

# Clearwater Township News

JULY 2020

Township Office: 5440 River St., Rapid City, MI • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1, Rapid City, MI 49676  
Phone - 231 331-6249 • FAX 231 331-4375 • E-mail – [clerk@clearwatertwp.com](mailto:clerk@clearwatertwp.com) • Website – [Clearwatertwp.com](http://Clearwatertwp.com)

## From the Supervisor's Desk

Given the challenges of COVID-19, our newsletter is delayed a few months. The board is doing our best to continue to conduct Township business in a safe and efficient manner. This mailing is geared to provide a quick look at what was accomplished in our Township.

### Improvements in 2019

**Freedom Park:** Locked the existing outhouses and placed a handicap Port-a John on the East and West side. The existing outhouses will be removed later in 2020.

### Torch Lake Access Sites:

Birch Street – added electrical to pavilion & repaired the fencing.

Division Street – Replaced fencing

**Paddle Antrim:** Chain of Lakes Water Trail signage was approved for sites in the Township.

**Township Hall:** Removed the old tennis court, ½ basketball court and shuffle board court. This change opens up ideas for remodeling in the future.

**Community Center:** Updated the overhead lighting to LED fixtures and bulbs.

**Road Improvements:** Morrison Rd and West Plum Valley Rd were repaved in 2019. Repairs to Shellway Drive and Pine Circle Drive are scheduled for completion by October 1, 2020.

**Fire Department:** The Fire Station remodel, Phase 1, was completed in March 2020. This now supports EMS housing and 24 hour coverage in Clearwater Township. To help recruit and retain Fire Department membership, the board approved

an annual retirement fund contribution based upon tenure. See the Fire Department section of the newsletter for more information on the good work being done by this dedicated group of individuals.

**Township:** All computer devices for the Township were upgraded to Windows 10. Thank you to our residents for approving the renewal of the Road Improvement and the Fire Department Equipment millages.

I would like to give special recognition and thank you to Larry Niederstadt and Virginia Lee, who both passed away since our last newsletter. Both served their community well for many years; many benefited from their service.

Kathy Eldridge, who served as Township Clerk for several years, retired and moved away in December 2019. We miss her smile in the office but are thankful that she continues to work as an Election Inspector. Thank you, Kathy, for all of your contributions.

We always welcome input from our local residents regarding concerns, improvements and new ideas for our Township. Please send your ideas via mail, email or phone. All residents are encouraged to attend the Township meetings to stay current on Township business and provide input. Please note that the Township Board meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month. Agendas and meeting minutes are posted on the Clearwater Township website to help keep all informed. Website: <https://www.clearwatertwp.com/>

## Zoning Administrator Report

If you're planning improvements such as excavation for, or construction of, any building structure or parking area, you will need a Land Use Permit before you start. You will also need a Land Use Permit to make a structural change, alteration or addition to any existing building or structure or to relocate any building or structure. If you have a zoning violation concern, please submit a complaint form.

The Land Use Permit Application and the Violation Complaint Form are both available at the township office and on the township website. On the website, look under Documents & Policies, then Applications & Forms.

If you're planning a garage sale, yard sale, estate sale, etc., remember that our zoning ordinance requires that signs should not be displayed for more than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the sale. Signs need to be removed within forty-eight (48) hours following the end of the sale.

If you have questions, please contact the Zoning Administrator via email at [aparzych.za.clearwater@gmail.com](mailto:aparzych.za.clearwater@gmail.com) or call 231-357-0447.

## Clearwater Township Board

Mike Gaylord, Supervisor

Jule Moore, Clerk

Barbara Crambell, Treasurer

Greg Bradley, Trustee

Jeremy Morrison, Trustee

Dawn Kuhns, Assessor

Adam Parzych, Zoning Administrator

Paul Fabiano, Fire Chief

## Message From The Township Clerk

### Election Updates:

With the passage of Proposal 18-3 in November 2018, voter registration and absentee voting is more convenient for all Michigan residents. Please notify the Township Clerk via mail, email or phone if you would like to vote by mail.

Voter registration is available at the Township Hall during office hours as well as on the weekend before every election. For the August 4, 2020 election, we will have office hours on Saturday, August 1, 2020 from 8AM to 4PM. The polling location for all elections is the Clearwater Township Hall at 5440 River St. in Rapid City.

Any registered voter can vote from home/by mail. Ballot applications can be returned to the Township Clerk in person, place in the LOCKED drop box outside the Township Hall, place in the secure drop box in the slot of the Township Office door, mailed to PO Box 1,

Rapid City, MI, 49676 or scanned and emailed to the Clerk at [clerk@clearwatertwp.com](mailto:clerk@clearwatertwp.com).

Ballots should be returned before Election Day. Return ballots to the Township Clerk in person, place in the LOCKED drop box outside the Township Hall, place in the secure drop box in the slot of the Township Office door or mailed to PO Box 1, Rapid City, MI, 49676. All ballots need to arrive at the Township Hall prior to the close of polls at 8PM on Election Day.

### 2020 Election Dates:

**Michigan Primary Election - August 4, 2020**  
**General Election - November 3, 2020**

Clearwater Township is always looking for friendly registered voters to work our Township elections. Some training is required before working. If this might be of interest to you, please contact the township office to learn more and fill out an application.

## Parks & Rec Report

Welcome newcomers to Clearwater Township! Here is a list of public parks and recreation sites in the area. Hello to longstanding members of the community. Here is a reminder of beautiful places we can all enjoy.

Freedom Park in Rapid City is situated on both sides of Rapid City Road. Freedom Park West has a picnic pavilion and a ball field. A footbridge over a fast flowing section of the Rapid River and a boardwalk under the road connects to Freedom Park East's wooded trails, a grassy park, playground and pavilion. Parking is available on either side.

About one mile south, Heritage Park sits on the east side of Rapid City Road. There you will find fields for baseball, softball and soccer. There is a picnic pavilion with electricity and a large grill for outdoor cooking. Describing the perimeter, a half-mile asphalt trail, known as Lund's Loop, is available year long as snow is removed in the winter season.

The Skegemog Lake Wildlife Area comprises 3,300 acres of land providing habitat for many plant and animal species. DNR manages fishing and hunting. You can hike and cross country ski on five and a half miles of trail. Parking for the North Shore Pathway is near the intersection of Round Lake Road and Schneider Road. The 1.1 mile trail, enclosed by wetland tree species opens, finally, to the undeveloped north shore of Skegemog Lake. Skegemog Swamp Pathway parking is south of Schneider Road on Rapid City Road. The section of the path leading out to an observation platform at Skegemog Lake may be closed due to high water levels. The rail trail continues south to the Barker Creek parking area on M-72. Further details can be found at [gtrlc.org](http://gtrlc.org).

Information about Seven Bridges Nature Area can also be found at the [gtrlc.org](http://gtrlc.org) website. Three and a half miles out of Rapid City on Valley Road, 314 acres affords opportunity for fishing, hunting, bird watching, hiking, trail running and biking, and cross country skiing. Contact the DNR about regulations concerning hunting and fishing.

There are seven public access sites for the southern beaches of Torch Lake. Traveling along Crystal Beach Road from the east, they are Oak St., Birch St., Maple St., Cedar St., Pine St., Division St., and Lake St. Watch closely for signage as a few of them are difficult to spot.

Across Crystal Beach Road, Birch Street and Cedar Street have additional park spaces.

On Aarwood Road, which runs between Rapid City Road and Crystal Beach Road, Aarwood Bridge Park is a pleasantly shady and rustic parking area offering access to Rapid River for non-motorized watercraft.

From Aarwood Road take Aarwood Trail to find DNR access site to Torch River. The river runs 2.1 miles between Torch Lake and Skegemog Lake.

All outdoor facilities are available to use without reservations. Under usual circumstances, our indoor facilities are available for rent. The Township Hall/Gym and the Little Red School House/Community Center are both located on River Street in Rapid City. For now, all activities have been suspended until further notice.

Old timers and newcomers alike, see you out in the parks and on the trails in beautiful Clearwater Township.

## Message from the Treasurer

### Property Taxes:

Summer taxes are due beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> and payable through September 14, 2020 without penalty or interest. If you have not received your 2020 property tax statement by the middle of July, please call the Township Office and leave a message for the Treasurer at 231-331-6249, ext. 11 to ensure the mailing address on file is correct for your property. Winter taxes are due beginning December 1<sup>st</sup> and are payable through February 14, 2021 without penalty or interest.

Tax payments can be made in person at the Township Hall or by mail to PO Box 68, Rapid City, MI. Make checks out to "Clearwater

Township"; if paying by cash, please bring the exact amount owed. Clearwater Township does NOT accept credit card payments. There is a secure, locked drop box outside the Township Hall and a secure drop box slot in the Township Office door that can be used as a drop off for your payments if the office is closed.

If you want a receipt and you are paying via mail or the drop box, include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your payment.

For more information check out the "Property Tax Information" page on the township website.

## Kalkaska Memorial Offers Adjustment to Taxpayer's Bill

In 2015, The Kalkaska Memorial Health Center's Board of Trustees started offering hospital millage taxpayers an opportunity to see an "adjustment" in their out-of-pocket expenses for all hospital services provided. The hospital board revised its policy that offers all Kalkaska County taxpayers the opportunity to apply for an adjustment based on their actual hospital millage payments over the past five years. The hospital may adjust a taxpayer's eligible account by an amount equal to the taxpayer's prior five-year hospital millage taxes.

Eligibility is for the taxpayer or their dependents as defined by IRS regulations. The amount of the adjustment may be applied to any outstanding, out-of-pocket hospital bill of \$50 or greater.

To obtain the adjustment the taxpayer must:

Provide the hospital with a copy of their

property tax bills that itemize the hospital millage portion. The taxpayer may request an itemization from his or her township if it is not already provided. The hospital will adjust up to five years of millage payments.

Provide the hospital with proof of payment for their property taxes. Unpaid portions of property taxes cannot be used for the adjustment and each year can only be used once.

The adjustment will not be automatically applied to bills. Taxpayers need to apply for it because the hospital does not have specific tax information on all township residents.

In order to receive the adjustment, individuals will need to visit the KMHC patient accounts department, Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm. For more information about applying for the adjustment, county taxpayers are encouraged to contact Heidi Kato at 258-7614.

## From your Planning Commission

The COVID-19 situation has limited the Commission's meetings to just three in 2020 to date. The Commission is working on several items such as rezoning some areas for land use to expand commercial and residential growth in Clearwater Township. We also have several issues under review, such as requirements for pole buildings, retail recreational marijuana growing and sales limitations, and campground regulations. Again, public input is valuable in the formulation of any new or amended zoning regulation.

The review of the Master Plan was

completed last October, with notices included to update the demographics information once the 2020 census is completed. The vacated alleyways situation is progressing, although there has been no concrete remedy formulated as yet. Two avenues of approach have been suggested to free the owners of Township ownership of a portion of their Village commercial properties. Resolving this issue makes the land fronting Rapid City Rd. more attractive for development.

*Tom Backers  
Planning Commission Chair*

# Clearwater Township Fire Department

8255 Garfield Street, Rapid City, Michigan 49676

COVID-19 is on everyone's mind. The virus can be deadly for some depending on their age and health condition. The Governors' latest executive order requires everyone in a public setting, indoors, to wear a mask. Outdoors, if you cannot practice social distancing you must wear a mask. This is for the public's protection. Please be considerate of business owners and employees who are just attempting to follow the executive order.

Your Fire Department just recently signed a contract with Spencer Manufacturing to build a new Pumper / Tanker. The truck should be completed sometime in July / August of 2021. The truck will give the Township a Tanker with 2800 gallons of water with the ability to act as a Pumper if needed. Time and manpower can be better utilized by pumping off our water rather than getting out, setting up, and dumping water into a portable tank. The truck will still have that option for larger, extended time fires. This will help us in dropping our ISO rating so each homeowner can save on their homeowner's insurance.

I am often asked, why do so many trucks respond to a fire. All the area fire departments are lacking manpower. Most volunteer firefighters have "real" jobs during the day, resulting in even less available fire fighters. On a reported house fire three (3) fire departments are automatically notified to respond. Depending on the size of the fire additional departments, especially tankers and manpower, may be requested. Clearwater Township Fire Department has mutual aid agreements with all its neighboring fire departments, along with Antrim and Grand Traverse

## Special Note

There is an ongoing problem with homes not being numbered and the numbering not visible at night. The best way to reduce the time for emergency responders to find you is to make sure that your driveway and home is marked with a highly reflective 911 sign, readable from both directions day and night. Private roads also need to be marked with a reflective sign. It is the homeowner's responsibility to mark their driveways and to maintain them for a quick response and possible live saving event be it for fire or ambulance.

County.

With summer comes yard work. So far, we have experienced some long stretches of hot, dry, and windy weather. Remember to always check with the DNR before you start a fire, to make sure it is okay to burn. You can access the DNR website at [www.michigan.gov/burnpermits/](http://www.michigan.gov/burnpermits/), then click on the map of Michigan or call 866-922-2876. Clearwater Township Fire Department is not staffed 24 hrs. by firefighters and it is best to check with the DNR. They are the issuing authority, not the fire department.

Your Fire Department has partnered with Kalkaska EMS to bring 24 hr. manned ambulance coverage to the Township. What this means is at no extra cost to our taxpayers we have an ambulance available in the Township 24 hrs. a day / 7 days a week. The ambulance and personnel report for duty, and remain in the township, unless needed to respond elsewhere.

Your Fire Department is always looking for dedicated individuals that want to serve their community. Training and equipment will be provided by the Department. You must be at least 18 years of age and live within Clearwater Township. Our training nights are the first three Mondays in every month at 6:30 pm. . . . stop in and see what we are all about.

To stay informed as to what your Fire Department is doing. . . . like and follow us on Facebook @ "Clearwater Township Fire Department".

## Department Membership is at a 10 year low Accepting applications for the following positions

### TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED AT NO COST

#### Medical First Responder

This is a non firefighting position. Medical First Responders provide basic life support and patient assessment before arrival of advance medical personnel.

#### Firefighter

Firefighters are primary responsible for responding to fires, accidents and other incidents where risks are poised to life and property.

*Must be at least 18 years old • High School Graduate or GED*

*Have a valid Michigan Drivers License*

*Applications can be found at the Township Office at  
5440 River Street Rapid City, MI.*

*Successful applicants must pass a pre-employment physical, drug screen and background check. Please note on your application to which position you are applying for.*

#### NOTE:

*Meetings held 1st 3 Mondays of the month 7pm • 8255 Garfield Street Rapid City, MI.*

*Training for both positions will be provided*

If you have questions call 231-322-2137 to leave a message or email at [cfdstation5@hotmail.com](mailto:cfdstation5@hotmail.com)

## 2019 Run Report

Incidents by Type:			
Structure Fires	19	CO Alarm	6
Vehicle Fires	1	Smoke / Odor Investigation	2
Wildland Fires	5	Smoke / Fire Alarm	5
Emergency Medical Responses	236	Unauthorized (Illegal) Burning	1
Motor Vehicle Accidents	34	Authorized (Control) Burning	1
Person in Distress	7	Hazardous Conditions	37
Water / Ice Rescue	1	Good Intent	14
		Dispatch Canceled En Route	24

(3% increase over 2018)

In 2019, your Fire Department received aid 24 times and provided aid to other Fire Departments 29 times.

## ASSESSOR'S REPORT

If you own and occupy your home or vacant and contiguous property by June 30 (for year 2020 only) , you are eligible to receive the Principle Residence Exemption. By receiving this exemption, you are exempt from having to pay the 18 mills of school operating tax. If you notice that you are not receiving the exemption and you are entitled to it, contact Dawn Kuhns, Assessor, at 231-409-1827.

The Veteran's Exemption will exempt all property taxes for veterans for their principle residence for those that meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged
- 100% totally and permanently disabled or determined to be unemployable by the Veteran's Administration or un-remarried spouse
- Michigan Resident
- Own the property for which the exemption is being claimed and it is used as homestead

This exemption can be granted by the Board of Review during sessions conducted in March, July and December. The application must be completed and returned with the letter from the Veterans Administration stating the qualifying factors.

## Burn Permit Info.

[www.michigan.gov/burnpermits/](http://www.michigan.gov/burnpermits/) or 866-922-2876

You can find us on Facebook @ "Clearwater Township Fire Department"

## Gone, But Not Forgotten

Community Members who have passed on since April, 2019

Marie Horton	Barbara Hefner	Lynn Spann	Joyce Sheitler
James Keeney	James E. Packer	Gerald Guy	Raymond Linderleaf
Beryl King	Vivian Klaiber	Theodore Hicks, Jr.	Donald Kidd
Andrew Day	Danny Demars	Frances Garrock	Margaret Lynn
Renee Hubble	Carol Zenas	Ella Barber	Delores Ford
Virginia Pierce	James Mitchell	Richard Scheitler	Ralph Peck
Mildred Wells	Virginia Lee	Rodney Guy	James Feutz
Jeffrey Cutler	Keith Weesies	Raymond Green	Nancy L. Zimmerman
Therese Bennett	Paul Slick	Richard Waterman	Neil Leiter
Rebecca Cross	Larry Niederstadt	Daniel Rauch	
	Elaine Goen	Evelyn Erlandson	

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# Clearwater Township

P.O. Box 1

Rapid City, MI 49676

Ph: 231-331-6249

Fx: 231-331-4375

[www.clearwatertwp.com](http://www.clearwatertwp.com)

## **CLEARWATER TOWNSHIP MEETING SCHEDULE 2020-2021**

### **TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETINGS BEGIN AT 7:00 PM**

ON THE FOLLOWING THURSDAY EVENINGS:

July 16, 2020 • August 20, 2020 • September 17, 2020 • October 15, 2020 • November 19, 2020  
December 17, 2020 • January 21, 2021 • February 18, 2021 • March 18, 2021

### **PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS**

BEGIN AT 7:00 P.M. ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

July 6, 2020 • August 3, 2020 • September 14, 2020 • October 5, 2020 • November 2, 2020  
December 7, 2020 • January 4, 2021 (Joint w/ZBA) • February 1, 2021 • March 1, 2021

### **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETINGS**

BEGIN AT 7:00 P.M. ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

July 13, 2020 • October 12, 2020 • January 4, 2021 (Joint w/Planning Commission)

ALL OF THE ABOVE MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE CLEARWATER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER, 5407 RIVER STREET, RAPID CITY, MI.

Due to COVID-19, meetings may be held at the Township Hall, 5440 River Street.

The Clearwater Township Board will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aids and services such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon seven (7) days' notice to the Clearwater Township Board. Individuals requiring such service should contact the Clearwater Township office at 231-331-6249 or PO Box 1, Rapid City, MI 49676

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