



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2016

12050 Old Belding Road Belding, MI 48809 616-691-8450
Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00a.m.—4:00p.m.

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Supervisor:	Frank Force
Clerk:	Kessie Brummel
Treasurer:	Sabrina Freeman
Trustee:	Dennis Heffron
Trustee:	Paul Knoerl

FROM THE SUPERVISOR:

As Supervisor one of the most time consuming issues I handle are complaints from residents about other residents. Many residents feel "picked on" because the Township is requiring them to clean up this , license that or stop the dog from barking. The fact of the matter is that all zoning violations are based on complaints from residents, usually your neighbor. **The Township does not tour the area looking for violations.** This has been the stance of the Township Board ever since the old administration hired airplanes to seek out violators.

When a call, email or visit is received, an Investigation Report is filled out so our Zoning Enforcement Officer can check out the complaint, take photos and talk to the resident if possible. If contact is not made he will leave his card for you to call him. By doing this he can ascertain if a Township Ordinance has been violated and if so a letter is sent from our Zoning Administrator citing the violation and giving a block of time to comply. We are more than willing to work with our residents but it has to go both ways.

The Ordinances that we enforce were created by residents of this Township and are amended by residents of this Township from time to time when the need arises. Failure to comply to a legitimate violation can end up in court and cost up to \$500 per occurrence. We manage to avoid the courts the majority of the time. All of our Ordinances are on our website at www.grattantownship.org and at the Township Office for Township residents to view.

The Planning Commission is instrumental for creating or amending ordinances. As a resident of the Township you have the opportunity to apply for this committee or others that help guide the Township and make it work. We are always seeking applicants to fill these committees. Unfortunately residents just do not want to get involved or spend their valuable time on a committee. It is important to know, if you want to have a say in what goes on in the Township, this is the way to do it. Committee applications are on the website and at the Township office.

Please feel free to call me anytime you have questions about these or any other issues.

Frank Force
Supervisor

FROM THE ASSESSOR:

BOARD OF REVIEW DATES

Monday, March 14, 2016 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Thursday, March 17, 2016 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE:

Presidential Election Year

2016 is a busy year for elections because it is a presidential year. Our election dates are March 8, August 2, November 8 and if necessary May 3 2016. It is no longer possible to vote straight party by a single mark, so make sure you plan a few minutes longer at the polls to vote. The polls will open at 7:00a.m. and close at 8:00p.m. You may also keep in mind the ability to possibly use the absentee voting application if you meet to proper requirements to avoid the precinct all together. The options are- 1)60 years or older, 2) physically unable to attend the polls without assistance, 3) being appointed an election precinct inspector in a precinct other than the precinct where I reside, 4) expecting to be absent from the community where you are registered, 5) the tenets of your religion, 6) confined in jail. Absentee voting is simple and very convenient. Your vote is sealed and not counted until the actual day of the election by our Election Inspectors.

A few things as voters you may want to remember for Election Day- 1) no campaigning within 100 feet of any precinct doorway, 2) Do NOT wear any campaign buttons or clothing in the precincts, 3) you CAN bring in notes as to how you want to vote, but must not leave it at the polls, 3) you can NOT take pictures or videos at the polls, 4) do NOT talk on you cell phone once you are in the voting station, 5) do not discuss with ANYONE how you are voting or suggest how they should vote, 6) it is permitted that a minor child may accompany and elector in the booth or voting compartment at an election.

Our Election Inspectors are an impressive group of people. They go to training to prepare for our Election Day so it may go as smooth as possible. It is such a long day for them. They start at 6:30a.m. and do not go home until everything is completed AFTER the polls have closed. Please don't hesitate to thank them for their efforts.

Kessie Brummel
Clerk

FAMILY FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS

Please join us on Monday, May 30th for the 28th Annual Memorial Day Celebration and Bridge Walk. More information will be available at the Township Hall closer to the date. The GTFD will hold its Annual Pancake Breakfast. Other activities will include a frog jumping contest, turtle race and penny scramble. There will also be other kids activities and games. A Memorial Service will take place at 11:00a.m. at the Grattan Center Cemetery. Please join us as we honor and remember those who gave there lives in service to our country.

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

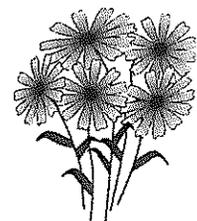
Upcoming Events:

Visit the Grattan Museum and 23 other local museums of the Tri River Museum Network as we Spring into the Past. This years event will take place on May 7th and 8th from 10:00a.m. to 4:00p.m. The theme for this year is Quilts and Quilt Block Trails. The admission to all of the museums is free for this weekend. Booklets listing all of the participating museums are available at the Township Hall.

Please join us on May 30th. We will be holding our Annual Memorial Day Bake Sale and Raffle from 9:00a.m. to 1:00p.m.. The raffle drawing will be held at 1:00p.m.. You need not be present to win. Hope to see you there.

Our meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00p.m. at the Township Hall. We welcome everyone to attend. If you have any questions about the Historical Society please call Pat Nugent at 691-7162 .

Think Spring!



FROM OUR TRUSTEES:

Dock and Boat Ordinance

A reminder to new lake residents that Grattan Township does have a dock and boat ordinance that provides reasonable regulations for watercraft, dock and raft usage. If you are unfamiliar with the ordinance, installing a new dock, or are new to the area, we would suggest you visit the Grattan Township website and review the ordinance. There are restrictions to the number of boats you can have on a given parcel and restrictions relative to the length and configuration of docks you can have on a given lakefront parcel. If residents have any questions relative to the ordinance it is suggested you contact the Township office for clarification.

Ordinance for Brine Discharging from Water Softeners

The Michigan DEQ has expressed concerns for a number of years over some of the sodium levels found at our sewer system irrigation fields. Although debate continues over all of the potential causes of these sodium levels/concentrations, it is evident that some of the sodium is introduced into the waste water systems via brine water from residential water softeners.

Most sewer customers may not think about where the brine water goes when your water softener is recharging/recycling. This brine solution eventually makes its way through our sewer systems' piping, pump stations, collection lagoons and then is sprayed onto the irrigation fields. Sodium/salt is not kind to pump station components and eventually collects or concentrates in areas of the irrigation fields.

The DEQ has requested a work plan from the Township to address these sodium levels in the irrigation fields.

Other Townships in the state have addressed brine discharge from water softeners via an ordinance to regulate the installation of water softeners in new home construction where sewer systems are utilized. As part of our work plan with the DEQ Grattan Township approved a similar ordinance at its January 2012 meeting.

Basically, on a new home construction in the sewer district it will be prohibited to install a water softener that introduces "backwash" into the Grattan Township Sewer systems. The water softener discharge must be dis-

charged into a separate below ground infiltration basin (drywell). The plumbing permit and consequent final inspection of the home will involve approval of the water softener and installation.

The Township would encourage any residents on the sewer system currently to install a "drywell" for your water softener when, and if, if you will be replacing it or are making plumbing modifications in your residential water system.

The Township also strongly urges all sewer system users to utilize potassium pellets in their water softeners versus sodium. Although more costly than sodium, if the majority of sewer customers (750) used potassium versus sodium for their water softeners, this would be very beneficial for the sewer systems and reduce the long terms costs for operation of it.

A reminder to all sewer customers that everything that exits your household into the Grattan Township sewer systems eventually makes it way through a number of pump stations, into a number of settling lagoons and eventually is used as irrigation water on a number of agricultural fields in the Township. We continue to experience emergency call outs for inoperable pump stations due to shop rags, diapers and other foreign material that have clogged, damaged or jammed pumps and floats. Grease is also a problem over time as this builds up in the pump station wells and has to eventually be removed mechanically.

**Paul Knoerl
Trustee**

Grattan Township Preserved Farms

As you know Grattan Township participates in the county wide Farmland Preservation Program which currently has over 4,000 acres enrolled. We have three more farms from Grattan Township to be added to our list of permanently preserved farms, bringing our total to nine farms now in Grattan Township. We have three more farms that are in the final stages of being preserved and many more applications waiting from Grattan Township farmers.

Program participation is voluntary. Farmers are compensated for the development rights on their property. Thanks to these farms, they are helping to preserve our agriculture and rural character in Grattan Township.

Senior Meals

Did you know that Grattan Township offers senior meals on Monday's and Wednesday's at the O'Brien Room at 12 noon? Also, Bingo for the Seniors is 2nd Wednesday of the Month following the meal. If you are not able to drive, seniors (60 years or older) residing in Kent County can register for Ridelink. There are Registration forms and more information about this transportation program at the Township Office or you may call Ride-link at 774-1288 to learn about the program.

It is a pleasure for me to serve the residents of Grattan Township. If ever you have comments or concerns, I can be reached at 616-794-2527.

**Denny Heffron
Trustee**

From the Desk of the Fire Chief:

The fire service, paid on call fireman has been in decline nationwide over the last number of years. The Grattan fire department is looking for personnel that would be interested in serving the residents of Grattan Township.

Every time we are called into service someone in the township is in some type of crises. We are here to serve them regardless of the nature of the call. For example in the last fiscal year we have responded to 255 calls to date, 16 car accidents, 11 brush fires, 116 medicals, 20 structure fires, hazmat and assisted our neighboring townships on 23 occasions. Medical calls range from heart related issues, strokes, Drug overdoses, difficulty breathing and numerous trauma type incidents. If you read this article and feel that is something you would be interested in doing please call the township for a application @ 691-8450 or call the fire chief @ 485-5925. You're invited to come down for a tour of the facilities and the equipment on site.

We currently are sending three people through the fire academy, Falica Pelkey, Kyle Ford and John Rasch. We are looking forward to their graduation come April. We are also looking for cadets , it's a great career finding opportunity if interested in public service. CALL Today!

**Lou Kirkbride
Grattan Fire Chief**

Grattan Township Meeting Schedules	
<i>Location: Township Hall</i>	<i>Time: 7:00pm</i>
Township Board	2nd Mon. each month And 4th Mon. as needed
Planning Comm.	1st Wed. monthly as needed
ZBA	3rd Wed. monthly as needed
Safety Board	4th Thur. monthly as needed
FASC	4th Wed. monthly as needed
Sewer Advisory	3rd Tue. monthly as needed

Website
www.grattantownship.org

Cable TV
Channel 25

CLIP & SAVE
SEWER EMERGENCY
GRATTAN TOWNSHIP
EMERGENCY SERVICE
PHONE: (616) 776-9656