Introduction

Greetings fellow Spring Lake Township Residents,

Thank you to the many that have reached out with congratulatory and supportive messages. It is very humbling to lead our outstanding Township, and I appreciate it more than you know. Many of you have grown to know me as a teacher and coach at Spring Lake Public Schools for 30+ years, while many of you may just be beginning to get to know me. Either way, I am here to serve and do my best to represent! With that said, a new chapter begins along with some things I would like to share as a priority:

**Stronger Communication and Listening:**

With the growing age of social media and the desire to be in the know, we have hired a new communications specialist that we will be sharing with the Village of Spring Lake. His name is Parker Cote, and he has already started in this new role. Our hope is to share many of the great things that are going on in Spring Lake. Increasing meeting minutes, quicker access and better sharing of information on our website are just a few of our communication goals. Our hope is to utilize several social media outlets…stay tuned!

**Transparency:**

Truly a word I dislike! Our Township has always, and will always, continue to be transparent. The word sits upon a pedestal. Some view us as too little, others too much. We will find the happy medium while I am here. Our office and books are always open. I challenge you to attend meetings and functions to truly be in the know! As a matter of fact, nearly everything you would want to know is all on our website.

**Trash Service:**

Our Spring Lake Township Manager, Gordon Gallagher, and I will be creating a waste hauler committee to review and recommend our next steps after our current 3-year contract ends. Several concerns and questions were brought up by you, our residents, that need attention, I agree! Please let myself or Gordon know if you are interested in being a part of this committee…We will get this sorted through!

**Manage Growth:**

Our County and specifically township is a hot area of growth in the State. Our Planning Commission and Township Board are continually monitoring and making best-practiced decisions. Our Planning Commission members are some of the best a Commission could possibly assemble!

In short, thank you for allowing me and the Board to serve you. We are committed to continuing our Township of Excellence!

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News from the Clerk

**2024 Elections**

After a quieter election year in 2023, 2024 will be a busy year. There will be many changes coming to the elections process based on 2022’s Proposal 2.

The biggest change will be the implementation of nine days of early voting. The Presidential Primary Election will be the first election where we will have early voting. The State is still finalizing the rules, and we expect more specific information later this year.

Other changes will be related to the forms we use. We will be using the purple return envelopes for all elections going forward. Return postage will be included for both absentee ballot applications and for absentee ballots.

**H. Carolyn Boersma, MMC, MiPMC, Township Clerk**

The absentee ballot application will have a new box to check if you want to receive an absentee ballot for all future elections. This is a change from our current permanent absentee list, which only allowed us to send applications to voters on the list. We will send ballots for all elections to voters on the new list. It will be important for you to keep your summer and winter addresses updated, so the ballot is sent to the correct location.

Even though there will be changes in the election process, our precincts will be open for in-person voting on each election day. As the State finalizes the updated election rules, we will keep you informed.

Visit www.springlaketwp.org to sign up for the Township e-mail newsletter!
Planning Update

Lukas Hill, AICP, Community Development Director

Spring Lake Township and the City of Norton Shores collaborated with local community foundations and Grand Valley State University AWRI to complete a water quality re-study initiative of Little Black Lake. Each municipality received a $3,785 grant from Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (SLT) and the Muskegon Area Community Foundation (NS) to support funding for this effort.

The award to Spring Lake Township comes from the North Bank Communities Fund and the James Hanna and Mary H. Murphy Land Fund. The funds will be used to update a previous 2008 GVSU study of the lake to determine if water quality has changed over the past 15 years. The information will serve as a basis for identifying management best practices to preserve the lake and, perhaps, establishment of a formal watershed plan.

Thank you to the Community Foundations for recognizing the value of preserving Little Black Lake. This inland lake hosts both Black Lake Park as well as PJ Hoffmaster State Park. Residents and visitors enjoy it while kayaking, fishing or just observing its natural beauty.

Finance Report

Jim Koster, Treasurer and Amy Bessinger, Finance Director

Did you know that you can find your property tax and Township utility bill information online, available 24/7?

By following the link on our website to BS&A Online services, you can create an account to look up your property information, including viewing the current and prior years information on:

- Property Taxes – property values, taxes billed and paid, and additional Assessing information
- Utility Billing – the current water/sewer bill, history including meter readings, usage, amounts billed, and payment history

If you are looking up your own property, choose Option 1 noting that you are the current owner of the property to see the information at no charge.

As of October 2022 we have upgraded our payment platform to make it easier to pay your taxes and/or utility bills. By clicking the “Make Payment” button from the BS&A site, the amount due will automatically be added to your shopping cart as you are directed to our new payment platform. With this new upgrade, you can add additional payments for multiple bills/properties to your cart to check out one time instead of several times. You can also create an account for the payment platform by clicking “register account” to store your payment information for quicker checkout and to set up recurring payments from your credit or debit card. When you create your account, you can include your email and cell phone number for communication regarding payments, including past due notices. We may also use that contact information to send out important messages about your services.

To set up your account and view your property information, choose the Payments option at the top of our website www.springlaketwp.org. For questions or for help with navigating the site, you can call our office at (616) 842-0598. You can also email Emilie, esmith@springlaketwp.org, or Amy, abessinger@springlaketwp.org.
**ENews** – On a regular basis the Township sends out an email newsletter. It provides updates and current event information. If you want to receive an electronic newsletter from the Township, please send us an email and we will sign you up. A sign up form is also available on our website.

**Community Survey** – This summer Spring Lake Township is going to send out a resident survey. The survey will cover many important topics. A high level of participation will help to achieve meaningful results. Watch your mailbox and the SLT ENews for more information.

**Citizens Academy** - This fall Spring Lake Township is going to host a “Citizens Academy”. This new program will be a fast paced and informational series on your local government operations. There will be eight (8) modules that will include tours of our water filtration plant and fire department as well as up close views of assessing, planning, finance and public works. If you might be interested in participating please let me know. Participation in this first series will be limited to 20 people.

There are many important topics of local and regional concern. As a reminder; it is vitally important to debate issues strongly. This can be done in a respectful way. Please remember that some of your neighbors may have views that differ from yours.

So, let’s be the type of community that “ Goes hard on the issues, and easy on the people”

**Are you interested in being appointed to a Board or Commission?**

Spring Lake Township is in the enviable position of having so many talented individuals that are willing to serve in various capacities. Each year the Township Board makes appointments to several of our Citizen Committees. Many of the individuals that are currently serving have expressed interest in continuing to work for the community; however there may be opportunities to get involved.

If you are interested in serving on one of our Boards or Commissions or if you know of someone that is interested, please contact Township Supervisor, Jerry Rabideau (JRabideau@springlaketwp.org) or Township Clerk, Carolyn Boersma (CBoersma@springlaketwp.org).

**Bike Path Issues**

Please be courteous to your friends and neighbors! Remember to give people that are walking the right of way. If you are on a bike let someone know if you are coming up behind them. A simple “I’m Passing on your left” statement is courteous.

Also, remember to pick up after your dog. We have been receiving a higher number of complaints about people taking their dogs for a walk along the bike path and leaving the dog droppings for the next person to step in.

It is the preference of the Township to educate first and regulate second. (Remind people what the right thing to do is and if this is not successful, issue citations). My email is GGallagher@sltwp.org. Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

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**Assessing News**

After you purchase your property, the Assessing office needs your Property Transfer Affidavit, Principal Residence Exemption, and/or your Conditional Rescind Forms.

There are specific deadlines for these forms and all are found on our website. Contact us for a full explanation if you need further details. Visit our department website and find information 24/7.

Our direct department number is (616) 844-2108. Our e-mail addresses are as follows:

dnorth@springlaketwp.org
and hsingleton@springlaketwp.org.


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**Sheriff’s Office Update**

**Home Security Checks**

Our community policing officer provides free vacation security checks to Township residents who will be away from their homes, businesses, or other facilities for a period of time. Deputies will periodically check the exterior of the property. This service is offered to deter potential burglars and provides additional security while your property is unoccupied.

Any resident who will be out of the area may use the program, whether you are leaving for a short time or if you will be gone for several months. To request a property check, please submit the Property Check Form at least two weeks prior to your departure. The form can be found on the Township website, under the Law Enforcement tab.
Firefighter Updates

Full Time Firefighters
As Spring Lake Township continues to grow, so does the need for emergency services. In 2022, the Spring Lake Fire Department responded to a total of 1367 incidents. This was the highest annual number of calls to date and exceeded 2021 by over 100 calls. During this increase, our personnel have been committed to providing excellent service. But, as the calls to 911 continue to increase, so does the need to acknowledge the strain on our paid on-call personnel and we need to look at alternatives to our current staffing model.

In early spring of 2023, Spring Lake began the process to hire three (3) additional Full Time Firefighters. Selections have been completed and our new firefighters began working on Sunday June 11th. With this addition, Spring Lake is now providing twenty-four-hour staffing at both Station 1 on Fruitport Rd and Station 2 on 174th Ave (just north of Hickory).

When dispatched, fire personnel respond from both stations and are supported by our paid on-call Firefighters. The paid on-call staff respond from wherever they may be and go directly to the emergency or to a fire station to retrieve additional equipment.

These enhancements will allow the members of the Spring Lake Fire Department to maintain the exceptional level of service to Spring Lake Township and the Village of Spring Lake.

If you call, we will be there!

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:

* Minimum of 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent
* Valid Michigan driver’s license with a good driving record
* Live within, or close to the boundaries of, Spring Lake Township or Village of Spring Lake
* Be willing to respond to fire and medical related incidents any time of day or night
* Have a servant attitude that leads you to want to serve our community

Our department runs over 1,300 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 Fire Department | Spring Lake Township, Michigan (springlaketwp.org)
or if you have any questions feel free to contact us at: slfdoffice@springlaketwp.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!

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Spring Lake Township Board of Trustees
Jerry Rabideau Supervisor
H. Carolyn Boersma Clerk
Jim Koster Treasurer
Ellen delaRosa-Pearn Trustee
Cathy Pavick Trustee
Ernie Petrus Trustee
Ande Scherf Trustee

101 S. Buchanan St.
Spring Lake, MI 49456
Phone: 616-842-1340
www.springlaketwp.org
Office Hours: 8am to 5pm
Monday-Friday

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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 4, 2022
September 4, 2023
November 23, 2023
November 24, 2023