

Wakefield Township

414 N. County 519

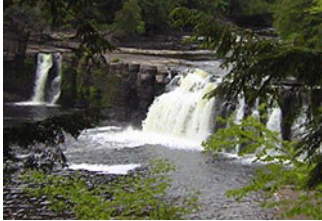
PO Box 164

Wakefield, MI 49968

Fax 906 229-2309

Volume 19 Issue 1

July 2019



Manabezho Falls on the Presque Isle River

Supervisor:

John Cox
906 224-3721
PO Box 164

jcox@wakefieldtownship.com

Clerk:

Mandy Lake
906 364-0669
PO Box 164
mlake@wakefieldtownship.com

Treasurer:

Joan Dalman
906 224-8201
906 364-1742
PO Box 191
jdalman@wakefieldtownship.com

Trustees:

Jerry Niemi
906 229-5553
jniemi@wakefieldtownship.com

Jim Spencer
906 224-6649
jspencer@wakefieldtownship.com

Custodian:

Robert Drier
906 224-2751

Wakefield Township Board Meetings: Dates and Times

Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, July 10, 2018*

December 4, 2018

Wednesday, August 8, 2018*

September 4, 2018

October 2, 2018

Wednesday, November 7, 2018*

Wednesday, January 2, 2019*

February 5, 2019

March 5, 2019

*Date changes due to elections & holidays



Millage Renewal, Primary, and National Election

The Board has decided that the millage renewal election will be held on the same day as the local primary election, Tuesday, Aug. 7, 2018. This is a very important election and the 3 mill renewal is not an increase in millage rate, and in fact has been in effect for a very long time. These funds are used for street lights, fire protection, cemetery, library, roads, and to subsidize the garbage collection contracts as well as funding our spring cleanup, planning and zoning, economic development, and improving and maintaining our township hall. Any questions regarding this should be directed to any Board Member. The exact ballot language is:

Renewal Question for Extra-Voted Millage

Shall the expired previous voted increase in the tax limitation imposed under Article IX, Sec. 6 of the Michigan Constitution on general ad valorem taxes within the Township of Wakefield be renewed at 3 mills (\$3 per \$1,000 of taxable value), and levied for four years, 2019 through 2022 inclusive, for general Township operating purposes, thereby raising an estimated \$73,699 in the first year the millage is levied.

Yes

No

Along with the millage question, there will be other local, state and national primary elections including

The State General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 6, 2018. The State Election Registration Deadlines are:

July 9, 2018-Last day to register for August primary

Oct. 9, 2018 -Last day to register for November general election

Absentee applications to vote are available on our website or by calling Mandy Lake, Clerk, at 906-364-0669.

The Board would like to acknowledge the election board members who serve us so well in keeping our elections honest, fair, and error free. They are chairperson Mary Kosk, Margie LeBarr, Carole Lillar, Deputy Clerk Mable Wanink.

Burn Barrels, Burn Permits, and Spring Cleanup

Our Spring Cleanup was very successful again this year. Together we disposed of 17.56 tons of garbage and junk and a large quantity of batteries and scrap steel. Thanks to all of you who participated and who continually work to keep our township looking good. One of residents picked up trash on 4 miles of our roadway this year. There are more of you out there that do similar acts. A special thanks to Western U.P. Recycling Center and the township volunteers who worked on this important service.

The state law allows you to use burn barrels for items like paper, brush and wood, but you may not burn household waste that contains plastic, rubber, foam, chemically treated wood, textiles, electronics, chemicals, or hazardous materials. Please use common sense when you burn, and if you have a neighbor close by, please cooperate with them by selecting a time to burn. The township has not adopted an ordinance banning burn barrels, has no plans to do so, but be aware that the Michigan DNR can enforce the law concerning burning the banned substances. There are no formal written permits required for open burning, but you should check out the MDNR website to see if burning restrictions are in force-www.dnr.state.mi.us/burnpermits/, or 906-353-6651

Blighted Properties and Building permits

Wakefield Township blight enforcement is done by the Supervisor. Donald Saari and the Supervisor share Zoning Administrator duties. Donald is also our long time building inspector. We also would like to remind those who are building or adding on to their existing homes to call the Clerk 364-0669 or visit our website for a permit application and to contact

Donald Saari. Our permits are the most reasonably priced in the state and we are asking for your compliance in this matter as well. Failure to obtain a permit may result in enforcement of our zoning ordinance which authorizes up to a \$100 per day fine for not obtaining one.

Website

We encourage everyone to view our website. It is constantly updated with information important to living in our township. You can find applications for building permits, absentee voter forms, phone numbers, zoning ordinances, economic development information, links to businesses in Wakefield Township, recreational sites, a calendar of events, meeting minutes, some nice pictures of our area and township demographics. Our web designer and updater is Tom Ruppe who is doing a fantastic job. Our website address is www.wakefieldtownship.com

GOALS

Finances and Goals

The township sets the budget priorities based on our goals. Here is a list of our goals for 2018 and 2019 that was developed in January 2018

- Continue to provide support to all current and future businesses in Wakefield Township
- Concentrate on opening the ATV trail near Old US-2
- Devote township funds and work as partners with the Gogebic County Road Commission to pave portions of North C.R. 519 and Indianhead Mountain roads. Chip seal about 1 mile of Old U.S. 2 and Sampson Rd. to preserve existing blacktop.
- Work with Xcel Energy and Northern Natural Gas in the construction of a gas pumping station on East M-28
- Work with Gogebic Range. Net and Merit Inc. to bring high speed internet to Wakefield Township in early summer 2018
- Continue work on developing a Master Plan for the township with the emphasis on citizen involvement and brevity of the Plan
- Upgrade electronic office equipment
- Replace doors and insulate more areas of the township hall. Replace some furniture.
- Replace road signs entering Wakefield Township

Our fund balance as of 3-31-18 was \$542,179. Our balanced budget for 17-18 was Revenues of \$197,585 and Expenditures of \$192,671. Our Revenues in 2010 were \$247,196, so our revenues have decreased by about \$50,000 since then. The loss of revenues can be attributed to many factors including loss of population, loss of tax revenue in housing and business, state tax mandates including the transfer of ad valorem taxes to commercial forest and qualified forest properties, and various other tax breaks that the township has no control over. The Board has been able to reduce expenditures by removing street lights where there are unoccupied houses and roads; reducing the township hall utility expenditures by using advance technology to reduce utility expenditures; and installing energy efficient windows, doors and insulation. In addition, the Board has held the line on salaries and eliminated benefits for several years for all Board Members.

Assessments and Board of Review Date

The July Board of Review will meet on Tuesday, July 17, 2018 at 5 p.m. in the Wakefield Township Hall. This meeting is for errors and omissions, principal resident exemption and to consider poverty exemptions.

As we stated last year, the State Tax Commission is requiring that local governments reassess at least 20% of the property in their jurisdiction each year. Therefore, this year, Wakefield Township complied again; by completing the assessments on some parts of the east, west and north sides of the township. Our assessor is Melissa Prisbe and if you have any questions about your property assessment please call her at 906-364-2910. If you are planning to build and are wondering approximately how much your tax will be, she can help you with that important information or you can visit our website and link to the State of Michigan Property tax calculator.

Broadband Internet

The township recently signed contracts with Merit Inc. and Gogebic Range.Net to provide internet service to customers within the tower ranges around our township. It has taken longer than expected to negotiate a contract that is fair to the companies and the township. Service should be available soon since the process of setting up the equipment shouldn't take too long. You can call Gogebic Range.Net at 906-842-3394 for more information if you are interested in signing up for this new service.

Roads

This past winter season did a lot of damage to our township roads. During our budget planning in January we had planned on spending about \$50,000 on road repairs. However, after our spring road inspection with the Gogebic County Road Commission, it was determined by our Board that more had to be done. Road repair costs have increased greatly. The township is using some of its fund balance to make repairs. The township share of the projects will be \$69,062. The Road Commission will be contributing \$42,708 for a grand total of \$111,770.

The total costs for each project are listed below

Indianhead -Asphalt Patch \$26,034
N. County Rd 519 -Asphalt Patch \$24,662
Old US-2 – Chip Seal \$25,800
Sampson Rd—Chip Seal \$9,068
Zorich Rd-- \$21,204—Recycled Asphalt
Miscellaneous Patching \$5000



Ambulance Service

As you may know, Beacon Ambulance has served the residents of western Gogebic County for many years. In March of this year due to falling revenues and operating at a loss, they notified the County that they could no longer operate ambulance here. To avoid the possibility of no ambulance service, all of the townships, cities, and the county have been meeting since then. Beacon allowed us to review their financial statements and their independent audits. It is clear that due to a number of factors including declining population, declining reimbursements for Medicare/Medicaid, increased costs for equipment, the lack of insurance coverage by patients, that the operation was losing money. To avoid a crisis, we all agreed to contribute to the operation until January 2019. The amount needed was \$185,000. Gogebic County will contribute \$92,500 or half, and the other half will come from each governmental unit's share that is based on population. Wakefield Township will contribute \$1,760, the lowest contribution. The highest contribution will come from the City of Ironwood at \$33,860. The Gogebic County Board will be looking at a long term solution over the next couple of months.

Editorial Comment

I hope that you find our newsletters helpful in providing you with information about our township. If you would like additional information on topics included, please let me know.

With all of the negative acts we see and read about, let's be thankful that we live here in Wakefield

Township where we all work hard, play hard and don't sweat the small stuff. Enjoy the summer. John Cox-Supervisor

Need More Information?

Our website continually is adding more information for you. Visit it at www.wakefieldtownship.com

Contact Information ---Clip and Save



Assessor - Melissa Prisbe - 906-364-2910

Blight Officer - Call Supervisor John Cox - 906 224-3721

Boiler Inspector - Chuck Poole - 906-235-3547

Building Inspector - Donald Saari - 906-364-1277 (cell) 906-364-1277

Building permits – Clerk, Mandy Lake - 906-364-0669

Burn Permits - www.dnr.state.mi.us/burnpermits/, or 906-353-6651

Electrical Inspector - Brandon Ingersoll - (906) 295-1335

Garbage collection – Gogebic Range Solid Waste Authority at 906-932-0600 or the clerk at 906-364-0669. Monday is collection day.

Indianhead Subdivision Sewer Hookups - Paula Koruga - 906-224-1092

Plumbing Inspector - Craig Cole - 906-235-8417

Power and Street Lighting - Xcel Energy Outage-**800-895-1999**. Street Light Outage

www.xcelenergy.com/ODL/OUTAGEREPORT or call-**800-628-2121**. If you prefer, you can call the supervisor at 906-224-3721.

Road Commission - 906-667-0233

Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control - Jim Finley - 906-663-4512

Wakefield Public Library ([free to township residents](#)) - 906-224-5236

Website and Facebook-www.wakefieldtownship.com

Western U.P. Health Department (Well and Septic Permits) Phone: 906-667-0200

WAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP TAXPAYER:

If you pay your taxes by mail, please enclose payment stub or the real estate index number(s). We are no longer automatically sending a receipt. If you wish to receive a receipt, check the box indicating this on the stub of your tax bill and return it with payment. Payments must be postmarked by September 14, 2017 to avoid penalties.

If you prefer to pay in person, I will be available:

Friday, July 13, 2018 9:00 AM--12:00 PM at the Twp Hall and
1:00 PM—5:00 PM at my home office

Friday, September 14, 2018 9:00 AM—12:00 PM at the Twp Hall and
1:00 PM—5:00 PM at my home office(**last day before penalties are added**)

You may pay your taxes at my home office anytime that I am available. Call first: 224-8201
Joan Dalman, Treasurer