

Brandon Township

Winter 2024 Newsletter

This newsletter is being mailed to all residents and property owners of Brandon Township, Douglas County, MN. As a reminder, the township has a website at brandontownship.org that contains extensive information such as vital statistics, history, news, meeting agendas and minutes, policies and board contact information.

Meetings

The township conducts monthly meeting at 7:00 pm on the third Monday of the month, unless it is a legal holiday on which it's held on the following day. Meetings are held at the Township Hall at 106 Mallard Ln in Brandon, MN. The public is welcome to attend. Agendas and minutes are posted on the township website.

Annual Township Meeting

The Annual Township Meeting is held on the second Tuesday of March. The agenda for this meeting includes approval of the annual township budget and tax levy for the following year. Township government plays an important role in maintaining our quality of life. If you are unfamiliar with what your township does for you, please attend the Annual Township Meeting and see grass roots government in action.

Kerby Lund

We are sad to report the passing of Kerby Lund this past July. Kerby served on the Brandon Township Board for ten years and was the Chairman for most of those years. Kerby was very active in maintaining the township roads to include many early hours plowing snow during the winter. The Board held a special meeting in July and appointed Zach Hintermeister to serve the balance of Kerby's term that would have expired at the end of 2024.

November 2024 Election Results

We had a great turnout of Township voters for the November, 2024 Presidential Election. We had 575 voters turn out of the 646 registered in the township for a turnout of 89%. Thank you to everyone that voted.

Two township supervisors were on the ballot for Seat B (Zach Hintermeister's position) and Seat C (Dennis Lund's position). Both of these supervisors were re-elected for another 4-year term.

Brandon Township Officers

Brandon Township is governed by three elected voting supervisors who, in turn, have appointed a Clerk and a Treasurer to handle the day-to-day administrative duties. Many townships also appoint a Deputy Treasurer and a Deputy Clerk to serve as backup and eventual replacement. Brandon Township appointed a Deputy Treasurer in 2023 and is actively looking to appoint a Deputy Clerk.

The ideal candidate would be a self-starting, retired or semi-retired bookkeeper or accountant with skills in both Word and Excel. Attendance required at monthly township meetings and training sessions. Whereas elected officers must be township residents, appointed officers are not required to live in the township.

Complete responsibilities and compensation details are available. If interested, contact Brandon Township Clerk, Mike Cleary, at mcleary@brandontownship.org or at 320-290-4490.

Depositing Snow in the Township Right-of-Way

It is unlawful for anyone to deposit any snow or ice in a public road right-of-way or to otherwise obstruct a public road. Minn. Stat. §§ 160.27, subd. 5(a)(1); 169.42, subd. 1. Depositing snow or ice in a road also increases snowplowing costs, creates a potential public safety hazard, and could damage equipment.

Note that the right-of-way extends 33 feet from either side of the center line of the road.

Please inform your commercial snow plow service (if you use one) of this law and that fines may be imposed.

Update on 2024/2025 Road Improvement Projects

The first roads paved by the township were Chippewa Heights, Wallen Rd and Shorewood Lane in 1994. After 30 years of use, these roads need to be replaced. A full depth reclamation is planned for 2025 with extensive prep work being completed in 2024. This work entailed replacing numerous culverts and constructing a turnaround.

The \$60,000 cost of the prep work was paid from township funds. The 2025 reclamation project is estimated to cost approximately \$780,000 of which 80% will be assessed to the approximately 95 adjoining parcels and the remaining 20% paid from Township funds.

We applied for a grant through the MN Dept of Transportation Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) to reduce the cost by approximately one-half. That application was not funded in 2024. Unfortunately, the MN Legislature did not pass an appropriation or bonding bill in 2024 so there are no funds available to reapply for a LRIP grant in 2025. We plan to schedule a public hearing on this project in early April, 2025 to review current estimated costs for the project prior to soliciting and accepting bids.

Township Road Grading

The township is responsible for maintaining 9.26 miles of paved roads and 37.6 miles of gravel roads to include snow plowing, blading, weed control, sign repair and culver and road repairs. In a typical year, the supervisors and part-time employees spend between 600 and 700 hours on these activities.

The most challenging task is in blading to keep the gravel roads as smooth as possible for driving. Blading is only possible when the roads are moist but not too wet. Infrequent rains can result in roads developing washboards during dry spells.

The township owns and operates its own road grader. With almost 38 miles of gravels roads, it takes more than 20 hours to blade the entire township. We ask for your patience for getting your road bladed as we frequently cannot get the entire township bladed after a rain before the roads become too dry.

Brandon Township Growth

Brandon Township continues to experience growth in new homes and year-round residents, primarily on its 8 larger lakes. We continue to see 6 to 8 new homes being built each year. And, according to the National Census, in the 20 years from 2000 to 2020, we added 122 new residents (6.1% annual growth). While this growth has added substantially to our real estate tax base, it has put more demand on the township for services. We strive to keep our township taxes as low as possible but we cannot control the annual market value increases calculated by the County.