

SANDS TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Winter 2023

OFFICE COMPLEX HOURS: Monday - Friday, 10 AM-3 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

ELECTRONICS RECYCLING COMING THIS SPRING!

**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**
Victoria Jenema (Chair)
Shelley Brauer
David Kallio
Jane Noe
Jamin Wonch (Alternate)

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

Sands Township will begin an electronics recycling program this spring. In mid-November we received a \$29,500 Rural Electronics Recycling Grant from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). This 2-year grant provides funds to purchase equipment, including collection bins, and to participate in a statewide transportation network to move collected electronics to a downstate recycling center. Grant funds also provide for staffing and promotion of electronics recycling.

This recycling program focuses on consumer electronics such as computers, televisions, monitors, printers and peripherals (keyboards, cables, mice). We will also collect rechargeable and lithium batteries. A unique feature of this grant is that Sands will serve as a collection location for Marquette County residents. Days and times will be scheduled specifically for electronics collection.

To kick-off the program, we will host an electronics recycling event at the Sands Recycling and Transfer Station: the date will be set once all necessary equipment is delivered. The program also includes electronics collection each month. Regularly scheduled hours will begin after the kick-off event.

How will you know when you can bring your old electronics for recycling? As soon as we know the schedule, we will publicize the kick-off event and electronics recycling hours via mailings, flyers, print, social media and Sands Township's website.

Submitted by: Darlene Walch, Supervisor

FIRE DEPARTMENT CADET PROGRAM

In 2022, the Sands Township Fire Department along with the Sands Township Board of Trustees, created the Sands Township Fire Cadet Program. The intent of this program is to get young residents (age 16-18) involved with the Fire Department to enhance recruitment efforts for volunteer firefighters within our Township. In addition to helping our recruitment efforts, the Fire Cadet Program aims to teach young residents valuable skills and make them part of a team that believes in serving the community in which we live.

While fire cadets are not licensed firefighters, the program allows them to participate in department training exercises and some on-scene support operations under the supervision of Sands Township Fire Department firefighters. The training and experiences the fire cadets receive through the program will prepare the cadets for a future in the volunteer fire service.

We encourage all Township residents between the ages of 16-18 who are interested in joining the Sands Township Fire Cadet Program to contact Assistant Chief Brian Kleven at (906) 361-3128. Those interested can also attend a Fire Department meeting on the 2nd or 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00pm at Station 1.

Submitted by: Tom Wahlstrom, Fire Chief

SANITATION NEWS AND REMINDERS

Have your garbage out by 4 am.

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

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 for further information or to find out how to dispose of these items at the Transfer Station for a fee (cash or check only—see fee schedule below) or the Marquette County Landfill by a permit obtained through the Township Office. Freon items must be taken to the County Landfill for disposal. The cost is \$40 per item and a permit is required from the Township Office.



Sands Township does not offer curbside recycling. Your recycling can be brought to the Transfer Station free of charge. Do not throw used batteries in the trash! You can bring them by the Township Office or the Transfer Station for recycling. Coming soon we will also offer electronic recycling!

Transfer Station Hours and Fees:

Wednesday 4-7 PM

Thursday 10-2 PM

Every 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month 10-2 PM

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 including glass	No Charge

GARBAGE PICK UP HOLIDAY **IN 2023**

Garbage pickup is affected by a holiday only if the holiday falls on a Tuesday or Wednesday. In 2023, the only holiday is Tuesday, July 4th. For that week **ONLY** trash pick up will be shifted to Wednesday and Thursday. All Tuesday garbage will be picked up on Wednesday, July 5th and all Wednesday garbage will be picked up on Thursday, July 6th. Please make sure to have your trash set out at the regular times on these days. We will remind all residents of the changes for this July 4th, 2023 holiday pickup as the time gets closer.



SCRAP TIRE COLLECTION & RECYCLING

Sands Township held a scrap tire collection for Sands Residents in August of 2022 and collected over 5 tons of tires in 3 hours. The Marquette County Landfill is working with EGLE on a Scrap Tire Cleanup Grant for Summer 2023. As soon as we have a scheduled date for Sands Township, we will pass it on to our residents.

In 2022, Sands Township had 4,000 residents (an increase of 550 from 2021) sign in to the Transfer Station to drop off 48.22 tons of single stream recycling and 8.94 tons of glass. Our glass recycling increased 2.5 tons from 2021! Since purchasing our own 40-yard roll-off for metal recycling, our hauler has delivered 6 roll-off bins of scrap metal to Alter Metal in Negaunee for recycling. **Keep the recycling going strong Sands Township Residents!**

*Want to help make the world a better place?
RECYCLE!*

Between our weekly trash collection and rubbish collected from the Transfer Station, Sands Township hauled 891.80 tons of trash to the Marquette County Landfill in 2022. This was a decrease of 136 tons from 2021.

PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

“The mission of Peter White Public Library is to enrich the community through access to library services and cultural opportunities.” (PWPL Mission Statement; 2022) In this letter I note many of the ways these goals are met at PWPL. To see all that the library offers please explore further at the PWPL website (www.pwpl.info) or even better, explore the library in person.

Most library Services are free if you have a PWPL library card. Room rentals for groups have a small fee to cover maintenance costs and technology equipment. Some meeting rooms have access to projectors, screens, WIFI connections, and room for up to 40 attendees. In addition to meeting rooms, there are study rooms and a casual space with vending machines for snacks. Public computers are available for use in the library. A Memory Lab for digitizing materials such as slides and VHS movies is on the second floor. A Recording Booth for making your own audio recordings is available. Quiet areas for reading, studying, or simply enjoying the beautiful views of Marquette or Lake Superior are on the second floor.

Library Services include many groups to help you connect with other like-minded citizens. There is a Meditation Group to help attendees improve focus and relieve stress. Book groups are available for infants to senior citizens and focus on either non-fiction or fiction. Examples are Book Babies and Global Geeks. Check these out!

Cultural opportunities include art exhibits and festivals. Each winter during the holiday season there are decorated trees sponsored by a variety of local groups. In April watch for the Great Lakes Poetry Festival with numerous programs and varieties of poetry. In the Huron Mountain Club Gallery on the main floor are rotating exhibits from artists which change every other month. In the Lower Level Reception Gallery are rotating exhibits of many types; e.g., quilts to digital illustrations. While in the lower level, check out the Marquette Arts and Cultural Center’s rotating exhibits as well.

Of course, the library has extensive collections of all types of books. You can access books through interlibrary loan, e-books, audio books on CD, and movies from the card catalog or free applications such as Libby, Hoopla, or Kanopy. Visit the Friends of the Library store on the main floor to purchase low cost, high quality used books and other resources.

I encourage you to spend one of these long winter days visiting PWPL or its website to explore these resources as well as many more. I end this letter with this quote from the Michigan Library Association by Caitlin Moran: “...On a cold rainy island, [libraries] are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead.”

Submitted by: N. Suzanne Standerford, TAC Representative

BLUEBERRY RIDGE WARMING HUT

Did you know some of the best property in Michigan belongs to you? Yes, it is true! This hut is a perfect example of what great things can be accomplished when state and federal agencies work together with local government (Sands Township) and a non-profit 501-c3 (Superiorland Ski Club). The Superiorland Ski Club identified Blueberry Ridge Recreation area as a premier cross country ski venue which needed a warming facility. They worked in building consensus with the community and state and fundraised and wrote grants to build this hut for everyone. The hut was approved by Sands Township and the State of Michigan. A lease for building this hut was obtained by Sands Township and applications for grants were made. The Superiorland Ski Club appealed to many individuals and groups in order to fundraise to build this hut.

A Federal Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant was awarded to this endeavor and was matched by our local efforts. The entire 880 acres at Blueberry is encumbered in perpetuity to public outdoor recreation under the LWCF guidelines and in its award of the grant.

This hut is managed by The Superiorland Ski Club, Sands Township and the State of Michigan Parks and Recreation. All groups share a common objective in caring for this hut and the goal of keeping the trails at Blueberry Ridge Recreation Area open for future generations to enjoy.

Come on in to the hut, enjoy the warmth, the fire, the snowy trails here and its forests. This Hut’s for you!



Submitted by: Blueberry Ridge Warming Hut Committee

SANDS TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Is it just me?

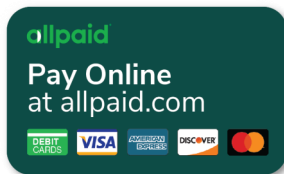
A puzzling phrase to say to yourself while working in emergency medical services. Some of us ask, "is it just me?" to dispatch after being alerted to a request for emergency assistance. Other times we sit, and wonder "is it just me" that knows there are occasions when no one is available to answer the emergency request or perhaps just one can, so we render care and wait for another agency to come for transport when they're available. We have made the choice to live in a rural area. With that choice comes the understanding of what services may or may not be available. We also choose a rural lifestyle and giving back to the community in different ways.

Sands Township EMS has a very long history of transporting injured and ill patients to area hospitals. When Lyn Nelson, our current Coordinator, started in 1989, there were years of slim staffing, but almost always we could transport. Recruitment has become increasingly difficult every year. Retention, not so much of a problem, as those who have left our agency have typically advanced to retirement or moved out of the area. This past summer, we engaged in a robust social media campaign to recruit people. One of our township residents came forward and answered the call to which we are grateful. Many people did reach out to us, but they neither lived nor worked close enough to Sands Township. Our volume is very low and thus we cannot staff fulltime at the Crossroads station. Our personnel are alerted via pager from 911 dispatchers. We must be within minutes from patients to render emergent care, which means leaving work, home, or local activities when possible. If there were 10 people in the county, a 3-month medical first responder course could happen. There is a local EMT course that starts every fall. Please contact the township if you have questions about these courses. We need you; we all do.

Submitted by: Lyn Nelson, EMS Coordinator

TREASURER'S NEWS

Winter property tax statements were mailed on December 1, 2022 and are due to the Sands Township Treasurer by 5:00 PM on February 14, 2023. Please allow 7 days for mailed payments to arrive. Beginning February 15th, 2023 a 3% penalty will be added. Beginning March 1st, 2023 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 have the option to pay their taxes online thru February 28, 2023 via the secure allpaid Website. The fee charged for Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover is 2.95%. To pay online, please visit the Sands Township Website at sandstownship.org and click on the Tax Credit Card Tab.

Submitted by: Kent Koehn, Treasurer

ELECTION NEWS FROM THE CLERK

This past year was a busy one for Elections, and I would like to take this chance to thank the voters of Sands Township for their support and patience. Our election inspectors shared with me that our voters were polite and respectful, many thanking the workers for their time. We had high voter turnout, with 552 voters in the August Primary and 1,215 for the November General election. Those are impressive turnout numbers for mid-term elections in a Township with 2,000 registered voters, and higher than the statewide average turnout percentage.

The passage of Proposal 2 will bring about many changes to voting and elections, which are set to be in place by 2024. The details of these changes still need to be worked out by the Bureau of Elections, including how early voting will be conducted. As we learn more about how the changes will work and go through training and certification for elections through the State, we will communicate any changes with our voters. If you have any questions or concerns about how elections are conducted in Sands Township, please contact Carolyn Kerkela, Clerk.

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, 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 draft 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. Draft Minutes are posted at the Township Office, Fire Hall #2 and on our website. There is also a meeting summary posted each month in the Mining Journal.

The public is welcome to attend all meetings in person or by Zoom.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Chairperson- Missy Lehtomaki -Vice Chair- Carrie Lusk - Secretary- Kirsten Matthews- Members – Bob Kallio, Wendell Kurr, Wendy Maas, Shawn Sitar & Rich Storm.

With the passing of longtime resident Bill Kapeller, the Recreation Committee has a member seat open. Please contact the Township Office for further information on the next scheduled Recreation Committee meeting or if interested in becoming a member. These meetings are open to the public and all are welcome to attend.

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 these meetings.



ZBA AND BOARD OF REVIEW

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is in need of a member. What is the ZBA's function? The ZBA hears appeals, evaluates requests for interpretations and approves or denies variances. They have 4 regular meeting dates throughout the year, however only meet if there is business to conduct. The Township also needs Board of Review members. The Board of Review consists of three Township residents who sit in review of the actions of the Assessor. The board meets three times each year. They are in need of one regular member and one alternate. Please call the Township office for further 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 further information please contact Tom Redlon, Cemetery Sexton at 346-6927 or the Township office at 249-9169.

The Cemetery Ordinance is available for review at the Township during regular office hours.

Submitted by Tom Redlon, Cemetery Sexton



NEWSLETTER

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

Striving to protect your water & environment

HELPFUL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR TOWNSHIP ENCLOSED

Transfer Station Hours:
Wednesday 4:00 PM—7:00 PM
Thursday 10:00 AM—2:00 PM
**Every 2nd and 4th Saturday of each
month – 10:00 AM– 2:00 PM**

**ELECTRONICS RECYCLING
COMING THIS SPRING!**

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 always need subs on our garbage truck. We are always looking for people to join our Fire Department and EMS.

We have open seats on Board of Review and Zoning Board of Appeals. 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

987 S. M-553, Gwinn, MI 49841

office@sandstowship.org

www.sandstowship.org

Follow us on Facebook!