

## **SUPERVISOR COMMENTS**

### **February 2020**

**Don't forget the launch for the Transfer Station Tags program begins March 1 ... You must have the yellow tag visible in your vehicle to use the Transfer Station.**

**The Recycling Sad Story Without a Happy Ending ...** The following appeared on January 29<sup>th</sup> in the Arenac Independent, so we'll use it as a launch-pad to discuss the Transfer Station and the status of recycling as it is today ...

*Dear Editor,*

*My wife and I are appalled that Sims Township transfer station no longer accepts recyclables. We were informed in our tax bill that recycling would be suspended as of 1 January 2020 until further notice. In an attempt to vocalize our concern, we attended the Sims township meeting on Tuesday where we learned that most of the township council was not even aware of the discontinuation of recycling at our facility. In fact, once it was brought to their attention there was little if any concern. We found this disturbing and were upset. We were told to contact Waste Management in Tawas for our recycling, but they do not handle individual recycling drops. Since that meeting, we have been searching for recycling centers where we can continue recycling and be responsible for protecting our planet. Sadly, we are not having much luck. My wife and I are appalled over the lack of township concern regarding this!! We have been recycling for 20+ years, and it is not easy to throw away plastic, cans and bottles. Mother Earth cannot sustain the pollution and damage caused by not recycling. The ocean and dump sites are filled with plastics and hazardous materials that will never decompose!!! We hope Sims township will find a solution to this problem so that our community can continue doing the right thing! Respectfully submitted, [Sims Residents ...].*

As you may or may not know, for the last few years we have had the services of both Waste Management and Sunrise Disposal servicing the needs of residents at the S/W Transfer Station. WM took care of the garbage and Sunrise took care of recyclables for paper, plastic, cardboard and metals. Last Fall, the Board was informed by Sunrise that effective the beginning of 2020, they would no longer be doing any recycling. The bottom line is, the world-wide demand for plastics and cardboard is no longer the way it was 10-15 years ago and with no demand,

recyclers can't make enough money to make it profitable. Regarding metals, that's a little different story as there is a little money that can still be made, and it's all driven by the market. For instance, two weeks ago, steel was about \$115/ton where last week it was about \$95/ton and those prices are no where near where they were say, ten years ago. In addition, the board still pays about \$40 to dump each of those small dumpsters and the townships get no fees from Sunrise on the recycle profit. It's the same price to dump garbage from the same size dumpster. Since our contract with Sunrise was only for recycling, we will not be renewing that contract and are looking for a different source to handle the metals portion of recycling. We will amend the WM contract to include an additional six dumpsters to replace the ones that Sunrise will remove, hopefully this week. Regarding the letter to the editor, the townships are limited on what we can demand from vendors, and if they can't provide the service, there is nothing the townships can do about it. This is both a state-wide and national problem that started off as a good way to protect the planet, but like many other things, has fallen on hard times and changing policies.

**Lake Issues Will Continue ...** *According to a recent MLive report, forecasts for Great Lakes water levels to keep rising means Michigan's related costs will climb into the hundreds of millions of dollars as the state confronts the impact. EGLE [DEQ] already has streamlined the permitting process for shoreline property owners seeking to build seawalls and take other measures to protect their property. Typically, a state declaration is requested by local jurisdictions after it's exhausted its resources, In other steps, town hall meetings will be scheduled around the state this spring. Officials said details will be announced soon. As a township, we will be keeping our finger on the pulse of the state as to any help and resources available in the months ahead.*

**The Year of Elections ...** Our Staff, plus several election volunteers had election training last week in Deep River and they will be involved in other training seminars over the next several months. For this year, we have elections in March, August and November. We hope everyone will get out and vote.

**Final Thought ...** Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Bill Gates, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci and Albert Einstein. B. Sage ...