

# MILTON TOWNSHIP-ANTRIM COUNTY

7023 Cherry Avenue, P.O. Box 309

Kewadin, Michigan 49648

[www.miltontownship.org](http://www.miltontownship.org)

231-264-6612

## **NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2021**

Lon Bargy, Supervisor	231-645-0841	Suplbargy@hotmail.com
Sandy Ball, Clerk	231-264-6612	SballClerk@gmail.com
Liz Atkinson, Treasurer	231-264-6693	Miltontownshiptreasurer@gmail.com
Tom Cole, Trustee	231-264-5565	Tbcole@charter.net
Brett Pharo, Trustee	231-264-6612	Brettpharo@gmail.com
Chris Weinzapfel, Zoning	231-264-6697	Miltonzoning@gmail.com
Amy Jenema, Assessor	231-632-3529	Assessoramy@gmail.com
Jeremy Ball, Fire Chief	231-499-1720	Miltontwpfd@gmail.com

### **MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS**

Township Board; 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month

Planning Commission; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month

Zoning Board of Appeals; 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday as scheduled.

### **SERVING YOUR COMMUNITY**

A very important part of the local government process is provided by residents who serve on the various commissions, committees and boards. They make decisions about how our community develops, consider variances to local ordinances, make determinations about local property values and advise the Township Board in planning and creating parks & recreation facilities. Everyone benefits from the service of these dedicated residents. If you have an interest in serving, please submit your letter of interest along with a resume. Currently, we have all positions filled, but as openings become available we prefer to have applications on file and ready as the need arises. The various commissions, committees and boards are; Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Review, Park & Recreation Committee and Elk Rapids District Library Board.

### **ELK RAPIDS DISTRICT LIBRARY**

The Elk Rapids District Library (ERDL) is recognized by the Library of Michigan as a legally established District Library. The participating municipalities include Milton Township, Elk Rapids Township and the Village of Elk Rapids. The ERDL board consists of an 8 member board with appointed representatives serving 4 year terms from each municipality; Milton Township has 3 appointees, Elk Rapids Township; 2, and the Village of Elk Rapids; 3. Each appointee is tasked with representing their respective communities as board trustees. This governing board of the library is the legal face of the library, and has a fiduciary duty to act in the best interests of the library in all matters, but especially in financial matters, and to provide the best library service possible to the citizens of the community. Financial support of the ERDL operating budget comes from your tax dollars through an annual millage on your winter tax bill. In 2020, Milton Township residents contributed \$183,542.27, Elk Rapids Township \$76,857.62 and the Village of Elk Rapids \$68,392.69

It is imperative that our Milton Township appointees represent our interests, perform due diligence in all aspects of library operations and policy in order to be the voice of the public body they represent.

For details visit: <https://www.elkrapidslibrary.org/> (select: About the Library; Board of Trustees) or <https://miltontownship.org/> (select: Announcements; Library Reports)

### **WE WANT & NEED YOUR INPUT**

Milton Township is revising its Recreation Plan that will cover the years 2022 through 2026. Many changes and additions have been made during the last five years and it is important to have township taxpayers provide comments about what has been done.

Your experience & opinions are an important part of this process. Please take five minutes to complete our online survey @ <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VVTTVZ5> or request a hard copy at the township office. The deadline is 7/23/21.

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

Milton Township is extremely proud of the progress and achievements of our board. Through continued partnerships we are able to enhance the health, safety and recreational opportunities for our residents and surrounding communities.

Shared services and cooperative opportunities can help municipalities reduce costs and improve services. Milton Township has diligently sought outside funding and support to accomplish our goals with over \$4,000,000.00 in total projects, resulting in over \$3,700,000.00 in outside funding. We greatly appreciate and thank the following organizations for their support. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Rotary Charities of Traverse City, Elk Rapids Rotary, Community Foundation, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, Elk-Skegog Lakes Association, Health Department of Northwest Michigan, Great Lakes Energy, Friends of Milton Township, Paddle Antrim, Cherry Capital Cycling Club, Elk Rapids Township & Whitewater Township.

## **TOWNSHIP HALL-OPENING DOORS TO EVERYONE**

The township hall is open, but individual offices will remain restricted. Post pandemic decisions led us to direct all visitors to the front door where you will be assisted at the reception area. We welcome visitors and are happy to serve those that require in-person needs/requests. We encourage use of the secure 24/7 drop box located at the side door entrance, U.S. mail, Email or by calling 231-264-6612.

## **SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE CHANGED TO 6 WEEK LIMIT with REQUIRED PERMIT/FEE**

On December 9, 2019 the Milton Township Board approved Ordinance No. 01-2019 Vacation Rental Ordinance. This ordinance became effective on January 1, 2021. The new Ordinance limits the number of weeks permitted to rent to six weeks per calendar year, AND not more than two (2) weeks during a four (4) week period. There is a required permit to rent with a \$200.00 annual permit fee starting with the 2021 rental season. The final adopted Ordinance No. 01-2019 can be found on our website under Announcements and Plans, Ordinances, Reports, Forms/Applications.

## **WE CAN'T HELP YOU IF WE CAN'T FIND YOU!**

Every second counts during a fire, police, or medical emergency. Valuable time can be lost if your house number is not clearly posted where emergency responders can see it. The Milton Township Fire Department is offering to provide you with a reflective address sign for a suggested donation of \$10.00. Please contact the Fire Department for more information @ 231-499-1720.

## **BOATER SAFETY - DO YOU NEED MICHIGAN BOATING EDUCATION?**

The Antrim County Marine Unit focuses efforts on education in an attempt to gain voluntary compliance with marine laws and safety regulations. Enforcement continues to be a component of marine safety, but education and compliance with boating laws have the most impact on creating a safe and enjoyable boating environment. Any motorized boat operator born on or after July 1, 1996, is required by law to obtain a boating safety certificate and to carry a boater education card.

For more information go to: [www.boat-ed.com/michigan/](http://www.boat-ed.com/michigan/)

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Milton Township Fire Department maintains a paid on call staff of 15 dedicated men and women. The staff is made up of eleven certified fire fighters, two support staff, and two probationary fire fighters that serve our community with the utmost professionalism. The Department consists of two fire stations. Station 1 is located on Cairn Highway and houses four apparatus plus an ATV. Station 2 is located on Cherry Ave. and houses three apparatus.

The department has a variety of fire safety and preparedness programs available including 911 Reflective Address Signs, Smoke Alarms and Knox Box Rapid Access System programs. To date we have provided 124 reflective address signs. We have provided 123 smoke alarms. We currently have 15 Knox Boxes in use; 4 commercial and 11 residential. New for 2021; to help offset costs of the reflective address signs a \$10 suggested donation for every sign request.

We received the following grant awards: Elk Rapids Lions Club for traffic vests, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians for a new battery operated spreader for extrication calls, and the DNR for two new portable radios. We have received thirteen grants in the past six years, and thank them for their support!

If you have a desire to serve your community we are always looking for new members. We hold a staff meeting the first Tuesday of each month and training meetings the remaining Tuesdays of each month. Please come check us out.

Open Burning: You may burn leaves, grass, limbs, brush, stumps and evergreen needles. You need to obtain a burn permit from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) visit: [https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79136\\_79237\\_80917---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79136_79237_80917---,00.html)

You can also contact the DNR at 888-922-2876. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact the Milton Township Fire Department via email @ [Miltontwpfd@gmail.com](mailto:Miltontwpfd@gmail.com) or the station phone at 231-264-6694 or Fire Chief Jeremy Ball @ 231-499-1720.

## **MAPLEHURST NATURAL AREA**

Milton Township is proud to maintain a long-term partnership with The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy in securing this spectacular 389-acre property through a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. Visitors have enjoyed the hiking/biking trails and picturesque views of Torch Lake, Elk Lake, and Grand Traverse Bay. Phase 2 of trail construction has been completed that gave hikers/bikers and cross country skiers a total of 6 miles to enjoy, with tentative plans for a 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of trails along the west and south edge of the property. Bike racks have been placed at Maplehurst thanks to a grant award from The Cherry Capital Cycling Club.

## **JOIN PEOPLE FUND**

Milton Township received a \$6000.00 grant from Great Lakes Energy People Fund for the conversion of 2 tennis courts to 8 pickleball courts. By working together, we can help enhance local communities and meet the needs of many. The People Fund harnesses the power of pooling small donations from Great Lakes Energy (GLE) members for sizeable grants to nonprofit community and charitable organizations that serve people in GLE's area. While the average contribution to the People Fund is .50 cents a month or less, thanks to thousands of GLE members rounding up their bills, the total impact has added up to more than \$3.5 million in grants since the People Fund began in 1999. Every act of generosity counts and means even more when we give together. Please consider joining. Call 1-888-GT-LAKES.

## **BEST PRACTICES FOR LAWN MAINTENANCE**

State officials want Michigan residents to care for their lawns in particular ways, including a focus on native plants and shoreline buffer zones. Over fertilization and chemical treatments all wind up in the nearest water source. Mowing to the water's edge usually results in accelerated shoreline erosion that degrades water quality. For Michigan Lawn Maintenance Best Practices visit: [www.Michigan.gov/egle](http://www.Michigan.gov/egle)

## **INTERESTING MILTON FACTS**

- There are 15 Townships and 4 Villages in Antrim County
- Milton Township is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest Township in Antrim County
- Milton Township boasts 43.7 total square miles (25.8 square miles is land and 17.8 square miles is water)

## **CLEAN-UP DAY - SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 2021**

Milton Township provides two clean-up days, typically the last Saturday in April & August. This service is provided exclusively for the taxpayers of Milton Township at the corner of Cairn Hwy. and Cherry Avenue. All smaller, loose items MUST be secured (tied or rolled up for easy drop off). Loads that are left loose and unbundled will have to wait until end of day. We do not accept oil, flammable materials, batteries, any liquid paints or solvents, chemicals, pesticides or yard clippings, brush or branches. Refrigerators will be accepted only if decommissioned with the red tag for a disposal fee of \$30.00 and passenger tires only for \$6.00 each.

## **PICKLEBALL COURTS**

Converting two tennis courts to eight pickleball courts have been completed. Growing popularity of the sport prompted the Milton Township board to approve the conversion at the corner of Cairn Hwy & Cherry Ave. The 4 tennis courts located on Indian Road will remain as dedicated tennis courts. Funding for this project was paid for, in part, by Great Lakes Energy People Fund (as noted elsewhere in this newsletter) and donations from Elk Rapids Township, Whitewater Township and Torch Lake Township. Shared services and cooperative opportunities can help municipalities reduce costs and improve services. Milton Township greatly appreciates the local support of our municipal neighbors!

## **ZONING**

A reminder that any new construction; homes, garages, sheds, accessory buildings and structures; no matter how large or small requires a land use permit and must meet all required setbacks. Applications can be found on the Milton Township website. Fences, roof re-shingling, window and door replacement and interior work do not require a zoning permit, but may require a building permit from Antrim County.

In 2021, the planning commission is in the process of a 5 year review of the master plan and will be seeking public input on the future direction of Milton Township.

The master plan, zoning ordinance, forms, applications, meeting dates can all be found on the township website.

Helpful Numbers: Antrim County Building Department - 231-533-8373

Soil Erosion - 231-533-8363 Ext. 3

Antrim County Health Department - 800-432-4121

**Antrim County Register of Deeds - 231-533-6683**

Antrim County Road Commission - 231-587-8521

## **IMPORTANT PROPERTY TAX PAYMENT DATES**

<b>July 1, 2021</b>	Summer Tax Statements Mailed
<b>September 14, 2021</b>	Summer Taxes Due – last day to pay without interest
<b>December 1, 2021</b>	Winter Tax Statements Mailed
<b>February 14, 2022</b>	Winter Taxes Due – last day to pay without interest/penalty
<b>February 28, 2022</b>	Last Day to Pay Summer & Winter Taxes
<b>March 1, 2022</b>	All unpaid taxes are sent to Antrim County for collection

Payment can be made by placing in the secure side door drop box, by U.S Mail, online or in-person.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT HELPS KEEP OUR LAKES CLEAN**

Stormwater management plays a critical role in the maintenance of healthy streams, lakes, and aquatic life. It's important to reduce the amount of runoff and runoff pollution by slowing it down and allowing it to soak in. When stormwater stays close to where it falls, less soil erosion occurs and fewer pollutants are carried to surface water. Educating yourself on where rainwater and snowmelt flow on your property when it doesn't get absorbed into the ground is a huge first step. Adopting a plan to reduce runoff and to make sure that it is clean when it leaves your property is the next step. Polluted stormwater degrades our lakes, rivers, wetland and other waterways. Nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen can cause the overgrowth of algae resulting in oxygen depletion in waterways. Toxic substances from motor vehicles and careless application of pesticides and fertilizers threaten water quality and can kill fish and other aquatic life. We all need to be good stewards of our natural resources. More information is available through the following sites:

State of Michigan	<a href="http://www.Michigan.gov/document/deq/wrd-stormwater-guidebook">www.Michigan.gov/document/deq/wrd-stormwater-guidebook</a>
Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council	<a href="http://www.watershedcouncil.org">www.watershedcouncil.org</a>
Elk-Skegemog Lakes Association	<a href="http://www.elk-skegemog.org">www.elk-skegemog.org</a>
Torch Lake Protection Alliance	<a href="http://www.torchlakeprotectionalliance.org">www.torchlakeprotectionalliance.org</a>
Michigan Shoreline Stewards	<a href="http://www.mishorelandsstewards.org">www.mishorelandsstewards.org</a>
Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership	<a href="http://www.mishorelinepartnership.org">www.mishorelinepartnership.org</a>
The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay	<a href="http://www.gtbay.org">www.gtbay.org</a>

## **CHAIN OF LAKES WATER TRAIL**

The water trail travels through 14 interconnected lakes and rivers, 81 access sites with routes totaling over 80 miles. In 2017, Milton Township entered into a partnership agreement with Paddle Antrim on the implementation and promotion of the Chain of Lakes Water Trail for the approved water trail access sites owned by Milton Township. Also in 2017, Milton Township unveiled a new universally accessible kayak launch at the Milton Township Waterfront Park. With the construction of the covered pavilion, swimming beach and restrooms completed, these amenities make the waterfront park a premier trailhead for the water trail. More information can be obtained through the Paddle Antrim website: [www.Paddleantrim.com/water-trail/](http://www.Paddleantrim.com/water-trail/)

## **SEPTIC INSPECTION AND PROPERTY TRANSFER ORDINANCE**

Sellers in Milton Township are required to have septic and well systems inspected prior to a sale. The sales can't close without it. Milton Township looks to the Antrim County Health Department to test well water and to inspect on-site sewage systems, at the property seller's expense. Systems that were newly installed within the past 10 years, or that were inspected within the past five years are exempt. Septic tanks must be pumped before a property changes hands, unless the seller can produce record showing that the tank has been pumped by a licensed contractor within the past five years. This ordinance protects home buyers, as well as the township's precious natural resources, which is especially important for a township bordered by four different lakes! This ordinance was adopted in October 2012, making Milton Township the first in the four-county health district to enact a time-of-transfer ordinance for property transactions.

## **RECYCLING CENTER**

Milton Township offers a 24 hour drop-off location, west of the old town hall, for the public to recycle their materials. Please break down cardboard boxes and remove all packing material. Please keep the area clean – NO TRASH. Milton Township placed surveillance cameras near the recycling bins to discourage wrongful dumping. Do not leave large bulky items or items outside of the recycle location containers. If it doesn't fit in the recycling bins, DO NOT LEAVE IT.



## WE CAN'T STRESS THIS ENOUGH



**We encourage everyone to visit the above shoreline greenbelt that was installed at the Milton Township Waterfront Park. A greenbelt is a strip of vegetation planted along the shoreline that serves as a buffer between your lawn and the water's edge. By creating a shoreline greenbelt and encouraging your neighbors to do the same, you can help keep our lakes clean.**



**A quick and easy way to get a shoreline greenbelt started is to create a “no-mow” zone. Native grasses and wildflowers are some of the first plants to appear. You can then enhance your greenbelt with a variety of native shrubs, trees, grasses, plants and flowering perennials.**



## IMAGINE WHAT YOUR PROPERTY VALUES WILL DO IF THE WATER QUALITY OF OUR LAKES DECLINES.....

In Milton Township we essentially live on a peninsula surrounded by the waters of Lake Michigan, Torch Lake, Torch River, Lake Skegemog and the Elk Lake. Living on the shore land of these magnificent bodies of water is an exceptional experience. We enjoy the beauty of the seasons as reflected by our lakes and enjoy fishing, boating and swimming in their pristine waters.

As we enjoy the pleasures of shore land living, we must recognize the responsibility we have in preserving our watershed environment – protecting the quality of our waters and the wildlife that share this land with us. Establishing a natural shoreline protection strip near the water's edge is a great way to beautify your shoreline and serve as a buffer between your lawn and the water's edge. Protection strips with native plants reduce erosion by stabilizing the soil and slowing runoff from the impervious surfaces created by our homes and driveways. They filter nutrients such as phosphorus, sediments and pollutants as well as provide valuable wildlife habitat. Shade created at the waters edge also enhances fish habitat.

A shoreline protection strip that will provide the most water quality benefits should cover 80% of the shoreline frontage and extend landward a minimum of 25 feet. Such shoreline protection strips are required in the Township for all newly developed properties abutting lakes, rivers or streams (Section 117.320 of the Township Zoning Ordinance). Shore land property owners who do not have an established shoreline protection strip are encouraged to develop one, even if not 25 feet deep. Other features of an effective protection strip could include swales, berms and rain gardens. Design features for Lake Michigan and Torch River frontage will be different than for Torch, Elk and Skegemog properties. A permit will be required from the Township before any earth change or removal of any vegetation within 25 feet of the average high water mark. Permits from the County and State may also be required. Additionally, advice on erosion control and the selection of native plant materials may be sought from the Antrim Conservation District (231- 533 – 8363). There are also resource materials at the following websites:

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council - <http://www.watershedcouncil.org/>

Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership – <http://Sties.google.com/site/mishorelinepartnership/>

The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay – <http://www.gtbay.org/>

**BELOW ARE 2 EXAMPLES OF POOR SHORELINE PROTECTION. KEEPING OUR SHORELINES AS NATURAL AS POSSIBLE IS BEST! PLEASE DO YOUR PART.**

