



Coldsprings Township News

Issue #10

2011

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This is the 10th newsletter that I have prepared and distributed since I was elected as Township Supervisor, and includes the 2011 Trash Labels. As I have mentioned in past newsletters, this newsletter may not be totally inclusive of things past and things to come, but it will at least give you an idea of what your elected officials are accomplishing or considering. As usual, all feedback is most certainly welcome and desired.

You might note that Dee Bondy is no longer listed as Trustee. Last Fall she tendered her resignation so she could spend more time together with Charles. The Board sadly accepted it. We were very grateful that Skip Bagnell stepped forward and offered to take the trustee position. We are also thankful that more than one applied for the position and appreciate all those who expressed interest.

AND – I sincerely apologize for getting this newsletter out so late this year. I promise to do better next spring and thank you for your patience.

Mike Neubecker

Tax Assessor

Our tax assessor, Dave Grimm, is available the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at the township hall. If you would like to call him during those times, please use the number for the hall noted at the top of this page. Further, on days that he is not at the Township Hall, he can be reached via his home phone number or address which is listed to the left. Normally, if you call his home phone number, you will receive a recorded message. Please leave your name and phone number, and he will return your call as soon as possible. If you are having trouble trying to reach him after a reasonable amount of time, do not hesitate to contact the Township Supervisor or any other member of the Board.

2011 Township Board Meeting Schedule

(All meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month and start at 7:00pm at the Township Hall, 6515 Hwy 571, Mancelona)

June 13th
 July 11th
 August 8th
 September 12th
 October 10th
 November 14th
 December 12th

Please try to attend at least one meeting each quarter. Your input regarding Township operations is very important to us!

Trash Removal

This past August, AREA WASTE agreed to extend the previous year contract for another year at the same price for trash removal throughout the township. We will still have 4 large-item pickups along with our regular trash removal days

(Mondays). We have provided 4 labels (numbered 1-4) to each taxpayer with this newsletter. Please remember that **PRIOR** to placing an item out for pickup, it is requested that you contact **AREA WASTE** at the number on the label to advise them of what you are placing out for pickup and where the pickup is located. In some instances, large items may not necessarily be picked up on normal trash day. However, if called prior to our normal pickup day of Monday, large items will be removed within a day or two of our normal pickup day.

If you have more than 4 large items that you need to dispose of, or are "cleaning up" and need to dispose of items in quantity, Kalkaska County operates a trash recycling facility located at the Island Lake Road facility. You can contact the Island Lake Road facility at 258-3369 to find out their operating hours (it varies by season), and what items they will or will not accept.

AREA WASTE DOES NOT pick up trash on any private roads. Residents/property owners on private roads are required to leave their trash for pick-up **NO EARLIER THAN SUNDAY AFTERNOON** at the intersection of their private road and the county-maintained road intersecting it. Each township property owner is allowed five 30 gallon bags for pickup each week. On weeks that have a holiday on the regular Monday pick-up day, trash will be picked up on Tuesday instead. Questions concerning missed pickups should first be directed to **AREA WASTE AT 258-4503**. If they are unable to provide you with a satisfactory response, do not hesitate to call one of your township board members at the numbers listed on the first page of this newsletter.

Trash will NOT be collected on Memorial Day (May 31st) or Labor Day (September 6th), but will be collected the day following. Please note on your calendar.

Township Road Improvements

As of the 1st of May, the Road Commission announced that they did not have adequate funds to meet payroll. Since then, they have laid off 8 workers. Consequently, there are no funds available to provide any road improvements throughout the county, let alone in our township. I personally hope that all 5 Road Commissioners take a serious look at the amount of money being paid out in payroll & benefits (nearly 70% of their funds) and start running the Road Commission like a business instead of providing an easy ride for employees at taxpayer's expense!

Road Endings / Access

We are still having problems with the road ending at the foot of Ford Road and ask that you take care not to block access to the water hydrant. It is imperative that our fire department have clear access to the hydrant in order to replenish the pumper truck with water when fighting fires in the area. We have placed "No Parking Zone" signs around the hydrant, and will enforce them by having any vehicles blocking them towed to the county impound lot.

As I have mentioned before, those of you who use the road endings in the summer or winter are asked to be courteous to the property owners on either side of the road endings - do not trespass on their property, and do not use their docks. Please respect their property as you would your own!

Coldsprings Township Website

The township has a very active Website which can be found at www.coldspringsexcelsior.org. We are placing the approved minutes of each board meeting on this Website, along with minutes of the Board of Review. This Website can also access Excelsior Township information (under construction); the Manistee Lake Improvement Board minutes; the Coldsprings Excelsior Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department (CEVFR); and the Coldsprings Excelsior Taxpayers Association (CETA).

This Website is packed with lots of information, and if you are someone that has online capability, it would be worth your while to log onto it and discover some of the things that have been happening in your community.

Items of interest also include a calendar of events and copies of recently enacted township ordinances.

If you log into the Fire Department, tremendous amounts of information can be obtained regarding equipment, procedures, run information, the Fire Explorers Post, and much, much more.

As always, suggestions for improvement of this Website are welcome, and can be addressed to the Webmaster through the Website, or to the Township Supervisor at the email address noted on page 1 of this newsletter.

CEVFR

Each year I continue to put information in this newsletter concerning our Fire Department. They are such an key part of our community, and no-one pays them notice unless they have a personal emergency.

The Coldsprings/Excelsior Volunteer Fire Department Board of Directors meet the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm at the Fire Hall located at 6617 Country Road 612 East. The public is invited and encouraged to attend these meetings.

CEVFR is always looking for individuals interested in becoming an active part of Fire and/or Rescue within the joint townships. If you are interested, or know of someone that may be interested in joining the Department, please let us know.

Cellular Tower / Wireless Internet

Starting last Fall, we hired an individual to give us a practicability overview on construction of a cellular / wireless tower on the property behind the township hall. After struggling to find any company willing to build one, the township board came to the conclusion that if we wanted one for the residents, we were going to have to do it ourselves. We were looking at the possibility of a 170 foot tower to carry a couple of local wireless providers, along with at least one phone provider.

Unfortunately, in direct conflict with the government's stated desire to increase coverage within the rural areas, we have been unable to find a cell phone provider willing to place equipment on our tower. All of the responses have basically been that this area of northern Lower Michigan is not in their ideal expansion area currently - maybe 3-5 years down the

line. Boy, that sure helps us in the here and now, wouldn't you agree?

With a cell phone provider on the tower, we could recoup the construction & maintenance costs of our own tower in as little as 6 years, but with only wireless providers (even 3 or 4 of them), we would not be able to ever recoup our investment. At our April 2011 Board meeting the matter of constructing a tower was tabled indefinitely. Now, only your phone calls to your cell provider is going get the message to them that we really do want their expansion, and that we are really upset that we pay for a service that we can't always get where we live or recreate at.

Township Meetings

The schedule for regular township board meetings is printed on Page 1 of this newsletter. Please take a little of your time and plan on attending a few of our meetings this year. You are an important part of this community, whether you are eligible to vote here or not, and we would really appreciate the chance to meet you and hear your views!

Cemetery

Two years ago, through a unanimous vote, the Board made a change to the Sexton's Manual that limits items placed on individual graves (other than new burials) to a maximum of two.

In the ongoing attempt to keep our township cemetery clean and serene, it requires that each headstone be weed-whacked regularly, and the time involved in moving numerous grave-site items is very costly. The township maintains the cemetery out of respect to those buried there, and their relatives and friends who come to pay their respects. Although most have complied, we still find some who have ignored the new change. We would appreciate it if the plot owners abide by the rules.

Township Improvements

- Last year, to the accolade of many, we installed a dock at Sands Park boat launch. It has made launching and recovery of personal boats much easier.
- We have been working with a Grant Writer to bring about many changes to Sands Park utilizing a 10-year park plan, such as expansion of both parking lots, expansion of the beach area, including a walking trail in the park, building a pavilion, installing a new well (with water on demand instead of by pumping), along with many other ideas. Most of them we hope to realize in the very near future, and some will be down the road a bit.
- We have port-a-johns in the park again this year, but fully intend constructing a minimum of 2 bathrooms this next year, and possibly an additional 2 if we get positive results back on our grant applications.

Parks & Recreation Committee

The majority of the things noted above in township improvements have happened, or will be happening as a

result of the hard work of the recently formed Parks & Recreation Committee. Last year we sent out a random sampling of questionnaires to tax-paying property owners (not just "residents") of the entire township and asked what their opinions / suggestions would be for improvements. Based on that input, the committee worked diligently on coming up with a 10-year Park Plan which was adopted by the Township Board.

A copy of the 10-year plan can be viewed at the township hall. If you would like to help contribute to the Parks & Recreation Committee, or would like further information, contact Brenda Lambert who is the Chairman of that committee. Her contact information is located on page one of this newsletter.

County Road Commission

Denny Corrado is our township representative to the Kalkaska County Road Commission, and if you have something that you would like to be brought up at the monthly Road Commission meeting, but cannot attend yourself, please call Denny at the number located on the front page of this newsletter and he will see that the Road Commission get's your message (trust me, he's VERY good at seeing they get our point all the time!).

Township Ordinance Enforcement Officer

Two years ago we hired Wendy Corona as Township Ordinance Enforcement Officer to deal with various ordinance violations within the township. Since we hired her, significant work has been done on cleaning up various eyesores and potential hazardous areas in the township.

We have found having an on-call Ordinance Officer has helped greatly in getting rid of the junk cars, trailers and overall trash that has been accumulated by many in the township. Some individuals do not get the message, however, and we are now set up to address the violations through the newly adopted Township Violations Bureau. And we have received a big "Thumbs Up" by the Sheriff Department and Prosecutors Office in support of taking these individuals through the court process if they can't clean up their property to make it a bit nicer for all the adjoining property owners.

If you see a potential violation of any of our township ordinances, please contact Wendy Corona at (231) 258-2519.

Burning Permits

Just a reminder that a permit is required for outside burning, and they are now VERY LIMITED through the State of Michigan. When permitted, only grass, leaves, brush and branches may be burned and the fire MUST be attended. It is against the law to burn any type of garbage or construction materials. A burning permit (if they are being issued at the time due to wind/dryness) can be obtained by calling the toll-free number of the DNR at 1-866-922-2876. This is a voice-activated number which will give you instructions about whether you CAN effect a burn, what can and cannot be burned, and then approve it. The permit is only good for the day that you call.



Manistee Lake Improvement Board

The Board has worked diligently over the past 4 years to aggressively address the problems with Eurasian Milfoil and other invasive plants. The Milfoil appears "under control" currently, and on Memorial Day weekend the MLIB had a public hearing determining the practicability of continuation of the project.

No further millage was requested to continue the project, and there is enough money still available to continue the project in a maintenance mode, possibly through 2012.

Progressive AE Engineering will continue to monitor the lake for milfoil, while continuing to work with various agencies to take samplings periodically of water quality, chemicals and plant growth.

Discussion was held at the public hearing regarding establishing a legal lake level on Manistee Lake, and feedback previously requested of those involved in the Special

Assessment District strongly indicates that it is not something they would like to see aggressively pursued in the near future. If 2/3rds of the lakefront owners brought forth a petition to start the process rolling, engineering studies would be initially required to provide to the County Board of Commissioners before they could give us the initial green light to proceed. Engineering studies alone would cost between \$15-20 thousand dollars.

White Sucker Netting

The (what has become) Annual White Sucker Netting went off again this spring (late), and 1,000lbs of white suckers were removed from Manistee Lake through the help of a small but dedicate corps of volunteers. I am personally grateful to Jerry Gancer and Norm LaCroix for their dogged determination, working with the Manistee Lake Association, to continue to rid the lake of these nuisance (but tasty) fish that destroy the egg beds of the game fish in the lake. I am sure that if you volunteered to give them a hand in the 3-4 days of netting next spring that they would be pleased with the help!