

SYLVAN TOWN NEWS



**March 14, 2017 Annual Town Meeting will be held at the
Sylvan Town Hall at 7pm**



Chairman's Notes - Greg Booth

Sylvan Township is fortunate to have dedicated people who step up to help our community. In the past year, the Town Board has said thank you and goodbye to two of those people who have given much of their time and energy to the Township, Lee Shade and Roland Anderson. Both Lee and Roland have been true to what Township government is all about, helping the Township operate fairly and efficiently. It can sometimes seem like a thankless job, so we say, "thanks."

We also welcome our newest Board member, Greg Bennett, who already has jumped in to contribute his ideas and energy to Township duties. All of your Board members serve the Township as your direct representatives, so don't hesitate to call us if you have concerns or questions. Township government is still the most grassroots kind of government, where you as a resident can vote directly on your taxes every year. Sylvan is, by population, the largest township in Cass County, and at approximately 2,800, is even larger than any Cass County city. Sylvan is also fortunate to have a full-time clerk/treasurer and part-time deputy clerk, both of whom are very knowledgeable and competent in Township affairs. We also are one of the few Townships in Greater Minnesota to have its own Planning Commission.

The biggest part of the Township budget is roads, so it's no surprise that much of our time spent in and out of meetings is spent on road issues. Some of the more common questions that come up include:

- Why doesn't the Township take care of my road? There are some public roads that are open to public use but are not maintained by the Township or County. In order for a road to be maintained by the Township, it must meet standards and be recorded with the County. There are some Township roads that are "grandfathered in," they don't meet standards but were established and recorded Township roads before the standards were adopted. Roads can be accepted by the Township through several processes – check with a supervisor or clerk to get the details.
- Why didn't the Township plow my road? The Township snow policy calls for plowing when we get two or more inches of snow. Sometimes we plow, or spread salt/sand, if there is less than two inches but conditions call for maintenance. And, if you believe your road has been missed, or is dangerous, you can always call to discuss it with a Township official.
- Why doesn't the Township offer police protection? The Board has looked into contracting or hiring police officers, but has always decided it is not cost effective. We receive excellent service from the Cass County Sheriff Department, and the County has deputies in and near Sylvan Township.

WINTER 2017 Important Dates

March 12, 2017
Daylight Saving Time

March 14, 2017
Annual Town Meeting
7:00 PM Town Hall
Alternative date:
March 21, 2017

April 18, 2017
Board of Equalization:
10:00 AM 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 - 7:00 pm at Pillager Fire Hall

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

Sylvan Town Hall
(218) 746-3652
Hours: Mon.-Fri.
8:30-12:30 pm.
1:00pm-2:30 pm
Email us at:
sylvan@brainerd.net
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, Primary Co-Road & Driveway
Greg Bennett: Co-Road/Driveway & Co-PC Liaison
Arlene Schmit: Co-Road & Driveway Supervisor, Park
Yvette Dullinger: Co-PC Liaison & Fire

Road Report

Fall ended and winter began with the heavy snowfall on November 19th and since then it has been as unique as any other Minnesota winter. The snow brought down many limbs and trees onto the road and road right of way. Many hours have been spent on clean up. Since then, the mild temperatures, small snowfalls, rain and sleet have caused many icy conditions. This has depleted much of the salt/ sand supply for the season.

Looking forward to spring the Township will be having a Pavement Maintenance Plan drafted. This tool will be a great help in keeping the existing paved roads in top condition. As board members change it will be a consistent record of the age of the pavement, what maintenance was done, where and when culverts were installed and if there are underground utilities in the right of way or crossing under the road. It will also help with scheduling and budgeting for surface up grades.

We as a board would like to thank the residents who have notified the Township of road conditions that need to be addressed. It is very much appreciated.

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

Notice:
Road weight restrictions begin on Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2017 on the south side of Hwy. 210.

Park Report 2016 Supervisor Arlene Schmit, Sylvan Park Rep

I would like to share some information with the Sylvan residents about the Pillager Lake Park.

The Pillager Lake Park Board has 4 government entities (City of Pillager, Township of May, Fairview and Sylvan). Each entity appoints a representative to the Park Board. We meet 4 – 5 times a year to discuss improvements needed and maintenance. Each entity pays \$2000 a year for a total of \$8000 to support the Pillager Lake Park. All expenses are paid from the Pillager Lake Park funds.

In 2015 we had storm damage and with a budget of only \$8,000.00 we were unable to finish all the projects that were damaged even with FEMA's help.

The DNR has a boat ramp and a fishing pier at the Park. The DNR will be putting in a new fishing pier this year which will be larger than the previous one. In the summer the Park is busy all week long with children swimming and using the playground equipment. The Park is a real asset to the surrounding area.



Roland Anderson pictured with the Sylvan Town Board members at his last meeting. From left to right: Yvette Adelman-Dullinger, Greg Booth - Chair, John Wulff, Roland and Arlene Schmit.

Planning Commission – Dave Johnson

Sylvan Township has recently completed an inventory and inspection of nearly all of the Individual Sanitary Sewer Systems in the Township. This project was presented to us by the Environmental Services of Cass County in 2013. Grant money was available through The Clean Water Funds from the MN Land and Legacy Amendment. The original Grant was for \$40,680 and required a match from the Township of \$10,170.

The project was managed by Cass County. The County dealt with the letters to property owners, invoices from the inspection companies, grant reporting, and letters to owners indicating compliance or failure once the inspections were complete.

Originally the idea was to inspect up to 500 systems. With better pricing from firms doing the inspection and additional grant dollars and some additional match from the Township nearly all systems were inspected. In order to complete this many inspections, the total project cost was \$56,260 of which the Township contributed \$15,580.

One of the major goals of the Sylvan Township Comprehensive Plan which was updated in 2014 was the protection of water quality throughout the Township. Sylvan Township is the most populated and most urban Township in Cass County. It is also a Township with a great deal of water front property as the Township contains 14 official lakes, many wetlands, two creeks, and two major rivers as part of the Mississippi water shed. Studies have shown that in a highly residential Township such as Sylvan Township the major contributors to degrading of water qualities are septic systems that have failed and storm water runoff from surrounding properties.

An initial step in the process was to send letters to all property owners announcing the inspections. Those who did not wish to participate had the option of opting out of the project. Those who did not opt out were able to have an up-to-date inspection of their system free of charge. An up-to-date inspection is important not only to know that your system is working properly, but also required if the owner would like to sell the property or would be in need of a building permit from the County or the Township.

The results were very impressive. With the original goal of 500 inspections, the final result was nearly 900.

In 2011/12 a similar inspection was done on the properties around Sylvan Lake which was funded by a similar grant and the Sylvan Lake Association. When you add those inspections in with the Township wide inspections there were a total of 1115 systems inspected with 1063 being determined compliant and 52 determined to be non-compliant. This is a compliance rate of over 95% which is higher than anticipated. Those who had systems that were not compliant were notified of a low interest program that they could take advantage of to bring their systems up to standards. There were 352 systems that were not inspected.

This project is very unique and Sylvan Township won the 2015 Local Government Innovation Award for Septic System Inspections for Water Quality. This project would not have happened if not for the work of John Ringle and his staff at the Cass County Environmental Services Dept. and an internship provided by National Joint Powers Alliance in Staples MN.

Cass County will be sending a large map that will likely hang in the town hall showing the inspections. Anyone interested in details of the inspections or seeing the map can stop in to the town hall.

New Planning Commission Member

Terry Quick joined the Planning Commission on January 20, 2017 replacing Greg Bennett who was appointed to the Sylvan Town Board. Terry has lived in Sylvan Township for three years and has been in the area since 1989. Terry owns Quick Construction and has had many interactions with various zoning authorities and will be a great asset to the Planning Commission.



Sylvan Township
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Pillager, MN 56473

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Fax: (218) 746-3612
Website: <http://www.sylvantwp.com>

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Annual Town Meeting Set For March 14, 2017 at 7:00pm

Township residents can participate in grass roots democracy, deciding the annual levy and other important Town issues. The Sylvan Township Annual Meeting will be held Tuesday, March 14, 2017, at 7 p.m. at the Sylvan Town Hall, alternate date will be March 21, 2017.

Proposed 2018 tax levies are:

- General Fund \$ 130,600.00
- Road & Bridge \$ 428,025.00
- Fire Fund \$ 69,000.00

Total Proposed Levy \$ 770,757.00

Last year's levy total was - \$ 849,525.00

Donations

Donations from Townships are very limited by Minnesota Statute. Some of the donations allowed by law include those to county fairs, county historical society, senior centers and youth centers. Any expenditure must be authorized by the Town Board.

AGENDA—tentative

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY TOWN CLERK/TREASURER
 - 1.1 Pledge of Allegiance
2. ELECTION OF MODERATOR FROM COMMUNITY
 - 2.1 Introduction of Board Members
3. CLERK/TREASURER'S REPORTS
 - 3.1 Motion to approve minutes of 2016 Annual Meeting
 - 3.2 2016 Financial Reports—Audit Report on Table
4. TOWN STATUS REPORTS
 - 4.1 Fire Association: Fire Chief Randy Lee
 - 4.2 Planning Commission: Dave Johnson
 - 4.3 Park Board:
 - 4.4 Road & Bridge Supervisors: John Wulff
5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION
 - 5.1 Donations or Other
 - 5.1.1 Cass County Historical Society - Letter
 - 5.1.2 Cass County Ag Society (Fair Board) - Lisa Fletcher
 - 5.1.3 Lakes Area Dive Team
6. SET TAX LEVIES FOR 2018 (see proposed levies at left)
7. MOTION TO SET 2018 ANNUAL MEETING FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2018 at 7:00 pm
8. MOTION TO ADJOURN