Running with John...

How are things going in the Spring Lake Township office in these coronavirus times?
1. Because of sound long range financial planning and conservative spending habits, SLT is in pretty good shape financially. We have yet to hear how much State funding will be cut out of our budget.
2. Thankfully, all of our staff is healthy and working from home and/or part of the time in the office and following social distancing and cleaning protocols.
3. Our Department of Public Works staff, our Fire Fighters and our Ottawa County Deputies are fortunately all healthy and on the job.
4. As to our opening up procedure – well, we have one, but of course, like everyone else we have to follow the Governor’s orders
5. Please follow our Facebook postings, our E-News (free to anyone who wants to sign up – very informative for SLT happenings) and the information we send to the media.
6. Please also know – our office doors are closed, but we are still very much here to serve our residents – call us at 842-1340 and a human will answer and direct your concern.

**HOW ABOUT SOME GOOD NEWS?**

SPRING LAKE TOWNSHIP HAS ACHIEVED THE HIGHEST STATEWIDE STANDARDS
THE MOST OFTEN OF ANY TOWNSHIP IN MICHIGAN

There are over 1240 townships in the Michigan Townships Association (MTA). There are only three of those townships that have been able to meet the very high standards required to achieve the Township of Excellence Award. Spring Lake Township was the first to achieve part of the award standards. Spring Lake Township was the first to earn the total award, and the first to earn the total award for a second time (the award is given on a four-year basis, and then after that four-year period the township has to re-apply).

The MTA states this award is “designated to recognize those townships that go above and beyond in their service to their residents, and that are governed by a township board that embraces best practices and acts strategically to deliver quality programs and services to accomplish community-driven goals”. The areas in which a township has to meet the stringently high standards are the following: Governance, Financial Stewardship, Assessment Administration, Tax Collection, Election Administration, Emergency Services – police and fire, Land Use Management and Economic Development, Transportation, Utilities and Cemeteries.

Besides achieving this award Spring Lake Township has the lowest combined water/sewer rates in our area, very low property tax rates, a strong fund balance, a very good bike path system, good roads, beautiful Rycenga Park and we are one of the collaboration leaders in our area.

News from the Clerk

**Election News**
For the August and November elections, an absentee ballot application will be sent to all registered voters. The COVID 19 virus is, and potentially will be, a threat to us still. I am doing this to give an option to those who would prefer not to be in a place where many people will also potentially be. However, if your preference is to vote in person, all precincts will be open. We will do whatever we can to try to keep the polling place sanitized for our workers and voters. While face masks are not required, they are encouraged. The opportunity to vote is a privilege as well as a right. We want to make sure everyone can vote in a manner that they feel most comfortable doing so. If you have any questions about the absentee voting process, please call me at 616-844-2101. I would be very happy to spend a few minutes to explain our process.

Reminder: Voters in Precincts 3 and 4 vote at St. Mary's Activity Center, 406 E. Savidge St.

**Cemetery News**
We had intended to plant trees in the cemetery this spring. However, due to restrictions on our ability to work because of the pandemic, we were not able to complete this task. We intend to plant trees either this fall or in the spring, depending on workforce availability and advice from the arborist.
**Planning Update**

**Community Development**

Spring Lake Township consists of a variety of land-use types with residential and industrial being the most predominate. Industrial uses provide local employment opportunities and help to diversify the tax base. New residential developments in the Township continue to be built out on both sides of Spring Lake. Spring Lake Township’s commercial uses are limited mostly to the M104 Corridor where a new Corridor Improvement Authority has been established to improve both the function and appearance of the corridor. As per the Master Plan, the Township identifies the Village of Spring Lake to be the commercial center of our community. Spring Lake Township will be reviewing the Master Plan in 2020 to ensure that the document meets all state law requirements and that our implementation strategies are still relevant.

**North Bank Trail**: Phase 2 of the North Bank Trail has been completed into Nunica, which adds another three miles to this regional pathway system. This new section offers great views of the Black Creek area, serene ponds, and a board walk over a small stream. As part of this new section, a new trailhead parking area has been developed along with new sidewalks in Nunica (which also offers easy access to Turk’s and the Crockery Creek Saloon). The Spoonville Trail will also be completed this summer, which will connect the North Bank Trail to the Explorer’s Trail on the south side of the Grand River.

**Little Black Lake**: Spring Lake Township partnered with the City of Norton Shores a few years ago to acquire approximately 40 acres of land adjacent to Little Black Lake. Since then, the area has been improved with a kayak launch, parking lot, and sitting areas. Whether you have a kayak or not, this new park area is worth a visit. Little Black Lake is also very shallow which allows one to wade out into the lake for great fishing. Please visit the Township website for directions.

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Visit www.springlaketwp.org to sign up for the Township e-mail newsletter! Join over 1000 of your neighbors and receive updates 2 times per month.

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**Go Paperless!**

Spring Lake Township has created a paperless option for its water/sewer billing. Our billing sign-up is easy — go to the Water/Sewer Department web page to submit the online form.

We also have options for paying your water/sewer bill.

You can write us a check and mail it or drop it off.

We offer online bill pay. Visit the Water/Sewer Department web page to pay. A convenience fee applies.

You can sign up for automatic payments from your checking account. These payments are withdrawn automatically on the date indicated on your water/sewer bill. There is no fee to use automatic payments. Visit the Water/Sewer Department web page to get the sign-up form.

Water/Sewer Department web page address: http://www.springlaketwp.org/departments/water-sewer-department/
2020 has been a remarkable year. All of us at Spring Lake Township have been doing our best to provide excellent customer service to our residents while still following recommended COVID-19 protocols.

I am very pleased to note that the Township and Village departments all continued operating through the Stay Home, Stay Safe Executive Order. We did get creative in many ways. The thing that stood out most to me is how much we can get done electronically. I would like to encourage all residents to continue to use the electronic communication that we have in place. Along with a very brief job description, here is a list of names, departments and email addresses for contacting the Township:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email address</th>
<th>Direct phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Township Supervisor</td>
<td>John Nash</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jnash@SLTwp.org">jnash@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-844-2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township Manager</td>
<td>Gordon Gallagher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ggallagher@SLTwp.org">ggallagher@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-844-2103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township Clerk</td>
<td>Carolyn Boersma</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cboersma@SLTwp.org">cboersma@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-844-2101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township Treasurer</td>
<td>Jim Koster</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jkoster@SLTwp.org">jkoster@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-844-0493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township Fire Chief</td>
<td>Brian Sipe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bsipe@SLTwp.org">bsipe@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-215-1590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Director</td>
<td>Lukas Hill</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lhill@SLTwp.org">lhill@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-842-1340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works Director</td>
<td>Wally Delamater</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wdelamater@SLTwp.org">wdelamater@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-846-2422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township Assessor</td>
<td>Heather Singleton</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hsingleton@SLTwp.org">hsingleton@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-844-2108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Director</td>
<td>Amy Bessinger</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abessinger@SLTwp.org">abessinger@SLTwp.org</a></td>
<td>616-844-2113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some resources that are available to residents:

Call 2-1-1: This number allows people to connect with important health, human, and community services. There are Call Specialists available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Use this number for help with food, housing and clothing assistance, utility assistance, support groups, healthcare services, teen pregnancy, senior issues, transportation, prescription assistance and seasonal programs.

Ottawa County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Response: The County has a website with a large collection of COVID-19 resources available at miottawa.org/Health/OCHD/coronavirus.htm. This website also has a COVID-19 All Cases Summary, tracking cases of infection in Ottawa County.

Thank you for your patience as we’ve navigated these unusual times. The Township is moving forward with our “Return to Excellence” plan, phasing in Township Hall services and in-person meetings. If you have any questions, please contact me directly at 616-844-2103 or ggallagher@SLTwp.org.

Remember to clean up after your dog. Township ordinance requires that you clean up feces made by your dog. Let’s keep the bike paths and streets clean for everyone’s use. Thank you for your cooperation!
**Fire Department News**

**Paid-on-call Firefighters**
The Spring Lake Fire Department is actively seeking applications for the position of paid-on-call firefighter. Paid-on-call (volunteer) firefighters respond to fire and medical related incidents and participate in community fire prevention and education. Qualified applicants must meet the following:
1. Minimum of 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent
2. Valid Michigan Driver’s license with a good driving record
3. Live within, or close to the boundaries of, Spring Lake Township or Village of Spring Lake
4. Be willing to respond to fire or medical related incidents any time of day or night
5. Have a servant attitude that leads you to want to serve our community

Our department runs over 1,200 calls a year and is licensed as a Basic EMT agency. If you would like to be part of team, applications can be found at [www.springlaketwp.org/forms](http://www.springlaketwp.org/forms) or if you have any questions feel free to contact us at: slfdoffice@springlaketwp.org.

**Assessing News**

**IMPORTANT!!** You can NOT have two PRE’s unless you qualify AND fill out the correct paperwork. The additional form is called a Conditional Rescind Form and is available for those who have purchased a new residence to live in and are still trying to sell their previous residence. Contact us for a full explanation if this applies to you.

Please contact our office with any address changes, including seasonal address changes, to ensure that you receive your tax bills and assessment change notices.

**Heather Singleton, Assessor**

Visit our website and you may find the answers to your questions among the links or a form that you may need.

Our direct department number is (616) 844-2108. Our e-mail addresses are: dnorth@springlaketwp.org and hsingleton@springlaketwp.org.


**According to the Township Code, all premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth (including grass) in excess of 6 inches. Please keep the grass in the front, side and back yards cut to avoid a notice of violation.**

**CALENDAR**

**Meetings at Barber School, 102 W. Exchange**

- **Spring Lake Township Board of Trustees**
  Second Monday at 7pm

- **Spring Lake Township Planning Commission**
  Third Wednesday at 7pm

- **Spring Lake Township Zoning Board of Appeals**
  Fourth Thursday at 7pm

**Holiday Office Closings**

- July 3, 2020
- September 7, 2020
- November 26, 2020
- November 27, 2020