

Supervisor's report, January 2021

Covid vaccines are becoming available to group 1b: people 65 and over, and essential workers. Seniors can sign up by calling 231-715-5557. This number can also be used by people who need transportation to get a Covid vaccine. Businesses with essential employees should use the Benzie-Leelanau health department signup at <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=OU8ELMhU3kuPzesR6uifWimrahLx0sFFIkZCnSIZgJVUQjFPRVBWT084Mk1BMkdHTFFXMUFWRlpCWC4u>

I have registered Leland Township as 1B, essential workers. Some of our employees and board members have been reluctant to jump "ahead in the line." It has been explained to me in emergency planning meetings that we should be caring for ourselves in order to be available to care for our community, much like the announcement in the airplane that "in the event of a sudden loss of cabin pressure", we are to put on our own oxygen masks before trying to help others. Although we can be put on the list, we will not be scheduled until other more vulnerable people have been offered the vaccine. It helps the health department to have contact information for interested people. Please reach out to our community members, especially the elderly, and make sure that they have called the 231-715-5557 number to register.

We are now in the budgeting season. Our budget for the fiscal year that starts April 1 must be finished by the end of February. The normal procedure is to hold budget hearings for each cost center and then a wrap up to reconcile the General Fund.

This year we also need to decide how to replace our extra-voted millage, which was levied for the last time last month at 0.4029 mils. If we can prepare ballot language for this by February 1, it can be on the May ballot along with the school millages, which are approved every year. If we do it as a separate election, we will have to fund the election ourselves. We could ask the voters for a multi year millage or go one year at a time. We have been putting off capital projects for the last few years, but we have also been adding to the Capital Improvement budget, which will stand at just over \$500,000 after our Monday board meeting. While this sounds like a lot, I have been compiling a list of our township assets and infrastructure and preparing a Capital Improvements Plan to determine how much tax revenue will be needed to take care of our responsibilities. You will see a draft of this plan in the next few days. This millage also helps to support operations. Costs there will go up as labor costs increase.

The ice rink is up and running. I arranged for a porta john to be put up next to the rink. The ice rink group has funds to help with the cost.

I received a lot of complaints about **political signs** that were not taken down after the election. The most egregious one, and oversized sign on M 22 on the way into Leland, has been on our radar for sometime, as it violated our ordinance due to its size. The property owner has been unresponsive. Our zoning administrator was unsure whether our political signs ordinance is enforceable. We eventually resolved it by working with the Road Commission, as it's anchoring was not so weak as to present a potential road hazard.

I also heard complaints about the **new riprap wall** that was installed next to the public access at Thompson Street. The jurisdiction for permitting of such structures [was recently changed due to a court ruling](#), leaving no opportunity for comment by either the public or the township. We will need to dredge our harbor in the spring, so I am optimistic that any barrier to beach walking can be fixed by depositing dredging spoils.

Maintenance Truck. We took advantage of the quiet winter weather to do some evaluation of the township maintenance truck. According to Van's garage, the truck will need about \$1100 worth of immediate work, plus an exhaust manifold, which is a dealer item. Ken will be taking it into Olson's auto body to find out how much it would cost to remediate the rust. The truck is a 2008 Ford F350 4WD with 110,000 miles on it. It was acquired in 2014, and Ken puts an average of 11,000 miles on it every year. Ken feels that a F150 or similar powered truck would be sufficient for his needs, as long as it has 4WD. If we want him to start plowing, this would change his needs.

The Library water system failed a routine test, and the problem has been traced to the water softener. We will be splitting the bill for this, per agreement.

Workforce Housing. In the course of getting our Board of Review sworn in, I had a talk with Jon Stimson about possible sites for development of workforce housing. Most of the grants available for workforce housing favor "walkable" neighborhoods. In Leland Township, this would mean areas in or near our sewer district. The Sewer Commission is in the early stages of a capacity study for our sewer district, which might help us to make good decisions about expanding the district. The lack of workforce housing continues to impact our ability to attract and retain essential workers such as fire and rescue personnel.

Street lights A conversation with Kathe Garthe of Northport's Dark , confirmed my own observation that the street light shield installed by Consumers Energy in select locations in Northport village have done next to nothing to address the glare and intensity of the new LED streetlights. When we call in malfunctioning lights this winter, they will be replaced by the new LEDs that are generating complaints. Consumers Energy is looking at alternatives, maybe in a year or two. In the meantime, I will be checking our lights before calling in any dead ones. It is hard to detect "cycling" in a drive by, so if anyone knows of lights that are on and off intermittently, please let me know of them. In other lighting news, the new Christmas angels in Lake Leelanau were installed a few days before Christmas after a successful fundraising effort. The plan is to keep them up through February for some cheer through the winter.

A wide range of educational opportunities are available through our MTA Premium online training subscription. I took in the Wednesday lunch webinar on budgeting. Please take advantage of this opportunity.