



GERRISH TOWNSHIP

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GERRISH TOWNSHIP

STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP

MARCH 12, 2019

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Good evening and welcome to the 138th. Annual State of Gerrish Township address. It is my pleasure as Gerrish Township Supervisor to continue our tradition of giving residents an in-depth look at the status of Gerrish Township. I want to thank our township residents, elected officials, support staff, and employees, for your continuing interest, input, and participation, that are key to Gerrish Township's growth and success.

I'd like to take a moment to recognize township elected officials, chief's, deputies, and support staff.

Gerrish Township Clerk: Kathleen Patchin Deputy: Annette Kirkpatrick

Gerrish Township Treasurer: Leasa Tulgetski Deputy: Sandi Klein

Gerrish Township Trustees: Mary Link and Jim Lippert

Police Chief: Brian Hill Fire Chief: Jim Fisher Building: Jason Jansen

Administrative Specialist: Mary Ann Figley Maintenance / Sexton: Tony Ide

The administration of Gerrish Township, functioning as a team, prides our self on delivering high quality services to our residents. We recognize and work hard to provide these services. Our goal is to provide these services in an efficient, cost effective and positive manner.

GERRISH TOWNSHIP HALL

In 2019, our township hall will be receiving several exterior building updates. Treasurer Tulgetski has been working to finalize a loan from the USDA for hall improvements that will include but are not limited to:

Remove and replace the existing roof membrane and drains.

Clean and repair all existing masonry, brick, block and stone

Remove and replace sealant at all exterior joints

Remove air conditioning units from roof to ground level

Your township offices will also see the replacement of computers and technology upgrades.

TOWNSHIP BOARD PROJECTS

Beginning in the spring of 2018, a committee comprised of Police Chief Brian Hill, Trustee Jim Lippert, Building Inspector Jason Jansen, and Supervisor David Udy, have been working to write a new Gerrish Township Property Maintenance Rental Ordinance. The purpose of this new ordinance is to ensure safe rental housing in our township. The ordinance is in the final

“dot-the-I’s and-cross-the-T’s” stage and will soon be brought to the township board for approval.

In November 2018, the Gerrish Township board attended a joint public meeting with the Lyon Township board. A new study for a sanitary sewer surrounding Higgins Lake was presented. Residents from both townships packed the Lyon Township Hall. Public comments from the attendees overwhelmingly encouraged both boards to support a new feasibility study for a sanitary sewer. Working with the engineers from Fleis&Vandenbrink, the application for a search grant from USDA has been submitted. The report back from the engineers can be expected by late summer 2019.

Changes to the operation of the Township compost site is under consideration. The Board is looking for ways to ensure that township residents and businesses have access, while eliminating the access to residents and businesses outside of Gerrish Township.

GERRISH TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

In 2018 two members of the planning commission retired after many years of service to our township. They were Norma Boyle and Bill Case. We are grateful for their dedicated service to our community. One member Jamie Purtell resigned due to personal commitments and we also thank Jamie for her service.

Members of our Planning Commission are;

- Mike Wansa chairman
- Mary Link Gerrish Township Trustee
- Mike Briggs secretary
- Mike Shaltz
- Kelly Kirkpatrick
- Greg Semack
- James Ostling.

The key accomplishments of the GTPC include;

- Updating the GTPC By-Laws, and an in-depth review of the GT Master Plan
- Conducted one full Site Plan Review and one partial Site Plan Review
- Modified one ordinance that increased residential accessory building height, considered other ordinances for modifications
- Participated in the Roscommon County Strategic Plan 2023 Task Force
- Began the process to create a Site Plan Checklist Package
- Participated in a Planning & Zoning Seminar Workshop
- Worked with the GT working group on the proposed township Property Rental Ordinance

Community Involvement:

- GTFD Open House - August 2018
- Grayson's Gift – Donate and install Bed Shaker Smoke Detectors for hearing impaired
- Provide and install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the community
- Conduct "Stuff the Ambulance" at Christmas to gather needed supplies for Lions Den and Child Assessment Center.
- Assist with Trunk or Treat
- Provide fire prevention and safety education programs to local organizations and schools

Training and Technology updates:

- Provide required and elective Fire and EMS throughout the year totaling over 1000 hours of training for employees with a variety of specialty classes such as Vehicle Extraction, 12 Lead EKG and Capnography, and Advanced Pump Operations.
- Replaced out dated Toughbook laptops for EMS run reports with iPad Tablets that provide multi-use capabilities and paperless options for EMS and Fire reports.
- Investigating new web site development to better reach the public and provide fire and life safety information.
- Upgrade Imagetrend web-based application to not only improve EMS reports but now includes Fire reporting for State required reports.

Officers:

- GTFD is working on a new Mission and Vision statement and is in the process of developing goals and objectives for the department.
- GTFD is working on a new succession plan to develop future leaders both within the department and community.
- GTFD has visions of increasing public education in the areas of fire and life safety.
- GTFD is investigating if Community Paramedicine is an option for the department to assist our citizens with home wellness checks.
- GTFD strives to stay current with new technologies that will improve the departments operations and efficiencies.
- GTFD as with other Fire and EMS service across the nation struggles with the recruitment and retention of quality and qualified employees and will be coordinating with others to address this national issue.

GERRISH TOWNSHIP FIRE / EMS

In July of 2018 Chief Jim Lippert retired after 42 years of service to the department. No one can accuse Jim of being a short timer!

The key positions in the department are;

- Jim Fisher - Chief
- Donna Brown - EMS Captain resigned in November 2018
- Kristi Gilliam – Assistant Chief EMS
- Brandon Rogers – Assistant Chief Operation
- Jake Figley – Captain/Training Officer
- Mike Bentley – Lieutenant/Safety Officer
- Julie Hill – 2nd Lieutenant EMS
- Jason Budzinski – 2nd Lieutenant Operations

In 2018 the GTFD responded to:

- 442 Medical Emergency calls
- 101 Fire and Rescue calls. 10 of the fire calls were community events such as parades and safety education.

Equipment and Facilities:

- The replacement for Engine/Rescue 220 (23 years old) is ongoing
- Replaced older hydraulic rescue tools with newer electric/hydraulic technology to remove trapped victims.

Committees and groups GTFD employees participate in:

- Roscommon County Fire Chiefs, EMS Board and Firefighters Association
- Roscommon County Emergency Management Planning Team
- North Central Medical Control-Education Committee, Review Committee, and Advisory Committee.
- Roscommon County 911 Authority Board and Technical Committee
- Active Violent Incident Management Team
- Michigan Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) committee
- Chief Fisher is a Director on the Northern Michigan Fire Chief Association

- Organized and participated in the South Higgins Lake State Park Youth Alcohol Enforcement efforts for the July 4th holiday.
- Officers participated in Lake Saver day. (department has done so every year of the program)
- Held four trainings for township CERT Team members.
- Collected 102.8 pounds of drugs (Drug Drop Box) in 2018 for proper disposal.
- Brought 33 blight issues for township ordinances into compliance.
- Started and continue to do extensive review of Police Policy Manuel with future goal of becoming State Accredited.
- Started researching grants to replace six first generation 800 MHz portable radios that are nearing their bench support life.
- Applied for BVP 50/50 grant and replaced all 7 officer's bullet proof vests as they have met their 5-year product liability
- Partnered with Grayson's gift to help provide specialized smoke alarms for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- Held two "Coffee with a Cop" events at the Bird and Bear Café which were very well attended.
- Had one officer resign in November. Position was filled in December.

All officers participated in programs and projects sponsored by Act-Now community group to include

- Bowling Tournament Fundraiser at Fred's of Roscommon in February.
- Spring and Fall Road Clean-Up through the MDOT Adopt-A-Highway Program (from Pioneer Hill south to Hillcrest Rd)
- Provided a trailer for scrap metal collection for residents and took several trips to the recycling center.
- Higgins Lake – Roscommon Chamber of Commerce Business, Recreation & Services Expo at the CRAF Center in May.
- Higgins Lake Sunrise Run in June (traffic control for runner safety)
- Awarded two RHS seniors with Act-Now Scholarships.
- Annual Meeting and Picnic at the TW> Municipal Center Outdoor Pavilion in July.
- Annual Golf Outing in August
- Law Enforcement Torch Run for Michigan Special Olympics in September.
- Stuffed Animal sales at Michigan Fireman's Memorial Festival Booth as a fundraiser for Shop-With-A-Cop.
- Annual Trunk or Treat in October
- Annual Shop-With-A-Cop in December providing 10 families.

GERRISH TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Key Department Positions:

- Brian Hill – Chief / Greg Patchin – Lieutenant / Norm Labonte – Sargent
- Eric Muszynski, James Scroggin, Shannon Fick, John Wybraniec, Officers
- Julie Hill – Administrative Specialist
- Terry Newton - Maintenance

In 2018 the GTPD responded to:

- 1524 calls for service
- Made 108 Custodial Arrests
- Issued 263 total traffic violations

Equipment:

- The department currently has 3 patrol vehicles. One is scheduled for replacement in 2019.
- One Polaris Ranger rescue vehicle for service to the community.

Gerrish Township Police Department – 2018 Year in Review

- Installed a new ionization water treatment system replacing the old system which is more economic and efficient.
- Installed a new independent server for the GTPD due to State LEIN (Law Enforcement Information Network) security requirements including a new router.
- Replaced two Tazer CEW's (Conducted Electronic Weapons)
- Chief Hill participated with the Property Maintenance Committee to develop an Ordinance for adopting the (IMPC) International Property Maintenance Code.
- Joined Car Fax as a tool for people to retrieve copies of accident reports and for investigative purposes at no cost to the department.
- Successful State of Michigan (LEIN) audit in February.
- Switched to new web-based training, communication and early warning system for employee performance which saves about \$1,000 / year from the previous on-line training with more options.
- Provided CPR/AED Training for all Gerrish Township CERT Team members.
- Participated in three lock-down drills at all Roscommon Area Public Schools and one random dog drug sweep at the high school.

- Annual Kids Helping Kids Christmas Program for Roscommon County Foster Children and their families in December.
- Assisted with approximately \$3,400 in assistance for heat, gas, wood, etc. through the Act Now Home Energy Assistance Fund.

GERRISH TOWNSHIP PARKS

Gerrish Township Parks and Marina Staff

- Marina Manager – David Udy, Lead Worker – Steve Myer
- Marina Staff – Lori Weinel, Kathy Kuchta, Terry Newton, Mark Mack, Dan Bohem, Caleb Purtell, Morgan Thomas, John Oman, Tony Ide

In 2018 the Gerrish Township Park and Marina / 103 Mill Street

- The marina is home to 133 seasonal in-water slips
- Gerrish Township Marina provides transient, short term, access to Higgins Lake.
- The marina also provides 12 slips for owners of personal watercraft (jet skis)
- The Launch & Go program provided summer boat storage for 10 outside summer storage, and 12 inside summer storage patrons
- A Customer Appreciation party was held in August. Approximately 175 persons attended.
- In 2018 an unused home was removed from the property allowing for additional parking and picnic area.
- Marina slip fees and fuel sales cover the entire cost of operations and grant payments. No taxpayer dollars are needed for marina operations
- Currently there are 160 persons on the waiting list for a seasonal slip.

Gerrish Township Park / 109 Carlos Avenue

- Excellent picnic areas with great views of Higgins Lake
- Bath House with rest room facilities
- Designated area for swimming

Municipal Center Park / 2297 E. Higgins Lake Drive

- Tennis and Pickle Ball
- Modern Children's Play Scape
- Soft ball diamond
- Outdoor pavilion
- Home for our township Halloween Trunk-Or-Treat

CHALLENGES MOVING FORWARD

- **Township general fund.** Since the 1970's the original 1.5 mill township operating millage has been reduced to .9616 mills due to the mandated Headley Rollback. At the same time costs for operation continue to increase. At some future date, our operating millage will need to be restored to the full 1.5 mill level for sustained township operations.
- **Township Infrastructure / Roads.** County owned roads are maintained by the Roscommon County Road Commission. We currently budget \$20,000 each year for neighborhood road improvements in order to receive the maximum matching funds from the RCRC. This however allows for only minor road projects designed to try to save what already exists. Neighborhood roads in our township continue to deteriorate at an alarming rate. Many roads that were paved in the 1970's are in such disrepair that they must be ground back to gravel before repaving. At some point, a road millage will be needed to save the neighborhood roads that exist and address the future demands of our residents.

Our successes – are large and small.

Earlier, I referred to the township administration, boards, and residents as a team. The work and efforts of our team members result in Gerrish Township being a desirable place to live, work, and play, in one of the most spectacular outdoor recreation areas in our state and our nation.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Udy / Gerrish Township Supervisor