

SANDS TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Winter 2022

**OFFICE COMPLEX HOURS: Monday - Friday, 10 AM-3 PM, Starting February 1, 2022
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

NEW TRANSFER STATION HOURS

ELECTED TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

Supervisor—Darlene Walch
249-9945

Clerk—Carolyn Kerkela
361-0630

Treasurer—
Kent Koehn
360-9305

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

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fire Chief—Tom Wahlstrom
239-4967

Assistant Chief
Hall #1—Ben Yelle
236-2796

Assistant Chief
Hall #2—Brian Kleven
361-3128

EMS Coordinator
Lyn Nelson
249-3392

Assistant Coordinator Frank
Rosado 249-3081

At the December 14th, 2021 Board Meeting, the Township Board approved to change the Sands Township Transfer Station hours to provide our residents additional opportunities to drop off recycling and rubbish. The new hours of operation became effective on January 1, 2022 and will run throughout the year. Our Transfer Station is available for both recycling drop-off and waste acceptance. There is no charge for recycling. 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. If you have any questions on the new hours or what items are acceptable, please call our office. You can also visit our Website at Sandstownship.org to access the MCSWMA Recycling Wizard tool to help you determine what is accepted for recycling. The new Transfer Station hours are listed below.

Every Wednesday 4:00 PM—7:00 PM

Every Thursday 10:00 AM—2:00 PM

Every 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month – 10:00 AM– 2:00 PM

WHICH WAY SHOULD WE GO?

Our township faces serious questions about how to fund and staff services we've long considered essential. The top three services are Emergency Medical (EMS/Ambulance), Fire Department, and Garbage Collection. Note they are listed in alphabetical order since the relative importance of each can depend on the day and circumstances.

Each service needs enough people, up-to-date vehicles and equipment, and funding to cover costs. Sands Township is walking a fine line with respect to each of these needs. We need additional people for the EMS and Fire departments as well as substitute employees for our garbage crew. Each service also needs upgrades to the vehicles necessary to provide the service. The garbage truck and one of the fire trucks need to be replaced as soon as possible and the EMS rig will reach that status within two years. Operational costs include wages, training, testing and certification, fuel, insurance, supplies, safety equipment, facility costs (electric, heat, technology, security), landfill tipping fees, and routine maintenance of equipment and vehicles.

During the next three months, we will be looking at options for providing these services to our residents. The questions are big: Should we continue to provide these services ourselves or should we out-source any of them? How do we ensure adequate funding for these services? Do we have enough people who can contribute by becoming members of the departments that provide these services? We'll be looking to you, our residents, for input on which way we should go regarding these questions.

Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Supervisor

SANITATION NEWS AND REMINDERS



There are no 2022 Federal Holidays on our scheduled garbage pick up days! Please put your trash out every week on your scheduled pick up day.

Have your garbage out by 4 am.

Please when needed, wash your can out. Replace any cans that are cracked or broken.

During the winter months, 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.

If animals get into your garbage, it is your responsibility to clean up.

DO NOT put out large items or bags heavier than 30 pounds. These items will not be taken.

Our garbage crew will not pick up building materials, appliances, furniture, carpeting or metal. Please call our office at 249-9169 for further information or to find out how to dispose of these items at the Transfer Station or the Marquette County Landfill.

Sands Township does not offer curbside recycling. Your recycling can be brought to the Transfer Station free of charge. If you leave out curbside recycling, it will be picked up as trash.

Sands Township has a very dedicated Sanitation Department, aka the “garbage crew,” that works very hard all year! Our Department Head and driver is Ken Contois. Ward Glass and Tim Johnston work the back of the truck and all three also work the Transfer Station. We are always looking for substitutes to fill in when needed!

Call the office for further details or an application.

BATTERY RECYCLING



Do not throw your batteries in the trash! Doing this can cause a fire in our garbage truck or at the Landfill. Drop your used batteries by the Township Office during office hours and we will take care of getting them recycled.

Alkaline Batteries: These batteries are used in items like flashlights, toys, TV remote controls, computer mice and calculators. Common alkaline batteries include AA, AAA, 9 Volt, C, and D.

Rechargeable Batteries: This type of battery includes lithium ion, nickel metal hydride, nickel cadmium, and small sealed lead acid. You’ll find them in products such as power tools, digital cameras, 2-way radios, cordless phones, laptops, and mobility scooters.

Cell phones: We also accept old cell phones. If you have an old flip phone or other retired cell phone, please bring it to us for recycling.

If you have any questions on battery recycling, please call the Township Office.

TREASURER'S NEWS

Winter property tax statements were mailed on December 1, 2021 and are due to the Sands Township Treasurer by 5:00 PM on February 14, 2022. Please allow 7 days for mailed payments to arrive. Beginning February 15th, 2022 a 3% penalty will be added. Beginning March 1st, 2022 all delinquent summer and winter taxes must be paid directly to the Marquette County Treasurer. If you have not received your tax statement or if your statement went to your escrow company and you would like a copy, please call the office at 249-9169.

Residents now have the option to pay their taxes online via the secure GovPros Website. The fee charged for VISA, Mastercard, AMEX and Discover is 3.5% with a \$1.95 minimum. To pay online, please visit the Sands Township Website at sandstownship.org and click on the Tax Credit Card Tab, access the QR code pictured below or call our office and we can take your payment over the phone.

Submitted by: Kent Koehn, Treasurer



PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

As I write this, it is December and snowing lightly. Winter has arrived! What better way to avoid the winter doldrums than to visit the Peter White Public Library (PWPL)! By exploring the website (www.pwpl.info) you can find current events happening at the library. There are so many new and familiar programs for all ages and abilities.

Many library programs are available online using Zoom or You Tube. Web addresses for the programs available on Zoom are provided on the PWPL website on the scheduled day. Additionally, some programs are live streamed and recorded at www.youtube.com.

If you visit the library in person, there is also much to enjoy. You can browse the materials available for loan; relax with a good book; or find a terrific used book in the Friends of the Library Used Book Store on the main floor. You will find many shelves of DVDs or audio CDs to enjoy at home.

Take a walk around the building to appreciate the rotating art exhibits on both the main floor and the lower level.

Currently, like many public venues, masks are expected for all patrons over the age of two while in the building. You can still order materials to be picked up from your car while parked in one of the designated parking slots. Directions for picking up materials in the parking lot are available at <https://pwpl.info/curbside-pickup/>. There is a Dropbox for returning library materials located outside of Sands Township Offices for your convenience.

If you find that you would rather stay home than fight snowy roads and frigid temperatures, explore the PWPL website to see all the opportunities available to you free of charge in the comfort of your own home. You will be amazed at all that awaits! Submitted by: N. Suzanne Standerford, TAC Representative

ZONING DEPARTMENT NEWS

Sands Township does not support hunting within Residential zoned districts including all Sands Township subdivisions. Districts that are zoned Open Space (OS), Forestry & Agriculture (FA) and Rural Residential (RR) within Sands Township are open to hunting. All hunters must have approval from the property owner prior to hunting on any property within these districts.

Unfortunately, dumping of junk, tires, household items, contractor waste, automotive parts and garbage within the wooded areas of Sands Township is on the increase. This activity is a violation of the Sands Township Ordinance. Violators found dumping in these areas will receive a Civil Infraction Citation.

Submitted by: Randall Yelle, Zoning Administrator

SANDS TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Like so many rural areas in Michigan, the Sands Township Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is in critical need of people willing to be trained to become Medical First Responders. Do you work from home in Sands Township? Would your work allow you to make up time and leave for EMS calls? Are you a recent retiree? Our EMS agency needs personnel to survive. Below is a letter submitted by a longtime Sands Township resident on his recent experience with our outstanding EMS team.

I'm a newby to the Township, having lived here since 1974 and this is the first time I've had to call on the Sands' EMS for assistance. This note is to thank the members of the EMS for the things they did for me when I had a medical emergency on Monday 11/22.

Early that Monday morning, I bent over to pick something up from the floor of our bedroom. In doing so, the ball of my right artificial hip came out of the socket and I tumbled to the floor. With the help of my wife, Carolyn, I painfully crawled onto the bed where I could not move because of the pain. Carolyn called 911 for an ambulance. Within what seemed just a few minutes, two EMS volunteers arrived at my home. They assessed the situation, took my vital signs, and determined that I would need to be put in a pneumatic full body splint in order to get me into the ambulance because I was on the second floor of my house. The person in charge (whose name I've not been able to determine) decided that more help was needed so he called volunteers from the Sands' Fire Department. He also decided that, in order to move me, I had to be sedated, so he called a woman from somewhere who was a professional in pain management. Very soon, there were at least six or seven men and women who were crowded into my 10 X 12 bedroom helping to get me into the splint and onto the gurney to take me down fourteen steps and into the waiting ambulance. I have only hazy memories of this operation but it must have been a major chore for the EMTs.

My hat is off to the EMTs who attended me that day. They were considerate of my pain, were able to improvise in this awkward situation, and were certainly professional in all that they did. Years ago, when I first moved to Sands, I was a volunteer for the fire department. At that time, this meant showing up for infrequent fires to assist in handling a hose or shoveling dirt on a ground fire in the Plains. Now I can only imagine the preparation that volunteers must undergo to act as professionally and as knowledgeably as the EMTs who treated me.

The Sands Township Website (sandstownship.org) announces that Sands is in critical need of EMS personnel. If I were younger, I'd volunteer once again. If you're able, please consider volunteering. As for me, I will gladly pay my local taxes to support the EMS.

Again my sincere thanks to the EMTs who treated me.

Submitted by: Mr. Bob Myers, Sands Township Resident

ELECTION NEWS FROM THE CLERK

There has been a lot of talk in the news recently about proposed changes to Michigan election laws. Be reassured our office is following these bills closely and has helpful resources within the County Clerk's office, the Bureau of Elections, Michigan Townships Association, and our election equipment vendors to make sure we have the resources needed and are conducting all elections securely, fairly, and with integrity. Additionally, all of our election inspectors are up for recertification training this year. It is important to our office that all voters have access to a secure ballot, and that our voters have faith in our election system. To ensure accuracy of our equipment, several pre-election equipment tests and post-election audits are conducted, many of which are open to the public for observing. If you have questions or concerns about Sands Township elections or elections in the State of Michigan, please feel free to contact me.

It looks like 2022 will be a busy election year. The Marquette School District is considering a May election, and there will be an August Primary and November General election. Several Township millages are up for renewal and will be on the August ballot.

If you wish to get involved and work our elections as an Election Inspector, applications are available in the office. If you have any questions in regards to your registration status, wish to request an absentee ballot, want to view your ballot, or have other voter/election related questions, you can go online to www.michigan.gov/vote or check with our Clerk's office at 906-249-9169 ext 2, or email me at clerk@sandstownship.org.

Submitted by: Carolyn Kerkela, Clerk

TOWNSHIP INFORMATION

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, facility rental information, and a News Page with the latest information and postings for our residents to include Zoom Links for board meetings. 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.

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETINGS

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 in person or by Zoom.

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

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Sands Township is currently looking for people willing to serve on the Parks and Recreation Committee. For further information, please contact the Township Office.



FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

The Fire Department elected new Officers this past November:

- Fire Chief : Tom Wahlstrom
- Assistant Chief for Hall 1: Ben Yelle
- Assistant Chief for Hall 2: Brian Kleven
- Captains: Andy Linsmeier and Greg Orchard
- Training Officer: Frank Rosado
- Training Officer Assistant: Pat Mager
- Secretary: Tim Reeves



2021 RECYCLING AND TRASH NUMBERS



In 2021, Sands Township had 3,453 total visits to the Transfer Station to drop off 47.3 tons of single stream recycling and 6.51 tons of glass. That's 53.81 tons of recycling that will not be added to the Marquette County Landfill. This is an increase of 1,000 visits from 2020 and over 20 more tons of recycling. Lets keep it going in 2022!

Between our weekly trash collection and rubbish collected from the Transfer Station, Sands Township hauled 1027.79 tons of trash to the Marquette County Landfill in 2021. This was a slight decrease from the 2020 total of 1101.62 tons.



NEWSLETTER

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

Striving to protect your water & environment

HELPFUL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR TOWNSHIP ENCLOSED

There are NO 2022 Holidays on our scheduled garbage pick up days! Please put your trash out by 4:00 AM on your designated pick up day for all of calendar year 2022. If you miss your scheduled trash pick up, you will need to store your trash until the following week.

Please note our New Transfer Station hours on the front page of this newsletter.

*****Beginning February 1, 2022 our office will be open Monday—Friday from 10:00 AM—3:00 PM. We will no longer have different hours on Tuesdays. *****

Want to Get Involved?

Are you interested in getting involved with the Township, but aren't sure how? We always 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! 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

(906)249-9169

FAX 249-2120

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office@sandstownship.org

www.sandstownship.org

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