

CHOCOLAY TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

January 2024

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Assessing

By John Gehres

The numbers are being finalized for the 2024 database. The change notices will go out this month reflecting the assessed and taxable value increases over last year. It's anticipated that Chocolay will have a higher turnout at the annual March Board of Review because of the significant changes.

Clerk

By Lisa Perry

The 2024 Election(s) have begun! There will be three elections this year with the possibility of a fourth. The dates are as follows:

February 27, 2024 - Presidential Primary

Early Voting for Presidential Primary election will be Saturday, February 17 through Sunday, February 25 from 10 AM to 6 PM at the Chocolay Township meeting room.

May 7, 2024 - Special Election (Nothing scheduled at this time)

There will be no early voting for a Special Election

August 6, 2024 - Primary Election

Early Voting for the Primary election will be Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4 from 10 AM to 6 PM at the Chocolay Township meeting room.

November 5, 2024 - General Election

Early Voting for the General election will be Saturday, October 26 through Sunday, November 3 from 10 AM to 6 PM at the Chocolay Township meeting room.

January 8, 2024, we sent out 2194 Absentee Applications and by January 27, 1014 were returned. We mailed out 1014 Absentee Ballots on 1/27 and received 12 by the end of the month.

To check the status of your application/ballot please go to <https://mVIC.sos.state.mi.us/>

This will be a very busy election season, please make sure you are registered to vote in your jurisdiction. If you move, please change your address on your driver's license to reflect the move, this is the best way to keep your registration current.

Fire Department

By Lee Gould

The Fire Department continues to work on our Wildland/Rescue truck replacement. In the fall of 2022, our former Wildland truck was taken out of service due to major mechanical repair. The truck was formerly a Department of Public Works truck that we got when our Public Works upgraded their truck. After extensive research, the fire department recommended a new Wildland/Rescue truck for replacement that would meet the needs of the department and last for 20 plus years. This truck would serve as not only our Wildland Fire truck, it would also assist on structure fires or structure fire protection in remote areas, rescue calls and any other call when needed. This truck would be used more than our previous wildland truck due to improved storage capabilities and the ability to carry more equipment. This can also allow the department to use this truck on calls where larger fire apparatus



is not needed, thus saving wear and tear on the larger apparatus and adding longevity to them.

Our call volume has been steady since the start of January. 2023 saw our call volume dip slightly due to the lack of weather-related calls. With this warm and unpredictable weather for the start of 2024, weather related calls are more likely if this continues.

Public Works

By Brad Johnson

I have been working on RFP's for contracted work that needs to be done for this year. The first RFP is let and is due on February 1 at 1:00. This one is for work on sewer mains and laterals. The second one is in four phases that will all be completed this year. This first and second part can happen simultaneously with the installation of a new vault toilet at Beaver grove and the removal of the existing vault toilet. The next phase will be to pour a concrete slab in front of the vault toilets. The last phase will be to relocate the underground power and hook the water shed back up to power.

The ice rink was open for about 2 weeks before we lost it again. This is the second year in a row for very poor weather for the rink. Watching the long-term forecast, odds are not in our favor that we will be trying to get it back.

Planning / Zoning

By Dale Throenle

Planning Commission

The Planning Commissioners participated in a regular meeting on January 22 in the Township Fire Hall.

There was one unfinished business item and five new business items on the agenda; the Commissioners decided to do new business prior to unfinished business:

New Business

1) Conditional Use Permit CU 24-01 – Proposed School 1510 M-28 East

Commissioners discussed and approved a conditional use permit for a change of use from a church to a school at 1510 M-28 East. The new school will be operated by the Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency (MARESA) students that need additional assistance to complete their instruction at their local school.

2) Election of Planning Commission Officers
Commissioners elected the officers for the 2024 calendar year. Elected officers are:

Ryan Soucy – Chair

George Meister – Vice Chair

Donna Mullen-Campbell – Secretary

Rebecca Sloan – Vice Secretary

3) Planning Commission Bylaws and Procedures Review

Commissioners reviewed the bylaws and procedures that the Commissioners use for Planning Commission responsibilities. They added the Pledge of Allegiance to the document; the Pledge of Allegiance will now be part of the agenda at each Planning Commission meeting.

4) 2023 Planning Commission Annual Report
The Commissioners reviewed the annual report that outlined Planning Commission accomplishments during 2023. The Commissioners approved the report and forwarded it to the Board for consideration.

5) Joint Meeting Discussion

The Commissioners proposed items that they would like to discuss with the Township Board at the joint meeting with the Board in February.



Unfinished Business

1) Proposed Zoning Ordinance Map for the Agriculture / Forestry (AF) Zoning District (34-23-02)

Commissioners discussed the proposed zoning ordinance map for the proposed AG 1, AG 2, and AG 3 zoning districts. Commissioners made minor changes to the map and recommended the language and the map be put forward into a public hearing at the March meeting.

The Planning Commission will participate in two meetings on February 12 in the Township Fire Hall. The first one, starting at 5:30 PM, will be a joint meeting with the Township Board. The second one, starting at 7 PM, will be the regular monthly meeting.

Zoning Board of Appeals

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

Police

By Liz Norris-Harr

Happy New Year! While we are enjoying the mild weather it has put a damper on the snowmobile training for Officers Harvala and Mitchell. It was cancelled this month and rescheduled for February. We have only been able to do snowmobile patrol once for the season.

The Police and Fire Ball was this month. It was a beautiful set up and very successful.

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	19											
Pounds Year To-Date	19											

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
24-01	1/5/2024	1/11/2024					1/8/2024	24-01 Carlson 01.05.24	Police Reports	Britta	Carlson
24-02	1/8/2024	1/12/2024			1/9/2024	01/26/2024	1/24/2024	24-02 Mulcahey 01.08.24	Employee Information Salaries/Benefits	Deborah	Mulcahey
24-03	1/5/2024	1/11/2024			1/9/2024	1/26/2024	Cancelled	24-03 Gencheff 01.05.24	Voting Information	Stephanie	Gencheff
24-04	1/8/2024	1/12/2024			01/09/2024	1/26/2024	1/24/2024	24-04 Mulcahey 01.08.24	Employee Information email address	Deborah	Mulcahey
24-05	1/11/2024	1/17/2024					1/15/2024	24-05 Heidtman 01.11.24	Police Reports	Travis	Heidtman
24-06	1/26/2024	2/1/2024					1/30/2024	24-06 Hughes 01.26.24	Police Reports	Brittany	Hughes
24-07	1/30/2024	2/5/2024			01/30/2024	2/19/2024		24-07 Kanerva 01.30.24	Police Reports	John	Kanerva



Web Page Statistics

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

Month	Sessions	Page Views
January	1,889	6,150
Totals	1,889	6,150
Averages	1,889	6,150

Zoning Permit Counts

Zoning permit counts through January, 2024:

2024 Reviewed Permits by Month		2024 Reviewed Permits by Type		
Month	Number of Permits		Approved	Denied
		Permit Type	Number	Number
January	3	Addition	0	0
		Alteration	0	0
		Commercial Outbuilding	0	0
		Conditional Use	1	0
		Deck	0	0
		Fence	0	0
		Garage	0	0
		Grading	0	0
		Home	0	0
		Home / Garage	1	0
		Home Occupation	0	0
		New Commercial	0	0
		Outbuilding	0	0
		Pole Building	0	0
		Rezoning Application	0	0
		Sign	0	0
		Site Plan Review	1	0
		Zoning Variance Request	0	0
Total	3	Total	3	0

