

SYLVAN TOWN NEWS



General Election - November 8, 2016



**Fall 2016
Important Dates**

September 23:
Absentee Ballot Voting begins

October 18:
Pre-registration for voting ends 5:00 PM

November 7: Absentee Ballot Voting ends 5:00 PM

November 8:
General Election - 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Town Hall

MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULES

Town Board Meets:
1st & 3rd Thursdays

Planning Commission Meets:
2nd Thursdays

Pillager Lake Park Advisory Board Meets:
As required

Fire Association Meeting
First Monday of each month - 7:00pm at Pillager Fire Hall

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings begin at 7:00 pm at the Sylvan Town Hall.

Election 2016

Primary Election - As predicted the voter turnout for the primary election was low with only 46 voters from Sylvan participating in the voting.

We are handling the absentee voting for Sylvan Township which started on Friday, Sept. 23, 2016 and runs until November 7, 2016 at 5:00 PM.

The general election will be held on November 8, 2016 from 7:00 AM until 8:00 PM and will be held here at the Town Hall.

The following Sylvan Township offices will be voted for at the state general election:

Township Supervisor Seat 1 - Currently held by Greg Booth. Greg Booth has filed for this position (4 year regular term).

Township Supervisor Seat 2 - Currently held by John Wulff. John Wulff has filed for this position (4 year regular term).

Township Supervisor Seat 4 - Currently held by Roland Anderson. Greg Bennett has filed for this position (4 year regular term).

Park Report

Pillager Lake Park was very busy again this summer. As fall approaches we will be closing the park for the winter. The porta-pots have been removed and the dock, buoys and garbage cans will be removed by October 1, 2016.

We have been working with Homeland Security regarding the 2015 storm. The Pillager Park received approximately \$10,000.00 from Homeland Security and also received donations from the Pillager Lions and the Pillager Fire Department for repairs and improvements with replacing the pavilion next summer.

Roland Anderson
Park Representative

Sylvan Town Hall
(218) 746-3652
Hours: Mon.-Fri.
8:30-12:30 pm.
1:00pm-2:30 pm
Website:
<http://www.sylvantwp.com>

For address changes, contact Cass County at 218-547-7260

Town Board:
Greg Booth: Chair, Weed Inspector
John Wulff: Vice Chair, Co-Road & Driveway
Roland Anderson: Co-Road & Driveway Supervisor, Park
Arlene Schmit Co-Road & Driveway Supervisor,
Yvette Dullinger: Planning Commission & Fire

Road Right of Ways – What Is and What Is Not Allowed

Who is responsible for this road? When searching for information one must first identify the agency that regulates the roadway in question. MN DOT for example is responsible for the trunk highway and freeway systems; the function of these roadways is mobility. Cass County is responsible for the county highway system, which are mostly collector type roadways. These collectors allow limited access with the primary function being mobility. The cities within the county have jurisdiction over the streets within their city limits. The Townships govern the remainder of the roads, streets and avenues; generally the function of these roadways is for greater access, however mobility is still necessary.

Some ATV's and snowmobiles may be operated in the right-of-ways on the ditch bottoms and back slopes at designated time of the year, as allowed by State Law, County or City Ordinance, and as otherwise restricted by lawful regulation. It is unlawful to obstruct or perform detrimental operations with the road right-of way, unless otherwise authorized by law. If you believe damage is being done to your property, the lawful recourse is to report the activity to your local law enforcement agency and provide a description of the machine, license number, or other identifying information.

Common right-of-way violations – the following activities or items are prohibited in the right-of way:

- Mailbox settings not conforming to legal standards.
- Construction or reconstruction of an access without a permit. Sylvan Township requires a driveway permit.
- Plowing snow or dragging debris across the roadway.
- Construction of landscape retaining walls or other permanent structures in the Road right of way.
- Placement of fences, posts, holes, trees, or shrubbery.
- For Sale signs or items may not be placed in the road right of way.

In addition, the Minnesota Outdoor Advertising Control Act (MN State Statute 173.15) prohibits erecting advertising devices on public utility poles, trees and shrubs, and painting or drawing on rocks or natural features.

Violations are unlawful and may result in legal action that is administrative or criminal. Cass County & Sylvan Township requires the removal of prohibited items, or correction of any such action which is a violation of the law, or that may otherwise constitute a potential safety hazard. The cost of such removal or correction is at the owner's sole expense.

Yvette Adelman-Dullinger
Town Board Supervisor

Planning Commission

Planning and Zoning has been busy in the past few months. We've worked with several commercial projects, with the Road Ordinance language, with several variances to residential permits that are handled by Cass County, and with the creation of a Draft Feedlot/CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation) Ordinance.

The commercial projects include two amendments to the existing Conditional Use Permit for the Corner Store owned by Chad Knutson. Chad has changed one storage unit to house Beimert Outdoors and another to house TNT Auto Body. The projects involved considerable regrading, remodeling, and signage changes. The other project is an expansion of an existing body shop. George Meyer will be expanding his operation on Little Pine Road. The additional space will allow George's Auto body to expand services and possibly the workforce in the future.

We've worked on the **Road Ordinance** changing some language that will allow the Board and the Road Authority to help determine conditions needed for managing the water flow resulting from new driveway and building site construction.

Cass County manages all of the **permitting for residential** properties in Sylvan Township. At times, home owners request a variance to the requirements of the County Land Use Ordinance. Most of the variances managed by Cass County are in our shore land areas and primarily due to a requested reduction in the setback of new structures or additions on structures that are non-conforming. The Township Planning Commission representatives visit the sites with Cass County Planning Commission and make a recommendation to the Town Board of Supervisors. The Board may modify the recommendation and send it on to the County. Cass County has been very respectful of the opinions of the Township especially in regard to how the variance would relate to the Township Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Commission has crafted a **draft Feedlot Ordinance** which is being reviewed by the Town Board and their legal professionals. Before adoption there will be a public hearing and residents will have the opportunity for input. The Ordinance is quite simple. Primarily the Ordinance requires that any new or expanding feedlots would be required to have a permit with the Township and a basic requirement would be a 1320 foot setback from residential properties.

This Ordinance is not intended to impact raising and grazing of livestock in the township. It is intended to protect a residential population that is rapidly growing from a new, large feedlot from being developed in the township that would have an adverse effect on neighbors. While it would require a 1320 foot setback, it does allow consideration of mitigating circumstances that could allow granting of exceptions and variances. The Ordinance will also protect feedlot owners by requiring anyone wishing to build closer to a feedlot than 1320 feet, to provide a waiver from complaint against a feedlot which is operated according to local, county, state and federal regulations. This acknowledgment would be recorded with the County Recorder as a protection for the feedlot operator.

There are currently very few feedlots in the Township. There is also very little regulation of the feedlots and the noise, dust and odor that can accompany a feedlot. Cass County has no regulation at all since they are a non-delegated county, which means they have chosen to not regulate and leave the regulation to the MPCA. The MPCA does not regulate or monitor odor thus leaving residents potentially exposed.

Again it should be noted that the intent is not to restrict traditional farming that takes place in Sylvan Township. Agriculture has been recognized in the Comprehensive Plan as one of the means to a desired outcome of protecting green space. Agriculture is also a major employer. And probably most important we all enjoy the meat, eggs, vegetables and grain they provide for our use.

The Planning Commission meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM. If you wish to join us and listen in on our discussions you are welcome.

Dave Johnson
Planning Commission, Chair



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Road Report

The Township Road System is the largest investment that Sylvan Township has with 55 plus miles of road. Most of the roads have been paved in previous years. The current cost to pave a mile of road is about \$200,000.00 per mile. With that being said we need to focus on keeping the roads in good condition. Moisture in the form of rain, snow or ice and the increased traffic continues to damage the driving surface.

There are habits that we as Township residents can follow to prolong the life of the Township roads:

- Schedule projects that require heavy loads to be delivered during the summer, fall or winter when the roads are the strongest.
- Drive so that the vehicle tires are on the paved surface. Driving off the edge of the pavement disperses the shoulder material causing wear, erosion and cracking of the pavement edges.
- A wet road is a weak road. Do not place materials such as leaves, dirt, brush, etc. in the ROW ditch. This prevents proper drainage causing a wet road base and a weak road.

As winter approaches I would like to encourage the residents of Sylvan Township to be our "EYES" on the road conditions. The Township Board members do not travel all of the roads in the Township. Letting us know if an area needs attention due to drifting snow, icy conditions, fallen trees or other objects in the road is very much appreciated.

Enter the Township phone number 218-746-3652 in your cell phone and let us know of the situation. Please leave your name and number so a Supervisor can contact you if there is a question.

Sincerely
John Wulff
Co-Road Supervisor
218-838-4395