



BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Meet new Chief of Police James Gallagher

James Gallagher is many things: a husband, a father of two, a Ferris State University alumni, and as of July 1, 2022 the Bloomfield Township Chief of Police. Chief Gallagher started in the BTPD in 2000 and has served as a Field Training Officer, a Dispatch Trained Officer and a member of the Oakland County Narcotics Team before succeeding outgoing Chief Philip Langmeyer. He looks forward to continuing to lead the department with empathy while reflecting on the accomplishments that led to becoming chief.

"I want to ensure that BTPD treats both residents and visitors to the community with dignity and respect," said Gallagher. Maintaining the first class service of the police in the community is a high priority for him, and this happens by instilling leadership qualities through all ranks of the department. In his ten years as a FTO, Gallagher came to realize, "Field Training Officer is one of the single most important jobs in the department. You're a mentor to new recruits as they begin training for the job. You set the example of how to act in a BTPD uniform. You're a new officer's first exposure to supervision and your expectations carry throughout their entire career."

He is also a Dispatch Trained Officer, which not only requires knowledge of changing technology, but made him keenly aware

of how important dispatch is.

"Dispatchers set the tone for someone's entire experience with the police. They are the first contact in law enforcement



Chief James Gallagher

when someone calls 911. Responding officers need important information quickly and if dispatch does their job well, the police can do their job well." Expanding the staff and capabilities of dispatch is another priority for Chief Gallagher, who said, "We do not outsource this responsibility and we never want to outsource this responsibility because it is such a highly important job."

Partnering with other organizations and working together was instrumental in the success of stopping drug dealers when he served as a member of the Oakland County Narcotics Team. Building community relationships in the Township is key to a healthy police department and he looks forward to

continuing the department bond with schools and other community partners.

"Educating residents on safety such as gun safety and traffic safety is essential to a safe community – it does not begin and end with public safety officials, he said."

Reflecting on his path from receiving a Criminal Justice Degree at Ferris State University to Chief of Police, Gallagher boils success down to one word: dignity. "Self-respect is important to becoming a good police officer because it allows you to respect others. In a situation with law enforcement it is important to never take away an individual's dignity. If dignity remains intact, we can safely do our jobs and maintain the community's trust."



New Chief James Gallagher, left, takes over from retiring Chief Phil Langmeyer.



BLOOMFIELD
TOWNSHIP
BOARDS
2022

ELECTED OFFICIALS

ADMINISTRATION

Dani Walsh, Supervisor
Martin C. Brook, Clerk
Brian Kepes, Treasurer

TRUSTEES

Neal J. Barnett
Michael Schostak
Stephanie Fakih
Valerie Murray

APPOINTED POSITIONS

PLANNING COMMISSION

Thomas Petinga, Chairman
Jeff Salz, Vice Chairman
Neal Barnett
Richard Atto
Bruce Selik
Andrea B. O'Donnell
John Kelly

BOARD OF APPEALS

Brian Henry, Chairman
Jocelyn Giangrande, Vice Chairman
Robert Taylor, Jr.
Andrea O'Donnell
Stephanie Fakih
Ed Ford
Scott Gittleman
Carol Rosati, Alternate
Glenda Meads, Alternate

Save the Date...**August 2**

Primary election

September 14

Last day to pay Summer Tax without interest

October 1

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day

November 5

E-Waste, Shredding & Medication Disposal Event



Board of Trustees

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

DATE: 2nd and 4th Monday

LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Planning Commission

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

DATE: 1st and 3rd Monday

LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Zoning Board of Appeals

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

DATE: 2nd Tuesday

LOCATION: Township Auditorium

NOTE: The Charter Township of Bloomfield will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services at all meetings to individuals with disabilities. All such requests must be made at least five days prior to said meeting. Please contact the Bloomfield Township Clerk's Office, 4200 Telegraph Road P.O. Box 489 Bloomfield Hills MI 48303--0489 248-433-7702 Fax: 248-433-7714

Questions about absentee voting? Find answers here

The Primary Election will be held Tuesday, August 2, 2022, and a series of Q&A videos have been produced to answer questions regarding absentee voting in Bloomfield Township. Such questions as Who Handles Elections in Bloomfield Township? Who Can Vote Absentee and How Do I Get an Absentee Ballot? When Do I Get My Absentee Ballot? are answered.

I hope you find these videos useful.

Remember to Exercise Your Right to Vote!

Martin C. Brook, Bloomfield Township Clerk


Q/A Videos

You can find the Q&A videos on the Township website. Use the QR code at right to access all the Q&A videos.

9.11 Memorial 5K/10K supports Police

The Bloomfield Township Police Honor Guard is proud to present the first 9.11 Memorial 5K/10K. Run through beautiful Bloomfield on a classic course that goes through scenic neighborhoods surrounding Bloomfield Hills High School. The course has shaded gravel roads, hilly terrain and beautiful residential areas. This is a great event for all ages and abilities.



All funds raised will go to the Bloomfield Township Police Honor Guard to help cover the cost of uniform maintenance, equipment, and travel. The main purpose of the Honor Guard is to honor and stand watch over law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice. The team is self-funded from donations and fundraisers.

Scan the QR code at left to register.

Grants help Township maintain high standards of Public Safety

Every Bloomfield Township Police Officer in uniform is required to wear a bullet proof vest. The Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Program reimburses jurisdictions up to 50 percent of the cost of body armor vests purchased for law enforcement officers.

Grants such as this are essential to police and fire maintaining the highest levels of service in the state. "Researching and applying for eligible grants is critical to funding infrastructure that keeps our officers safe, our residents safe, upholds transparency in policing, and educates and trains our staff," said Police Chief James Gallagher. Grants assisted with paying for dash cameras in every police vehicle and body cameras for every officer.

The Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority has awarded Risk Avoidance Programs (RAP Grants) that fund innovative projects and tools. MMRMA helps members by fund leadership, education, training and authorized certification and accreditation programs.

A recent grant that has been a huge success has been the ability to hire Co-Responder

Clinician Hillary Nusbaum, a social worker, through a partnership with Oakland County Health Network. Nusbaum splits time between the Township and three other communities, specializing in cases related to mental health. Thanks to this new grant, a second social worker will be added soon.

The Fire Department has received grants that have helped purchase Self Contained Breathing Apparatuses, cardiac monitors and a SOAR Truck. Additional grants include one that assists in paying for treating cancers associated with toxic chemicals related to firefighting. Grants have allowed for the purchase of a SOAR truck shared between communities to help fight 2-alarm fires.

Grants allow the safest communities to stay safe by providing and assisting in the purchases of materials and training that allow public safety officers to go above and beyond. Bloomfield Township is proactive in searching out grants that help maintain our high standards of excellence.



A NOTE FROM Dani Walsh, Bloomfield Township Supervisor

Why is there a millage request on the August ballot?

Collaboration is key in municipal government and has been one of my favorite parts of the job. The way the Board of Trustees has worked together to focus on services and sustainability of our Township has been nothing short of amazing. The administration has found efficiencies in our departments, sought out even more grants, and strengthened our regional partnerships with other communities in shared services like our Police Co-Responder program. I also tasked former police Chief Langmeyer to solve the issue of overweight trucks destroying our major roads. He and Sergeant Shoemaker worked with DPW Director Noah Mehalski to create our weigh station on the Township campus. We now have 4 officers trained to spot, inspect, and fine overweight vehicles and to get the word out to the trucking companies to either comply with weight restrictions or find another route.

We also faced the 2018 question of, how can we provide long term stabilization of our public safety resources and services without going outside our 10 mil cap? The changes we made improved our financial standing, so we no longer needed to go outside the millage cap and ask for a SAD. We looked back at 2018 and saw that it failed for a few main reasons: a SAD assessed us above our means of 10-mils, was not a dedicated millage, and there were too many millages that required special elections on

off years. We listened to the residents and went to work on restructuring, rethinking, and reprioritizing so we address the 2018 concerns from the residents.

Since legal ballot language always makes simple concepts very confusing and frustrating to decipher, due to statutory requirements, here is my best attempt at explaining the proposed police millage ballot proposal and what is being asked of all of us residents in regular English.

1. This is a millage under our 10 mil cap, not a SAD. Making this a millage, and not a SAD, makes us more accountable to stay within our 10 mil means of taxing. The SAD process is meant for neighborhoods to improve their individual infrastructure, not as a way for the Township to go outside our cap.

2. This is a dedicated millage, not a general fund millage and elected officials can only use these dedicated funds for public safety. As a result the residents know the money will be focused on providing the best resources, equipment, and first responders necessary when you call us in crisis.

3. We combined two public safety millages into one new millage with an increase. We currently have four separate dedicated public safety millages. Two of those millages are voted on in off year elections that are costly and have lower attendance. Combining public safety millages to eliminate special elec-

tions saves money and encourages voter response.

- **Cost benefit of saving over \$125,000** by eliminating a special election next year

- **Higher attendance means a greater voice** – the highest voter turnout occurs in the gubernatorial and presidential election cycles. Combining millages on those ballot cycles increases the number of people who vote.

4. Staying under the cap, even with the requested increase. The increase still puts us lower than the last 40 years due to Headlee roll-backs.

- 1982 we had four public safety millages totaling 7.4056 mils

- 2004 we had four public safety millages totaling 6.4486 mils

- This proposal will cut us to three millages and with the increase will have public safety millages totaling 6.4087 mils

5. Provides sustainability for capital expenditures like ambulances, bulletproof vests, fire trucks, and lifesaving equipment that is currently bought with grants. We will continue to solicit those grants, but grants are not guaranteed and sometimes don't cover the whole amount. For example, we got a \$500,000 grant from the state of Michigan for our SOAR truck in the Fire Department. That grant process took almost 2 years. In that time the price of the vehicle went up to \$800,000 due to supply chain issues and

we must now make up the \$300,000.

6. Allows the Township to bring back services like the neighborhood traffic patrol as a presence to slow down drivers in neighborhoods. Since that unit was removed in 2018, the most common call to the police (outside of criminal activity) are the ones about increased traffic speeds, volumes, and noise levels in the neighborhoods.

7. Helps reduce overtime costs and burnout within the fire department to reduce potential risk to first responders and to residents.

Current staffing has caused about \$700,000 in overtime over the last year to staff when people are sick or out with injuries. Although it is legal to have a responder who is working on 48 or 72-hour back-to-back shifts, it is not an ideal model. By staffing at levels on 24-hour shifts, you are better served with fresh and ready first responders and they are more likely to stay here with a good work/life balance as well.

This is a dedicated millage, under the 10-mil cap, and combines two millages to reduce the number of elections and move them to the busier election cycles for higher turnout. Unfortunately, these facts get lost in translation with the legal wording required for the ballot language. I hope this description helps explain what the ballot proposal is asking for, so you have the information you need to make your decision.

BT firefighters participate in Oakway Mass Casualty Drill

Bloomfield Township Police and Fire are always training for high risk/low frequency events. This June, Fire Department EMS Coordinator Mike Sova

participate in a Mass Casualty Drill from dispatch to resolution. Recreating the scene of an active shooter, training included how to arrive on the scene, assess injuries and

BTFD. "We trained to treat wounds by applying tourniquets and packing wounds with gauze and dressing. We also trained to set up a triage area to assess wounds and prioritize the evacuation of victims to hospitals. For this training we partnered with St. Joseph Mercy Hospital to practice transportation to a medical facility."

Sova was proud to represent BTFD at this training and to work to better the

response of OAKWAY communities in the event a tragedy such as this strikes. OAKWAY comprises the Township, Southfield, Birmingham, West Bloomfield Township, Royal Oak, Waterford Regional, Madison Heights, Rochester Hills, Farmington Hills, and Ferndale. All communities work to support and aide each other in emergencies, with over 600 firefighters representing the communities.



Battalion Chief VanHeck instructing OAKWAY area first responders on the initial steps of commanding a mass casualty emergency.

helped organize the annual OAKWAY Mass Casualty Incident Event at the UMW Sports Complex in Pontiac. Over two days, multiple classes and training sessions prepared OAKWAY area firefighters and paramedics to

effectively get the victims to a hospital as quickly as possible.

"Unfortunately, we must no longer have the mind frame of 'prepare for this in case it happens,' but 'prepare for this when it happens,'" said Sova, a thirteen year veteran of



BTFD firefighter/paramedics check the pulse of a simulated shooting victim in order to train on triaging, treating and transporting victims of shooting events.

August 2 election includes Public Safety millage replacement request

On Tuesday, August 2, the primary election includes a Combined Public Safety Millage Replacement to fund police, fire and safety throughout Bloomfield Township. Bloomfield Township currently has four public safety millages. Millage 3 is set to expire in December 2023 and millage 4 is set to expire in December 2022. The ballot proposal asks if millages 3 and 4 should be combined to create one new millage at 3.89 mils or \$3.89 per \$1,000 of taxable value beginning in December of 2023 and lasting for 10 years.

If the millage passes, Police Chief Jimmy Gallagher looks to reinstate a Traffic Unit, which would include four officers dedicated to addressing the number one reason for

complaints to the department. These complaints include speeding in neighborhoods and noise pollution along Woodward Avenue. The Traffic Unit would also manage the dedicated truck weighing station. This station helps insure trucks don't carry loads that are

too heavy, thus helping preserve the roads from additional wear and tear. Fire Department Chief John LeRoy is hoping to return to appropriate staffing levels that will help avoid overtime expenses, which totaled \$700,000 in 2021. Additionally, ageing safety equipment is scheduled to be replaced and costs for equipment have increased 20-30% due to global procurement issues.



BT police officers and firefighters are dedicated to keeping residents and visitors safe.

What is the Headlee Amendment and how does it impact millage rates?

"Almost every year, since they were voted in, ten, twenty years ago, millages get rolled back. They go down most years, except when there is an exceptional downturn in the housing market" said Darrin Kraatz, Director of the Assessing Department for Bloomfield Township. "Many people don't know this," he continued.

These rollbacks are a result of the Headlee Amendment to Michigan's constitution, which passed in 1978. Since this time, units of government are required to annually calculate a Headlee rollback factor. The annual factor is then added to Headlee rollback factors determined in prior years resulting in a cumulative Headlee rollback factor sometimes referred to as the "millage reduction fraction."

This total "millage reduction fraction" is then applied to the millage originally authorized by charter, state statute, or a vote of the people. In summary, the actual mills available to be levied by a unit of local government is the product of the authorized millage rate times the total millage reduction fraction. This is known as the "Headlee maximum allowable millage."

According to the Michigan

Municipal League, local governments were allowed to "roll up" their millage rates when growth on existing property was less than inflation until Proposal A legislation passed in 1994. The 1994 change to the General Property Tax Act has prevented local governments from being able to share in the benefits of any substantial market growth in existing property values.

Uncapped values are treated as growth on existing property and trigger Headlee rollbacks. For local govern-

ments levying at their Headlee maximum authorized millage, rolling back the maximum authorized millage rate reduces the revenue that would have been generated from these increased property values. The increase in the taxable value of property not transferred is capped at the lesser of inflation or five percent. Even though the taxable value of a particular piece of property increases at the rate of inflation, the millage rate for the entire community is "rolled back" as a result of the

increase in the total taxable value of the community. The net result is a less than inflationary increase in the actual dollars received from property taxes.

Jason Theis, Bloomfield Township Finance Director, created the chart below to demonstrate how tax revenue will continue to fall behind inflationary increases due to Prop A and the Headlee Amendment, resulting in public safety staff levels remaining low at 22 fewer personnel than in 2008.

Value of Tax Dollar with Inflation Since 2008



Check the Dashboard

How does Bloomfield Township stand financially compared to other communities?

You can find out at a glance by looking at the dashboard. It can be found on the home page of the Township website, www.bloomfield-twp.org. Just look for Citizen's Guide and Dashboard under Quick Links at the right of the home page.

A wide array of financial information about the Township – and data about communities across Michigan - is available on the site.

Scan to follow us on social media or to sign up for the eNewsletter. Get all the latest information!





BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP

4200 TELEGRAPH ROAD

PO BOX 489

BLOOMFIELD MI 48303-0489

TOWNSHIP DIRECTORY

Water/Sewer Emergency
433-7730

Administration	433-7700
Accounting	433-7712
Assessor's Office	433-7710
Building Division	433-7715
Clerk's Office	433-7702
Community Cable	433-7790
Engineering & Env.	594-2800
Fire Non-Emergency	433-7745
Ordinance Division	594-2845
Planning Division	433-7795
Police Department	
Administration	433-7750
Non-Emergency	433-7755
Animal Welfare	433-7757
Investigations	433-7760
Alarm Info	433-7775
Property	433-7777
Records	433-7776
Public Works	
Road Division	594-2800
Water & Sewer	594-2800
Senior Services	723-3500
Adult Day Service	723-3530
Treasurer's Office	433-7705

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BTFD hosts Representative Haley Stevens to discuss fire service issues

On Friday, July 1, the Bloomfield Township Fire Department and Supervisor Dani Walsh led a conversation about the future of national fire department recruitment with Haley Stevens, Congressional Representative from Michigan's 11th district.

"I was so honored to visit the Bloomfield Township Fire Department last week and learn about the incredible work they are doing and how I can best support them at the federal level," said Congresswoman Stevens. "So many of our Bloomfield firefighters are second and third generation firefighters who have

been firefighting for over 20 years. Our community is unbelievably grateful for their service and I can't express how meaningful this visit was for me and how much I learned about the firefighting career."

Fire Chief John LeRoy explained that hiring new

recruits has become increasingly difficult. While the 24-hour shift work can mean four to five days off per week and overtime, managing the increased stress of the job may not seem worth the tradeoff. Additionally, national training standards do not exist, which makes hiring from state to state difficult. As a result, fire departments within a state compete for the same talent and firefighters enter a field that restricts mobility and potential advancement.

The discussion also touched on needing to increase the Medicare reimbursement rate for EMS transportation that has not kept pace with inflation. "This is going to cause a collapse of the EMS industry. Private ambulance companies can't survive the increased costs. Employee costs will really hurt them in an attempt to stay competitive," said Chief LeRoy.

Assistant Chief Matt DeRousse added, "The Township Fire Department provides advanced life support transport to hospitals, but our transport revenues only make up a small portion of the cost."

