

SYLVAN TOWNSHIP NEWS



Important Dates

March 14, 2023
Annual Town Meeting
7:00 PM Town Hall
Alternative date due to inclement weather is
March 21, 2023 7:00 PM

March 24, 2023
Spring Short Course
Town Hall Closed

April 9, 2023
Easter
Town Hall Closed
Monday, April 10, 2023

April 14, 2023
Board of Equalization:
10:00 AM Town Hall

**March 14, 2023 Annual Town Meeting will be held at the
Sylvan Town Hall at 7pm**



MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULES

Town Board Meets:
1st & 3rd Thursdays
Except December

Planning Commission
Meets:
2nd Thursdays

Pillager Lake Park
Advisory Board Meets:
As required

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

Unless otherwise noted
all Town Board and PC
meetings begin at 7:00
PM at Sylvan Town Hall

Chairman's Notes

As a Township resident, you have a lot of direct voting power when it comes to the Annual Township Meeting.

Unlike voting for a local, state or national representative, voting at the annual town meeting means you have a direct say in the annual tax levy, donations, and other Township decisions. Some important decisions made by Sylvan Township residents in the past have included: Approving construction of a new Town Hall, approving the paving of many Township roads, and moving Township elections from March to November.

At the Annual Meeting, the Board does not run the meeting. It is opened by the Town Clerk and then chaired by a Moderator, chosen from the voters attending. Budgets, developed after consideration by the Board, are presented for Township residents to vote on. This sets the levy for the following year. Townspeople can also make motions to donate Township money, but there are statutory restrictions on those donations. For example, money can be donated to a historical society or county fair, but not to charity organizations or local service organizations.

Sylvan Township has the highest population of any city or township in Cass County. But we are still a rural township, with all the advantages that Township government allows. If you've never been to an Annual Meeting, or haven't missed one, join us for some grassroots government on March 14th at 7:00 PM.

Greg Booth
Sylvan Township Chair

Sylvan Town Hall
(218) 746-3652
Hours: Mon.-Fri.
8:00 am - 2:30 pm
Email us at:
info@sylvantwp.com
Website:
www.sylvantwp.com

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

Town Board:
Greg Booth: Chair,
Weeds
Greg Bennett: Vice
Chair, Co-Road &
Driveway, PC Liaison
Bob Johnson:
Co-Road & Driveway
Fire Liaison,
CC Emergency Mgmt.
Arlene Schmit
Co-Road & Driveway,
Pillager Park Board
Keith Card:
MAT - District 1 Board
CC Emergency Mgmt.

BLINDED !!

Bob Johnson, Town Board Supervisor

Ok, here's a question for you...

You're driving down the road at night and you notice a car approaching from the opposite direction has their high beams on. It's hard to see so you give a quick flash of your high beams (Not legal!) just to let them know they forgot to dim theirs, and a quick flash back from them lets you know you weren't being blinded by high beams after all?

I'm pretty sure we've all had similar experiences with bright lights and driving at night particularly as we age and common eye issues associated with aging make it even more of a challenge.

Here's the deal, there's more than aging eyes that are affecting night driving, making people sometimes wish they didn't have to drive at night.....It's the lights!!!!

So what do brighter lights introduce into the night driving experience that affects EVERYBODY?

It's often referred to a Disability Glare:

- Decreased visibility
- Increased reaction times
- Poor recovery times

Note: Dirty or damaged windshields can also be a contributing factor.

Older style sealed beam and halogen headlights were considered insufficient for drivers to see far enough in front of them, especially on darker rural roads, so along came LED's and more recently HID's (High-Intensity Discharge/xenon)

One way light brightness is measured is in lumens.

- A typical halogen bulb puts out about 1300 lumens
- The average LED puts out about 2,000 - 4,000 lumens
- An HID emits anywhere from 2,800 - 5,000 lumens

LED's and HID's also have much higher color temperature of light measured in KELVIN (i.e. white, purple, blue, etc.) and therefore can be much harder on the eyes. With all of the aftermarket upgrade options in brightness and function (which could include adjustability) it's really tough to keep up with the technology, even for some service providers.

There's also state and federal regulations that limit brightness, typically 3,000 lumens max. Other contributing factors are the height of some vehicles compared to others and the addition of brighter fog lights.

So some might say what's the big deal? I need better visibility at night so it's safer for me to drive. If it's a problem for you, get your eyes fixed or don't drive at night.

Besides that take being a little extreme and non realistic, is it really safer for you if the driver coming at you is, practically speaking, driving with their eyes closed?

So, with all that said, what can we do to minimize the potential hazard?

Regulatory efforts are so far behind currently and even if they were updated they would be very difficult to enforce.

(Who wants more regulation anyway?!)

Good news is the United States just approved the use of what's called Adaptive Driving Beam Headlights, commonly used in Europe, wherein bulbs are part of a system with sensors that adapt beam patterns to road conditions or oncoming vehicles.

I know, great going forward but what about now?

I'll share what some of the "experts" recommend:

- *Clean your windows and mirrors*
- *Dim your dashboard lights*
- *Use the night setting on your rear view mirror (It's not just the lights coming at you)*
- *Don't look directly at oncoming headlights. Try to safely direct your gaze towards the right lane marking*
- *Decrease your speed*
- *Pull over until your vision recovers*

Yellow-tinted glasses are mentioned but there's really no evidence to support improvement in nighttime visibility.

If your headlights are an adjustable type they should be checked periodically to ensure proper adjustment.

We also have to be honest about our vision and a visit to the eye doctor might be part of the solution too. Just sayin....

At the end of the day, please drive safely at night.

Update for Sylvan Park by Dave Johnson

The Park Committee met on the 17th of January to set new priorities for the coming year. The Park Committee is made up of individuals that have a desire to be involved in the further development of Sylvan Park. If you are interested in volunteering as an advisor or a worker, be sure to call Sylvan Town Hall and add your name to the list.

For 2023 some of the priorities will be adding more trees, more wildflowers and grasses in the pit area. This year we will be paying more attention to the cleanup and enhancement of the entrance to the park. This work will include a bit of landscaping at the entrance, a new sign on Lower Sylvan Road, moving the gate to a location near the parking lot which will allow more room for pedestrian and handicap accessibility.

The trails will need attention this year. We hope to do some thinning of the dogwood which is part of our forest management plan. The thinning will be part of an effort to improve the views from the trails at the overlooks to Sylvan Lake. Benches at these overlooks as well as a bench at the overlook above the pit area long Sylvan Ridge Trail will be part of this effort. There will be a need to reseed some areas of the trails due to storm damage.

As I have said before “we are in year 4 of a 10-year effort to polish this geographic hunk of coal into the gem that will be enjoyed by everyone in the area.”

If you like to snowshoe this is your time. The trails are waiting for you. Supervisor Bob Johnson has plowed part of the entrance road large enough that two cars will be able to park off Lower Sylvan Road. The trails are seldom used in the winter, and you can enjoy the solitude and the views with little interruption.

If you visit the Sylvan Township website, you will see a complete list of the ideas discussed at our meeting and the priorities of that list.

Road Report by Greg Bennett

Sylvan Township had another busy year in 2022 for road projects. Completed road projects included paving Zebroski Acres Lane and 134th Avenue. We were also able to complete an overlay on Hardy Lake Road. Projects that have been identified by the Sylvan Township Road Committee for consideration in 2023 include possibly overlaying Little Pine Road, Golf Course Circle, Ace Drive, and Crow Wing Circle. A final decision has not been determined as of yet, however, the board is hoping to be able to approve at least one of these roads this year.

As always, the board asks that all residents keep the road right-of-way clear of all obstructions (such as trees, plants, and posts) all year long. It is also the responsibility of each resident to clear snow from in front of or around their mailbox. Garbage cans should never be left in the street. Please keep all containers in your driveway to allow the plows to completely remove snow. Residents are also reminded that it is unlawful under **Minnesota Statute 160.271**, to plow snow from driveways onto or across County or Township roads.

We appreciate feedback from our residents as to what we can do better to create safe roads.

Pillager Lake Park Report by Arlene Schmit

The Pillager Lake Park Board has 4 government entities. Each entity appoints a representative to the Park Board. City of Pillager - Wade Mortenson, Townships of May – Bianca Wyffels, Fairview – Walt Richmond and Sylvan – Arlene Schmit.

We have been very lucky the last few years and have had some good park hosts and hope they will return next year.

We need to do some improvements to our play equipment and add some Class 5 to the road. Otherwise, our park is in pretty good shape. If you have any ideas or would like to be a park host please contact Arlene Schmit at 218-251-1048.



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info@sylvantwp.com

Annual Town Meeting Set For March 14, 2023 at

Township residents can participate in grassroots democracy, deciding the annual levy and other important Town issues. The Sylvan Township Annual Meeting will be held Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 7 p.m. at the Sylvan Town Hall, alternate date due to inclement weather will be March 21, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Proposed 2024 tax levies are:

- General Fund \$ 137,700.00
- Road & Bridge \$ 500,000.00
- Fire Fund \$ 106,588.00

Total Proposed Levy \$ 744,288.00

Last year's levy total was: \$ 727,022.00

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 2022 Annual Meeting
 - 3.2 2022 Financial Reports—Audit Report on Table
4. TOWN STATUS REPORTS
 - 4.1 Fire Association:
 - 4.2 Planning Commission:
 - 4.3 Pillager Park Board: Arlene Schmit
 - 4.4 Road & Bridge Supervisor: Arlene Schmit
 - 4.5 Cass County Sheriff: Sheriff Welk
5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION
 - 5.1 Donations or Other
 - 5.1.1 Cass County Historical Society /Museum- Letter
 - 5.1.2 Cass County Ag Society (Fair Board) - Lisa Fletcher
6. SET TAX LEVIES FOR 2024 (see proposed levies at left)
7. MOTION TO SET 2024 ANNUAL MEETING FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024 at 7:00 pm
8. MOTION TO ADJOURN