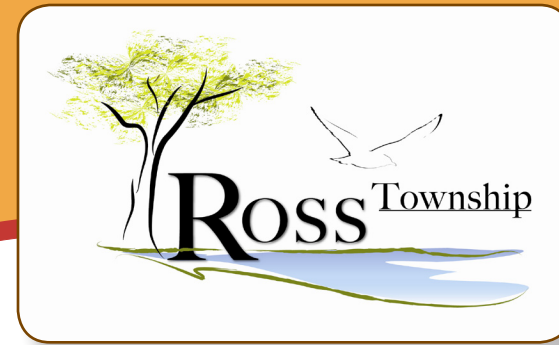




ROSS TOWNSHIP
12086 M-89
RICHLAND, MI 49083

12086 M-89
Richland, MI 49083
269-731-4888
www.ross-township.us



NEWSLETTER
Fall 2019

Police Protection Update

Special meeting: Monday, October 14, 2019 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Earlier this year, the Township Board re-launched the Law Enforcement Committee to evaluate our current police protection contract. As a result of this activity, several important questions have surfaced and require an answer before we make any changes.

1) Do the residents understand how police protection works in our township?

Since Ross Township is located within Kalamazoo County, part of the taxes we pay to the county provide for police protection. Several townships, such as Richland Township, forgo any additional police protection via contracted services because these townships believe they have sufficient coverage from the Kalamazoo County Sheriff Department (KCSD). Additional police protection has two primary options: A) Establish a local township or village police department or B) Enter into a contract with an existing department, such as, the KCSD or a City Department.

Ross Township used to have its own police department, but eighteen years ago, it was decided to contract with the KCSD for services above and beyond the baseline coverage. Our original agreement specified two officers and the cost was split 50/50 with the KCSD. Several years ago, the KCSD decided to no longer split the costs which resulted in Ross Township going from two officers to one.

2) Are the residents of Ross Township willing to pay for the additional police protection?

For 2019, our budgeted expenditure for forty hours of additional protection is \$128,000, which is 13% of the total budget. Typically, police and fire protection are paid for via a millage or special assessment dedicated to those services. Currently, the police protection expense is paid for from the general fund while the fire department has a special millage.

In 2020, the Township Board is planning to ask the residents of Ross Township if they are willing to pay for additional police protection in the form of a millage. The plan is to ask for ½ mil, which would generate \$175,000. Another way to look at this is a ½ mil would mean that a home valued at \$200,000 would pay \$50 per year for additional police protection. The implications of a Yes vs. No vote are as follows:

- o Vote YES and approve ½ mil for additional police protection. This will generate approximately \$175,000 per year.
- o Vote NO and Ross Township will not fund any additional police protection above and beyond what is paid for by our taxes as residents of Kalamazoo County

If you are interested in learning more about this important topic or you have questions to ask, please join us for a special meeting on Monday, October 14th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

An Awesome Place to Call Home

By Rob Baker, Supervisor

At a recent County Supervisor Meeting I was reminded of our townships makeup as compared to others. I listened as a few Supervisors announce manufacturing growth in their townships and thought we really don't have anything comparable in Ross Township. But, I'm ok with this and believe most of us who call Ross Township home are as well. Living in Ross Township allows us to distance ourselves from major commercial and manufacturing areas yet benefit from our community business districts.

I appreciate our past leaders' decisions to follow "Maintaining the rural character and quietude of our community" as stated in Ross Township's Mission Statement. This plan has resulted in much of our township composed of farmlands, lakes and woodlots along with several special destination locations including a bird sanctuary, forest, lake park, nature trails, golf courses and state hunting lands. So, please take time to enjoy all the opportunities our Township offers in a rural community.

Township Tidbits

The Ross Township Board along with the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of Review work hard to make certain that equality and service is preserved so that every resident can live comfortably in Ross Township. Beyond the required collection of taxes, assessments, and elections, the township provides fire protection, police protection, a lakefront park, ordinance enforcement, county representation and community involvement.

Consumers Energy has upgraded street lights in some areas of the township to LED. This has resulted in a measurable cost savings for the township.

One of the most common requests from residents has been to receive more communication from the township. We have an email address database. If we don't have your email address on file, sign up by visiting the website (www.ross-township.us) and scroll to the bottom of the Home Page to "Join Our Mailing List". The website provides meeting dates, agendas, minutes, etc. Newsletters are mailed in the spring and fall. We encourage you to attend the monthly meetings of the various boards. Give us your feedback – this is your township.

ASSESSOR'S ASSESSMENTS

A new "Notice of Assessment 2020" will be mailed in February. When received look it over for changes in values, proper home exemption percentage and correct address. Periodically you should check your property record card to ensure our Township records are correct. You may request a copy be sent to you or come to the Township office.

Treasurer's Tidbits

Summer taxes were due September 16, 2019. Taxes not paid by the due date will be considered late and interest will incur per Michigan State Law. The 2019 Winter Tax bills will be mailed December 1, 2019 and are payable until Friday, February 14, 2020. Taxes not paid by the due date will incur interest and penalty. Notify the township office of any changes in your address. Only a small portion of your taxes stays at the Township to provide services for the residents.



The Clerk's Corner

An election will be held this November 5th with only one item on the ballot. KRESA is asking for a 1 mil property tax levy for the next 20 years for the purpose of establishing an area career educational and technical program.

You can request an absentee ballot application by coming to the township office or print one from your computer by going to our website: www.Ross-township.us. Click on the forms tab from the Home Page, then click on Absent Voter Ballot application.





Update from Gull Lake Sewer + Water Authority

Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority has embarked on our Asset Management Plan (AMP) journey. We are in the beginning stages of mapping this journey. In 2014 GLSWA was awarded a State of Michigan Stormwater, Asset Management, Wastewater Grant (SAW). The SAW grant was a 3-year program aimed at putting together an inventory of assets (sanitary sewer infrastructure), and conducting a conditional assessment of each asset for the purpose of determining a rate structure necessary to finance the on-going operation and replacement cost of the sanitary sewer system.

Age of each asset, conditional assessment of each asset, and projected life of each asset is then placed in the AMP for future planning.

GLSWA has a high level of commitment to customer satisfaction. We strive to ensure that our environment is protected from sanitary sewer overflows. One area of concern revolves around the failure of any sewer system component. GLSWA takes a pro-active approach with mitigating failure of the system through the use of the Asset Management Plan. Review of data collected on force main pipe, pipes that are used to transport the sewage from one area of gravity flow to another area of gravity flow, indicated potential failures occurring before the pipe reaches its full life of service. A second concern reviewed pertained to the structural integrity of the manholes. With these 2 sets of data, GLSWA developed a scope of work to address the concerns with capital improvement project set to commence in the fiscal year of 2020. Upon completion of the bidding and awarding process, a construction schedule was set for the project to begin during the last week of July, 2019 and conclude the third week of September 2019.

The total project scope consists of partial force main replacement at 4 pumping stations around Gull Lake; 2 manhole rehabilitations; and the installation of 2 flow meters for future data collection and monitoring purposes. This capital improvement project, funded by GLSWA, comes as an investment in assets at a cost of \$512,000.00. John Crumb, Director GLSWA

Visit Us

Visit us on our website at: www.ross-township.us or subscribe to our email address either at the bottom of our website home page, email us your address at rosstownship@rosstown.comcastbiz.net or call us at 269-731-4888.

Metro County Connect

Public Transportation is available to all Ross Township residents traveling anywhere in Kalamazoo County through Metro County Connect. MCC is open to all residents of the County and offer discounted fares for individuals certified as having a disability and senior citizens 62 years and older. For more information call 269-350-2970. Fares range between \$3.00 and \$14.00 for a one-way trip depending on the type of trip you qualify for (certification is required for some). Service is provided 6 am to 11 pm Monday through Saturday and 8 am to 5 pm on Sunday.

Cemetery Committee Comments

A new crushed asphalt driveway was installed for under \$5,000 at Day Cemetery. It looks great and is packing nicely. The same type of driveway has been done at the Yorkville Cemetery.

The fence lines on the east and south sides, at Day Cemetery, were cleared of old fences and overgrown vegetation. Consideration is being given to using shrubs or trees as a natural fence line.

Earlier this year day lilies and daffodils were planted by the entrance signs at all the cemeteries. Quite a few were in bloom this year and next year will be even better.

Volunteers from the Portage Northern wrestling team and Gull Lake Gateway Academy Students have put in many hours at Yorkville Cemetery clearing dead and overgrown brush. The many volunteer hours are appreciated in helping to beautify the landscape, fresh paint to the signs and planting the donation of day lilies and spring bulbs.

Ross Township Park Committee

The park has been very busy this season with many updates. Many happy visitors enjoyed the improvements. The Park officially closed for the season on Sunday, October 6th. Over 600 volunteer hours were logged this season. We invite all of our residents to check-out the difference.

Ross Township and the Park Committee are partnering with the Gull Lake Area Rotary Club to install a small playground in the Park next summer. There will be a Boy Scout Troop #294 Eagle Scout Project included in this joint effort.

Memorial plaques will be available for purchase to place on a new park bench to honor a loved one. We are asking anyone interested in making a donation to this project or purchasing a plaque to please contact the Ross Township Office.

On behalf of the Park Committee we want to say **THANK YOU FOR A GREAT SUMMER.**

Meeting Dates



TOWNSHIP BOARD 6pm

October 15th 2019
November 19th 2019
December 17th 2019
January 21st 2020
February 18th 2020
March 17th 2020

PLANNING COMMISSION 7pm

October 28th 2019
November 25th 2019
December (no meeting)
January 27th 2020
February 24th 2020
March 23rd 2020

ZBA 5:30pm

First Wed. of the month as necessary

FIRE BOARD

Meetings held every 2-3 months

PARKS & REC COMMITTEE 6pm

First Thursday of the month

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

As needed Spring & Fall

AUGUSTA MCKAY-DOLE LIBRARY HOURS

Monday & Tuesday 9am-5pm
Wednesday 10am-7pm
Thursday & Friday 10am-5pm
Saturday 10am-2pm
Closed Sunday
Phone: 269-731-4000



Ross-Augusta Fire Department

Fire Chief Doug Bogema reported they responded to 224 calls January through August. Of those calls, 119 were medical calls, 18 calls for assistance to other departments and received assistance from others 14 times. In addition to emergency responses, firefighters spent many hours in training.

Thank you to all those who participated in the Annual Car Show this year. It was a tremendous success.

Reminders: *If we can't find you – we can't help you. Consider purchasing a **reflective address marker** for \$12 from the Fire Dept. Stop by the township office to place your order.

**Call the township office for a permit when burning your leaves this fall. Please be considerate of your neighbors when burning.*

***ANNUAL HAUNTED HOUSE**
at the Fire Station 12086 M-89.
Saturday, October 26, 2019 1-4 pm



Saturday,
October 26th
1pm-4pm

Attention Ross Township Snowbirds

Many of you will be heading South before long. Some practical tips for you to consider:

- Have our Police check your house on a regular basis
- Stop delivery to your mail and newspaper boxes
- Contract with someone to clear your driveway and walkway to the house
- Stop in at the township office to fill out a "Property Check" form.

Ross-Augusta Fire Dept.

On Call 24 hrs. / day
EMERGENCY -911
Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Dept.
269-488-8911

KALAMAZOO COUNTY

Register of Deeds:
269-383-8970

Treasurer:
269-384-8124

Road Commission:
269-381-3170

Household Hazardous Waste: 269-373-5211

Gull Lake Sewer & Water:
269-731-4595

Associated Government Services

8721 Gull Rd. Suite B,
Richland MI 49083
269-629-0600

Monday - Friday
8:00am - Noon
1:30pm - 4:30pm

