



# Whitewater Township News

**Summer 2020**

This Newsletter can be found on the Township  
Website: [whitewatertownship.org](http://whitewatertownship.org)

## Directory

5777 Vinton Road \* P.O. Box 159  
Williamsburg, MI 49690  
Phone 231-267-5141  
Fax 231-267-9020  
[www.whitewatertownship.org](http://www.whitewatertownship.org)

### SUPERVISOR

Ron Popp ext. 23  
[Supervisor@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:Supervisor@whitewatertownship.org)

### CLERK

Cheryl Goss ext. 24  
Mon thru Thur 9 am - 5 pm  
[Clerk@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:Clerk@whitewatertownship.org)

### TREASURER

Ardella Benak ext. 22  
P.O. Box 100  
Hours: M-W-F 10:00 am - 5:00 pm  
[Treasurer@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:Treasurer@whitewatertownship.org)

### TRUSTEE

Paul Hubbell  
Message 231-267-5141  
[Trustee02@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:Trustee02@whitewatertownship.org)

### TRUSTEE

Lloyd Lawson  
Message 231-267-5141  
[Trustee01@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:Trustee01@whitewatertownship.org)

### ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Bob Hall ext. 21  
Thursdays 8:30 am - 4:30 pm  
[Zoning@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:Zoning@whitewatertownship.org)

### ASSESSOR

Dawn Kuhns - 231-409-1827  
By Appointment  
[assessordawn@gmail.com](mailto:assessordawn@gmail.com)

### FIRE & AMBULANCE

911 Emergency  
Fire Hall 231-267-5969  
(Non-Emergency)

### PARKS & RECREATION

Ranger Station - 231-267-5091

### PLANNING COMMISSION

Kim Mangus, Chair  
231-631-2326

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Luann Snider, Chair  
231-883-3193

### GT COUNTY RD COMM

231-922-4848

### BURN PERMITS - MDNR

866-922-2876  
[www.dnr.state.mi.us/burnpermits/](http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/burnpermits/)

## Primary Election August 4, 2020



All registered voters in Whitewater Township have received an absent voter ballot application as the state is encouraging absentee voting in the August and November elections. The clerk's office has received lots of applications, and by the time you receive this newsletter, we will have begun to issue ballots. For those who have voted AV previously, your ballot will now arrive in a slightly smaller white and blue envelope, as opposed to the manila/brown envelopes previously used. When returning an AV ballot, please **make certain that you have signed in the box with the X on the back of the return envelope**. A ballot cannot be accepted without the voter's signature in this box.

You can track the status of your application and ballot by going to [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote), the Michigan Voter Information Center (MVIC).

For those who wish to vote in person, the precinct will be open at the Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on August 4th. Safeguards will be in place to minimize exposure to COVID-19, i.e., maximum number of voters allowed inside at a time, social distancing inside and outside, mask requirement, sneeze guards, and disinfecting of surfaces between voters.

If you have any questions about voting in the August 4th State and Local Primary, please call the clerk's office at: 231-267-5141 x24.



*Cheryl Goss - Clerk*

## Whitewater Township Park Boat Launch/Entryway Improvements Public Comment Period

The public is invited to comment on the new preliminary plans for the Whitewater Township Park Boat Launch and Entryway Improvements Project. The new preliminary plans are available to view at the township hall and have been posted on the home page of the township website, [www.whitewatertownship.org](http://www.whitewatertownship.org). If requested, they can be sent through e-mail.

In June 2019, the township received a \$200,000 grant from the DNR Waterways Commission toward the cost of these improvements. Preliminary cost estimates are approximately \$400,000. All of the funds for this project will come from Whitewater Township Park user fees and the \$200,000 grant award. It has been 20 years since the boat launch has seen any improvements, and increased traffic in the park has created safety concerns. The new plans address these issues.

The public comment period will begin July 1 and extend to August 15, 2020. You may offer comments on the plan during this time period via a link on the township website, [www.whitewatertownship.org](http://www.whitewatertownship.org), or by sending written comments to Whitewater Township Board, P.O. Box 159, Williamsburg, MI 49690. A public hearing will be held at a later date.

Questions about the plan should be directed to Cheryl Goss, Parks & Recreation Administrator, (231) 267-5141 x 24, or [clerk@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:clerk@whitewatertownship.org)



**JULY 21, 2020 6:00 pm**  
**BOARD OF REVIEW (JBOR)**  
**No Appointment Needed**

## 2020 Clean-Up Day Results

June 13th was Cleanup Day in Whitewater Township. From 7:30am to 12:00pm trucks and trailers were lined up waiting their turn.

The Auxiliary provided coffee & donuts for the early morning risers. Thank you Don Erickson from Erickson Salvage! Erickson's hauled away 11 trailer loads of scrap metal that would have otherwise been sent to the land fills. TJ Tires collected 137 tires, 3 tractor tires for a total cost of \$387.50. Area Waste compacted 218 yards of waste for a costing of \$9,810.

Thank you to all the volunteers that helped and citizens who participated in making this a successful event. WESA collected an impressive amount of can donations thanks to all the generous citizens wishing to donate for the Restoration of the Fire Department's 1940's REO Fire Engine. The weather was perfect! These efforts by all are what help to keep Whitewater Township clean!

*Thank YOU!*



## Secure Drop Boxes



Secure Drop Boxes at Township Hall by the main doors, are always available for your convenience. Items can be left safely when no one is available. Boxes are labeled Zoning, Elections/Clerk and Taxes.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Annual  
*Spaghetti Dinner*  
FUNDRAISER



**Saturday September 12th, from 4 - 7 at the Williamsburg United Methodist Church**



Whitewater Township Emergency Services Auxiliary (WESA) will be hosting the Annual Community Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction. Proceeds will be used in support of Emergency Services. Bring your family and friends to enjoy an evening out while supporting your local Emergency Services personnel. We look forward to seeing you there.

### Other WESA Events

Mark you calendar - make your **camp reservations** soon for October 10 - Halloween at the Park will feature fun, food, friends and campground trick-or-treating.



## SWIMMER'S ITCH PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Lake-lovers of all ages can swim and enjoy the water without fear of ruining a vacation due to swimmer's itch. There is a lot of scientific information available regarding what causes swimmer's itch. Full reports are available through Fresh Water Solutions (FWS). Through quantities of studies scientists have learned that the culprit is cercariae. You can report swimmer's itch cases at [www.freshwatersol.com](http://www.freshwatersol.com)

### Prevention Strategies

**SWIM AFTER LUNCH:** Since most of the itch-causing cercariae exit the snails in the morning and only live for a day, you would expect fewer cercariae to be around in the afternoon due to movement by wind, predation, natural mortality, etc.

**SWIM WITH OFFSHORE WIND:** Find a place where you can swim upwind. Scientists were able to show a strong correlation between wind direction (onshore, offshore, alongshore) with cercariae concentration with significantly higher concentrations found with onshore winds.

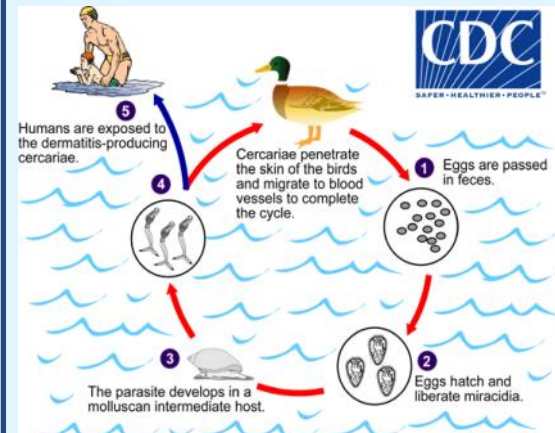
**ADJUST SWIM LOCATION:** Study results show cercariae numbers increasing near shore with an onshore wind, with very high numbers found within 1 meter from shore. Very few cercariae were found in deeper water.

**WEAR A RASH GUARD:** Rash guards are tight-fitting one or two-piece swimsuits fashioned from combinations of polyester, nylon, lycra, or spandex for stretch, breathability, and quick-drying properties. They are relatively inexpensive and protect against most water-borne invaders, including the cercariae that cause swimmer's itch. Rash guards remove the need for creams and/or sunscreen (except to face), which eliminates foreign chemicals being applied to skin or added to the water. Additionally, rash guards work against all species of parasites.

**INSTALL A SWIM BAFFLE:** The biggest advantage is in creating a safer swim area for multiple riparians (such as a public beach or popular swimming beach).

**EMPLOY A PARASITE SKIMMER:** Since cercariae are mostly shed from snails in the morning and travel to the surface for the rest of the day, most can be easily "skimmed" off the water surface before swimming, similar to skimming leaves from a pool. This technique can be employed alone or in conjunction with a swim baffle.

**TOWEL OFF QUICKLY AND THOROUGHLY:** Although not scientifically proven, many, over the years, have found drying completely with a towel as soon as you are out of the water helps.







Ardella M. Benak  
Treasurer



# Treasurer's Corner

## Normal Office Hours at the Township Hall:

Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, other days by appointment.  
Treasurer@Whitewatertownship.org - 231-267-5141 ext. 22



Lois MacLean  
Deputy Treasurer

**Summer Deferment Applications** can be found on the Township webpage, or a copy can be obtained from the Treasurer's office. If you have had a deferment in the past, your 2020 application has been included in with your 2020 summer tax bill.

**Principal Residence Exemption (PRE)** Affidavits (**Homestead Exemptions**) and **Request to Rescind** are due **NO later than June 30, 2020**. They can both be found on the Treasurer and Assessing webpage tabs and can be picked up here at the township hall.

**Important:** If you receive a tax bill that is not yours, please call us so that we can make sure the correct people get their tax bill. We appreciate your help in this.

ALSO: For your safety and the safety of our staff, due to the current Covid-19 situation, we are encouraging taxpayers to not enter the building unless necessary. If you leave your ENTIRE TAX BILL in the drop box with your payment, we will be glad to stamp your top portion paid and mail to you. We discourage the use of cash and please do NOT leave cash in the drop box.

*Ardella M. Benak*



**CENSUS 2020** – The "self-reporting" phase which has historically been how most township residents are counted has ended. Now, the Census will begin their field work – going door-to-door.

Each counted person means at least \$1,800 in additional state and federal program funds and getting proper representation in Congress and the Legislature, among other benefits. You do count—so be counted!!



### DID YOU KNOW .....

#### WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP PARK RECEIVES NO TAX MONIES FOR OPERATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS!

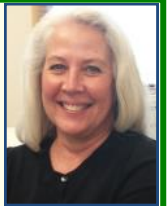
Most residents/taxpayers are under the impression that Whitewater Township Park (campground and boat launch) is a tax-supported entity. While that may have been true at one time, it has not been the case for many years. Here are the last three times that Whitewater Township Park received taxpayer funds:

March 2007 - \$5,244      March 2009 - \$3,600      March 2011 - \$2,000

Through growth of revenue and careful spending, Whitewater Township Park has been 100% user fee supported the last 9 years. Additionally, any revenue beyond expenditures has been utilized exclusively to pay higher wages for park rangers and make numerous infrastructure improvements in the park including . . .

#### Restroom Tile at Whitewater Township Park Bathhouse!

Through a generous 2% grant of \$18,069 from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, as well as park user fees, the restrooms at Whitewater Township Park are sparkling clean with new wall tile! Thank you to the Grand Traverse Band for providing the greatest share of the funding for this project! Thank you also to Northern Floor & Tile for their professional installation of the tile, as well as local contractors Ed Kuhr and Rick Wilson, who removed and reinstalled fixtures and partitions! Working together, a much-needed improvement at Whitewater Township Park was completed.



### Property tax appeal deadlines extended

Individual and business property owners have an extended opportunity to file an appeal with the Michigan Tax Tribunal (MTT) on the assessed value of their residential, commercial and industrial property. [Public Act 88 of 2002](#), extends the filing deadline for property tax appeals to the MTT to Aug. 31. The measure allows businesses an additional 90 days to file an appeal, and agricultural and residential property owners receive an additional 30 days to file an appeal with MTT. The new law, effective June 11, 2020, is similar to Executive Order 2020-87 issued in May.



Dawn Kuhns  
Assessor

### DISABLED VETERANS PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

**This exemption** is only available to disabled veterans or if the veteran has died, to their un-remarried surviving spouse who own and use the home as their homestead. The disabled veteran or their surviving spouse must be a resident of the State of Michigan, be honorably discharged & the VA has determined to be permanently and totally disabled as a result of Military service. Must have benefits at the 100% rate or rated as Unemployable. To receive this exemption, you **MUST apply each year at the Township**.

For more information on how to apply and the MTT contact Assessor **Dawn Kuhns (231) 409-1827**.



Happy Summer All,

The Township Hall reopened to foot traffic on June 10, 2020. Other area businesses are doing the same, providing a little more normal feel to daily life, a welcome change! During the shutdown your Township Board began using the Zoom Application to allow those wishing to participate in meetings via the internet from their couches to do so. Use of the application will continue thru 2020 more as a streaming service as Executive Orders allow. Please join us!

Members of The Whitewater Township Fire Department and Mobile Medical Response (MMR) have been standing at the ready to serve our communities needs through the pandemic. Thus far, all have returned to the station safely to serve again. Thank you to all members of Emergency Services, especially those members in our community.

Road repair is expensive. Road replacement, is very expensive, approaching \$600,000 per mile. Whitewater Township has approximately 43 miles of asphalt and 20 miles of gravel driving surface to plan for. Using information from Grand Traverse County Road Commission (GTCRC) 2019 PASER Report provided February 2020, work has begun on an asset management plan mirroring key elements of the GTCRC's plan, pared down for our use. GTCRC offers a partnership program for certain road work projects that can defray costs up to 60%.

Whitewater Township Planning Commission did not meet in April, May or June. The group is looking to pick back up in July addressing issues such as reducing minimum lot sizes in the RC-1 Zoning District, Event Barn Use, and Master Plan updates. All three items will require a significant public outreach effort ensuring a good outcome. Please watch the website and your mailbox for forthcoming information.

The Park and Recreation Advisory Committee remains busy with improvements to the Hi Pray Park, dugouts, batting cages, and tennis courts areas. Lossie Trail and Battle Creek Natural Area are getting some trail signs and marker attention. A public comment period beginning July 1, 2020 to August 15, 2020 for folks to review and provide input on the proposed changes to the boat launch area of the Whitewater Township Campground is scheduled. Details will be available for review at the Township Hall and on line in the near future. Later in the year, the group will be discussing Recreation Master Plan. They meet the second Monday of each month beginning at 7:00 PM. Please drop in to a meeting to support them.

Enjoy the summer!

*Ron Popp*

**Whitewater Township Supervisor**

**TOWNSHIP CALENDAR**

JULY 2020	AUGUST 2020	SEPTEMBER 2020	OCTOBER 2020
7/1 Planning Commission	8/4 Primary Election	9/2 Planning Commission	10/7 Planning Commission
7/13 Park & Rec Committee	8/5 Planning Commission	9/14 Park & Rec Committee	10/10 Halloween Party in the Park
7/14 Township Board	8/10 Park & Rec Committee	9/15 Township Board	10/12 Park & Rec Committee
7/15 Historical Society	8/11 Township Board	9/16 Historical Society	10/13 Township Board
7/21 July BOR	8/12 Historical Society	9/24 Zoning Board of Appeals	10/14 Historical Society
7/23 Zoning Board of Appeals	8/27 Zoning Board of Appeals		10/22 Zoning Board of Appeals



**Whitewater Township Fire Department**



Gradually the fire department is returning to normal with limited training gatherings. The county fire chiefs have been meeting via Zoom and will continue to do so throughout the shutdown.

The new wildland turnout gear was delivered on May 7, 2020 and distributed to the firefighters. On May 9th I assisted WESA with a can and bottle drive at Hi Pray Park. What a great turnout, through the generous donations we filled a 10 x 10 storage unit! All donations are being dedicated to the restoration of the 1940's REO Fire Truck.

The fire department participated in the Memorial Day Parade on May 25. A progress inspection was conducted of the new Pumper/Tanker on May 29. The crew at CSI is making good progress with the final assembly. Later this month the graphics will be completed and then the truck will go through a thorough testing process.

Thank you and be safe!

*Brandon Flynn*  
**Fire Chief**

