

BENZONIA TOWNSHIP
2022 WINTER NEWSLETTER
231-882-4411

www.benzoniatownship.org

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

Supervisor – Jason Barnard

Clerk – Diana Heller

Treasurer – Karen Burns

Assessor – Jill Brown

Zoning Administrator – Jason Barnard

Cemetery Sexton – Bob Wilkinson 231-633-2592

Trustees – James Sheets, Sheila Priest

Fire Chief – Steve Adams

General information, forms, ordinances, etc. are available on our website: 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 9-2. February 14th the deadline for winter taxes 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 where you can go to make payment.

ELECTION 2022 –The wonderful fall weather allowed a record number of voters to turnout for the November election. We have approximately 2,700 registered voters and had 900 vote absentee and 800 in person.

A big **thank you** goes out to all our election workers who work long hours behind the scenes prior to election day, and on election day to make everything go as smooth as possible. At this time, we don't have an election scheduled in 2023, but are anticipating another record number of voters for the General Election in 2024.

Thank you to our township for another great election.

ASSESSOR – Jill Brown, our township assessor, can be reached at 231-881-4000 or at 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 9-volt 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. Visit: 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 - Our park of approximately 30 acres is located between South Street and Grace Road and is home to four baseball diamonds, multiple soccer fields, a playground, a nine-hole disc golf course, multiple picnic areas with grills, a dog park and two pavilions available for gatherings. To schedule an event using one of the pavilions please fill out a reservation form by stopping into the township offices or from our website at www.benzoniatownship.org, click on "Docs and Forms" at the top and scroll down to appropriate form. This past fall we teamed up with a non-profit called ReLeaf Michigan who helped us in receiving a grant to plant a bunch of beautiful new trees. With help from local volunteers and our Park Steward, Barry Hahn we were able to plant 20 young trees which varieties include Oak, Maple, Elm, Linden, Sycamore and Redwood. They will be a great addition to the beauty of the park and will enhance the upcoming walking trail; we give huge **thank you** to Barry and all of the volunteers who helped us in the planting!

DOG PARK – More and more dogs are bringing their people to the park to play. It's so exciting to see it being used year around. Please remember to pick up after your pet. There are bags and a container available.

The township is happy to be the recipient winner of the 2022 Best of Benzonia Awards for the category of Dog Park.

WALKING TRAIL – Speaking of the walking trail, we’ve awarded AJ’s Excavating with their bid to construct the half-mile walking trail in which construction will begin first thing in the spring. This trail will be made possible by using a portion of last year’s excise tax revenue that was received from the recreational marijuana retail sales within the township.

PLAYGROUND - We are hoping start work on purchasing and installing some new playground equipment in 2023 as well. This is also expected to be paid for by the recreational marijuana excise tax revenue, please let us know if you have any ideas on what kind of playground equipment you’d like to see us install.

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 - Calls for service have continued to increase with a year to date total of 450 on November 9th, 2022. These are again record breaking numbers and we’ll be sure to well surpass 500 calls for the year. We want to express our enormous gratitude for your help in passing the recent operational millage renewal/increase. This will allow us to appropriately plan for the future and guarantee our services for the next ten years. As most of you know we had to put the building of our new Fire Station on hold last year due to extremely inflated costs but are finally seeing some of these costs return. We are planning to begin the bid process again this winter in the hopes of breaking ground this coming spring, please stay tuned. If you are interested in becoming a trained Firefighter, EMT, or Medical First Responder and are willing to dedicate a small portion of your time to community service, please contact Chief, Steve Adams at benzoniatownship@gmail.com or call the township offices at 231-882-4411, ext. 16. The application is also on our website at www.benzoniatownship.org.

THANK YOU TO THE EMPLOYERS OF OUR VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS! We thank you for allowing them to leave their jobs at any unknown time to make rescue runs and fight fires in our community.

TOWNSHIP CLEANUP DATE - Our spring cleanup date May 13th from 7:00am to 11:00am. Same place as always on US-31 next to Expert Fulfillment, Benzonia. We’ll have a signup sheet and ticket along with a list of what can’t be taken to this event at the township office. It should be available by mid-April. You may bring the equivalent of a pickup load to this event.

CEMETERY - You can see our updated ordinance on our website www.benzoniatownship.org, or stop in for a copy.

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 0.76880 mills for 2023. 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 – It’s always so nice to see the rink in operation. Children laughing and parents enjoying themselves. The Benzonia Library has skates that they loan out for use at this rink, allowing people to skate that might not use it because of lack of equipment.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO EVERYONE FROM BENZONIA TOWNSHIP!