

# Wakefield Township

414 N. County 519

PO Box 164

Wakefield, MI 49968

Fax 906 229-2309

*Volume 18 Issue 2*

*December 2018*



Manabezho Falls on the Presque Isle River

## Wakefield Township Board Meetings: Dates and Times

Meetings are at 5:30PM on the first Tuesday of the month unless otherwise noted.

December 4, 2018

**Wednesday January 2, 2019**

February 5, 2019

March 5, 2019



April 2, 2019

May 7, 2019

June 4, 2019

July 2, 2019

### Supervisor:

John Cox  
906 224-3721  
PO Box 164

[jcox@wakefieldtownship.com](mailto:jcox@wakefieldtownship.com)



### Clerk:

Mandy Lake  
906 364-0669  
PO Box 164  
[mlake@wakefieldtownship.com](mailto:mlake@wakefieldtownship.com)

### Treasurer:

Joan Dalman  
906 224-8201  
906 364-1742  
PO Box 191  
[jdalman@wakefieldtownship.com](mailto:jdalman@wakefieldtownship.com)

### Trustees:

Jerry Niemi  
906 229-5553  
[jniemi@wakefieldtownship.com](mailto:jniemi@wakefieldtownship.com)

Jim Spencer  
906 224-6649  
[jspencer@wakefieldtownship.com](mailto:jspencer@wakefieldtownship.com)

### Custodian:

Robert Drier  
906 224-2751

## Pipelines

Our fall issue traditionally has focused on businesses and industries like logging, manufacturing, tourism mining and so forth. Did you know that utilities such as the three pipelines and the electric power transmission lines that cross through our township account for about 52% of our total taxes which support our schools, county government and our township? In real dollars pipeline companies Trans Canada (natural gas lines), Enbridge (liquid petroleum products), and Northern Natural (natural gas lines) pay \$316,525 annually in taxes to Gogebic County, the W-M School District and Wakefield Township.

Many of you have asked about the construction site on M-28 near Jackson Creek. On or about November 1, Northern Natural Gas completed work on its Marquette Branch Line Expansion project. The project was authorized April 17, 2018, pursuant to the regulations of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. As part of the project, Northern is constructing and will operate a compressor station, consisting of two ISO-rated 1,590-HP natural gas-fired turbine compressor units at the M-28 site. The line will be increasing its pressure to 945 psi. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$21.2 million. In addition to the compressor, you may have noticed other upgrades such as new replacement pipe, fences, and additional small buildings around our township. Additional construction projects and upgrades are also under construction in Baraga and Marquette. The purpose of these projects is to meet customer demand.

Pipelines are the safest transportation method to transport natural gas, propane, crude oil or oil products. Our Township Board attends training sessions annually sponsored by the pipeline companies to make us aware of safety practices the pipeline companies are using. Residents who own property where pipelines cross, should be receiving safety information from the companies as well. If you pass by a pipeline and something is concerning to you, call 911 and they will contact the pipeline company.

Another energy transporter through our township is Xcel Energy (Northern States Power). They have upgraded and extended the power lines through our township to make power available to the new Northern Natural Compressor Station. They also are consistently one of the top five taxpayers paying \$57, 459 in taxes to Gogebic County, the W-M School District and Wakefield Township.

### **George Dalbeck Logging**

George Dalbeck logging continues to expand its presence in Wakefield Township. His employment currently is over 20 workers. In addition, he has purchased and cleaned up the blighted properties in the area around his business. The township is impressed by his continuing commitment to the community.

### **Big Snow Resorts**

The casino approval, as well as many others across the country, has been halted for an undetermined time at the federal government level. It is not what we hoped for, but we are fortunate that we have the Big Snow Resort ski hills in our communities. The inconsistent weather that we have been experiencing the past few winters has not been good for any ski hill businesses, but Big Snow Resorts have seen an uptick in ticket sales. Let's hope that this trend continues with more sales with seasonable temperatures and adequate snowfall.

### **Highland Copper Company Inc**

Highland Copper Company Inc. is a Canadian exploration company focused on exploring and developing copper projects in the Upper Peninsula. Our Township Board has attended two MDEQ permit hearings in the last 6 months and testified in full support of this project. The water permit was approved, leaving just the air permit which is currently under review. With offices in Wakefield, the project continues to move forward and we hope that soon this mine will become a reality.

### **Extreme Tool and Engineering**

Wakefield Township has learned that Extreme Tool has been sold. Extreme Tool has been in business for 20 years, starting in Ironwood, but moving to Wakefield Township for most of those years. Business expansion has occurred throughout the years with a start of 10-15 jobs and growing to 85 people employed with a payroll of over \$5 million. Over this period of time the owner, Mike Zacharias, has been very generous to worthy community projects across the area. Our township appreciates his commitment to sustaining and growing his business here. We look forward to supporting the goals of the new company, Westfall Technik, just as we have worked well with Extreme Tool over the past 20 years. Parts of the press release follow.

“Extreme Tool & Engineering, Inc. has been acquired by Westfall Technik, Inc. a global holding company

that provides highly productive plastics manufacturing solutions to the medical, packaging and consumer goods industries. Westfall is particularly excited to partner with Mike Zacharias, President of Extreme, and his team to continue their tradition of excellence that Extreme's customers have come to expect.

Extreme has developed an impressive reputation for delivering clients solutions to complex challenges in engineering, mold manufacturing, injection molding and automation. Extreme's core competency in delivering ultra-high tolerance molds for complex medical device and packaging / dispensing applications adds another important dimension to Westfall's current capabilities. “Extreme, in combination with our prototyping businesses and molding operations, allows us to offer our customers the ability to design, engineer, and manufacture their most complex medical devices.” said Jim Berklas, Head of M&A for Westfall. “We continue to be on the lookout for injection molding businesses with strategically important characteristics such as Extreme,” added Berklas.

### **Western U.P Recycling / Verso Paper**

This diverse operation in our township has been very successful since its opening. With the price of recycled metals and timber fluctuating the business remains viable and employs a number of workers. Again this past spring our residents were able to come to this facility and bring their metal and refuse. It was a very successful effort for our community and we are grateful to have them here.

### **Northland Basement Waterproofing**

Located at 111 Commercial Lane, just off Highway US-2, Northland Basement Waterproofing offers the following services: Basement Waterproofing, Crawlspace Repair, Foundation Repair, Commercial Foundations, Concrete Lifting and Leveling, Sump Pumps, Radon Gas Mitigation, and Insulating Services.

### **Burn Barrels, Burn Permits, and Spring Cleanup Dates**

Spring Cleanup-Friday, May 17, 2019- 9 am.-4 pm. and Saturday, May 18, 2019 from 9 am.-12:00

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/](http://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](http://www.wakefieldtownship.com)

### **Finances**

Our audit this year had no findings to report and no budget violations. Our audited fund balance as of 3-31-18 was \$564,686. This was about \$20,000 more than we anticipated and the funds were budgeted for roads. The auditor reported that the Board has done a good job of budgeting and monitoring the budget to actual during the year. 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 the past several years for all Board Members.

### **Assessments and Board of Review Date**

The December Board of Review will meet on Tuesday, December 11, 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.

The March Board of Review which will hear tax appeals will be on the following dates:

**Tuesday, March 5, 2019-4:30 pm. Bd of Review (Organizational—not for public tax appeals)**

### **Tax Appeals Dates**

**Monday, March 11, 2019- 9 a.m.-3:00 p.m**

**Tuesday, March 12, 2019-3:00 p.m- 9:00 p.m**

The State Tax Commission is requiring that local governments reassess at least 20% of the property in their jurisdiction each year. Therefore, all parts of the township are subject to reassessment which includes pictures of your buildings. 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.



### **Roads**

Road repair costs have increased greatly. This year the township spent about \$69,000 and the road commission spent about \$43,000 for a total of \$112,000 on township roads.

In addition the Gogebic County Road Commission authorized our township to receive \$25,000 for graveling that was mainly used on Old M-28. The Road Commission has authorized \$31,000 to be spent on gravel for the 2019 summer season and after the winter, we will determine where the greatest needs are.

### **Broadband Internet**

We are now able to provide Broadband Internet service for those who currently have service through Gogebic Range.Net. The township has an agreement with Merit Inc. and Gogebic Range.Net to provide internet service to customers within the tower ranges around our township. Service is now available in most areas where you have a line of sight to the towers. You can call Gogebic Range.Net at 906-842-3394 for more information if you are interested in signing up for this new service.

### XCEL Energy Power Poles

With the holiday season approaching you are reminded by XCEL Energy that ornamental attachments such as holiday lighting, banners, flags and planters cannot be placed on their power poles, due to safety concerns.

### Need More Information?

Our website is continually adding more information for you. Visit it at [www.wakefieldtownship.com](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://www.wakefieldtownship.com)) - 906-224-5236

**Website and Facebook**-[www.wakefieldtownship.com](http://www.wakefieldtownship.com)

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

**Zoning Administrator** - Donald Saari - 906-364-1277 or call John Cox 906-224-3721



### 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 February 14, 2019 to avoid penalties.

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

**Friday December 28, 2018** 9:00 AM--12:00 PM at the Twp Hall and  
1:00 PM--5:00 PM at my home office

**Thursday, February 14, 2019** 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)**\*\*\*

**Thursday, February 28, 2019** 9:00 AM--12:00 PM at the Twp Hall and  
1:00 PM--5:00 PM at my home office **(last day before taxes are turned over to county)**



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

Joan Dalman, Treasurer