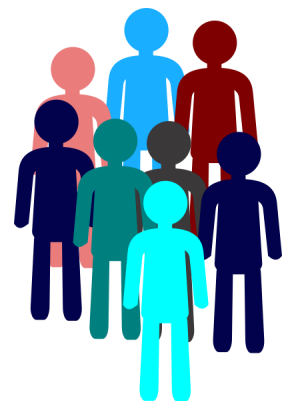
Census forms will be mailed to households in March 2020. Every person in the household needs to be counted, even children. The forms ask for name, gender, age, birthday, race/ethnicity, relationship to head-of-household, whether you are own or rent, and phone number.

You can now fill out census forms online using the unique Census ID that will be mailed to you. You can also re-

spond by phone or email. Your information is not shared with anyone and strong security measures are in place to protect your information.

If you do not respond to the March mailing, reminder letters will be mailed. The self-response deadline is July 2020.

We encourage you to fill out this information promptly and to make sure everyone in the household is counted accurately. A lot of the funding Sands Township receives is linked to our population as recorded in the Census.





## 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](http://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

The Landfill has once again been awarded a grant from EGLE for scrap tire collections throughout the County. As we learn more about free tire collections throughout the County next summer, and a date we will host one at our Transfer Station, we will pass the word on.

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. 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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