

CHOCOLAY TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

March 2023

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Assessing

By John Gehres

We had a total of 46 petitions at the board of review this year with 38 of them being veterans exemptions. The rest of the taxable property owned by the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community has been put into trust and exempted at the meeting. We are now in the process of looking for a replacement to do field work this summer.

Clerk

By Lisa Perry

On March 28 we mailed the initial batch of absentee ballots, there were 957 ballots sent out, this is 43% of the 2259 applications that were originally mailed out. If for some reason you do not see your ballot, please contact Lisa at the Township office. Reminder that **ELECTION MAIL WILL NOT BE FORWARDED** to another address, so if you are a “snowbird” or out of town, please let Lisa know if you have not already been in contact.

We will be busy preparing for the May 2, 2023 Special Election, the Public Accuracy test will be held on Monday, April 24. The testing will be held at the Silver Creek Church located at 219 Silver Creek Road, Marquette, MI 49855. This is open to the public.

During an election period, it is a great opportunity to clean up the voting records, if you have moved or have a child or relative that has moved out of the area, now is a good time to contact your Clerk’s office so they can take care of this. The best way is to change your driver’s license promptly

with your move if you are staying in Michigan. If you are moving out of state, you can call your Clerk’s office and they can advise you of the steps you have to take. This does not take much time and really helps with maintaining the election files. This is also a great time to make sure you are registered to vote in your jurisdiction, registering sooner than later is always a good practice.

Fire Department

By Lee Gould

We are off to a slow start for 2023 with emergency calls. This is not abnormal however as generally each year there are slow times. Seasonal variations of weather conditions can change call volumes in the fire service rather quickly. Each season brings its own challenges for emergencies that contribute to emergency call volume.

Our new fire truck has been used on several emergency calls. We are still learning some of the finer changes 25 years of technology upgrades bring. Overall we are very pleased with the truck and happy the department put the hard work into it. Our old fire engine, that the new one replaced, is sold to Wells Township in southern Marquette County. We anticipate delivering it to them closer to the end of April.

We are currently transitioning our seasonal equipment from winter to spring mode. This includes items like getting the 4-wheeler ready for rescue calls, the snowmobile prepped for summer storage, getting our ice rescue stuff ready to be put away and open water rescue stuff ready.



Public Works

By Brad Johnson

On March 2, I attended the Township/Road Commission relations meeting. This meeting is set up by the road commission to let the local units of government know what the MCRC is working on or planning on doing in the near future. This year, the MCRC is replacing a box culvert on Cherry Creek Road. The MCRC has also purchased the equipment to do chip sealing in house. This year they are doing several roads in within the county to familiarize their crew with the process of chip sealing and then starting next year they will offer this to the Townships and Cities saving them a considerable amount of money.

We found that the manhole cover at the corner of Main Street and U.S. 41 had a 5 ¼ inch hole dead center of it. At first it appeared to be cut out with a core machine. We brought a new manhole cover down to replace it and realized right of way it was not a vandalism issue, the new cover was sticking up about ½ inch above the ring. Leaving this much of a lip, would have caused a huge issue with the snowplows. Bill and I made several calls to other municipalities to see if anyone had any old covers laying around that we could use temporarily until we can replace the ring and cover this spring/summer. Over the course of 50 plus years, the plows have worn what was once a 2 ½" cover down to about 1 1/3". With the amount of flow in this stretch of the sanitary system has me very concerned that the missing piece will make it down to lift station 1 and potentially end up in a pump. If this does in fact happen, we will end up with a pump failure and be looking at an impellor and shaft rebuild at the minimum. This piece could take anywhere from 1 hour to 5 years to finally making its way to the wet well, we will never know until its either in the pump or we catch it when we have the wet well vacuumed out.

We are in the process of releasing a few RFP's for work that needs to be done that is too large of a project for us to do in house. Replacing the pavilion roof RFP is let already and due on April 25th and I am currently working on the RFP for the siding replacement on the Township building. I goal is to let this RFP mid-April.

Technology

By Dale Throenle

Staff presented a draft version of the proposed Township web site to the Board at the March Board meeting. The Board was in favor of the design for the new site.

Tentative go-live for the new web site is May.

Planning / Zoning

By Dale Throenle

Planning Commission

The Planning Commissioners participated in a meeting held on March 20 in the Township Fire Hall.

There were four items on the agenda for the regularly scheduled meeting; all were considered old business.

Old Business

- 1) Proposed *Zoning Ordinance Changes*
Commissioners discussed the options for including single family residential and registered rentals in the Industrial zoning district. Staff presented four options:
 - 1) Leave the ordinance as is.
 - 2) Add *Single Family Residential and Registered Rentals* as conditional uses in the Industrial zoning district.
 - 3) Rezone seven parcels located below Beaver Grove on US 41 South from Industrial to Commercial and apply the Mixed Use Overlay District to the newly zoned parcels.
 - 4) Rezone seven parcels located below Beaver Grove on US 41 South from Industrial to a



new zoning district to match the district as it is defined in the Township master plan.

The Commissioners chose to go with option two; they requested a public hearing at the next meeting so they could finalize the decision and send it to the Board for consideration.

2) Non-Conforming Parcels in the Agriculture / Forestry (AF) Zoning District

Commissioners continued to discuss options related to the non-conforming parcels in the AF district. They reviewed a table of options with suggested acreage sizes and proposed uses for those options.

3) Public Input Discussion / Survey Questions
Commissioners discussed the questions that would be presented to the public with the newly acquired *FlashVote* software. They designed five questions that will be used in the first public *FlashVote* poll.

4) Proposed Zoning Ordinance Definitions
Commissioners decided to table the discussion until the April meeting.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals did not meet for its regular meeting in February and will not meet in March.

Police

By Liz Norris-Harr

We had a slight change in Interns for our program. Alec Olivier decided to further his career elsewhere. We did, however, hire Tyler Harvala. Tyler currently works for MCSO at the jail. Tyler and Mason have been learning the ropes with the police department as well as attending fire training weekly. We are excited for them to start the academy.

The officers were excited to finally get a nice snowfall late this month so they could get out on the snowmobile for patrol. They were even able to get the interns out for some snowmobile driving training.

Prescription Drug Collection

Prescription drug collection through the drop-off box at the Township Police Station.

Month 2019	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pounds To-Date	5.5	4	8.5									
Pounds Year To-Date	5.5	9.5	18									

FOIA

REQ #	Date Rec	Res by Date	Invoice Sent	48 Days Invoice	10 day Ext Sent	10 day Ext	Response Date	Link to Documentation	Description	First Name	Last Name
23-1	2/6/2023	2/10/2023					2/7/2023	23-1 Glendon	Police Reports	Jessica	Glendon
23-2	2/15/2023	2/21/2023					2/15/2023	23-2 Darkin	Police Reports		Ferrell
23-3	2/24/2023	3/3/2023					2/28/2023	23-3 Skyline Lien Search 02-24-23	Property Information	Skyline Lien Search	
23-4	3/6/2023	3/10/2023					3/10/2023	23-4 Hyde 03.06.23	Police Reports	George	Hyde
23-5	3/14/2023	3/20/2023					3/17/2023	23-5 Mulcahey 3-14-23	Job descriptions	Deborah	Mulcahey
23-6	3/14/2023	3/20/2023					3/16/2023	23-6 Mulcahey 3-14-23	Police Reports	Michelle	Phillips
23-7	3/17/2023	3/24/2023					3/21/2023	23-7 Brjoser Request 3-17-23	Police Reports	Nicole	Braser
23-8	3/20/2023	3/27/2023			03/24/2023	4/11/2023		23-8 Mulcahey request 3-20-23	Job descriptions	Deborah	Mulcahey
23-9	3/14/2023	3/21/2023			03/21/2023	4/4/2023	3/23/2023	23-9 Metropolitan request 3-14-23	Fire Report	Metropolitan	Reporting Bureau



Web Page Statistics

Year to date totals through February are shown in the table.

Month	Unique Visits	Number of Visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth (GB)
January	2,121	4,153	16,070	30,207	7.85
February	1,927	3,923	21,825	33,723	20.19
March	1,808	4,059	18,225	30,410	13.34
Totals	5,946	12,359	57,014	96,029	48
Averages	1,972	4,032	22,272	34,526	20.39

Highest hits per day in March for the Township web site occurred on Tuesday and the highest peak usage time was 11 PM to 12 AM.

Downloads

There were 707 downloaded documents in March. The top ten documents downloaded were:

Page	Number of Downloads
Appealing Property Assessment	352
Township history	121
Beaver Grove pavilion roof replacement	53
Zoning Ordinance	48
2023 Meeting Dates	44
Planning Commission agenda materials – 03.31.22	41
Zoning Board of Appeals minutes – combined 1999	39
Township Information Guide	36
Township Board agenda materials – 03.13.23	35
Township Board combined minutes – 1998 through 2021	29



Page Visits

Top ten pages visited in March were:

Top ten pages visited in July were: Page	Number of Views
Employment	944
Clerk	450
Directory email	400
Recycling	390
Schools	288
Agendas and Minutes – Township Board	270
Contacts	248
Assessor	237
Agendas and Minutes – Planning Commission	229
Police	214

Zoning Permit Counts

Zoning permit counts through March, 2023:

2023 Reviewed Permits by Month		2023 Reviewed Permits by Type		
Month	Number of Permits	Permit Type	Approved Number	Denied Number
January	0	Addition	0	0
February	0	Alteration	0	0
March	6	Commercial Outbuilding	0	0
		Conditional Use	0	0
		Deck	0	0
		Fence	1	0
		Garage	1	0
		Grading	0	0
		Home	2	0
		Home / Garage	0	0
		Home Occupation	0	0
		New Commercial	0	0
		Outbuilding	1	0
		Pole Building	0	0



2023 Reviewed Permits by Month		2023 Reviewed Permits by Type		
			Approved	Denied
		Rezoning Application	0	0
		Sign	0	0
		Site Plan Review	1	0
		Zoning Variance Request	0	0
Total	6	Total	6	0

