

Supervisor's Report, September 2024

The L-4029, Tax Rate Request, needs to be approved by the board and filed with the county every year. You will see our Allocated millage, our two fire millages, the fire station bond millage, and the Library millage.

Millage requests typically authorize us to levy "up to" the amount of the millage that the voters approved, reduced each year by the Headlee rollback. Townships typically levy the entire allowable amount, although if a township finds that they have excess funds, they do not have to levy the entire amount.

The Fire Station Bond millage is different. Although there was a projected millage rate approved by the voters in 2014, we found that the increase in our taxable value caused us to be collecting too much at .6333 mils and the accumulated funds put us out of compliance with the State Tax Commission. The terms of the bond do not allow us to pay down the principal until 2025. This makes sense, because bonds are supposed to be a stable investment at a known rate and a known return.

I have calculated the millage rate for the Fire Station Bond each year since 2020 when I found out about our lack of compliance. This year .4 mils will cover our payments without letting the balance in the Fire Bond Checking account go too low.

The voters approved the \$3,700,000 bond in November 2014. The balance after the October 1 payment will be \$2,652,000. The payoff date is 4/01/2035. The interest rate is 3%. Next year the board could consider whether to adjust the millage rate in order to pay the bond off sooner.

DTE Tree Grant: This grant was applied for a year ago, but was lost in a computer crash at the Releaf Michigan office until last month. The requirements for receiving this grant (in your board books) are challenging. Parks and Rec met on Tuesday night and felt "doubts about our ability to comply with the requirement to provide 15 gallons of water a week for each tree. The consensus was that we do not need more assets without a plan for their care."

I had a Zoom meeting on Thursday with Kama Ross, representatives from Releaf, and representatives from DTE. I will meet at Suelzer Park with Kama on Saturday to see if we can figure out a way forward. It is possible to delay planting until the spring, but survivability for transplanted trees is much better in the fall than in the spring. I might have answers to some of the challenges by Monday's meeting.

Harbor restroom repair There were no responses to the RFP for repairs to the exterior of the harbor restroom. The next step could be to reach out to the contractor who was originally recommended by Harbormaster Anderson.

Lawsuits If you have been reading my emails, then you know that both the appeal and the civil suit on the 211 Main Street project have been resolved. I am still waiting for the transcript. The threatened Mountain Harbor suit was also resolved out of court.

ISO We received word in late August that the review of our Fire Department has resulted in an ISO score of 6. This is not an improvement from the 2014 score. Chief Besson and I are still researching why we did not get credited for obvious improvements in several categories.

Reynolds Street I have not heard of any response from the letter to the owners of 308 Reynolds. The landscaping violations have not been addressed. Five of the parking spaces have been repainted, but the rest are still faded away.

Sidewalk Bids documents have been shared in an email. The closing date for bids has been amended to September 23rd, per Martin Graf. We are looking for bids on Grand Avenue and River Street by the harbor restrooms.

Other items:

- Renewed the Harbor's Motor Fuel Retail Outlet License with MDARD
- Worked with Paul Olson to update the Par Plan proposal to reflect current office space, fleet vehicles, and dismissal of lawsuits.
- Received life rings and accessories for installation by fire department
- Received word AT&T Installed the new pole on Birchwood Drive. There is no longer a wire hanging over and impeding the trash truck and emergency vehicles.

Speed limits: we are still waiting to find out how the new speed limit legislation is going to be implemented, but it seems as if the townships will have a bigger role in identifying places where the speed limit should be adjusted. While M22 between Leland and Duck Lake Corner is on everyone's mind right now, I want to remind the board of other places that we have heard from constituents who want their speed limits suggested.

The big one that comes to my mind is the village of Lake Leelanau. Sometime back (in the 1980s?) the Town Board, voted to move the 35 mph speed limit signs out to a spot near Houdek's house on the east side and to a location on the west side about where the town offices are today. The signs stayed there until about 10 years ago, when MDOT had a sign renewal project and moved the speed limit signs back to their official places. When I was chairing the Lake Leelanau Community Association, a big goal was restoring the larger speed zone.

We have heard concerns about speed from residents on 641 between Horn Road and M22 and also from residents on M22 north of Leland, especially about traffic coming down the hill,. We should keep all of these areas in line in mind when we are considering how to exercise whatever our new authority turns out to be.

On August 19th, I was hanging up laundry in my backyard when I heard some commotion out on M-204. When I heard the crash, I grabbed my phone and started walking out towards the road. It's common to have to make 911 calls from my home, but this was the worst accident in the 30 years that I have lived there. A small car had attempted a U-turn in front of one of the Plamondon Landscaping company trucks pulling a trailer and was hit broad side, pushed into the ditch. When I got there, the occupants of the truck were already out and walking around, but the people in the car were seriously injured and the car doors were stuck. People were already stopping to help when I got there, Our neighbors across the street comforted and calmed the people in the car while the driver of the truck called 911. Leland Township Ambulance 593 arrived very quickly, under four minutes. Lieutenant Chase Schelling was the first to arrive and began organizing the scene. Chief Besson and Deputy Chief Neissink had been at the Lake Leelanau station working on a project, so they arrived next. Deputy Chief/Fire Marshall Greg Thomas responded from the Leland station with ambulance 591. Greg Johnson, who was on duty at the Leland station, brought Engine 512.

I watched our crew at work for the next hour. Ambulance 593 was the first on the scene, and engine 511, which is designed to respond to serious crashes, was the next one there. It was unclear at first how many people would need to go to the hospital, so a backup ambulance was sent from Suttons Bay. Engine 511 is equipped with the "jaws of life" extrication tool in the front bumper, and is also capable of providing water should fire breakout. It was positioned facing the wrecked car. The car was stabilized to prevent it from moving and causing further injury. Leland Township paramedics and EMTs worked together calmly and efficiently, first getting the male victim out through the back door and then working to pop open the front passenger door, where the woman was trapped and suffering. The wreck was too far from the road for the compressed air extrication tool to reach, so the new battery operated extrication tool was used. It is not much larger than my vacuum cleaner and much quieter, so much so that its work was done while I was still waiting for them to turn it on.

If you are a fan of those "911" TV shows, you would have been disappointed. No time was wasted, no voices were raised, the work just unfolded quickly and efficiently. I could see the results of our regular training schedule and our very experienced first responders.

I was also impressed by the behavior of our public. People stopped, look for an opportunity to help, but once our paramedics were there, the public was respectful and stayed out of the way. Volunteers directed traffic until the Sheriff Deputy showed up. Drivers were patient, nobody tried to hurry through the scene. I watched until the vehicles were towed away and the last glass was swept up (thank you Deputy Chief Niessink). My husband used his tractor to pull the landscaping trailer off the road. A competing landscaper stopped and generously offered the Plamondons the use of a truck until they could get a replacement.

It is one thing to sit in meetings and follow the process of ordering a truck like 511, which was designed by our department for our local needs. It is one thing to listen to the Chief's report and hear about the new battery operated extrication tool that he found, a demo model for a good price. It's one thing to hear about the many hours of training that our firefighters put in every

month. It is one thing to sign our mutual aid agreements. It is one thing to convince the voters to fund the staffing of both stations. It is totally different to see all of these pieces in action in the actual emergency, and to see them come together so smoothly and quickly that it hardly seems possible.

At the moment when the second crash victim was freed from the wreck and they were both on the way to the hospital, I was surprised by how grateful I felt. I knew that they had gotten the best possible care at the crash site and were already receiving medical care on the way to the hospital. Some rural counties have one or maybe two ambulances in the whole county; our community has supported state of the art Advanced Life Support for all in need, residents and visitors alike. I am thankful that our taxpayers approve generous funding for our Fire and Rescue department. I'm thankful that Chief Besson exercises great foresight and wisdom in advising us how to employ those resources. And I'm thankful for the smart, brave, and capable people who choose to serve us on the LTFD.