



# BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

## Town halls bring focus to Aug. 6 election

Supervisor Leo Savoie stood at the front of the room – but not at the podium nearby.

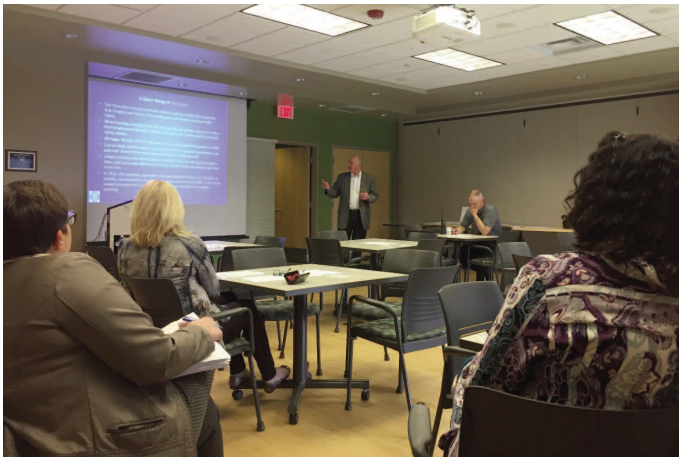
In front of him were a number of residents. It was clear this was not a formal affair. But it was just as important.

Savoie was speaking at the Township Senior Center. The topic was the upcoming Aug. 6 election to decide if the Township should create a Special Assessment District for Public Safety. The SAD was proposed as a means to raise money to help fund the police and fire departments. Public safety SADs are not unusual. A number of communities have adopted SADs as a means to raise revenue. The Township has turned to the SAD

because of a recent change in state law, which changes how communities fund health care benefits for retirees. In the past, the Township paid claims as they arose. Now communities must to fund a minimum of 40 percent of its retiree health care liabilities within 30 years, or at least have a plan to do so. That hadn't been done in the past, but it hasn't prevented the Township from getting a AAA bond rating from Standard & Poors rating agency. And Bloomfield Township is widely recognized as one of the most

fiscally strong communities in the state. Still, the public safety SAD would help the Township ease its financial burden.

Seems pretty straightforward, but as with any proposal that will raise residents' taxes – even though the average annual increase would amount to about \$219 – some folks were



Supervisor Leo Savoie answers residents' questions at a town hall meeting.

skeptical of the plan and even more didn't even know about it and what brought its proposal about.

So the supervisor took the show on the road, in a way. He began visiting homeowner groups and scheduled a series of town hall meetings at the Township Senior Center and Bloomfield Township Hall. The format was the same: Savoie explained the Public Safety SAD, outlining why the Township is seeking it and what impact it would have on the community if it passed or if it fails. But the

focus of each meeting has been on taking questions from the audience.

What, for example, has the Township done to cut costs, they asked. Savoie noted with charts and graphs that the Township has been cutting costs for years, and there are 23 fewer Township employees

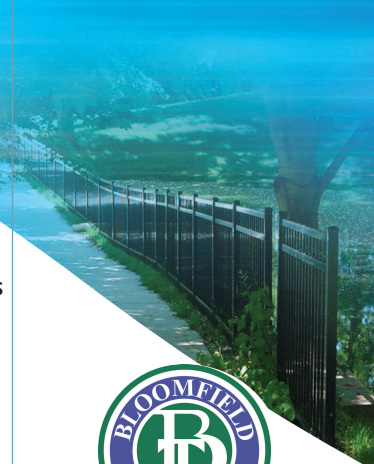
today than in 2008. Changes also were made to retirement plans. The Defined Benefit Retirement plan was changed 14 years ago to a 401k-style retirement plan while the Defined Benefit Health Care plan was replaced eight years ago with a more fiscally conservative Defined Contribution plan. Numerous other

cost-saving measures

have been implemented as well.

Another often asked question has been what happens if the SAD fails. Savoie explained that the Township would be able to comply with the state law even if the SAD fails but there would be a cost. Ten police officer positions would be eliminated; eight firefighter/paramedic positions would be eliminated and one of the fire stations would be converted into an EMS response station only; the

Please see Town Hall on page 5



## BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD 2019

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

#### ADMINISTRATION

Leo Savoie, Supervisor  
Janet Roncelli, Clerk  
Brian Kepes, Treasurer

#### TRUSTEES

David Buckley  
Neal J. Barnett  
Michael Schostak  
Dani Walsh

### APPOINTED POSITIONS

#### PLANNING COMMISSION

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

#### BOARD OF APPEALS

Carol Rosati, Chairman  
Tracy Leone, Vice Chairman  
Brian Henry  
Robert Taylor, Jr.  
Claudine Bacher,  
Dani Walsh  
Bruce Selik  
Jocelyn Giangrande, Alternate  
Jeffrey Drake, Alternate

## Save the date...

**August 6**Public Safety SAD  
Election**August 17**Woodward Avenue  
Dream Cruise Classic  
Car Show**October 5**Household Hazardous  
Waste Drop-Off Day**October 13**

Township Open House



## 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

**Special Election August 6, 2019****Special Assessment District for Police/Fire Departments**

On Tuesday, August 6, 2019, Bloomfield Township voters will consider the passage of a special assessment district for the police and fire departments. Extensive information is available on our website, within this newsletter, and at the Town Hall meetings scheduled in June and July. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. Whether voting at the polls or absentee, you will notice two significant changes.

First, some polling locations have been consolidated, similar to previous special elections. For this election, 32 polling locations have been reduced to 17 polling locations. A first-class mailing will be sent to voters affected by this temporary relocation. Signs will be posted at the relocated polls and the consolidated locations. A list of polling locations for this election can be found on our website at the following link: <https://www.bloomfield-twp.org/getattachment/Government/Services/Clerk/Elections/Polling-Locations-and-Precincts/Polling-Place-location-for-SAD-election.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

Second, this election marks the first time Bloomfield Township electors will vote under the requirements of Proposal 3, a wide-ranging constitutional amendment passed by voters in November 2018. The ballot language changed the state's election law, most notably expanding voter registration and making it easier to vote absentee. Michigan joins 27 other states where any registered voter can request an absentee ballot without providing a reason. Some additional reforms of Proposal 3 are listed below:

- Straight-party voting
- Automatic registration when people obtain or renew a driver's license or conduct some other type of business with the secretary of state's office, unless they opt out.
- Registration by mail up to 15 days before an election – July 22, 2019 is the last day to register in any manner other than in-person with the local clerk for the August 6, 2019 Election
- In-person registration extended to Election Day with proof of residency – July 23 through 8 p.m., August 6, 2019,

at the local clerk's office

- People who register past the 14-day deadline must bring proof of residency, such as a driver's license, government-issued identification card, utility bill, bank statement or pay-check that shows their address
- Voters who register on Election Day can either vote absentee in the local clerk's office or take a receipt verifying their registration to their polling place
- Statewide audit of election results

With this special election and the many exciting changes of Proposal 3, the clerk's office welcomes your questions and encourages you to vote on Tuesday August 6, 2019. We can be reached at 248-433-7702 or [clerk@bloomfield-twp.org](mailto:clerk@bloomfield-twp.org). We will be open for extended hours the weekend before the election: Friday, August 2, 2019, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Saturday, August 3, 2019, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. As always, my staff and I are at your service.

Jan Roncelli, Bloomfield  
Township Clerk

**Water quality gets top rating**

Bloomfield Township is pleased to inform you that in 2018, as in past years, we have surpassed the water quality standards required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE, formerly MDEQ).

The 2018 Annual Water Quality Report describes the

source of our water, lists our test results, and contains important information about water and health. This report is intended to provide consumer understanding of drinking water and to heighten awareness of the need to protect our precious water resources. We hope this report addresses any drinking water quality concerns you might have.

Go to [www.bloomfield-twp.org/WaterReport](http://www.bloomfield-twp.org/WaterReport) to view your 2018 Annual Water Quality Report and learn more about your drinking water.

If you would like a paper copy of the 2018 Annual Water Quality Report mailed to your home, call the Department of Public Works at (248) 594-2800.



## A NOTE FROM

Leo Savoie, Bloomfield Township Supervisor

# Cutting costs is not something new

For the past several weeks I have been meeting with residents across the Township to discuss the Aug. 6 Public Safety Special Assessment District election.

I like these talks to be informal with individuals invited to ask multiple questions and not limited to speaking for only a few minutes. My goal is to make sure that everyone has a clear understanding of what is at stake in this election so they can make an informed choice when they go to vote on Aug. 6.

At these sessions the residents learn, and in the process I learn as well. For instance, I have learned that one of the key things the residents want to know is what the Township has done already to cut costs and control expenses. Some folks believe that we have done nothing and we are satisfied with just doing business as usual no matter what happens with the economy and our financial situation.

That is just wrong. In fact, it's historically wrong. I happened to come across a copy of this community newsletter from the summer of 2009. That was when we were really getting clobbered by the Great Recession and were facing a \$6 million budget

shortfall due to declining property taxes that cut into our revenue stream.

The title of that article was "Township takes steps to reduce costs, use personnel more efficiently." In the article then-Supervisor Dave Payne related what was being done



The Township strives to provide best-in-class services at the lowest possible cost.

then to trim costs. It was pretty hard-hitting, including some major staff cuts. The economy has improved since then, but the major reductions implemented still have an impact today.

The numbers tell the story more dramatically than I can. Consider that we have 23 fewer employees today than we had in 2008, which has saved \$1.9 million each year. We also implemented a five-year pay freeze, which saved \$7 million a year. Also, we ended longevity pay for all new hires in 2011. We also

modified our employee health care plans, producing a savings of at least \$12 million.

Additionally, we are looking at refunding the pension obligation bonds, which will save approximately \$1.8 million over the next 15 years.

Another important thing to

remember is that it didn't take a Great Recession to cause us to look at cost-saving measures. As early as 2005 we closed the Defined Benefit Pension plan, and in 2011 we closed the

Defined Benefit Health Care plan, both of which actions have produced savings.

And there are more, many more, actions that we have enacted to be fiscally responsible. You can find out just what we have done by going to the Township website, [www.bloomfieldtwp.org](http://www.bloomfieldtwp.org), and clicking on the link "August Election Facts" under "Township News" at the left side of the home page. That will take you to a comprehensive listing of information about the Public Safety Special Assessment District.

There are plenty of other specific election topics there I could discuss here, but there just isn't enough space to cover them all. But I think it is important to note that Bloomfield Township has a well-earned reputation for providing its residents the best services possible. Whether it's keeping the Township beautiful, quick response time from the police and fire departments or just answering phone calls and email inquiries and complaints as soon as we get them, our mission is to provide great customer service.

And the fact that we still maintain a AAA bond rating shows that major financial firms recognize our financial strength and acknowledge that we are fiscally responsible.

And I truly believe we are being responsible and forward thinking in placing the Public Safety SAD on the ballot. The voters will decide if this is the route we should follow. Before making that decision, however, I urge you to go to the website and study the information there.

The answers to questions you may have are likely there. Take the time to look into it. Or, you can call me directly. I'll be glad to answer your questions.

## 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.bloomfieldtwp.org](http://www.bloomfieldtwp.org). Just look for Citizens' Guide and Dashboard under Quick Links at the right of the home page.

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

## Phillip Langmeyer named police chief

Capt. Phillip Langmeyer has been named the new Police Chief of the Bloomfield Township Police Department. He replaces Chief Scott McCanham, who retired from the department in June.

Langmeyer has been with the department since 1992 and has had long and wide-ranging experience with the Township Police Department.

For the last two years he has been captain of the Investigations Division, where he is responsible for all inves-



Chief Phillip Langmeyer now leads the Police Department.

tigative functions including Records, Property and Community Relations.

Prior to that he was captain of the Patrol Division where he led all patrol operations including Dispatch, Traffic and Animal Welfare.

He also has been a facilitator at Michigan State University where he organizes and delivers presentations about a variety of law enforcement topics for staff, command and first-line supervision classes.

Langmeyer received a bachelor of arts degree in criminal justice from Michigan State University. He also is a 2013 graduate of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA.

Langmeyer's appointment as chief was unanimously approved by the Township Board.

"I'm proud to lead one of the best departments in the state," he said.

## Tune in to Township social media

Find out what's happening in the Township by following us on social media. The Township regularly posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Next Door. The Township's Police and Fire departments can also be found on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. And you will continue to get updates every Thursday through the eNewsletter. And that's not all. The Township website, [www.bloomfieldtwp.org](http://www.bloomfieldtwp.org), is updated and modified typically several times daily.

There are road closings, traffic alerts and special events coming up, such as the election set for Aug. 6 to establish a special assessment district (SAD) for public safety. In order for you to make an informed choice when you go to the polls, you need to know all the facts about the issue. The Township strives to provide you with those facts through every means available.

So follow us on Facebook, look for our tweets and watch for our pictures on Instagram – and tell your friends to subscribe to the eNewsletter.



## Dream Cruise takes an historical turn

On Jan. 29, 1886, Carl Benz applied for a patent for "a vehicle powered by a gas engine." Benz's one-cylinder "Motorwagen" launched the auto industry.

You can see a detailed replica of Benz's 1886 Motorwagen at the Bloomfield Township Dream Cruise event on Saturday, Aug. 17. The Motorwagen will be on site courtesy of the Automotive Hall of Fame in Dearborn, which will have a display with information about the Hall of Fame throughout the day. And there will be plenty of other classic cars present as well. The Bloomfield Township Classic Car Show and the Bill Wells Car Club classic will be held 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 17, at the Mercedes Benz dealership and neighboring Comerica Bank on Woodward, just south of Big Beaver Road.

There will be classic cars on display, a live band, food and plenty of fun for adults and kids. It's also a great location to watch the classic cars passing by on Woodward.

There is still time to register your classic car. Go to the Township website, [www.bloomfieldtwp.org](http://www.bloomfieldtwp.org), and click on the Classic Car Show tab under Township News.

## Drop-off days a huge success

The Township's Electronic Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off days were a big hit with residents.

The Electronic Recycling, Medication Disposal and Paper Shredding event held April 27 drew a record number of visitors. Cars began lining up well before 9 a.m. on the day of the event and by the time it ended



This year's Electronic Recycling event set an attendance record.

1,285 cars came by to drop off old TVs, computers, and other electronics as well as expired medications and stacks of papers to be shredded.

"We broke a record and had our best turnout since the program started in 2007," said Township Public Works Manager Katie

Fotherby.

The Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day held on May 4 didn't set a record (it was "only" the fourth-best such event held) but it did do well, drawing 1,024 cars.

"The event was well-attended," Fotherby said. The next Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day will be Oct. 5, 2019.

## Township takes steps to control Gypsy Moth pest

2018 saw a dramatic increase in gypsy moth populations in much of Michigan with several cities seeing areas of defoliation. Gypsy moths are a threat to both our forests and urban trees. They are a species of non-native invasive caterpillar that is damaging to oak trees and other hardwoods.

The Township has assumed primary responsibility for Gypsy Moth management through its general operations. Since 1993 Bloomfield Township, together with the National Gypsy Moth Management Group, has implemented an integrated pest management approach to reduce and contain the Gypsy Moth problem. The fungus, *Entomophaga maimaiga* has been cited as the key factor in the management of Gypsy Moth populations in Bloomfield Township. National Gypsy Moth Management Group personnel collect data from biological surveys and then apply the fungus to targeted trees in sites around the Township. A final report

from the company is submitted in the winter for review and determination of future actions. The report outlines the program's effectiveness including such issues as treatment timing, control measures and identification of improvement. A selective



**Gypsy moth larva on a tree should be reported to the Township for treatment.**

ground spray application at specific locations of *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt is a naturally occurring bacterium) is sometimes necessary at a few sites with a high gypsy moth egg mass count. The goal is to control the pest and minimize the economic, social and environmental costs.

Some counties in Michigan, such as Roscommon County, Bay County, and Midland

County have county-wide programs for aerial spraying of infested areas that are funded by a millage. The millage funded program monitors gypsy moth throughout the county and schedules aerial spraying of areas of infestation. Rochester Hills, just northeast of the Township, does not treat annually with the fungus *Entomophaga maimaiga*. Last year gypsy moth populations increased in the City, and there were areas of defoliation. The City has scheduled aerial spraying this spring in two locations, totaling 72 acres of land, that experienced significant defoliation last year. Due to the continued Bloomfield Township management program, including the placement of *Entomophaga maimaiga* and occasional ground spraying of select sites, aerial spraying has not been necessary in Bloomfield Township since 2001.

Gypsy Moths were brought to Massachusetts in 1869 as a possible source of silk. When they escaped from captivity, North America presented an

adequate food supply and few natural predators. After spreading across the north-eastern states, gypsy moth appeared in Michigan in the 1950's and began major defoliation in the 1980's.

Gypsy moth harms trees by eating the leaves during their caterpillar stage. This prevents the tree from photosynthesizing food to survive. Gypsy moth caterpillars emerge in mid-May from egg masses that were laid by females the previous summer. After they emerge, the caterpillars eat a significant amount of foliage throughout the spring. The caterpillars (larvae) will then pupate in July and after a couple weeks, emerge as adults. The adult moths then mate and the flightless females lay beige/tan egg masses that can contain from 50 to 1500 eggs in each one.

If you suspect the presence of Gypsy Moth in your area, you can report it to the Bloomfield Township Engineering & Environmental Services Department at 248-594-2800 or email us at [EES\\_dept@bloomfieldtwp.org](mailto:EES_dept@bloomfieldtwp.org)

## Town Hall from page 1

Township Assessing services would be farmed out to the County; the animal shelter would be closed, there would be a \$1.4 million cut to the road fund, meaning road maintenance would decrease. The popular Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off day and Electronic Recycling events would be eliminated, and the Gypsy moth program to keeps the pests in check would be ended, among other cuts. Even with all that, Savoie explained, we would

have to ask the Board of Trustees to approve a 1 percent collection fee on the tax bill, which has always been allowable but never used at Bloomfield Township.

Losing these things, Savoie said, would go against the very things that make Bloomfield Township recognized as one of the finest places to live anywhere.

Not everyone agrees with the SAD concept and some voices are raised that residents should vote no on Aug.

6. They say the Township is not being transparent and there are cuts that could be made and the Township should be more prudent in its spending practices.

While Savoie makes it a point to address every question raised he also notes that the Township has a wide variety of information about the SAD on the Township website, [www.bloomfieldtwp.org](http://www.bloomfieldtwp.org) and there is even a special section of Frequently Asked Questions. Click on the

August Election Facts link at the left side of the home page.

In the course of the town hall meetings Savoie does not tell people how to vote. Every person must decide that for themselves. His job, he said, is to make sure people have access to all the correct information about the SAD.

And in the end the voters will decide.



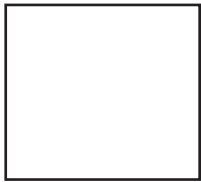
# BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP

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



## Women join the Fire Department family

What's it like to be a trail-blazer? Firefighter/paramedics Michelle Figurski and Kim Whalen are the first women to join the Township Fire Department since its establishment in 1930. Both

Michelle and Kim have only positive things to say about their experience. "There were a lot of adjustments at first," Michelle said. "But once we sat down for our first dinner together

it felt like family." Michelle was the first woman to be hired, in 2017. Kim joined the department in 2018. What drew them to careers in firefighting? Michelle wanted to be a firefighter since she was young, starting at the age of 15 as a cadet in Auburn Hills. She achieved her EMT license in high school, and after graduating worked as a paid on-call firefighter. She attended Oakland Community College for her associate's degree in fire science and her paramedic license before being hired by Bloomfield Township.

Kim's path was somewhat different. She received a bachelor's degree in fire sci-

ence from Lake Superior State, choosing that major because she knew she wanted a career in which she could be active. She was hired by Bloomfield Township right out of college.

Both women had to pass all the same tests as men, and agree that they are as able to perform the physical aspects of the job as their male colleagues. The best thing about the job, they said, is that every day is different and interesting.

"It's great working here because it's like being part of a family. The men are like our brothers, and no matter what, they've got your back," Kim said. "We meld well with everyone in the department."



Kim Whalen, left, and Michelle Figurski are Bloomfield Township's first female firefighters.