



# Whitewater Township Newsletter



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

## Directory



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### SUPERVISOR

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### CLERK

Cheryl Goss ext. 24  
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### TREASURER

Ardella Benak ext. 22  
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[Treasurer@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Treasurer@whitwatertownship.org)

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vacant  
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### TRUSTEE

Heidi Vollmuth  
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Dawn Kuhns - 231-409-1827  
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### FIRE & AMBULANCE

911 Emergency  
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### PLANNING COMMISSION

Kim Mangus, Chair  
231-631-2326

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Luann Snider, Director  
231-883-3193

### GT COUNTY RD COMM

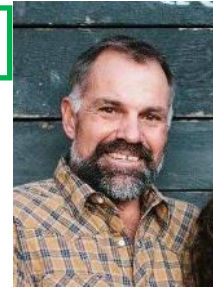
231-922-4848



## Saying Goodbye.....

Dear Whitewater Residents

It is with a heavy heart that I have made the very difficult decision to step down from my position as the Trustee of the Whitewater Township Board. It has been such an honor to have served as an integral member of this board for the past twenty-one years. Since my initial election as Trustee in 2000, I have had the pleasure to contribute to many positive changes in our community. Over the years, I have served as a strong advocate for the farming community.



In my nearly five terms of service, I have worked under three different Supervisors and several different additional board members. Over the years, our community has faced many challenges. Though sometimes it was difficult, we as a board have always been able to work together to better our community. I see myself as open minded and willing to compromise. In the past, this attitude has helped me to successfully contribute to our board in order to collectively make decisions that have helped to better our land and future for our community families and farmers. However, I believe that the present board I am serving with does not work well as a cohesive unit. Specifically, there have been two board members that have continuously slandered the rest of the team; this is unprofessional behavior. The slandering and inability to work together is not how a township board should operate. Ultimately our township is suffering because of it. If we can't work together as a team, we are not being good Public Servants to this community. I do not wish to be a member of a board with this reputation, as it goes against everything I stand for. In addition to my frustration with the lack of comradery in this current board, it has become very apparent to me that there is a select group of people that believe I have conflict of interest regarding a current issue. It is evident the topic of allowing for permits for growth of medical marijuana is a very controversial topic in our community. There is a small group of people in this community that believe I have a personal conflict of interest due to a family member who is currently trying to sell his business to a marijuana processing facility. As I have stated in previous meetings, this is absolutely inaccurate, I do not have a conflict of interest in this issue. Not only have I personally financed a private attorney, but I also have regretfully had to use finances from the township to hire an additional attorney to prove that I do not have a conflict of interest in this issue. Both attorneys have submitted their opinions that a conflict of interest is of no concern in this matter. Yet, this continues to be an incrimination toward myself. I pride myself in my service for this township, as I have always put what I believe to be in the better interest of our community first.

I refuse to let these select few individuals and the inaccurate accusations from the public discredit my moral compass, my reputation and my sole dedication to this community over the last twenty-one years. I also want no part of serving with an incompatible board that has caused so much daily stress and frustration in my life. I therefore effective immediately, resign from my current position as White Water Township Trustee.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to our Township for trusting in me to serve as your Trustee for nearly five terms. ***It has been my absolute pleasure to serve this beautiful community.***

Thank you, *Paul D. Hubbell*

## CALENDAR

### DECEMBER

- 12/02 Special TB Meeting
- 12/03 Planning Commission
- 12/13 Park & Rec Advisory
- 12/14 Dec. Board of Review
- 12/14 Township Board
- 12/25 Christmas



### JANUARY

- 1/01 New Year's Day
- 1/07 Planning Commission
- 1/10 Park & Rec. Advisory
- 1/11 Township Board
- 1/27 ZBA



### FEBRUARY

- 2/02 Planning Commission
- 2/08 Township Board
- 2/14 Park & Rec. Advisory
- 2/21 President's Day
- 2/24 ZBA



### MARCH

- 3/02 Planning Commission
- 3/08 Township Board
- 3/14 Park & Rec. Advisory
- 3/17 St. Patrick's Day
- 3/24 ZBA



# *What's New*

**Alex Darrow** Has been appointed to a partial term on the Whitewater Township Planning Commission; term shall end 12/31/2022.

Welcome Alex!

**Planning and Zoning** The Planning Commission is officially beginning a Master Plan review with the assistance of Chris Grobbel of Grobbel Environmental & Planning Associates. There is an approximate one-year timeline that will involve multiple phases including survey, public input, and lively discussions regarding the future 'vision' for Whitewater Township.

**Parks Closed** Due to the August 10th storm "Closed Due to Storm Damage" signs have been put up at the Battle Creek Natural Area and Lossie Road Nature Trail.

**Whitewater Township Park** The 46th Annual Halloween Party on October 2nd was a huge success! The weather was gorgeous, and lots of costumed trick-or-treaters came out with their parents. Numerous campers reported that they love the event and look forward to it each year. A HUGE thank-you to all of the Whitewater Emergency Services Auxiliary and Whitewater Township Fire Department volunteers who spent many hours of their personal time planning, organizing, fetching, setting up tents and games and tables, setting up food and drinks and serving it, manning games, making sure everyone was having a good time, and then taking it all down and putting it away for another year, as well as park rangers who worked hard to keep the park facilities clean and campers happy! The campground is now closed for the 2021 season.

**Grant Awarded to Whitewater Township Fire Department** Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) through FEMA for 12 new SCBA air packs. Whitewater FD submitted a regional grant with Traverse City, Long Lake, Paradise and Almira (Benzie County) fire departments. The combined award amount is \$598,181.82 for 94 SCBA units, which is one of the largest award amounts in Michigan for the 2020 AFG term. Whitewater Township's allotment is 12 SCBA units, which includes 12 SCBA air packs, air bottles and face masks. Additional accessories will need to be purchased to accommodate the new technology.

**Thank you, Chief Flynn, for your ongoing hard work in writing grants.**



## **Focus on New Local Business - Myrtle & Maude's Farm Market**

Opened September 18, 2021. It is part of a fourth generation family farm and they are VERY proud of that! Farm living is something they wouldn't trade for the world. They are extremely passionate about the hard work and the life lessons it provides in their day to day life ... sharing this with the community is their ultimate dream! They hope through their market they will be able to give people an amazing insight into farming here in Northern Michigan along with lasting memories with family and friends. The plan is to invite schools to have the opportunity for educational field trips on the farm so that we may provide children in the community with a better idea of what this agricultural region is about and how lucky they are to be growing up here, and who knows, maybe spark the next generation of local farmers!

**What does the dream picture of the market look like?** Well, so far it has been a dream come true! They decided that they were truly going through with this just about a year ago this November! Switching career paths from full time nursing to farm market owners was intimidating and overwhelming at times, but with MUCH support from family and friends, their first season was a true success!

"Hard work is not something we are afraid of! This past spring and summer was crazy busy getting ready to open as we broke ground for the building in April! Our family is a great team and we work well together. We have the same goals in mind with the future of Myrtle and Maude's, expansion and growth into the agritourism market while keeping our focus on the importance of family, educating and creating lasting memories for all of our visitors. We want to create a relaxing family atmosphere where people can come to shop locally, learn about Northern Michigan farms, and play with their kids, all while realizing how lucky they are to be living or visiting our agricultural community!"

**What you will find at Myrtle and Maude's?** Fresh, in season produce, locally made goods, refurbished furniture, Michigan cherry products, farm tours, play area, outdoor seating, patio seating with big screen TV for big game viewing. The plan for 2022 is to hold monthly events up until the start of the July cherry season at which time they will be open daily. Starting in March or April of 2022, they are hoping to have once a month events. Each month there will be a new theme with the market totally restaged and flipped, a good reason to come back each month! Once they are in season with cherries and apples, the store will be open daily offering the fruits grown here on the farm along with farm tours to give an insight of what the harvest looks like! Farmer Paul will be driving the tractor and doing his best to educate and entertain, sharing the farm experience for young and old alike.

**Coming NEXT - Ladies afternoon, December 5th from 11am-3pm.** The market will be open offering Christmas decor and gifts along with 12 additional vendors! Find them on Facebook and Instagram or join the email list for updates and schedules of events: [myrtleandmaudes@gmail.com](mailto:myrtleandmaudes@gmail.com)



"We would like to thank the community for all of the support over the past few months and we look forward to seeing you all in the spring!"

*Sadie Merchant & Susan Hubbell*

*(aka Myrtle and Maude)*



## Supervisor's - Update

Neighbors and Friends

With the first couple of snowfalls under our belts it is a reminder the Holidays Season is drawing near. May everyone enjoy some extra time with family and loved ones, near and far.

The 2021 construction season has been described in many different ways. Challenges from almost every corner have come together trying our patience and draining our pocketbooks. Even still, Land Use Permits in the Township are on a record pace for the year, proving the American "Can Do" Spirit is alive and well.

Cherry Capital Communications of Elk Rapids and 186network of Rapid City are both contemplating fiber optic expansions in the Township. To help support these efforts the Whitewater Township Board has committed about 1/3 of the \$294,000 American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds allotted to us for the purpose. We look forward to working with both of these service providers in the future keeping Whitewater a great place to call home.

A new ambulance service agreement will soon be in place. The new agreement addresses funding and staffing issues that always surround emergency services. To maintain 24/7 Advanced Life Support Ambulance Service in Whitewater Township we will now share one ambulance and crew with Acme Township. The Fire Department has labor challenges too. With added training demands just qualifying to be a firefighter is difficult. The firefighter sector is moving away from paid on call departments like Williamsburg to that of fulltime departments.

The Planning Commission has been hard at work on zoning ordinance amendments for marihuana and the 5-year Master Plan Review. The proposed Event Barn use and a possible change to the minimum 5-acre lot size in the RC-1 District are topics still to be addressed. As always, the Township's Website will be used to notify folks of upcoming meetings and agendas.

A group of Townships are working together to avoid the brining issues that plagued some Townships in 2021 and to address the Road Commission's current process for getting local road projects initiated. Regarding roads and flooding concerns, the Grand Traverse County Drain Commissioner has toured a couple of sites in the Township.

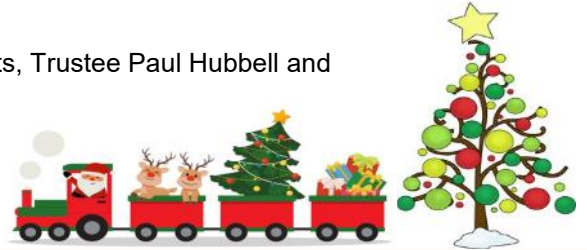
Thank you, Andy Smits!

The Township Board has contracted with c2ae an architecture, engineering and infrastructure design firm to provide a lite version of a needs assessment. This assessment will help the Township identify and plan for infrastructure needs in the coming years addressing the development activity headed our way.

On a sad note, the Township accepted resignations from two longtime servants, Trustee Paul Hubbell and Firefighter/EMT Jeremy Jennett. I hope you will join me in thanking them for their service to the community. Thank you Both!

*Ron Popp*

**Whitewater Township Supervisor**



The Whitewater Township Fire Department continues to struggle with recruiting and retaining fire department employees. This crisis is not isolated to our community; it is happening across this great nation and in some cases local fire department and rescue agencies are not able to respond at all.



*Having said that, the Whitewater Township Fire Department would like to say a sad goodbye to Firefighter/EMT Jeremy Jennett, who is hanging up his gear after serving our community for the past 13 years. Firefighter Jennett began his tenure in 2008 with Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department working out of the Whitewater station (Battalion 3). When Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department dissolved and Whitewater Township Fire Department was established, he continued to serve out of Station 3. Throughout the last 13 years, Jeremy has obtained many training certificates and citation letters for service above and beyond his regular duties.*

*Jeremy plans to concentrate on his career and spend more time with his family when he officially retires on December 1.*



***We at Whitewater Township would like to thank Jeremy for his dedicated service and wish him well in the next chapter of his life.***

Remember to check your smoke alarms and the smoke alarms of your loved one's this winter. As of November 22, Michigan has had 97 fire related fatalities this year with careless smoking as the leading cause of these fires. Many of these fatalities occurred because of absent or non-functioning smoke alarms. If you need help with smoke alarms please contact the Whitewater Township Fire Department.



## Treasurer's Corner

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
From my family to yours, here's wishing you a safe and joyous holiday season.

*Ardella M. Benak*



### Dates to Remember.....

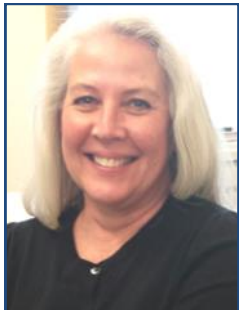
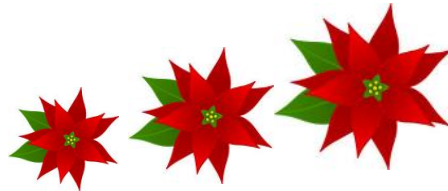
- ⇒ Winter Tax bills due without interest by . . . . . 2/14/2022
- ⇒ A 1% interest each month for delinquent Winter Taxes starting . . . . . 2/15/2022
- ⇒ **Summer 2021 Deferment** must be paid by . . . . . 2/14/2022
- ⇒ A 3% penalty will be assessed on delinquent taxes starting . . . . . 2/15/2022
- ⇒ Last day to pay your property taxes at Whitewater Township Hall . . . . . 2/28/2022
- ⇒ Delinquent 2020 Real Property taxes are turned over to GT County . . . . . 3/01/2022
- ⇒ A 4% penalty plus a 1% interest fee will be assessed by GTC starting . . . . . 3/01/2022



**Personal Property Taxes** starting with the numbers: 28-13-900 will continue to be collected at the Township Treasurer's office as they do not get turned over to the County.

**Partial payments** are accepted. When paying with **CASH**, please have the **exact amount** of your tax bill. I thank you for your understanding in this matter. The township does not accept credit card payments. After March 1, 2022, please call Grand Traverse County Treasurer's office for the correct payoff amount due at 231-922-4535.

## *"Details, Details" . . . From the Clerk*



Greetings to Everyone -

Now that we are nearing the end of the calendar year, it seems appropriate to reflect a bit on 2021. We didn't fully get back to normal, as some had hoped, but it was better than 2020. Let's hope we take further steps toward "normal" in 2022.

During 2021, the township board has dealt with many issues, some of which are routine, others of which are controversial. Growth has always been a controversial issue in Whitewater Township.

I think back to 1979, the year I moved to Traverse City from a small farming community north of Lansing, and to 1985, the year I moved to Whitewater Township in order to be closer to my employment. Growth has been coming to Whitewater Township in the years before and since I moved here, in the form of agricultural, commercial, industrial, and residential growth. With Whitewater Township being the second largest township in Grand Traverse County in terms of geographic size it is no longer a secret that Whitewater Township is a good place to live and work.

There are those who want no growth to come to the township, in any form. Others are more accepting of growth. One thing is certain, growth will come. For various reasons, landowners will decide to make changes on their property or sell their property to someone who wants it for development purposes, whether it be residential, agricultural, commercial, or industrial. This is the natural cycle of ownership of land.

The powers that be in the township do not have the authority to stop all growth. They can only attempt to manage growth for the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the township. Accordingly, opponents and supporters of growth, and the landowners whose properties are the focus of growth, will need to compromise on upcoming growth. They will need to agree to disagree on some points, and to fashion a compromise that balances the property rights of landowners with the rights of citizens to not have their health, safety, and general welfare compromised by growth.

Finding compromise between the various interests will require that everyone exhibit a respectful attitude toward each other's views. It will require that only facts are used as the basis for making statements, and not rumor, gossip, speculation, innuendo, and what each of us *thinks or assumes* we know. Getting to the facts requires independent research and wading through the ever-present misinformation and disinformation.

Let's go forward, starting now and into 2022, always speaking from a position of facts and a respectful attitude toward everyone involved in the discussion.

*Cheryl A. Goss*  
**Whitewater Township Clerk**

