



Crystal Lake Township Newsletter

Winter 2022-23

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IMPORTANT BOARD STATUS UPDATE: We have had recent changes in the township leadership. CLT clerk Sue Sullivan departed not quite mid-way through her 4-year term, citing among other things her health and housing problems. We sincerely thank her for her many years of public service and wish her well in her well-earned retirement. Besides missing her personally, this meant that as of Oct. 1st we had no appointed clerk to replace her. The remaining four seated board members were unable to come to a consensus on a replacement, even after several special meetings and two willing candidates. After repeated tie votes, the board averted higher authorities stepping in to assure the security of the mid-term elections (a large part of the clerk's work) by hiring the fully qualified former Deputy Clerk Halliday as a stop-gap measure, to perform all elections-related tasks. (A summary to help understand these events is available on the website.)

Finally, in a special meeting on October 25, the board considered a third candidate and unanimously voted to appoint Judy VanMeter as the new clerk with a start date of November 12, 2022. Ms. VanMeter is a longtime township resident and a well-seasoned 31-year veteran of helping to run the township elections. She is currently appointed as Precinct Board Chair. We sincerely thank the other candidates for applying, the community for participating in the process, and offer our congratulations to Judy in her new township position.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT REQUESTS

AUDIENCE MEMBERS: Observing firsthand your own government operations is a good way to volunteer your services. The casual act of witnessing your elected officials at work is one great way to start getting involved. We cordially invite you to attend any meeting; the board meets regularly every third Tuesday at 7 p.m. Don't have time? When you do have a minute, make an appointment with a board member or just stop by with a question or your comment. Democracy depends on an involved and informed public.

BOARD OF REVIEW MEMBER: Here's your chance to learn, up close and personal, how your Crystal Lake Township property is assessed. That's because this board's purpose is to receive and evaluate citizen protests. The board is comprised of township citizens –maybe you?– who provide a check-and-balance on property assessments. Democracy in action! We supply training for this job and remuneration for your time and effort. Volunteer to be an alternate on this board, if you can make a long term commitment, attend training, and meet 5 days a year. Contact Supervisor Ferris.

CEMETERY ENDOWMENT: This fall we lost yet another great friend to and benefactor of our cemeteries when Mr. Fred Auch passed way. His leadership raising funds from others plus his own generous donations to the North Cemetery Endowment are his legacy to us. He was big hearted and charming, had the nicest smile and loved the outdoors. It was with his strong support and subtle influences that the North Cemetery accentuates the natural and emphasizes the beauty of its "up north" setting. Thank you, Fred, and all the original committee members –notably Doug Putnam, Brad Heywood and John Vinkemulder—for your kind gifts benefitting us all.



CLEAN UP DAYS: Plan ahead with these two summer 2023 Saturday dates for getting your oversized or awkward junk items to the dump: May 6th and August 5th. The location is still planned for the Frankfort Dow Airport parking lot on Airport Road. Look for new instructions on our website as the dates draw nearer.

CRYSTAL LAKE AND INVASIVE SPECIES: Did you know that the State and all townships around Crystal Lake have ordinances requiring boat cleaning that apply to all? CLT contributes money to the Benzie Conservation District whose mission is to prevent new aquatic invasive species from being introduced into local water bodies. To protect our precious waters, every floating craft operator should ensure that vessels of any type are clean of hitchhiking invasives, whether you are paddling a board or kayak, whether in a fishing trawler or driving a high speed motor boat. The Crystal Lake Watershed Association provides a free boat washing station at the DNR launch located 6 miles east of Frankfort (2 miles west of Benzonia/US-31) on M-115 at Mollineaux Road. Read more details at www.crystallakewatershed.org.

ZONING: It has come to our attention that persons anticipating building small structures such as storage sheds, well houses, etc. are assuming that no permits are required for these structures because the State Construction Code does not require a Building Permit for structures less than 200 square feet. (BTW: This standard was recently increased from the previous 100 square feet.) However, the change in Building Permit requirements has no relationship to Township Zoning Ordinance requirements. **ALL STRUCTURES OF WHATEVER SIZE require a Land Use Permit from the Township Zoning Administrator.** The Land Use Permit is necessary to determine and assure that the placement of any structure meets all zoning requirements, particularly setback requirements. Doing **anything** to alter your property? Check with our Zoning Dept. first.

CRYSTAL LAKE TOWNSHIP FIREWORKS ORDINANCE:

In a nutshell, TOWNSHIP LAW provides that legal, consumer-grade fireworks are allowed ONLY on safe burn days and hours as follows:

- 11 a.m. on Dec. 31 to 1 a.m. on Jan. 1
- 11 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. on the Saturday and Sunday immediately preceding Memorial Day
- 11 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. on June 29 and 30, and July 1, 2, 3 and 4
- 11 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. on July 5, only if that date is a Friday or Saturday
- 11 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. on the Saturday and Sunday immediately preceding Labor Day

STATE OF MICHIGAN FIREWORKS LAW:

In a nutshell, State Law regulates fireworks --ALL DAYS OF THE YEAR-- in the following ways:

- ONLY if consumer or low impact grade products;
- NEVER if on public property, including beaches, streets and sidewalks, at hospitals or schools, in playgrounds or parks.
- NEVER if a burn ban has been declared;
- NEVER if ignitor(s) are under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances.
- NEVER if
 - A. deemed illegal or if not approved by the State of Michigan and/or by the State Fire Marshall, regardless of how it is labeled;
 - B. commercial grade without a state license;
 - C. homemade explosives.