



West Traverse Township
(Est. 1897)

Township Board

- Bob Sandford - *Supervisor*
- Eva Lauer - *Clerk*
- Kristi Hollingsworth - *Treasurer*
- Sophy Carpenter - *Trustee*
- Sam DeCamp - *Trustee*

Planning Commission

- Jim Bartlett - *Chair*
- Paul Mooradian - *Vice Chair*
- Joey Arbaugh - *Secretary*
- Richard Horan
- Eva Lauer
- Ann Wilderom
- Pete Wallin

Zoning Board of Appeals

- Ken Parada - *Chair*
- Sophy Carpenter
- Ed Gray
- Tim Hayner
- Paul Mooradian

Board of Review

- Joretta Bethke - *Recording Secretary*
- Craig Cottrill
- Gary Laenen
- Gary Morse

Thorne Swift Nature Preserve Committee

- Sam Decamp - *Chair*
- Joey Arbaugh
- John Baker
- Carolyn Sandford

Recreation Committee

- Carolyn Sandford - *Chair*
- John Riggs
- Paul Repasky

Water Board

- Bob Sandford - *Chair*
- Jim Bartlett
- Wayne Chellis
- Sam DeCamp

Planning/Zoning Administrator

Randy Frykberg

Assessor

George Tupa

Secretary

Sue Matsko

Office Hours

9:00 am - 1:00 pm daily

Board Meetings

2nd Tuesdays - 7:00 pm

Planning Commission Meetings

2nd Wednesdays - 7:00 pm

West Traverse Township 2006 Fall Newsletter

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www.westtraversetownship.com

From the Treasurer

The Township Office will be open from 9 am to 5 pm to receive tax payments on the following dates:

December 29, 2006

February 14, 2007 – taxes are due and payable without interest and penalties

February 28, 2007 – taxes are due and payable before being returned as delinquent to the County Treasurer

Please report address changes or change of ownership promptly to the Treasurer. Failure to receive tax statements does not exempt taxes from penalties. Make sure your principal residence exemption and property transfer papers are filed with the assessor.

Please confirm that your check matches the total amount due for the bill. For payments that are not correct, the Treasurer will either return the check to the sender (which may result in interest charges) or send a second bill for amount underpaid.

Public Act 357 of 2004 shifts the county operational tax to the summer tax collection. For 2006, the final 1/3 of the county tax is on the winter tax bill. Beginning with 2007, the full amount of the county operational tax will be included in the summer tax bill.

Water System Update

An expansion of the Township's water system – originally proposed for this fall – was postponed. This proposed expansion would have added a reservoir, located on the Township's property on Hughston Road, to the system and would have extended the supply line down Lake Road from Carpenter Lane to the Windward Association. The postponement occurred because the Township was unable to reach satisfactory contractual terms with its water supplier, the City of Harbor Springs, in time to allow the expansion to proceed prior to the end of the 2006 construction season.

A newly discovered concern regarding the City of Harbor Springs' desire and capability to continue supplying water to the Township after the current supply contract expires in 2011 prompted the Township Board to request that the Water Committee develop an overall 5-year water system plan that may include a Township well in addition to a reservoir. Once that plan is in place, discussions will continue with other parties relative to their participation in ongoing efforts to address water supply and water quality concerns.

Township Five Year Recreation Plan

On November 14th, the Township Board adopted the West Traverse Township Five-Year Recreation Plan for 2006-2011. This Plan was developed by the Recreation Committee. It proposes improvements and changes to the Township properties designated for recreational and/or educational uses, namely the 40 acre parcel on Hughston Road, the 80 acre parcel off Ridge Road, the Cook property across from the Township Hall, and the Thorne Swift Nature Preserve.

The Plan follows the format required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The reason for this is that MDNR approval is required in order to apply for and receive grants from the State of Michigan and others for recreational improvements. The Plan also incorporates information from the Township Planning Commission's 2005 Survey, which included questions about recreation needs and interests. A key aspect of the Plan is that the Township can amend it at any time over the next five years to reflect changes in specific actions.

The Plan is available for review in the Township Office and on the Township website.

Thanks

In August 2006, David Leik resigned as Supervisor of West Traverse Township and Imogene Leik resigned as Township Bookkeeper. The Township thanks them both for their many years of dedicated service and for their many contributions to West Traverse Township and the surrounding area.

November General Election

Congratulations to the 938 people who voted in West Traverse Township. That represents 66.1% of the registered voters, versus 56.6% for all of Emmet County. A hearty thanks are also in order for Clerk Eva Lauer and her hard working staff of election workers - Joretta Bethke, Cynthia Fisher, Jane Keller, Sandra Lauer, and Barbara O'Neill - who kept everything moving along smoothly even with the high turnout.

Thorne Swift Nature Preserve – John Riggs

We had a great 2006 season. We had good attendance in our Kid’s programs, which were very exciting for the little ones, especially the series of classes devoted to wilderness skills. Our regular adult and family programming went well also, including the very popular Birding and Wildflower walks. Although the weather didn’t cooperate for our Celestial observation night, the people who did come were treated with a show of lightning in the distance. One of the most popular programs is our other night time event which includes stories around the fire circle, “smores”, and a night hike. Our numbers were solid with about 5,000 visitors during the summer months. As night time programs hold so much interest, I would like to expand on the star gazing programs. My well used telescope though has seen it’s better days, so if there is anyone interested in donating a 6 or 8 inch reflector on a Dobsonian mount, it would be greatly appreciated. Other items which would compliment our programs and displays include binoculars and a night time camera with an infrared flash. Thank you and I hope to see you all next season.

Zoning/Planning Activity

This year, thru November 16, The Township has issued 43 zoning permits, classified as follows:

- 16 new homes
- 13 minor additions or minor remodels
- 3 new accessory buildings; and
- 5 other (signs, foundation,entrance, etc.)

The Township Planning Commission (PC) has also been active. Along with reviewing and considering possible updates to the Township Master Plan, the PC has held Public Hearings resulting in

- Approval of a Special Use Permit for a Township Water Reservoir on Hughston Road Township property
- Denial of a Special Use Permit for a Communication Tower in the Agricultural district on Hughston Road
- Recommendation to allow Communication Towers in the S-1 Public District as a Special Use, subsequently approved by the Township Board
- Recommendation to amend the regulations for towers in the Agricultural District, also subsequently approved by the Township Board
- Recommendation to allow changing 5 approved but not yet built single family homes to duplexes in Perry Farms Village
- Recommended changes to the Private Access Way Ordinance, still in-progress

New Entrance Ramp

Just in time for the November election, the Township Hall entrance ramp was rebuilt to bring it into compliance with current requirements for handicap access to polling places. The new ramp also improves the appearance of the Hall, and should continue to do so for many years with minimal maintenance due to the use of synthetic decking and railings.

2006 Road Repairs

In August, 2004, Emmet County voters overwhelmingly passed a ballot measure that allows each township to levy up to 1 mill each year for 4 years for road improvements. In 2005-6, our Township levied 0.5 mills and for 2006-7 it will be 0.7 mills. The Township Board, in conjunction with the Emmet County Road Commission, selects the specific roads that need to be repaired. For 2006, 6.13 miles of roads were repaired as follows, at a total cost of \$117,000:

7 Mile Point	Cracksealing	0.24
Lower Shore Drive	Cracksealing	2.44
Hughston Road	Cracksealing	0.67
Heynig Road	Sealcoating	0.23
Hughston Road	Sealcoating	0.51
Lightfoot Road	Sealcoating	0.06
Lightfoot Road	Sealcoating	0.11
Heynig Road	Wedge and seal	0.73
Lightfoot Road	Wedge and seal	1.00
Carpenter Lane	Wedge and Seal	<u>0.14</u>
Total Miles		6.13

Our strategy for road repairs is to maintain those that are already in good condition and to focus repairs on high traffic volume roads that service as many residents as possible. The Township Board will be meeting with the Road Commission in January to select the roads to be addressed in 2007.

Comments from New Supervisor

Thanks to all of you who voted for me, and a special thanks to the many of you who encouraged me to seek office, and supported me throughout.

Initially, I ran for supervisor because of my interest in local government. Then, the more I became aware of the situation and had the opportunity to speak with many of you, it became apparent that it was time for a change in the way the Township is managed. We need to emphasize teamwork, open communications, respect for diverse opinions, and cooperation with our neighbors in other townships and cities

I welcome input from any and all Township taxpayers on how I am doing as Supervisor and how we are doing as the Township Board. It would also be helpful if more of you could find the time to participate in the Township government, simply by attending monthly Township Board and/or Planning Commission meetings. Both the Board and the Commission would benefit from your input.

I’m looking forward to being Supervisor and will do everything I can to earn your confidence.