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2023 Summer Newsletter

10599 Twin Lake Rd NE Mancelona MI 49659

Phone (231)587-8354 Fax (231)587-4066

www.bluelaketwpkalkaska.org

### Township Hall Office Hours

**Supervisor:** Thurs 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Sat 10:00 AM – Noon

**Clerk:** Tues 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Treasurer:** Wed 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Assessor:** 2nd & 4th Sat 10:00 AM – Noon

**Zoning Dept:**  Fri & Sat 10:00 AM – Noon

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**Township Telephone Numbers You May Need:** ***(In an Emergency Call 911)***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Supervisor | Blair Shearer | Home: 231-587-5698 | [blsuper@torchlake.com](mailto:blsuper@torchlake.com) |
| Clerk | Tracy Nichol | Home: 231-587-9644 | [blclerk@torchlake.com](mailto:blclerk@torchlake.com) |
| Treasurer | Christine Almose | Home: 231-587-9593 | [bltreas@torchlake.com](mailto:bltreas@torchlake.com) |
| Trustee | Mary Shaw | Home :231-587-8468 | maryshaw@torchlake.com |
| Trustee | Larry Shoemaker | Home: 231-587-0723 | gladysshoemaker90@yahoo.com |
| Township Assessor | Tom Sheneman | Home: 231-499-5039 | [blassessor@torchlake.com](mailto:blassessor@torchlake.com) |
| Zoning Admin | Jonna Schuhart | Home: 231-564-1341 | [blzoning@torchlake.com](mailto:blzoning@torchlake.com) |
| Blue Lake Fire Dept. | Chief Greg Brierley | Home: 734-216-9137 | bluelakefirechief@att.net |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Phone Number** | **Other County Numbers of Interest:** | **Phone Number** |
| GFL Environmental (Trash) | 231-258-9030 | Kalkaska County Road Commission | 231-258-2242 |
| Kalkaska County  Commissioner: Kohn Fisher | 231-258-5178 | Kalkaska Animal Control | 231-258-3309 |
| Kalkaska Sheriff Department | 231-258-8686 | DNR Burning Permit  http://www.dnr.state.mi.us.burnpermits | 866-922-2876 |
| Kalkaska County Office Building | 231-258-3300 | EGLE (formally DEQ) | 989-619-3740 |
|  |  | RAP Poaching Hotline | 800-292-7800 |

**Township Meetings**

The Board meets the first Wednesday of every month at 7:00 PM at the township Hall. We welcome everyone to attend.

**Drop Box**

The Township has a secure drop box located between the office and hall doors. For your convenience this can be used to drop off any correspondence (for example: voter information or taxes).

**Fire and Rescue Department**

We are staffed with volunteers and are always seeking new members. Volunteers are paid for their time coming to meetings, taking classes, and during runs. Please feel free to call Fire Chief, Greg Brierely at 734-216-9137 or simply stop by the fire barn on Monday evenings. We meet every Monday evening at 7:00 PM. We would be happy to meet with you and talk about your options.

**From the Clerk’s Desk**

Michigan has moved the date for the 2024 Presidential Primary election to the 4th Tuesday of the month, February 27, 2024. The General Election will remain the same, the first Tuesday of November, November 5, 2024. It is still undetermined how Michigan’s Proposal 2 that was passed in 2022, will alter elections for early in person voting. Our polls will be open from 7:00 AM until 8:00 PM. If you would like an absentee ballot for any reason, please contact the Clerk (231.587.8354 or [blclerk@torchlake.com](mailto:blclerk@torchlake.com) and the Request for Absentee Ballot” will be mailed to you.

You can also print out an Absentee Voter Application request from our website. Under DEPARTMENTS and Services click on ELECTIONS and under Absentee Voting you can click on the link to print the form and mail it, drop it off, fax it, or email it to the Clerk at the township hall.

**From the Treasurer’s Desk**

Summer taxes are due by Thursday, September 14, 2023. The treasurer’s office will be open that day to collect payments. If your payment arrives to Blue Lake Township via US Postal Service and is postmarked on or before September 14, 2023, your payment will be accepted as paid in full. If post marked, hand delivered or put in the drop box after September 14,2023 you will be billed an additional penalty of 1%.per month until paid.

Winter taxes will be mailed out by December 1, 2023, and will be due by February 14, 2024. After February 14 you will incur a 3% penalty on unpaid taxes. The last day to pay your taxes to the township is February 29, 2024. March 1, 2024 delinquent taxes will be sent to Kalkaska County Treasurer’s office and additional penalties will be imposed.

**You can also look up what you owe in property taxes by going to our website** [www.bluelaketwpkalkakaska.org](http://www.bluelaketwpkalkakaska.org)

Under DEPARTMENTS & SERVICES click on TAXES, in the far right-hand column is a PAID/UNPAID list in alphabetical order by last name.

**Tax Loss**

As a result of a business moving $39,000,000 in Personal Property Taxes into a new classification Blue Lake Township is incurring a loss of 29% in tax revenue for the 2023-24 tax collecting year.

**Received** **Tax Income** **Projected**

**2022** **2023** **Loss**

General Fund .8123 mill $95,525 $67,704 $27,821

Fire Fund 1.8 mill $211,686 $150,028 $61,658

Trash 1 mill $117,601 $83,349 $34,252

Highway 1.5 mill $176,601 $125,023 $51,381

The move is being contested at the Michigan Tax Tribunal by a group of townships. Both our attorney and our Assessor suggested Blue Lake not contest the move as whatever the outcome of the class action will apply to the entire state. The Michigan legislators made the changes in Personal Property Tax Classifications to provide some tax relief to small businesses, thus encouraging their potential growth. There are plans to reimburse the entities effected but the amount can be anywhere from 0 to 100%. Not promising or reassuring when townships need to budget. To compare, in 2013-14, we suffered a loss of $4,221 per mill and this upcoming tax season we will be losing $34,252 a mill.

**Free Property Fraud Alert for All Kalkaska County Taxpayers**

Kalkaska County is offering a free service which will alert you on ANY document recorded with your name match. Once a document is recorded you will be contacted by phone or email within 48 hours.

Sign up for free at [www.propertyfraudalert.com](http://www.propertyfraudalert.com)

Your contact information is not shared with any entities; it is used strictly for notification purposes. Please contact JoAnn DeGraaf, Kalkaska County Register of Deeds with any questions at 231-258-3315

**Help Keep Our Lakes Clean**

The Blue Lake – Coldsprings Civic Association recently held their annual Memorial Weekend meetingand President, Bob Barr, provided valuable information on keeping our lakes clean and pristine. He reviewed the lake monitors results for clarity, phosphorus, and chlorophyll testing and reported that the numbers reflect that the lakes are in good condition. Also discussed was shoreline development and the use of fertilizers on lake lots. It was noted that it is best to use natural/organic phosphorus-free fertilizers and to leave shorelines and natural as possible to help with erosion and filtering of runoff. Helpful information is found on the MiCorps website <https://micorps.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/CLMP-Score-the-Shore-Factsheet.pdf>

**Planning Commission Update**

The Township Planning Commission has been hard at work updating several township Ordinances. The well-attended public meeting held on June 17 was to discuss the proposed changes to several Ordinances: Nonconformities, Short Term Rental, Shipping Containers, Accessory Building Size & Height, Kennels and a new Noise Ordinance. The proposed changes will be presented to the township board at their next meeting on July 12 for a vote of approval. A complete list of the proposed changes can be found on the website. The next Planning Commission meeting is Tuesday, July 25 at 7:00PM.

**Blue Lake Township Road Improvements**

The Township Road Plan this year is to complete the restoration of Blue Lake Road from County Road 612 north to the point where the new pavement is at Bell Avenue. The road will be capped with new pavement from 612 north to the culvert on the hills. The remaining section from the culvert north to the intersection at Bell Avenue will be chip sealed. Both sections will get new shoulders which we are quoting to complete in crushed limestone instead of standard road gravel. The limestone stands up better to the snow plowing and should last longer than standard road gravel. Many of our roads deteriorate from the shoulders causing the need for new pavement, driving our focus to improve the shoulder portion of the roads, and as a result reduce future costs. The Township Board will receive the final quotes from the County for the work soon and approve it for work late this summer if it is in our budget. For the future the volunteer committee is going to evaluate the 10-year plan to adjust for the tax revenue reductions the Township has experienced, this will undoubtedly impact our plan.

**New Zoning Administrator**

Jonna Schuhart is our new Zoning Administrator. She is available at the township office on Friday’s and Saturday’s from 10am-Noon or can be reached anytime at 231-564-1341.

**Zoning Permits**

A Zoning Permit shall not be issued until all other necessary permits required by State, County, or Local regulations, including well and septic system approvals have been obtained or waived with exception of those permits issued by the Kalkaska County Building Department and County Soil Erosion, Sedimentation, and Storm Water Runoff Control Office. The location of the property boundaries and all structures shall be staked on the ground for Zoning Administrator approval prior to the issuance of the Zoning Permit. You can view the Zoning Ordinance and Permits requirements online at our website under: DEPARTMENTS and SERVICES, click on Zoning and Permits. You will find these on the right-hand side of the page.

### Trash Pickup

**Residential trash pickup is on Monday by GFL Environmental with a 5-bag limit per household.** Boxes of garbage or large items that do not have a sticker on them will not be picked up. Household items only, no construction material will be collected. If a holiday falls on Monday, pickup will be on Tuesday. Please do not put out trash that is not bagged - our contract with GFL Environmental is for bagged trash only. If you put your trash out before Monday morning, please have your trash in an animal proof receptacle. Dogs, cats, ravens, and raccoons are just some of the critters who love to spread trash around. FYI: scattered trash violates the nuisance ordinance, and a ticket may be issued.

**If your old refrigerator or freezer is no longer working**, you can call GFL Environmental for pick up at 231-258-9030. However, they will not pick up your old appliance unless the freon has been removed and has a sticker documenting the removal.

B & T Appliance on Woodmere in Traverse City will accept your old appliance for recycling for $25.00. Phone 231-947-0465 for more information.

**Tire Recycling –** Upper Lakes tire in Grayling - 989-732-9432 will take your old tires for $2.50 per tire. Express Tire in Kalkaska - 231-258-2300 will accept them for $5.00 per tire. GFL will not pick up tires.

Large items require a sticker for pick-up and are available at the township hall.

**Land Splits & Divisions**

All land divisions, new lot lines, and lot combinations must comply with Blue Lake Township Ordinances and the State Land Division Act. There are requirements as to road access, the size and shape of the lots, and the number of lots that can be created. An application and more information are available on the web site under “Zoning and Permits”. An application fee of $50 and a $20 per split administration fee is required. Your completed application and fees must be submitted to the Blue Lake Township Land Division Agent, the Assessor, Tom Sheneman.

**Short Term Rental Property**

The Zoning Ordinance requires short term rental properties be registered with the Blue Lake Township Zoning Administrator. It also requires that owners post an information sheet in a conspicuous location within the property which should include trash pickup, lake regulations etc. Applications and a complete list of requirements can be found at the township hall or through the Zoning Administrator.

**Wave Boats/High Water**

**ATTENTION BOATERS! With lake levels still at all-time highs, please be courteous of the erosion caused to our shorelines, seawalls, and homes from high speed boat wake action.**

DNR watercraft rules require that boating activity stay a minimum of 100 feet away from stationary structures “i.e.: docks, swim rafts or shorelines”. Please travel counterclockwise around lake.

**Eagle and North Crooked Lake** – slow, no wake.

**Bass, Indian, Little Twin, North Blue and Squaw lake**s – No high-speed boating or water skiing or towing. Boats and Pontoons should go slowly with minimum wake.

**Big Twin, Big Blue, Starvation Lakes** – No high-speed (no wake) boating between 7:30PM – 11:00AM

**Township Hall Available**

The Township Hall is available for your personal use. It requires an application to be completed and a $50 deposit. If the usage rules are followed and the hall is left clean, the deposit will be refunded. Call the hall at 231-587-8354 during office hours or visit our web site and look under “Events - Hall Rental” for further information.

**Broadband Service**

The Township maintains a Public Access Wi-Fi system at the Township Hall. If you have a compatible computer, you can use it in and around the Township Hall to access the Internet. It works in the parking lot but if you are there during office hours come in and use the table inside.

**County Recycle Center**

The County Recycle Center located at 904 Island Lake Road has closed but the County of Kalkaska has recently completed a contract with GFL Environmental to provide 3 large recycle bins outside at the Recycle Center. Recycle bins are also available at CETA Hall and behind the Kaliseum. Bins will be emptied by GFL every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

**Kalkaska Public Transit Authority**

Kalkaska County Residents 60 years of age and older can ride free of charge on all KPTA buses. This Senior Ride Free program is provided through a contract between Kalkaska Public Transit Authority and Kalkaska County Commission on Aging. Currently the service is for transportation within Kalkaska County only and does not apply to trips going into Grand Traverse County. For additional information regarding this service, please feel free to contact KPTA at 231-258-6808 or the COA at 231-258-5030.

**Kalkaska Memorial Health Center**

Kalkaska Memorial Hospital has 24/7 emergency services that are available with new physicians and extended services. Located at 419 S Coral Street. Visit their website [www.munsonhealthcare.org/kmhc](http://www.munsonhealthcare.org/kmhc) for more information. KMHC has also opened a Walk-in Care Clinic attached to the Medical Associates Offices. The first check-in window is dedicated to walk-in registration. No appointments are necessary. All patients are welcome and served on a first come first served basis. The clinic is open Monday thru Friday Noon - 8 PM. Saturday from 8 AM - Noon. They are closed on Sunday. Office call pricing will be charged for each visit.



Photo courtesy of Susan George

**Visit our website** [**www.bluelaketwpkalkaska.org**](http://www.bluelaketwpkalkaska.org) **for more township information**