

# Bruce Township Newsletter

## Supervisor's Office

Bruce Township will be receiving money as part of the American Rescue Plan. It will come as two separate payments. We received the first payment with the second coming next year. The big question is what we are allowed to use the funds for. There are a lot of restrictions. Primarily its broken down into 4 categories: (1) Assist with negative economic impact on the community, (2) Revenue loss, (3) Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, (4) Impact of Covid-19 on government operations and premium/hazard pay. We have until December 31, 2024 to be obligated and funds must be expended by December 31, 2026. The conditions on what we can and cannot use the funds for are constantly changing. Our board, like many other municipalities, have decided to wait on dedicating the funds for any particular use until we are sure what can be done. One thing I can say for sure is that the board will decide on what would best benefit the community.

I have recently been asked to participate in a committee regarding the M-53 corridor. The committee is made up of government officials from Bruce Township north to Goodrich Township also including representatives from Macomb County, Lapeer County, and the State of Michigan MDOT. We had our first meeting on October 25th at the Goodrich Township Hall. It was upsetting for me to hear that Michigan Department of Roads has a lot of infrastructure

improvements south of Bruce Township with nothing on the agenda for Bruce Township. That's ridiculous. It is concerning that they would have so many improvements south of Bruce Township -with so much traffic funneling into our community - with no plan on how to keep the traffic flowing north. I asked them if they have ever driven north on M-53 through Bruce Township into Almont. In the evenings the traffic gets backed up for two miles. At times longer in the summer with residents heading up north. It causes drivers to take back roads to get around the congestion increasing the number of cars traveling our back roads and side streets at high rates of speed on our dirt roads. This creates unsafe conditions for those residents that live along those streets. Something needs to be done and having nothing on the agenda is not acceptable. The next meeting is to be determined. After the holiday season, I will post the date on our website and encourage you to participate and voice your concerns. Something must be done.

Congratulations to Dorothy Sochowicz on her retirement. I have only had the pleasure of working with Dorothy for one year and it has been a real pleasure. She is my go to person for information and knowledge regarding operations with the Township, I wish her the best of luck with her future endeavors.

## Clerk's Office



Congratulations to our Dorothy! After 24 years of commitment to this community, Dorothy Sochowicz is retiring. She has worked as Deputy Clerk to three clerks and has been the backbone of the office. Additionally, Bruce Township enjoys the reputation for excellent standards in our election management and undeniable smooth operations thanks to Dorothy who has been our Election Coordinator. You will be missed Dorothy! Enjoy retirement!!



The Special Election, held on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, had a 27.4% turnout in Bruce Township. A relatively low turnout electing Doug Wozniak to fill the 8<sup>th</sup> district of the Michigan State Senate and both Romeo School's bond proposals were approved. For more information on this election, and others, visit our website.

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**Seeking the Largest Trees in Michigan**  
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 Releaf Michigan of Ann Arbor is looking for the largest trees in the state. The nonprofit company is hosting the 15<sup>th</sup> biennial Big Tree Hunt contest. These trees can be located anywhere in the state and may be in your back yard! Prizes will be awarded and your tree might be added to the National Register of Big Trees. Submissions will be accepted through August 19, 2022. Contact Releaf if you have a contender.  
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As we have just celebrated some of our nation's veterans, Bruce Township would like to acknowledge, and *thank*, those veterans who live among us. Their sacrifices are many and their actions give us hope for a strong tomorrow. These are just a few of our veterans:

- Captain James Weil, USA
- William Thompson, USA
- Gerald Kotkowski, USA
- Donald Long, USN
- Robert Frownfelter, USAF
- James Manning, USMC
- James Tyler, USMC
- James Myatt, USAF, Active Duty

If you are a veteran, please contact our office and share your information with us. 586.752.4585

Susan Kraft, Clerk  
 586.752.4585 Ext. 116  
[skraft@brucetwp.org](mailto:skraft@brucetwp.org)

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## Treasurer's Office

The Treasurer's Office is committed and looks forward to serving taxpayers with respect, professionalism and a commitment to customer service.

### Bruce Township to be awarded \$791,818 under the American Rescue Plan

Your 2021 winter tax bill was mailed out on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Please refer to the **back of the bill** regarding due dates, payment options and contact information.

Please note as a reminder to reduce costs, we will no longer be mailing tax receipts. Tax receipts will be given upon request with a self-addressed stamped envelope or you may print it yourself from the website [www.brucetwp.org](http://www.brucetwp.org)

TCF Bank will no longer be collecting tax payments on the township's behalf.

You can confirm your tax payment has been made by checking with your bank first to verify that your check was cashed. If you escrow your taxes, please check with your mortgage or escrow company. As a taxpayer, you are liable for the tax payment. Payments can be made and verified on our website [www.brucetwp.org](http://www.brucetwp.org) under the make tax payments tab.

#### Online Bill Pay

Payments can be made for Taxes and Utilities on the township website: [www.brucetwp.org](http://www.brucetwp.org) keep in mind that your credit card company will charge you 3.25%.

**PAYMENT MAY BE PLACED in the OUTSIDE SECURED DROP BOX located at the rear twp. hall building entrance.**

You can contact the Treasurer's office at 586-752-4585.

Frank DiGiorgio  
Treasurer  
Ext. 117

[f.digiorgio@brucetwp.org](mailto:f.digiorgio@brucetwp.org)

Robert Biluk  
Deputy Treasurer  
Ext. 119

[rbiliuk@brucetwp.org](mailto:rbiliuk@brucetwp.org)

## Assessing Department

The 2022 Assessment Notices will be mailed to all property owners by the end of February 2022. The Board of Review will be held the week of March 14, 2022. Exact dates and times will be included in the assessment notice. If you wish to appeal your assessment, please call our office to schedule an appointment once you receive your notice.

Poverty Exemption guidelines and application are available on our website. Applications can be considered at the March, July or December's Board of Review.

Disabled veteran's must apply for the disabled veteran's exemption each year with the Assessor's Office. A reminder letter will be sent to all existing veterans who have applied for the exemption. Disabled Veteran's exemption can be considered at the March, July or December Board's of Review. Please see our website or call our office for more information.

The summer of 2022 representatives from the Assessing Department will be visiting the northern portion of the township for our annual 20% inspection review. Exact sections to be reviewed will be listed on our website in the Spring of 2022.

## Building Department

The building department regulates and monitors construction within the township based on local zoning and ordinances and in accordance with the state building code.

Building applications, permits and information are available on the Bruce Township website.

Please note change for the building permit application and accessory building requirements

Most home renovation projects, new construction, accessory buildings, sheds, interior remodel, decks, fences, roofs, swimming pools, generators, air conditioners, furnaces, demolitions, etc. require permits.

Permits are required for building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical and fence projects.

Please check our website or contact the building department for your project requirements.

Building department direct line 586-258-7053 or [building@brucetwp.org](mailto:building@brucetwp.org)

#### **Cemeteries under Township control:**

*Bruce Armada Cemetery* / Armada Center Road, east of Kanie

*McCafferty Cemetery* / Van Dyke north of 34 Mile Road

*Goodrich Cemetery* / Kidder Road north(east) of Van Dyke

## Planning and Zoning

It has been a busy year in the Planning and Zoning department of Bruce Township. The Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Board of Trustees have conducted reviews of eight site plans, five special land uses, one rezoning request, and four variance requests – all in keeping with Bruce’s Proud Heritage, Planned future.

In addition to the normal course of business, the Planning and Zoning Department has also contributed the following:

- Worked with the Supervisor and office staff to implement a monitoring process of the Trust and Authority (T and A) Accounts to reduce the likelihood of the Township being in a deficit position. The Township has recovered \$134,000 of \$140,000 due the Township (left over from prior Administration).
- Finalized approval of a Site Plan for East Pond Creek Estates development which was already being developed without proper approval (left over from prior Administration)
- Signed a new agreement with the Planning Consultant resulting in more favorable terms and conditions and reduced risk profile to the Township. Maintained a competitive rate structure with Townships of similar size and complexity.
- Updated the Planning and Zoning Fee Schedule to align with the new Planning and Zoning contract and bringing the rates in line with other similar Townships (previous rates were last reviewed over 12 years ago).
- Two newer Planning Commission members completed the Michigan Citizen Planner training.
- Moved the Planning Commission meeting to the 1st Wednesday of the month in order to provide better timing and coordination with the Board meeting.
- Added the Planning and Zoning module to the BSA enterprise municipal software improving office workflow and communications.
- Initiated regular feedback and communication sessions with the Planning and Zoning Coordinator resulting in improved communications and enhanced learning opportunities.
- Established and led Committee to resolve the outstanding Mentco Timbers Consent Judgement Committee picked up an activity that was left dormant for over 5 months under the prior Administration. Through the Committee’s efforts the Township will receive payment of \$73,875.00 (the estimated cost of paving), in lieu of paving the dirt road section of Mellen. The initial advice from the outgoing administration was to just agree to drop the paving requirement which would have cost the Township a lost opportunity of \$73,875.00.
- Brought back an outstanding Special Land Use application (which was left dormant and incomplete under the prior Administration) to the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees to be dispositioned consistent with Township processes and ordinances.
- Planning Commission addressed concerns regarding the following Primary Care Giver Marijuana Home Occupation issues:

- ◇ Restricting Primary Care Giver Home occupations to certain Zoning districts
- ◇ Requiring Primary Care Givers to be licensed with Bruce Township
- ◇ Requiring certain inspections for any electrical permits 200 amps or more of service

All three recommendations were subsequently unanimously accepted by the Board.

- The Planning Commission and Board adopted several other amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, including several updates to the accessory building standards, and adjustments to internal setbacks for multi-family developments.
- The Planning Commission and Board worked on and adopted an updated Subdivision Ordinance.
- The Planning Commission conducted a five-year review of the Township Master Plan and voted to re-affirm the plan for another five years.

In October, 2020 (prior to the new board taking office), I was asked to take on the responsibilities of Planning and Zoning Administrator in order to transition the final responsibilities of the out-going Clerk. At that time, I agreed to do it for zero stipend with the agreement that it would be on an interim basis. The Planning and Zoning department has addressed the major outstanding items and gotten the department on a more consistent track, so the timing is right for change. I am resigning from the position upon naming a replacement for the position but under no circumstances no later than December 31, 2021. I will be working with the Supervisor on finding a replacement and transitioning the role.

Mike Tremblay  
Bruce Township  
Planning and Zoning Administrator