

BENZONIA TOWNSHIP  
2020 WINTER NEWSLETTER  
231-882-4411

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

1020 Michigan Ave., P.O. Box 224, Benzonia, MI 49616  
GENERAL OFFICE HOURS – MONDAY – THURSDAY 9:00 – 3:00

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Supervisor – Jason Barnard

Clerk – Diana Heller

Treasurer – Karen Burns

Assessor – Jill Brown

Zoning Administrator – Jason Barnard

Cemetery Sexton - RJ Jordan (231-645-4814)

Trustees – James Sheets, Sheila Priest

Fire Chief – Steve Adams

The office is open to the public **HOWEVER**, we ask that you please wear a face mask if you come in and use the hand sanitizer at the front desk before entering any of our offices. **THANKS!**

General information, forms, ordinances, etc. are available on our website: [benzoniatownship.org](http://benzoniatownship.org). We also have a Facebook page for Benzonia Township that we hope you will take a minute to look at, like and share.

**WINTER PROPERTY TAXES** – Treasurer’s office hours during winter tax collection will be Monday thru Thursday from 9-3. February 14<sup>th</sup> is a Sunday in 2021, and Monday is President’s Day, so the deadline for winter taxes will be February 16<sup>th</sup> to avoid the penalty. **We encourage payments by mail or in our drop box** please include a SASE if you want a receipt mailed. We are excited to announce that we are now able to take credit cards for payment of property taxes!!! There is a link on our webpage: [www.benzoniatownship.org](http://www.benzoniatownship.org) where you can go to make payment.

**ELECTION 2020** – The General Election in November was historic in so many ways! We have 2601 registered voters in Benzonia Township. We saw 1289 voters choose absentee and 632 walk-ins on election day. That’s 74% turnout for Benzonia Township. Our Clerk, Diana Heller, would like to personally thank all of the registered voters in Benzonia Township for helping the committee conduct a safe and courteous election. Our dedicated committee, along with the Clerk worked until 2:30am on Wednesday morning making sure all of the “T’s” were crossed and the “I’s” were dotted. All of this was done under the watchful eye of the election challengers and poll watchers. We truly appreciate all of our voters.

**ASSESSOR** – Jill Brown, our township assessor, can be reached at 231-881-4000 or at [townshipassessing@gmail.com](mailto:townshipassessing@gmail.com). During the winter months, she will only be in the township office with a scheduled appointment.

**RECYCLE** – Bring in your dead batteries (non-automotive), cell phones, printer cartridges and compact fluorescent bulbs to the township hall. Please put tape over the terminals on the 9volt batteries and on **ALL** lithium-ion batteries.

Remember, if you have a flag to retire, we have a container at the hall for them. The Boy Scouts will hold a ceremony to dispose of them.

Contact information for the county recycle coordinator is: 231-882-0554 or email [benzierecycler@benzieco.net](mailto:benzierecycler@benzieco.net). Visit: [www.benzieco.net](http://www.benzieco.net) and click on recycling for a schedule of upcoming events. **Please be sure that all items are clean and free of food residue.**

**MEMORIAL PARK** - The park is located between South Street and Grace Road in Benzonia. We have two pavilions available for gatherings. Please schedule your group events at the township hall. We have a form for groups over 25.

**DOG PARK** – Remember to pick up after your pet. There are bags and a container available.

**PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT** – We continue working on this project and will be applying for grants to try making this a reality. If you have any suggestions, we’d like to hear them as we move along with these projects.

**Donation boxes can be found at the park if you’d like to “chip in” and help us with maintenance and development. THANKS!**

**STATION 5 FIRE DEPARTMENT** - Our fire department not only provides fire protection service, it also provides medical first response, vehicle extrication, ice water rescue, hazardous materials (operational level), search and rescue and fire prevention services. We currently have a total of 20 members on the department. During the past six months some of our newest members have completed training to become certified firefighters with the State of Michigan. The newly trained firefighters are working hard to complete their probationary requirements to serve the community as Firefighters. We have 7 members dual trained as firefighter/medical responders that provide non-transporting medical response for the community and provide assistance with Benzie County EMS. The Fire Department as seen increase in the amount of calls for service over the past years, 2020 is soon to hit 500 calls for service. Benzonia Township has purchased property that will be slated for construction of a new fire station/township hall, more to come as planning continues. The new pumper truck, Fire Engine 1, has been ordered and is being built with a tentative delivery in the fall of 2021. If you are interested in becoming a trained Firefighter, EMT or Medical First Responder and are willing to dedicate a small portion of your life to community service, please contact our Chief (Steve Adams – [benzoniafire@gmail.com](mailto:benzoniafire@gmail.com) or call the township office). The application is on our website: [www.benzoniatownship.org](http://www.benzoniatownship.org) . We would also like to thank you as community members for your continued support of the department.

**911 SIGNS:** The Boy Scout Troop 10 supplies us with the 911 signs. There is an application at the township hall or online at our website: [www.benzoniatownship.org](http://www.benzoniatownship.org) The price is \$35.00 and the scouts will install them.

**LIBRARIES:** There are two libraries located in Benzonia Township. We collect a library millage for them. This money is divided equally

**ROADS:** Love Road, will be reconstructed in 2021. It will be worked on from US-31 to Hanmer Road. Part of the construction will be the lowering of the hill near the cemetery to improve visibility and sight distance. During this construction, please access Benzonia Township Cemetery using the back gate located on South Street.

**TOWNSHIP CLEANUP DATES** - Our spring cleanup date May 8<sup>th</sup> from 7:00am to 11:30am. Same place as always on US-31 next to Expert Fulfillment, Benzonia.

**CEMETERY** – We are in the process of updating our Cemetery Ordinance. We want to especially address the “Decoration of Lots”. There is a problem with the use of artificial flowers and added decorations and rocks that make the maintenance of the cemetery difficult. In the spring before Memorial Day, please check our web site or stop into the office for the new, amended Cemetery Ordinance, as it may affect you. We have an area resident who is retired and loves to garden! She has indicated that she would be available, for a fee, to take care of cemetery lots! She would purchase plants, plant them and water and weed during the summer. If you are interested, please contact the township office.

**HEADLEE ROLLBACK** – The discussion continues about overriding Headlee. Headlee was voted in back in 1982. At that time, Benzonia Township was operating on 1.21 mills, and since that time the millage has rolled back to .78930 mills. This is happening with every unit of government in Benzie County. This directly impacts the income we receive from taxes, which impacts projects we can do like paving roads, park, cemetery upgrades and maintenance, etc. The only way we can get an override is to have it put before the voters at the county level. You can expect to see more about this in the near future.

**ICE RINK** – We all have missed the ice rink in the last couple of years. While Benzonia Township is not responsible for the ice rink, we do help fund the project. We have been made aware of a local business who is interested in continuing the rink and taking care of the maintenance and upkeep for it! We are really happy to hear that, as the rink is used during the season by area families.