



News You Can Use!

Peninsula Township

FALL 2018

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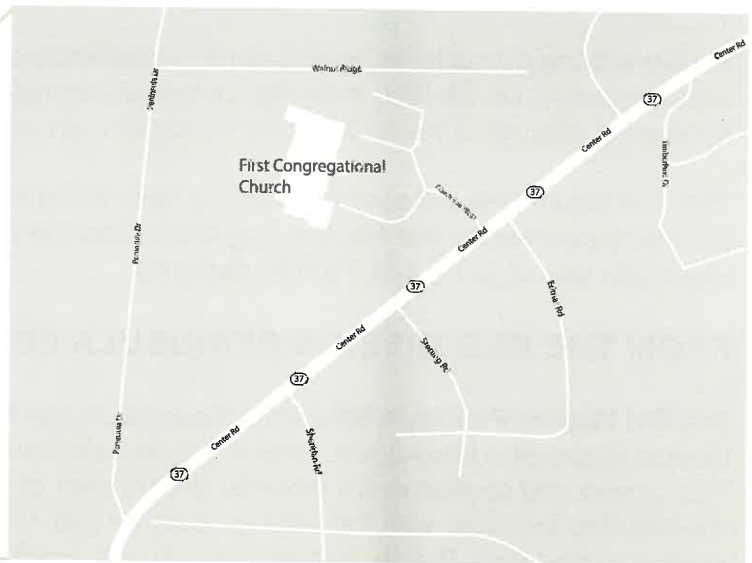
VOTING AND OTHER NEWS FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE...

Greetings from the Clerk's Office!

VOTING NEWS

The November 6, 2018 election is shaping up to be an interesting set of races and referendums from a number of perspectives, but we will stay out of the politics of it all. I am writing to inform the nearly 2600 voters in **Precinct #2 (south end of the Peninsula)** that **your voting location will change for the November 6, 2018 election. The new Precinct #2 polling location will be at the First Congregational Church, 6105 Center Road, Traverse City, MI 49686.** This is the Congregational Church that is located at the base of the peninsula as you drive north on M-37. All registered voters in Precinct #2 will be receiving new voter registration cards in the mail over the next few weeks; these cards will have the new Polling Location address on them.

You may be wondering why you will not be voting at the Fire Station at the base of the peninsula. Fred Gilstorff, the Fire Chief, is moving forward with having fire fighters and emergency medical technicians housed at the fire station 24/7. This is to reduce response time in addressing fires and emergency calls by residents in the southern half of the peninsula. You can read more about Chief Gilstorff's efforts and other matters affecting the Peninsula Fire Department in his article in the newsletter.



CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Peninsula Township is one of only three jurisdictions in the State of Michigan that offers "green burials". Because of this, we are receiving requests from individuals and other townships about our green cemetery policies. A newly formed Cemetery Committee is reviewing cemetery policy for all three cemeteries in the township, and updates in policy are likely to come along with a new digital recording and processing system for the purchase of cemetery plots. If you are interested in serving on the Committee, please contact the Clerk's office for more information. **Our next meeting is from 3-5 pm on Thursday October 11, 2018, in the Town Hall Conference Room.**

NEW FIRE PROOF FILING SYSTEM

A new fire-proof cabinet will be arriving this month that will hold nearly twice the volume of one-of-a kind documents, historic records, deeds, and other valuable information as the township's current filing cabinet. The old cabinet was declared non-fire or water safe last year, and the Town Board approved the purchase of the new cabinet to protect our valuable documents last spring. While we wait for the new cabinet, all of the documents contained in the old cabinet, have been reorganized, alphabetized, and indexed for easy access in the future.

ANNUAL STATE AUDIT

The Clerk and Treasurer's offices are happy to announce that the Township passed the required State of Michigan annual audit with flying colors. Tobin and Company (auditors) just sent the township its Audit Report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, on September 25, 2018.

NEWS FROM THE OLD MISSION PENINSULA HISTORICAL SOCIETY...

Founded in 1992 by a core group of citizens concerned with saving the Hessler Log Cabin, the Old Mission Peninsula Historical Society continues to work toward fulfilling its mission of preserving historical structures and keeping alive the history of the region.

The Hessler Log Cabin, the Mission Point Lighthouse, the Dougherty Mission House, and the Log Church serve as visible reminders of the rich history of the area.

Please explore our website, www.omphistoricalsociety.org, read our newsletters and other material, and consider joining us. Monthly meetings are typically scheduled for 7:00 PM, the first Thursday of the month, September through June, and feature a program on a topic of local history.

The Tree Committee will continue planting trees along the roadside sometime in October. Other projects are being planned for the Hessler Log Cabin and the Log Church. Volunteers are welcome. Contact Laura Johnson at (231) 223-7400 if interested.

FROM THE OLD MISSION PENINSULA EDUCATION FOUNDATION...

The Old Mission Peninsula Education Foundation has had a busy summer with fundraising events and farmers markets! In late August, local residents held a private golf outing at the scenic Manor Golf Course. This unique and special event included guests from all over the Traverse City region, all of whom were interested in assisting with the startup-costs for Old Mission Peninsula School. The outstanding hosts, Bill Premo and Pam Prairie, had not only put the event together at their personal course, but offered to match all of the initial registration fees. As the event wrapped up and the silent auction items were being distributed, OMPEF President Allison O'Keefe told listening participants how much we had raised. "I'll MATCH that amount!" announced a voice in the crowd. Ted Wickman's amazing generosity led to

applause from everyone and the celebratory atmosphere increased tenfold. Thank you to everyone who attended, and special thanks to the Premo and Prairie Family and Ted Wickman for their incredible donations!

Our first community farmers market in August was well received by visitors. With vendors ranging from local growers, jewelry makers and artists, there was something for everyone. We greatly appreciate everyone who was involved and look forward to bringing the event back in 2019.

We had an influx of donations after the sad and sudden departure of community resident Josh Wunsch in the spring. It was at the initial meeting in October 2015, when the fate of the school was being discussed, that Josh stood up, waving a dollar in his hand and saying, "We sold you our school for a dollar fifty years ago. I'll give you a dollar to take it back." His firm belief in educational opportunities on OMP was and continues to be inspirational. It's because of people like Josh that our school was not only saved, but given a new chance to flourish, and we will be recognizing him with a formal naming in our school. The Taft Family has been leading a charge to raise the \$250,000 amount in order to name the OMPS gymnasium in Josh's honor. A special thank you goes out to his family and friends for their past and continued support.

Community donations have also included gym equipment, books, play materials, microwaves and refrigerators, office supplies (including paper!) and flowers for the front entrance. There are many ways to continue to help move OMPS forward.

OMPEF is a sustainable foundation thanks to generous community donations and involvement. While OMPS is back and in full swing, donations are still needed. The school wish list includes increased technology, a language teacher, updated playground equipment and funds to help transform the current library space into usable space for the school, among other items. If you wish to be a part of Josh Wunsch's naming of the gymnasium, please make a note of that on your donation. OMPEF also accepts stock transfers. Ask your employer about matching donations as well! Please send all donations to OMPEF at the school address, 2699 Island View Road, Traverse City, MI 49686.

NEWS FROM PENINSULA COMMUNITY LIBRARY (PLC)...

Building the Heart of the Community. The plans are done, the bids are out, the interior designers are busy at work, and we are ready to break ground. All we need now is your support in bringing us to home-stretch in our fundraising campaign toward a new building. Thanks to you, we have raised close to 2.1 million dollars. We still need \$400,000 more. Please pledge or gift today. Call the library to find out how to donate IRA proceeds or stock. You are going to LOVE the new library!

"The only thing that you absolutely need to know is the location of the library."

--Albert Einstein

PCL Hours: Monday and Thursday 9-8. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9-5:30. Saturday 9-1 after Labor Day.

Programs at PCL:

Scrap Happy Scrap quilting ideas with Helen Vogel September 6 at 6:30 PM

Red Hot Best Miriam Pico entertains September 20 at 6:30 PM. If the weather is nice, bring a picnic & chairs to be outside. Otherwise, enjoy her voice in the library.

Voting Counts! Celebrate National Voters Registration Day September 25 by registering to vote. You can do it at PCL! The Grand Traverse League of Women Voters will be on hand to assist from 9-11 AM.

Sisters in Crime The sister team who writes as PJ Parish will talk about their new book, writing in one voice when you are two, and the very local PCL connection in *Damage Done*. October 8 at 6:30 PM.

Breakfast and Movie Families are invited to a showing of the film Hotel Transylvania – PG, October 13 at 10 AM. Wear your favorite monster costume!

Haunted Halloween Our 7th annual Halloween event with a haunted library, pumpkin walk and stories in the woods happens October 27 from 6-8. Co-sponsored by PCL & the OMPS PTO.

BINGO! An evening of our favorite game at 6:30 November 8 for the grown-ups PCL's own Peanuts BINGO. Celebrate cartoonist Charles Schultz birthday with themed snacks and unique game moves. Dress as your favorite Peanuts character to win a prize for best costume! RSVP by November 6.

Owl some Teens Teens and preteens create awesome owl ornaments from slices of log, perfect for fall decoration November 12 at 6 PM. No fee, but please RSVP by 10/15.

Spymaster! Kids don their dark glasses for DIY secret agent activities at PCL Headquarters, November 24 from 9-noon. THUMBPRINT cookies and TRUTH juice too.

Regular programming includes: Pageturners on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM; Gentle Yoga happens Wednesdays at 9:30 AM for \$7; Story Stew for kids is offered Thursdays at 10 AM (note change), with the 4th Thursday offering free books for kids courtesy of Born to Read and Twilight Rotary. Our Reading Therapy Dog Coco loves to listen to kids read – call for times. Notary service is available too – call. Kids enjoy crafts & play in our Imagination Station. Bring your project to THREADS at PCL Mondays at 10 AM & work among friends! Chapter Chicks Mother Daughter Book Club meets 10/20 & 12/15 at 9:30 AM. We have Large Print materials, audio-books and DVDs! Call for more info! 223-7700.

Best Friends! The Friends of Peninsula Community Library meet September 19 & November 21 at 1 PM. All are welcome!

Peninsula Community Library's Holiday Schedule finds the library closed 11/22 & 11/23, 12/24 & 12/25, 12/31 & 1/1.

FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS...

HOT OFF THE PRESS!!

Effective 10/2/18, your Peninsula Fire Department will be providing advanced life support services. More details to follow.

Good day residents and Happy "Fall". The summer has flown by, and we are now moving into cooler weather which means it is that time of the year when our furnaces will start running. It is very important to get this equipment serviced by a licensed technician to limit the chances of having issues during the winter months. Please keep a three foot clearance of combustibles around your furnace. If you have questions about any home fire safety topics, please contact us at the fire station, and we would be glad to come to your home and give you safety tips.

Currently the fire department has responded to 370 calls for service as of August 30, 2018. The members of the department continue to train on a daily basis, perfecting our skills. Residents may notice increased fire truck activity on the roads as members are out training and doing pre-planning to prepare for emergencies while becoming more familiar with the layout of the township. We have quite a few new part time staff, which are learning the area. We now staff Station #2 in the south end of the township from 7 am to 11 pm, seven days a week. This fact decreases our response time to residents in the south end. We are physically working on Station #2 to have staff 24 hours a day.

October is fire prevention month. Residents are encouraged to stop by either fire station and take a tour of our facilities and equipment. Please bring the kids and grandkids, because we have educational material for them and we love to show them the fire trucks. We also will be going to the new Old Mission Peninsula School to spread our fire safety message to the students.

The fire department also will soon be putting on CPR classes for residents. If anyone is interested in take this class, we request that you give us a call (231-223-4443). More information can be found on our face book page as well (Peninsula Township Fire Department); we would love if you would follow us and give us a "Like".

Wishing everyone a safe "Fall" season and once again if you have questions please give us a call or better yet, just stop by one of the fire stations.

Yours in life safety,
Fire Chief Fred Gilstorff

From the Office of Zoning Administration and Code Enforcement...

A number of zoning issues have surfaced recently regarding the use of our beautiful shoreline (all 43 miles of it)! The Zoning Administrator and Code Enforcement Officer would like to remind you of the following regulations affecting your use of the shoreline and near shore waters.

Great Lakes Shoreline Regulations

Peninsula Township's Zoning Ordinance permits docks, boat hoists and decks on the Lake Michigan shoreline. Although summer is over, and many have already pulled docks and boat hoists out of the water, here's a summary of the Zoning Ordinance regulations for installation of these structures next summer.

Private Waterfront Ownership (Section 6.2.2.2c)

- A maximum of 1 dock and 1 boat hoist per 50 feet of shoreline is permitted.
- The dock must be no wider than 7 feet and no longer than necessary to provide adequate depth.
- These uses are allowed as a "Use by Right" and do not require a Permit from the Zoning Department.

Shared-ownership Waterfront (7.4.2)

- Shared Waterfront use requires a Land Use Permit from the Zoning Department; the Permit, listing the current property owners with access rights, must be kept up-to-date by the shared access owners or association.
- 5 feet of shoreline is required for each property owner with shared access rights (there are exceptions for properties within a Subdivision, Planned Unit Development or Condominium).
- 1 shared dock is allowed; the dock must be no wider than 7 feet; it must be in the center of the shared-ownership property.
- 1 Boat Hoist is allowed per 50 feet width of the shared-ownership waterfront.

Decks on the Shoreline (6.2.2.2.d)

- Decks are permitted on the shoreline; the deck may be no more than 30 inches above grade.
- The deck cannot be located in the Flood Plain. That means that the deck must be at least 35 feet from the Ordinary High Water elevation and must be at least 3 feet higher than the Flood Elevation line (which is 3 feet above the Ordinary High Water elevation).
- The deck cannot be in the side yard setback area.
- The deck cannot be in the road Right-of-Way.
- A Land Use Permit, issued by the Township Zoning Department, is required prior to the construction of the deck; permits from Grand Traverse County may also be required.
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Please contact Christina Deeren, Director of Zoning (231-223-3218 or zoning@peninsulatownship.com) or Dave Sanger, Ordinance Enforcement Office (231-216-1212 or email us at : <enforcement.peninsula-zoning@gmail.com> for assistance.

ON THE UPCOMING PARK COMMISSION REFERENDUM...

Submitted by Citizens for Peninsula Parks

Q & A Regarding Ending the Elected Status of the Park Commission

In recent months, a citizen-led effort to change the elected status of the park commission has been underway. Below are the main questions and factual answers about the proposed change that will be on the November 6 election ballot.

Why are citizens looking to make this change?

This is entirely about structure and efficiency, not about the outstanding citizens who have served on the park commission past and present.

Concerned citizens as well as elected members of both the park commission and town board have noted inefficiencies for many years. The park system was much simpler in the past with fewer parks, limited activities within the parks, fewer residents, and far fewer tourists. The park system requires much more day-to-day attention than even a few years ago. The proposed change is intended to eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy.

Additionally, turnover among park commission members has been significant with resignations and decisions not to run for reelection. Continuity issues result from the turnover. There have been six different park chairs in less than a decade. Many residents are not aware that the park commission is an elected board. There have been problems finding candidates to run for office.

What are the differences in the parks now versus the past?

The lighthouse has become an extremely popular tourist destination this past decade. The park commission turned a once dormant lighthouse into an active visitor center with a gift shop requiring staffing. Over 46,000 visitors signed the gift shop guest book during limited and seasonal hours, so clearly many tens of thousands more are visiting the lighthouse property. The majority of the park commission's time is poured into the lighthouse's needs.

Old Mission Point Park was another nearly dormant 600 acres of land that's receiving increasing usage with the visitors to the adjacent lighthouse property. Bowers Harbor Park continues to add amenities including a new baseball field for our little leaguers, as well as a 60-acre expansion. Kelley Park is another recent addition to township responsibilities; the property is owned by the DNR but managed by the township. And the very popular south-end Pelizzari Natural Area was added to the system less than a decade ago. This is a radically different park system than just a few years ago.

How will ending the elected park commission help anything?

Currently the five-person, elected park commission must create a budget and take it to the seven-person, elected town board for approval. Significant changes to expenditures – and they happen with frequency given the increasing needs – must be reviewed by the town board. Any major changes within the parks are also reviewed by the town board. With the park commission's normal monthly meeting schedule, this can be a time consuming and unwieldy way to manage the daily needs of these massively valuable assets. Most of the property additions in recent years were led by the town board precisely because of the need for agility in decision making. Many who work closely with the parks – including some past and present park commission members – state that the elected park commission is an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy.

The town board has three elected officials in the township offices on a fulltime basis: supervisor, clerk, and treasurer. They have staffing assistance. That group takes most of the day-to-day calls for the parks despite not having formal responsibility. By making the town board and staff directly responsible, it will not only improve efficiency, but will make official much of what's already happening and create a more logical chain of command.

Will this make our township different from how other townships function?

Absolutely not. Hardly any townships in the state have an elected park commission. Peninsula Township is the outlier, not the norm. It is rare for any level of government – federal, state, or local – to have an elected park commission. Grand Traverse County and the City of Traverse City, with massively larger budgets than Peninsula Township, do not have elected park commissions.

What will happen if the elected status of the park commission changes?

The ballot question reads: Shall the Peninsula Township Park Commission be dissolved pursuant to MCL 41.426g thereby transferring all powers and duties and all assets and all liabilities of the Peninsula Township Park Commission to the Peninsula Township Board of Trustees?

In the simplest terms possible: a “yes” vote ends the elected park commission and puts control in the hands of the town board. A “no” vote leaves things the same.

If the ballot measure passes, the town board may decide to create an appointed park commission to serve in an advisory capacity, but will retain all decision-making powers to more efficiently manage the parks.

By ending my right to vote for an elected park commission, won't I be losing my say in how the parks are managed?

No. The parks will still be managed by an elected body: the seven-member town board. By transferring responsibility to the much more visible town board that has twice monthly meetings and elected officials in the office fulltime, those supporting this measure hope that citizens will have more say in the way their parks are managed.

Will this cost residents more by not having elected park commissioners?

No. The proposed change is entirely about structure and efficiency, not about predicting what future costs will be.

If the park commission ceases to be elected, is the town board prepared to handle the responsibilities?

Yes. The town board unanimously authorized the ballot language for the November 6 election. Town board members welcome the change should citizens vote to make it.

Please exercise your right to vote on November 6.



Peninsula Township Newsletter
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 Traverse City, MI 49686

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