

Hello Township Residents and Property Owners:

The Township Supervisor's "State of the Township" is posted to the website [www.menomineetownship.com](http://www.menomineetownship.com) for the past fiscal year (April 2015 to March 2016) - under Clerk's minutes and under the Supervisor's icon. Hard copies are available upon request for those without internet at the hall. On most Wednesdays, the Deputy Supervisor holds hall hours from noon until 4pm. The Supervisor and/or Deputy Supervisor can be reached at their home on other days.

This is a presidential election year which is when the 4-year terms for all township officials expire. For residents it is important that you are registered and vote. The Primary Election date is August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 and the General Election date is November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Township Government is not a full-time staffed entity and is separate from the County and the State governments. The main body is composed of 5 elected positions that make up the Menominee Township Board of Trustees. All township officials have statutory responsibilities/duties, but three officials have several administrative responsibilities as the State's Agent in their respective areas (Assessment, Elections, and Tax Collection). A workload graph has been posted on the website to portray where each of the present official's time is spent. Most people know of the township board meetings and other interaction outside board meetings, but that is only a very small part of the official duties. What catches many people off-guard who run for office (afterward) are the several administrative responsibilities involved with the three offices – Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer. Some of the duties are listed below. Michigan Township Association has a book designed for each office that covers all the responsibilities in detail.

**"Office of Township Supervisor"** Board Moderator, Chief Assessing Officer, Secretary to the Board of Review, the Legal Agent (Coordinator), Develops the Budget, Appoints Planning Commission Members. Many have been tripped up throughout the state thinking the name Supervisor is a real supervisor. The Supervisor does not supervise, he moderates. The individual in that position should have good leadership strengths to facilitate township actions and moderate a board of 5 who each have equal power on the Board of Trustees.

**"Office of Township Clerk"** Maintains Custody of Twp Records & Computerized General Ledger, Records & Maintains Meeting Minutes, Issues First Signature Warrants (Checks) to Pay Bills, Maintains Voter Registration and Conducts Elections, Maintains Twp Ordinance Book, He must appoint a Deputy and maintain financial coordination with the treasurer in order to pass annual state required audits which are posted on the BS&A site. Again, the name Clerk is deceptive - the Clerk does more than just clerical work.

**"Office of Township Treasurer"** Collects Real and Personal Property Taxes, Maintains account of Receipts and expenditures, Second Signature on Twp Warrants (Checks), Deposits funds, Invests twp funds, Collects Delinquent Personal Property Taxes (Real Property settlement with County) and other fee assessments. He must appoint a deputy and maintains financial coordination with clerk, depositors & vendors in order to pass annual state audits which are posted on the BS&A site. Treasurer in many organizations handle funds; but Township Treasurer is mostly focused on "Tax Collection" and the miscellaneous State duties associated with Tax Collection more so than just handling funds.

Two additional board positions **"Office of Township Trustee"** – Office of Trustee does not have any Statutory Administrative responsibilities. All 5 members of the board have "trustee" duties as township legislators, required to vote on all issues, responsible for the township's fiduciary health and serve on commissions, and perform other duties as assigned by the board. The other duties and responsibilities are driven by additional services and local people needs. Our township maintains the hall, two parks and a cemetery. Some services provided are done jointly with another township – fire services, transfer station (garbage) - and some services are coordinated with other governmental bodies - i.e.; the county (Road Commission) - Road Repair/Maintenance.

For all offices, not only are there statutory responsibilities, there are many 'housekeeping' responsibilities. There are authorized additional meetings and training sessions to learn the job. New officials require training to understand the position. There is some voluntary work, time and effort to provide the best service to the township. Along with board voluntary work also is the coordination of other people and businesses who have joined in to voluntary their time and work for the township, providing equipment and many have donated materials.

For those running for office, the 2015 gross salary compensation for the positions have been posted to the township's website at [www.menomineetownship.com](http://www.menomineetownship.com). The township 'cost' reflected in the budget differs from actual 'compensation' provided to officials and after deduction paycheck amounts. A comparison chart has also been posted to show that equal sized township, like Escanaba Township with a near identical population, size, and SEV. This is how salaries are compared... compare Apples to Apples. The smaller townships in our county, with lower population, fewer parcels and lower SEV, do not have the same workload as our township.

As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, running for these positions for the next term are as follows: 3 individuals are running for the Office of Supervisor - Ken Goffin, Calvin Fernstrum and Keith Kovar; For Office of Clerk - Michael Armbrust; For Office of Treasurer - David Wesoloski & For Office of Trustee 4 individuals are running for the two Trustees positions – Larry Barker, Diane Kosewski, Carl Havelka and Frances Havelka.

The Clerk is the Election coordinator and may be reached at his home or you may contact him by mailing the Township Hall at N2283 O-1 Drive if you have questions.

As reflected in the budget resolution for the next year, the Township Board again voted again not to levee a township millage for the 2016 tax season. Many people of Menominee Township do not realize that the township operates without having to tax or fee property owners. The primary township operating income comes from the revenue share payment received 6 times per year from state (federal funds) and other income, mainly the impact host fee funds from Waste Management. We still maintain a healthy fund balance and we are getting some good Investment Income from general funds that are collecting interest on government bonds stretched out over 10+ years.

Presently, the township board continues to do what it can to improve and maintain our two parks with hours of volunteer time spent improving the parks, mainly by the Treasurer and business support. The Township Supervisor donated equipment time as well as Plutchak Fab Inc to complete the ball park in-field to standards. Many enjoyed the Oktoberfest 2015 activities this past season on a now functional ball field. 11 teams and several local businesses were involved to make this a total success and provide Birch Creek entertainment for many local people. The local activity also raised additional funds for future development and a special account holds local business donations for the ball park. After public hearing, the Supervisor, with authorization from the board, submitted for a \$45,000.00 (25% match) grant from the State to fund the continued development of the ball park. It is pending at the state for a late October 2016 decision, so there probably will not be any development activity this year. There are a couple minor improvements planned to continue to improve the playground near the hall with volunteers already lined up to serve. The handicap parking lot area plan has been placed on hold pending O-1 drive reconstruct.

The Assessor would like everyone to look at their assessments and their tax bills to ensure that the Principal Resident Exemption (PRE) or homestead percentage is correct. If a homeowner is living in that home on the property and this is your principal residence, 100% should appear in the PRE block. This will "EXEMPT" a homeowner from paying the School Operating Tax. This happens with new home owner purchases - since homeowners must apply for that exemption and the owner may not know they qualify. And it may be a reverse situation that needs attention. If you think you have an issue with the PRE, call the assessor on a Monday or a Tuesday between 4pm and 7pm. It is best to call ahead and make an appointment if you plan to visit in person.

This past year, one of our larger local industrial businesses, Lumberjack Hardwoods Inc, has expanded adding a kiln and a new storage/drying building. They have applied for a tax incentive for their expansion.

The Treasurer's collection hours at the hall are posted on bulletin boards at the hall, on the website and on the tax bills. Per phone arrangement, he is available to meet at other times, at the hall or visit a property owner's home, especially for those who can't get around very well. The Treasurer's statutory office is located at his home except for the hall collection dates listed on the bill. Do not leave payments with any other township personnel at the hall. The only State Agents for Tax Collection are the Treasurer and his Deputy. Mailing check payments to N2920 Bay de Noc is preferred, but again, if you can't make a collection date at the hall, other arrangements can be made.

Our General Fund excess balance of \$1.4 million has been maintained well over the past 4 years. The township's ability to maintain a healthy financial status allows us to continue without imposing a township millage. Furthermore, over the past 12 years we have continue to provide substantial funds to the county road commission for repairs and reconstruction. The road commission many times refers their responsibility back to the township - BUT....

All roads belong to the County Road Commission. Road funding comes from the state and federal government bodies. The Township should not be a 100% funding source as now is the case when we've asked for work to be performed. The small revenue share that the township receives is limited – and must be spent on performing the three main statutory responsibilities first (Election Admin, Assessing & Tax Collection); then General Township Administrative support and services (fire depts., parks, garbage handling - water – sewer) and then considerations is given to supplement other governmental entity services such as roads reconstruction. The township gets involved in coordinating some of the road projects, but the final decision is the County Road Commission's decision. The board has kept road project costs within the townships spending ability. Our main challenge has always been to get the time window from the Road Commission to commit to do Menominee Township's projects. The large size of Menominee County makes it difficult to always have the Road Commission doing work for Menominee Township.

For continuous improvement we need public comment and feedback from the residents and land owners. Feel free to join in for public comment at the Planning Commission meetings and Township Board Meetings at the township hall or just give us a call or write a letter. See the township meeting schedule listed under the clerk on our website.

[www.menomineetownship.com](http://www.menomineetownship.com)

Respectfully Submitted - Menominee Township Board of Trustees

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and Darlene Nerat  
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