



C O M M U N I T Y R E P O R T

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK

BY WILL HATHAWAY, SUPERVISOR

Rome wasn't built in a day. Whether building something new, like a second fire station, or addressing a long-term problem, like the dioxane contamination from Gelman Sciences, each successive Scio Township administration takes the incremental steps that it can during its term. **We build on the work of our predecessors and have faith that our successors will achieve more to continue the momentum.** Here are some examples of long-term initiatives that span multiple administrations.

When I first met with Fire Chief Houde in 2020, he mentioned a second fire station and showed me the section of the Township where it should be located. Chief Houde shared multiple studies that demonstrated the need for this additional public safety infrastructure. Coincidentally, my first conversation with the Township's engineering consultants underscored the eventual need for a water pressure facility in that same southeast corner of the Township. The problem was how to secure land for these two, future facilities. The opportunity presented itself in 2021. The Land Preservation Commission had been working for many years to protect a tract of farmland along Wagner Road. The Township was able to carve out a 9.5-acre strip of land at the north end of this 110-acre parcel for a future, second fire station and a future water pressure tank while protecting

the majority of this prime agricultural land.

The Gelman dioxane pollution is an unfolding crisis that Scio Township leaders have faced since it was first discovered in the 1980s. **By leaders I am referring not only to those elected to the Board of Trustees, but to the dedicated community activists who have worked for decades to alert their neighbors, gather and report data, and challenge their government to act in response to the public health threat.** In late 2020, Scio Township joined with other impacted municipalities to advocate for intervention by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Scio launched its own well-testing program in 2021 and found evidence of dioxane far beyond the previously known groundwater plume. The EPA is currently evaluating the site for inclusion on the National Priorities List and eventual designation as a SuperFund site. Scio will continue to press the federal government to bring its resources to bear so that Gelman is held responsible for its pollution.



The Zeeb Road Pathway was identified as a priority by a non-motorized transportation task force in 2010. That vision didn't move to construction for years, but with grants from the State and the County, and the support of Scio voters for the 2020 Parks & Pathways Millage, that pathway is on the verge of connecting to

the Border-to-Border Trail across the Huron River.

There are many more examples of pending projects: The Park Road paving and pathway project, implementation of the renewed Transportation Millage, pedestrian improvements to the Jackson Road corridor, further expansion of Scio's network of non-motorized pathways, reestablishment of

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funding to continue road maintenance and improvement, support for environmental sustainability projects.

Sometimes one Board hands its successors

an ongoing challenge. When we took office in November 2020, this Board inherited a contract for residential waste and recycling removal with GFL, an agreement the prior Board finalized just days before they left office. The prior Board had worked for years to set up the conversion

to single waste-hauler service. That contract demanded immediate action, and it continues to generate new challenges for your township government. I have faith that the Township will persevere. I wish the incoming Board success.

LETTER FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

This fall, nearly everyone is focused on the upcoming presidential election. Presidential elections normally bring out the most voters to weigh in on the course of our country and local issues.

This fall, Scio voters will find the Fire Protection Millage Proposal is one of those local issues they will be asked to decide.

In direct response to the failure of the Fire Expansion proposal on last year's ballot, this new proposal is a greatly pared down plan that nevertheless addresses the identified needs of the Department.

In 2023, the Scio Township Fire Department responded to about 1600 calls for service. We respond to all types of calls, including rescue calls like car accidents or water rescues, alarms going off (fire, carbon monoxide, and others), service calls like animal rescues and unauthorized burning, hazardous condition calls like power lines down or fuel spills, emergency medical calls and, of course, fires. Emergency medical calls account for around 43% of our

calls even though we do not respond to all of the EMS calls in the community. Because we are not equipped to provide transport service to hospitals, that is handled by Huron Valley Ambulance.

There has been a suggestion that, because 43% of our calls are medical, maybe we need a satellite EMS station rather than a second fire station. This topic was debated heavily two years ago by a committee that studied the community's fire needs. **A satellite EMS station instead of a second fire station was found to be insufficient to meet the Township's needs, now and in the future.**

The committee concluded that if we did construct a satellite EMS station where the need for increased service in the Township is greatest, that new station would only be able to handle 43% of calls; the medical calls, not any of the rescue or fire calls. In contrast, a second fire station with a staffed fire engine could handle 100% of the calls; medical, fire, and all the other categories of emergency we

BY ANDREW HOUDE, CHIEF
SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

receive. Each of our engines is furnished with all the equipment needed to provide medical care, except the ability to transport people to the hospital. We are the "first responders" to ALL fire/medical emergencies in the community.

If voters approve the Fire Protection Millage Proposal this fall, our staffing plan is designed to provide a stable base of protection that we can build upon, potentially including transporting if it becomes necessary in the future. **The Fire Department requested the Township Board put forth a proposal to increase taxes for fire protection from the current 1.35 mills to 2.7 mills for the next 12 years in order to build, equip, and staff a second fire station**—with the goal that all unmet emergency needs in our growing community can be accommodated.

FIRE PROTECTION BALLOT PROPOSAL INFORMATION SESSIONS

OCTOBER 1, 7PM @ TOWNSHIP HALL

OCTOBER 8, 6PM @ AADL 265 PARKLAND PLAZA

OCTOBER 19, 10:30AM @ TOWNSHIP HALL



THE MICHIGAN LEAD AND COPPER RULE OF 2018

requires public water systems to determine the material of all water service lines. If your home is randomly chosen to be inspected, Scio Utility staff will briefly enter your home to physically inspect the line connected to your water meter and a small hole will be dug in your front yard to identify the line material there. The hole will be re-filled, and the surface restored to its previous condition. Thank you for your cooperation!

FIRE PROTECTION ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT

This November 5, Township residents are being asked to make a long-term investment in fire protection by voting to authorize 2.7 mills (\$2.70 per \$1,000 of assessed property value) to replace the current 1.35 mills dedicated for these services, for 12 years beginning in 2025.

GROWING DEMAND

Since the establishment of the STFD in 1988, there has been substantial growth in the number of residential developments, with commensurate growth in population from approximately 9,000 to nearly 17,600 (according to Census data). Currently, more than 1,200 housing units are either in development or approved, and with changes in zoning, higher density developments, and buildings with a greater number of stories along the Jackson Road corridor are in our future.

RESEARCHED RECOMMENDATIONS

Since 2015 there have been 3 formal studies of fire services in Scio Township – all of which indicated the need for more staff, additional equipment, and a second fire station.

The proposed assessment would fund:

- 12 new personnel to meet industry firefighting standards
- Construction of a second fire station in a high-call area
- Adequate staff and equipment to respond to more than 90% calls within 6 minutes
- Improved response times to areas far from the Zeeb Road station
- Upgraded and modernized vehicles, including a ladder truck and a new water tanker

HOW MUCH WILL 2.7 MILLS COST?

A Scio homeowner with a home valued at \$500,000 currently pays \$338 annually to fund fire protection. With the new assessment, that same homeowner would pay \$675 at tax time, beginning in 2025.

RESIDENT BENEFITS

Placement and staffing of a second station on property already owned by the Township brings services closer to currently underserved areas. It would address the 6-minute response-time goal in the southeast and east sides of

DAVID READ, FIRE SERVICES GUIDANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR, AND MARK BRAZEAU, TRUSTEE

the Township, where current response times average 10 to 15 minutes. This improvement represents a large step toward achieving the STFD's response-time goal of 6 minutes 90% of the time averaged across the entire community. Improvement in response-time averages would likely result in improved Department insurance scores, which may be associated with lower home insurance premiums for affected residents.

With added personnel, the STFD would be able to respond with 7 on-duty personnel to the 30% of calls we are currently under-responding to, including: higher acuity medical calls (5%), fires (4%), car accidents and other rescue calls (7.5%), alarms (7.5%), and hazardous conditions (10%). Most of the time, 7 personnel responding (along with Huron Valley Ambulance personnel) is adequate to resolve these incidents. This level of response would enable the Department to respond with industry-standard levels of staffing and resources to more than 90% of all 911 calls dispatched to the Fire Department.

FUNDING

The Department has aggressively sought outside funding for capital improvements such as upgraded vehicles needed to address fires in multi-story buildings. In the State budget beginning October 2024, we lobbied for and will receive a direct appropriation of \$750,000 towards a ladder truck. However, we have sought and failed to garner federal and state funding for staffing, other apparatus, and to subsidize the cost of building a second station. We continue to search for additional funding sources, but these potential sources will only fund capital improvements, not ongoing operations.

To learn more about the ballot proposal: visit the STFD at 1055 N. Zeeb Rd., 8am-4pm, M-F, call (734) 665-6001, email fire@sciotownship.org, or go to: www.sciotownship.org/fire.

Want to lower the cost of your energy bills?

The Washtenaw County Weatherization Program has EXPANDED. Income guidelines have INCREASED. All work is FREE of charge!



Weatherization can include:

- Home Energy Inspection
- Air Sealing and Insulation
- Furnace Replacements
- Fresh Air Bath Fan

Income must be at or below 80% area median income (AMI) to qualify:

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
Income Limit 80% AMI	\$66,300	\$75,750	\$85,200	\$94,650	\$102,250	\$109,800

Apply today at bit.ly/wx-app or call (734) 544-3008!

Homeowners and renters can apply!

Benefits of Weatherization

- Comfort
- Lower Utility Bills
- Energy Savings
- Improved Health and Safety



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Collaborative solutions for a promising future.

(734) 544-3008
415 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti
washtenaw.org/weatherization

CLERK'S COLUMN

The Township recently received the annual audit report of the Township's financial statements, prepared by Rehmann Robson. This is the first year that Rehmann has audited the Township, a task which they completed on time and within budget. As in prior years, the Township received an unmodified opinion, but with several comments and recommendations

for improvements to the Township's internal controls and operational efficiency.

The auditor's comments mirror some of the recommendations that the Township recently accepted from Maner Costerisan, certified risk examiner hired to evaluate the Township's processes to expose areas of concern and make recommendations to improve internal controls. Residents can expect to hear regular updates at

BY JESSICA M. FLINTOFT, CLERK

Board of Trustees meetings on the progress of implementing these recommendations. To learn more about the Township's financial reports, policies, and audit reports, see sciotownship.org/finance or reach out to the Township if you are looking for a particular report.

INVESTING IN A RESILIENT FUTURE

Community resilience is the ability to prepare for anticipated hazards, adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions. Activities, such as disaster preparedness—which includes prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery—are key steps to resilience. **Scio Township's first responders are essential to our resilience because they have the training and expertise to handle crises, coordinate with other agencies, provide medical care, and manage the effects of disaster, often preventing further harm or death.**

The 2024 Fire Protection Millage Proposal asks voters to fund the construction of a second fire station, both current and future sustainability and resilience goals of Scio's Environmental

Sustainability Climate Action Plan. The second station, as planned, will also function as a Scio Community Resilience Hub. Resilience hubs are community-serving facilities augmented to support residents and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, or after a natural hazard event.

Fire Station #2 is designed to be a highly efficient, all electric building (except for backup power). The design maximizes rooftop solar and will support future fleet equipment including electrification. The building includes a hardened shelter and a training room serving not only Scio firefighters, but Scio's planned Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and double as a community meeting space that easily transitions into a community shelter.

BY JAN CULBERTSON,
PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

Restorative site planning limits turf grass to functional areas and focuses on prairie restoration, including continuing periodic grazing to reduce grass dominance. Site stormwater management will maximize run-off water quality and return it to the aquifer through rain gardens, bioswales and infiltration basins. Community connectivity will be enhanced by a pathway across the site, connecting neighbors with the adjacent farm and its community garden and planned education center.

The new fire station and community resilience hub is designed to respond to individual, community, and weather-related emergencies, while addressing Scio's environmental and climate goals.

DEER HUNTING

Regulations governing deer hunting have changed for the 2024 season. For information on how these changes affect you, visit Michigan.gov/Deer or contact the DNR Wildlife Division at 517-284-WILD (9453).



HOMEOWNERS' ENERGY POLICY ACT

Under the newly enacted Homeowners' Energy Policy Act signed into law by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer this July, HOAs can no longer prohibit unit owners/homeowners from installing a wide range of energy-efficient upgrades. The law covers a range of home upgrades from rooftop solar panels and home EV chargers to clothes lines and rain barrels.

ELECTIONS UPDATE

IT'S TIME TO MAKE YOUR VOTING PLAN!

You have 3 options to cast your vote this November 5, 2024.

1. ABSENTEE BALLOT

Any registered voter may request an absentee ballot online at Michigan.gov/Vote or by stopping by the Clerk's Office with a photo ID. If you need to have your ballot mailed to an alternate address while you are out of town, please fill out the **Alternate Address Request Form** found on the Scio Township website front-page banner, or call the Clerk's office to request one. **Election mail will not forward so please provide your vacation address if you have paused your mail at your home residence.**

Absentee ballots must be returned by 8 pm on November 5, 2024. Return your absentee ballot by mail, drop it at the Clerk's Office in Township Hall, or place it in one of Scio Township's two secure drop boxes. A second drop box has been added at Scio Foods, 6950 Jackson Rd. We thank Scio Foods for partnering with us and hosting the new drop box location. Bring your absentee ballot to

the Early Voting site or your polling location on Election Day to cast your absentee ballot through the tabulator yourself. *If you are a permanent absentee voter and have not received your ballot yet please call or come into the Clerk's office.*

2. EARLY VOTING

Scio Township voters can cast their ballot early and in person during Early Voting, which begins Saturday, October 26 and runs 9 consecutive days through Sunday, November 3. Cast your ballot during Early Voting at the Meeting Hall in Scio Township Hall, 827 N. Zeeb Rd. OR the Learning Resource Center at 4135 Washtenaw Ave. Early Voting hours run from 9 am to 5 pm every day.

3. VOTE AT YOUR PRECINCT POLLING PLACE ON ELECTION DAY

Find your polling place on the map on the back of this newsletter, online at Michigan.gov/Vote, or call the Clerk's Office. Election-day polls are open from 7 am to 8 pm.

Check your voter registration at Michigan.gov/vote or call the Clerk's Office at 734-369-9400 or email Clerk@sciotownship.org.

BY BARBARA CALLEJA, DEPUTY CLERK

DROP BOX LOCATIONS

Scio Township Hall, 827 N. Zeeb Rd.

***NEW!** Scio Foods, 6950 Jackson Rd.



CLERK'S OFFICE HOURS

8 am – 4 pm Monday through Friday

8 am – 5 pm (incl. weekends) October 26 - November 3

Monday, November 4, 8 am-4 pm

Tuesday, November 5, ELECTION DAY, 7 am - 8 pm

ESTF FOOD WASTE SURVEY

The Scio Environmental Sustainability Task Force is gathering data to measure interest in starting a community compost collection program. **Composting is a sustainable alternative to disposing of food waste that turns the material into rich, healthy soil.**

Participants in the program would collect their own compostable materials, either in their own suitable container, or one provided by the program. These containers would then be taken, and the contents transferred by the owner, to a larger (64 gallon) container placed at a publicly accessible site. There may also be an

educational component to this program.

Last year, Canton Township launched a residential Food Compost Pilot Program to help reduce the amount of food waste being sent to landfills. Since the start of the program, over 165,000 pounds of food waste have been diverted from the landfill. Participants receive a 2.5-gallon bucket with a lid, a sticker displaying the list of acceptable food waste, and a guide listing program information.

Provide your interest in launching a similar program in Scio. Scan the QR code at right

BY JAN CULBERTSON,
PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

(or go to sciotownship.org/compost) to take a survey asking seven quick questions that will measure interest and help guide placement of containers. Please take the time to help us reduce food waste in landfills and extend the life of your septic systems.



FROM THE UTILITIES DIRECTOR

BY BRANDON MCNIEL,
UTILITIES DIRECTOR

I am pleased to announce that starting shortly after Labor Day, H2O Water Towers, a respected contractor from Saline, began the much-anticipated repainting of our water tower. This project is scheduled to take approximately one month to complete.

During this time, the tower will receive a fresh coat of paint and proudly display Scio Township's logo. At the same time, necessary improvements will be made to ensure our tower meets the latest compliance standards set by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE).

WATER METER REPLACEMENT UPDATE

Since starting our meter replacement project in late April, Scio Utilities has successfully installed approximately 600 new meters across the water district. This work is halted for the months of September and October to accommodate the Sewer Cleaning Project and Water Line Identification Project, but we have made great

progress toward our goal of updating all the meters in the water district. **Thank you to all the homeowners who have scheduled their meter replacement already.** We will resume active meter installations later this fall.

SEWER CLEANING/WATER LINE IDENTIFICATION PROJECTS

The sewer cleaning project will be underway before you receive this newsletter. Pipeline Management, a company based out of Milford, **will start in the Walnut Ridge community and from there will move to the Upland neighborhood.** Residents, please be mindful of workers in the area as they work hard to keep our sewers flowing!

Pipeline Management will also be helping Scio Township with Water Service Line Identification. **This is work that is mandated by EGLE and all work performed is necessary in order to comply.** Roughly 350 houses will be chosen at random for Line Identification on the

private side of the water-service line. Pipeline Management will be using their Vactor truck to hydro excavate an 8-inch-wide hole in the front yard down to each water service line in order to identify line material. As part of this work, Scio Township Utilities must gain access to those homes to visually examine the line material before the water meter. If your home is chosen, please work with us to the best of your ability so we can complete this work quickly.

WATER AND SEWER RATE INCREASE

Effective July 1, 2024

Water per 1,000 gallons = \$12.46

Sewer per 1,000 gallons = \$12.86

If you have a Metron water meter, you can download an app onto your phone to keep track of water usage (helps detect leaks!). Or you can check in at sciotownship.org/leak to see if you are listed on the Leak Report or High-Water Usage Report, updated weekly.

SCIO OUTSIDE PROGRAMS

October 10 – Skywatchers: Exploring Michigan's Constellations

November 2 – Young Naturalists: A Mini Nature Scavenger Hunt

November 15 – Owl Prowl

Visit sciotownship.org/parks for detailed information regarding each activity.



SEE A PROBLEM IN THE PARKS?

Let us know! For questions, concerns, or to report an issue, contact: Murphy Harrington, Director of Parks, Preserves, and Pathways at mharrington@sciotownship.org. Please include the date, name of the park, and the approximate location of the area of concern. *Thank you for helping us keep your parks clean and safe!*

OUR LAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION

WORKING TO PROTECT OPEN SPACES

Over 1,700 acres of natural habitat and agricultural lands in Scio Township have been permanently protected through the efforts of the Land Preservation Commission (LPC). Scio's Land Preservation Fund millage was approved in 2004 to preserve open space and farmlands, protect wildlife habitat, protect drinking water sources and water quality, and provide new parks and recreational opportunities. The .5 mill dedicated millage was renewed in 2022 with over 70% voter approval and will provide over \$600,000 annually for the next 10 years. **The Township leverages matching grants for acquiring land and conservation easements.** So, Scio taxpayers' \$8 million in millage funds over the last 20 years has been more than matched by contributions from federal, state, and local partners, amounting to an additional \$12 million, all for land preservation.

The seven-member LPC meets monthly to score prospective properties and review the progress of pending applications for preservation. After

a site visit, **applications are rated on the presence of wetlands, ponds, and streams; the quantity of landmark trees and native plants; habitat quality; proximity to other protected properties; historical or cultural value of the parcel; and competing pressures for residential or commercial development.** Then the Commission goes to work ranking the parcels, reviewing offers, and acquiring surveys, appraisals, and environmental assessments of the land under consideration. Finally, the LPC makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees, which makes the final decision. Property purchased by the Township is then referred to the Parks, Preserves and Pathways Committee for recommendations to facilitate public access through trails, signage, parking lots, and other amenities.

Property owners whose application is accepted for a conservation easement may realize substantial reductions in property taxes. Easements are generally for 10+ acre parcels and are annually monitored to ensure that development or removal of natural resources

BY CONSULTANT BARRY LONIK, LPC CHAIR
WILL WEBER, TRUSTEE JOHN REISER, AND LPC
MEMBER TIMM REDMOND

has not occurred. Although an owner of property preserved through a conservation easement may restrict public access, approximately half of the 36 preserved parcels have public access, including the West Scio Preserve, Fox Science Preserve, DeVine Preserve, Scio Woods Preserve, Sloan Preserve, Van Curler Preserve, and Botsford Nature Area.

Another way the LPC protects farmland is through the Buy Protect Sell (BPS) program, whereby the Township purchases land then sells it with its future use limited to agricultural activities. Recent examples include the Honey Bee U-Pick Farm on Scio Church Rd and the Vestergaard Farm on Wagner Rd. The LPC is currently considering several properties for purchase of the land or of a conservation easement. Property owners interested in protecting their land from future development are encouraged to apply at Township Hall or use the form found at Sciotownship.org/LPC.

VAN CURLER PRESERVE UPDATE

Van Curler is a Township-owned preserve of approximately 90 acres located between Huron River Drive and Joy Road north of the Dexter-Huron Metropark. **It consists of prairie, coniferous forests, wetlands, bluffs, and ponds, accessed by a two-mile rustic trail system** developed by the Parks Department in 2023. About one quarter of the site is prairie that has been infiltrated by non-native plant species. To rid the area of invasive plants, a controlled burn has been approved for the Spring of 2025. After the burn takes place, native seed mixes will be spread over the site to improve the prairie habitat.

In addition to two miles of rustic trail, the preserve has recently gotten a new entrance, including a parking lot, landscaping, and improved signage. Special thanks to the Washtenaw County Conservation District for their rain barrel donation, which will be used

BY CHRIS CHENG, PROJECT MANAGER

to water the entranceway landscaping (visit washtenawcd.org/rainbarrel to get yours). The new entrance drive is located at 6393 Joy Road. It's easy to drive right on by and miss the new entrance so look for the new preserve entrance



sign, pictured here. The preserve is open to the public year-round from dawn to dusk. Please stop by and enjoy the great outdoors!

WELCOME NEW SCIO TOWNSHIP STAFF

BY MARY GILLIS, EDITOR

JULIO BARROS

Julio was hired as a part-time IT specialist this fall. He is a senior in Cyber Security at Eastern Michigan University working on his capstone project this last semester before graduating in December. Julio (the J is pronounced because he is Brazilian) came to the United States from his home in Sao Paulo in 2018 and stayed on when he received a scholarship from EMU. Since his degree is in a STEM program, he is allowed to stay on another 3 years with a visa covering practical experience. And since he has a girlfriend (and a job!) he has decided to stick around and "see how it goes." **Julio previously worked for GE and University of Michigan on cyber security projects.** His first job at Scio will be to take over for IT Director Chris Bailey while he is out on short-term leave. So, he will also be rolling out multi-factor authentication in Township Hall. Julio is aware of the technological challenges to overcome at Township Hall, that's part of the reason he was attracted to the position. "I think it will help me develop more for my career and as a person," he says. He also likes it that we are a small organization, "more like a family, which is good for me." Welcome to our family, Julio, we're glad you joined us!



RAY HAWKINS

Scio Township is fortunate to have gained the services of experienced water- and sewer-technician Ray Hawkins, who comes to us from a crew-leader position in the Utilities department of the City of Dearborn. A few years back, Ray and his family decided to get out of the city life and bought an 1880s farmhouse in Stockbridge. He lasted about 6 months doing the commute to his old job before he started looking for something closer to the "new" family home. **Ray brings with him 20 years of experience inspecting, cleaning, repairing and maintaining water and sewer infrastructure and related equipment** in the larger (and older) systems in place in Dearborn and Westland. Utilities Director Brandon McNiel brought Ray in as part of the expansion of the department needed to keep up with necessary maintenance of the Township's ageing system, and to help with upgrades such as the new Metron meters. Ray is also overseeing the contracted crews who are cleaning and televising our sewer lines (see p. 6 for the Utilities Director update). Ray says, "I'm grateful for the opportunity to bring my skill set to Scio Township, and glad to serve." Welcome Ray, we're glad to have you on board!



BELISHA KING

Scio Township is excited to welcome Belisha King to our Finance staff. Belisha is starting in the Utilities Department, answering phones and doing the billing. She will eventually provide backup for payroll and accounts payable roles and cross-train Finance Manager Rebecca Maute on Utility billing. Belisha is a friendly, energetic person who lives on a lake near Jackson, Michigan. Her work for the Township entails running the billing cycle each month after the water meters have been read. The meter reading portion of the work is handled by the Utilities technicians and is gradually becoming automated as the rollout of the new Metron meters continues (see p. 6 for the Utility Director's update). **Belisha reviews every bill generated by the BS&A utilities billing module to ensure it hasn't generated something that doesn't make sense** (a negative bill, for example, or a bill that is 10 times what it was during the last cycle) and works to correct those. Much of her day-to-day is occupied with answering phone calls from customers wanting to schedule their meter replacement or with questions about their bill. The most common question is, Why is my bill so high? The answer is usually either sprinkler use or a leak and Belisha can offer some help on both those issues. "I'm looking forward to working with everyone," says Belisha, "and learning enough about utility billing to be able to answer every question."



MURPHY HARRINGTON

Sciotownship has attracted a dynamic new director of Parks, Pathways, and Preserves in Murphy Harrington. Murphy has worked as a scientist, teacher, and laborer in the related fields of biology, ecology, and conservation both in Ohio and in the Ann Arbor area. **She brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to her new role here in the Township, where her priorities are community engagement and taking next steps in restoring our preserves to healthy ecosystems.** These two goals are intertwined, for the work of restoring or reverting ecosystems is the work of many hands over the course of years. As Murphy explains, the creation of a greenbelt, or string of connected or nearly-connected green spaces in an otherwise urban area, has historically meant

long-term work to restore a healthy ecosystem on land that had previously been heavily disturbed, either by agriculture or topsoil- or gravel-mining. That is the case

at **Liberty Pond Nature Area**, for example, one of our preserves located off Liberty Road east of Parker Road, which had previously been mined for topsoil. The Township has been luckier in our acquisition of areas that are not suitable for agriculture, mining, or development, such as the wetlands that form part of the **West Scio Preserve**, a park that is accessible at the end of Dino Drive off Jackson Road. Murphy plans to build on the momentum created by the work of former PPP Director Anna Cone and the committee members and volunteers who have begun blazing trails in our preserves in order to make them more accessible to visitors and removing invasives in order to improve the



health and beauty of each park's ecosystem. She also plans to re-start community programs both within and about the parks. So, she will be offering guided walks in the parks as well as information sessions at Township Hall on topics of interest to the environmentally-minded. **If you're a person with an opinion about parks, a volunteer looking to make meaningful contributions to Scio green spaces, or a member of a group looking for volunteer opportunities, reach out to Murphy at MHarrington@sciotownship.org.** Murphy says, "I'm really excited for the changes that are coming, and to keep the momentum in the parks going."

DAVE PIEKNIK, FIREFIGHTER

Dave Pieknik (pronounced pyek-nik, but he's nice about it if it comes out "picnic") started with the Scio Township Fire Department this September. He comes to us from Novi City and Detroit and started his firefighting career with the US Forest Service. Chief Houde says, "Dave brings a wealth of experience with him, both fire and EMS, and we expect him to learn Scio Township quickly." Dave likes the atmosphere at STFD and is looking forward to working in a smaller department in a semi-rural area. He and his wife (and baby boy) currently live in

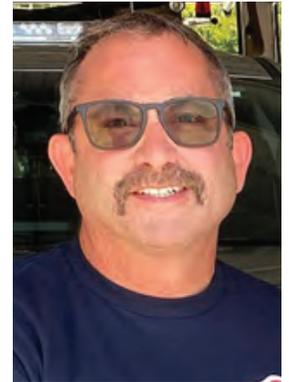


Brighton and are considering moving to the area now that both their jobs (she works for U-M) are nearby. Dave is intrigued by the different challenges of fighting fires in areas such as ours compared to the more urban settings where he has recently worked. For example, **you don't have to figure out the logistics of getting water to scenes that**

don't have fire hydrants when you work in a city. Dave has sometimes cooked (as most firefighters do) for his crew and is looking forward to sharing locally-sourced pierogis as well as kielbasa and sauerkraut with his new coworkers here in Scio. He says, "I'm grateful for the opportunity to work in this beautiful township and serve the people of Scio."

TOMMY BEGRES, FIREFIGHTER

The Fire Department is happy to bring Tommy Begres up from part-time to full-time firefighter this fall. Tommy (never Thomas) is a registered nurse, a nurse practitioner, and a firefighter paramedic, a specialist certification that only two other Department personnel have (and one of those is the Chief). Tommy says he has **always worked at both careers, nurse and firefighter, simultaneously.** "I just really like the uncertainty of a varied schedule," he told me, "and I love helping." Tommy lives in Oakland County with his attorney wife and two daughters and was attracted to come to Scio by the potential for growth. Having grown up in the Dexter area, Tommy was pleasantly surprised to see the transformation of the Township in the intervening years before he returned in 2017. "It really shows what a valuable entity Scio is in the county." He added, "It's an incredible transition and there's so much more to be done. I'm really looking forward to being part of that." Thanks for bringing your infectious energy to the Scio Township Fire Department Tommy!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

As the end of the year draws near, it seems fitting that there are goodbyes to say. And this November 20, Scio Township says goodbye—and thank you!—to several public servants who have stepped up to perform the important work of taking care of the business of the people.

DONNA PALMER, TREASURER SINCE 1987

First, I want to thank you for all the years of community support I have received. I like my job. It's sometimes bumpy but that's life. I'm not leaving with any hard feelings. I was invited to apply for the job of Treasurer by former Clerk Gay Konshuh who knew me from the years I spent working elections. I was the chair of Precinct 1 in those days, which was all of Dexter Village. **When I think back on the many years I spent on the Board of Trustees, the most momentous vote I took part in was the decision to create a boulevard on Jackson Road.** I was the tie-breaking vote in favor, and I've never regretted it. I've seen a lot of growth in Scio over the decades, and I'm proud that we have balanced development with preservation. I think we learned from our counterparts on the Michigan Townships Association what kinds of decisions yielded the results we wanted to see in our township. After all these years working in Township Hall, with coworkers who have been a second family to me, I am still looking forward to retirement and the huge list of all the things I want to do that I will finally have time to do. **Top of the list is spending more time on sewing projects and playing outside in my garden.** My favorite part of this position has always been my dealings with the public, either over the phone or at the desk in Township Hall.

I have just loved talking to the people. I thank you for the privilege of serving you these many years. Goodbye to all of you. I'm sure I will see you around.

WILL HATHAWAY, SUPERVISOR SINCE 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as supervisor for the past four years. My first experience with township policies was in 2005 when I successfully lobbied the Board of Trustees to reestablish Scio's drop-off recycling program. I was appointed to serve on the Planning Commission in 2011 and my involvement with Township governance grew from there. My interest has been in the substance, learning about township government and finding ways to make our community better for everyone. **I've been lucky to help make our beautiful nature preserves more accessible to the public, to expand the network of non-motorized pedestrian pathways so people can get around safely on foot or bicycle, to preserve a Township-owned historic farm on West Liberty Road and put it back on the tax rolls by selling to a private owner.** In the past four years, Scio Township has protected hundreds of acres of farmland and natural open space, launched sustainability initiatives to conserve energy and help protect our planet, supported the rehabilitation of a long-abandoned industrial site on North Zeeb Road, removed blight from Jackson Road, and secured over \$4 million in State funding for Scio infrastructure projects. Through the years I have worked collaboratively with many wonderful people who share the goal of improving Scio Township for everyone. I

BY MARY GILLIS, EDITOR

encourage other Scio residents to get involved. See what you can do!

MARK BRAZEAU, TRUSTEE SINCE 2022

It's been a remarkable journey, and I have truly enjoyed contributing to Scio government. I am particularly pleased with our success in securing majority board approval for Heritage Woods, while personally assisting nearby residents with their land use and sale challenges. This development not only adds to our tax base but also includes a 61% green-space initiative and a \$200,000 contribution to our Fire Department. As important, it is Scio's first retirement community, enabling residents to stay close to their loved ones even if they age-out of the family home. **The pragmatic analysis and final Board approval of tax incentives for 300 North Zeeb Road has also been beneficial for local residents.** This initiative brings a next-gen, high-tech business to our community while simultaneously removing a deteriorating eyesore in our downtown area. As I now fully return to my professional career, I sincerely hope that the new Board of Trustees will remain focused on what is best for Scio as a whole, rather than catering to individuals or vocal groups. I trust they will have the courage to stand firm when required, coupled with the wisdom to recognize the difference.

We should also recognize the work of **Sandra Egeler**, Deputy Treasurer, **Nancy Colasanti**, Treasury Assistant, and **Joyce Parker**, Township Manager, who are also retiring from service with the Township this fall. Thank you!

A REAL HERO SPEAKS UP FOR WHAT'S RIGHT.

Be a real hero. If you see or hear something that threatens student or school safety, submit a confidential tip to OK2SAY@mi.gov.



POSITIONS ARE COMING OPEN on several Township boards, committees, and commissions. If you have a skill or area of specialized knowledge you would like to share with the community, please consider applying to join one of your local government advisory boards. It's a great way to give back to the community or preserve or improve an area of special interest to you. Be it local roads, zoning, taxes, or the environment, we've got a place for you. Apply at sciotownship.org/join.

MESSAGE FROM THE ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

For emergency vehicle access, make sure your roadway is clear of overgrown brush and low-hanging tree limbs, and that your address is easily visible from the road. Fire and EMS personnel need to be able to find you to help you.



USEFUL CONTACT INFO

TOWNSHIP HALL AND CLERK'S OFFICE

827 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(734) 369-9400
Hours: Monday to Friday 8 am – 4 pm
info@sciotownship.org
clerk@sciotownship.org
newsletter@sciotownship.org
website: sciotownship.org

OFFICERS

Will Hathaway, Supervisor—
whathaway@sciotownship.org
Jessica Flintoft, Clerk—
jflintoft@sciotownship.org
Donna E. Palmer, Treasurer—
depalmer@sciotownship.org
Mark Brazeau, Trustee —
mbrazeau@sciotownship.org
Jillian Kerry, Trustee —
jkerry@sciotownship.org
Kathleen Knol, Trustee—
kknol@sciotownship.org
John Reiser, Trustee —
jreiser@sciotownship.org
TownshipBoard@sciotownship.org

SENIOR STAFF

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ahoude@sciotownship.org
Andrea Garrett, Assessor —
algarrett@sciotownship.org
Brandon McNiel, Utilities Director —
bmcniel@sciotownship.org
Chris Cheng, Project Manager --
ccheng@sciotownship.org
Kristy Aiken, Office Coordinator —
kaiken@sciotownship.org
Murphy Harrington, Parks Director
mharrington@sciotownship.org

UTILITIES

In Scio:
8 am – 4 pm..... (734) 369-9350
After hours (734) 651-4770
In Loch Alpine:
Water or sewer emergencies... (248) 433-8904
Non-emergencies (517) 673-8369
Account Management/Billing
(office hours M-F, 5-8 p.m) ... (734) 433-0835

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1055 North Zeeb Road
For emergencies 911
Business line (734) 665-6001
Fire@sciotownship.org

WASHTENAW COUNTY

**County Water Resources
Commissioner** (734) 222-6860
drains@ewashtenaw.org
County Road Commission (734) 761-1500
wrcr@wccroads.org

County Commissioners

District 1 – Jason Maciejewski
maciejewskij@washtenaw.org
District 9 – Katie Scott
scottk@washtenaw.org

County Sheriff Scio Station

For emergencies 911
Business line (734) 994-2911

STATE OF MICHIGAN

State Representative

District 47 - Carrie Rheingans... (855) 627-5052
carrierheingans@house.mi.gov
District 33 - Felicia Brabec ... (517) 373-2420
feliciabrabec@house.mi.gov
District 48 – Jennifer Conlin... (517) 373-7557
JenniferConlin@house.mi.gov

State Senator

District 14 – Sue Shink (517) 373-2426
SenSSHink@senate.michigan.gov

Governor

Gretchen Whitmer (517) 373-3400
gwhitmer@michigan.gov

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

U.S. Representative

District 6 – Debbie Dingell ... (202) 225-4071
debbiedingell.house.gov

U.S. Senators

Debbie Stabenow..... (202) 224-4822
stabenow.senate.gov
Gary Peters..... (202) 224-6221
peters.senate.gov

President of the United States

Joe Biden..... (202) 456-1111
whitehouse.gov

THE SCIO TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY REPORT

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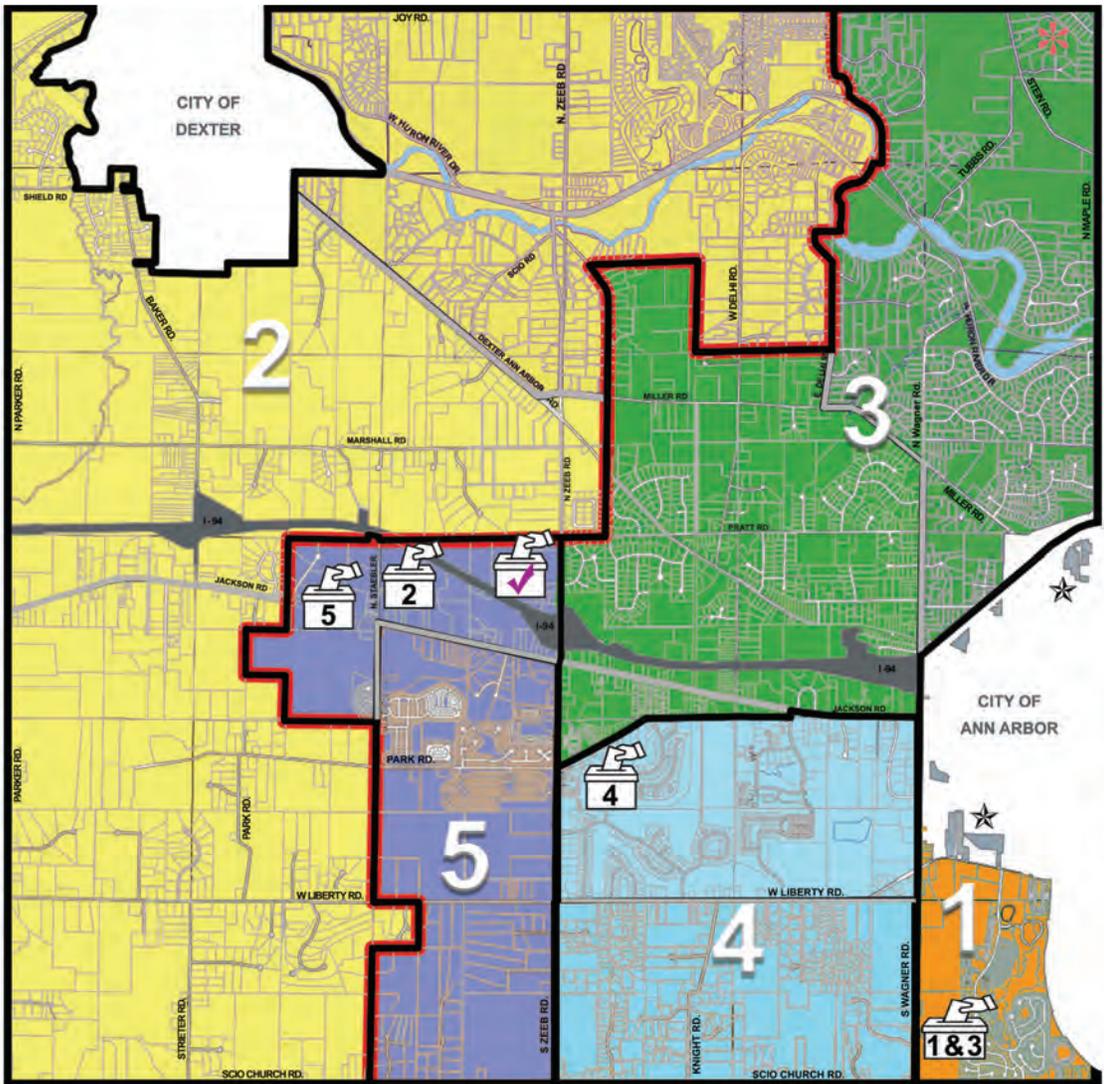
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To Scio Neighbor

SCIO PRECINCTS AND POLLING PLACES



ELECTION DAY VOTING

PRECINCTS 1 & 3
Washtenaw Inter. School District
1819 South Wagner Road

PRECINCT 2
Kiwanis Club
100 North Staebler Road

PRECINCT 4
Polo Fields Main Club House
5200 Polo Fields Drive

PRECINCT 5
Scio Farms Community Club House
6655 Jackson Road

EARLY VOTING
Scio Township Hall
827 North Zeeb Road
OR
Washtenaw County LRC
4135 Washtenaw Avenue

- Polling Place
- Precinct Boundaries
- School District Boundary

Early Voting: Saturday October 26 - Sunday November 3, 2024, 9 am. - 5 pm. **Election Day Voting:** Tuesday November 5, 2024, 7 am. - 8 pm.
Absentee Ballots are due to the Clerk's Office by 8 pm. on Election Day, November 5, 2024

Map approved November 2023