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Early Voting - Update From The Clerk

In 2022, Michigan voters approved amendments to the Michigan constitution (Prop 22-2) establishing a fundamental right to vote, creating some new voting procedures and voter rights, and tightening up election security measures. The most dramatic change to voting in Michigan established by Prop 22-2 is "early voting."

Prop 22-2 requires nine days of in-person voting to occur prior to each federal and state-wide election. Early voting begins the second Saturday before the election and ends on the Sunday just before the election, so four weekend days and five weekdays. Ann Arbor Township has entered into an agreement with Washtenaw County and 22 other cities and townships in order to run early voting centers more efficiently.

During the 9 day early voting period, Township voters will be able to vote in-person from 9 am – 5 pm at either of these two locations:

- Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center, 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108
- Scio Township Hall, 827 N Zeeb Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Voters are also still able to get an absentee ballot, either by applying for one to be mailed to their home, or by coming into the Township office, 3792 Pontiac Trail. As before, absentee ballots can be returned either by mail or by dropping off at the Township, and now there's a new option too: MI law now allows voters to return their absentee ballot to an early voting center or to their polling place on election day and feed their absentee ballot into the tabulator themselves.

Now voters have three distinct options:

- Vote early in-person at an early voting center in the 9 day early voting window.
- Vote at home or while out of town on an absentee ballot in the 45 days prior to an election.
- Or come on Election Day and vote in-person at your Township precinct.

Here are a few other improvements created by Prop 22-2 that township voters will appreciate.

- There will be state-funded return postage paid on absentee applications and absentee ballots.
- A state-funded ballots-only drop box will be installed on the front porch of the Township Office, available 24/7 and monitored by a security camera.



- For voters who would *always* like to get an absentee ballot, a "one-and-done" absentee application will be available shortly. The requirement to submit a new application prior to each and every election has been removed. Instead, after completing the new one-and-done request, voters can have a ballot mailed to them for all subsequent elections. Our old "Permanent absent voter application list" will become a "Permanent absentee ballot list" over the next year.

Prop 22-2 and the enabling legislation that has been passed in 2023 creates win-win-win solutions for voters, taxpayers and township election administration. Voters have more options and convenience to vote than ever before. Newly allowed collaboration for early voting centers creates efficiency and saves taxpayer money. Simplification of absentee voting, security upgrades and process improvements are anticipated to also create efficiencies and reduce the cost of township election administration going forward.

For more information see aatwp.org and select "Elections" or visit mi.gov/vote.

Climate Action Plan Ready For Public Input

The Ann Arbor Charter Township Board of Trustees established the Climate Resilience Committee to create a Climate Action Plan to address risks and vulnerabilities related to climate change that face the township.



Climate action plans have been created at the state level and at the county level. In September of 2020, Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued Executive Directive 2020-10 to develop the 'MI Healthy Climate Plan' to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition the state toward economy-wide carbon neutrality. The Plan was published on April 21, 2022. In Washtenaw County, the Board of Commissioners approved the county's 'Resilient Washtenaw Plan' on December 7, 2022.

The Ann Arbor Township Board saw an opportunity to leverage the County's plan to reduce carbon emissions while meeting the specific needs of the Township, and now the Climate Resilience Committee has created a draft plan that will be presented during the week of December 4 for public input. Date and time will be posted on the Ann Arbor Township website aatwp.org.

Broad goals of the Township Plan are to reduce carbon emissions from Township operations to net zero by 2030, and to reduce township-wide carbon emissions to net zero by 2035. The Township plan has a strong focus on implementation – those areas under township control where the Township community can focus limited resources to effect change in the Township.

The draft plan describes current and projected impacts due to climate change, and specific risks and vulnerabilities in the Township. These include population changes and climate migration, infrastructure vulnerability, water availability, and effects on agriculture and natural systems in the Township.

The plan presents adaptation and mitigation actions to address these impacts.

The plan also describes the types of actions that will be necessary to meet greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, both Township-wide and from Township operations. These actions include reductions in residential and commercial building natural gas and electricity use, improvements in building energy efficiency, reduction in transportation emissions, increases in renewable energy generation, and reductions of waste generated in the Township. The top priorities from the climate actions include:

1. On-going Climate Education and Public Engagement.
2. Residential & Commercial Energy Efficiency and Weatherization.
3. Community Bulk Buy for Solar and Building Electrification

Get Involved, Ask Questions, Provide Input
Your input and feedback are valuable. A public

engagement meeting to present the draft plan and receive input will be held during the week of December 4, 2023. There will be time for participants to ask questions and offer feedback. The exact date and time and the presentation for this meeting and the draft plan will be available at aatwp.org prior to the meeting, and there will be an online survey as well for you to offer feedback.

Our Township Office Team

2023 has been a big year for the Ann Arbor Township office team.

We are a small group of hardworking folks who wear multiple hats. We help you apply for permits, schedule your inspections, process utility and tax payments, coordinate planning meetings and we are always here to help answer your questions.



Left to right: Jae Elliot, Libby Greeley, Jennifer Morris

The gap left by two departing staff members earlier in the year created a challenge that was heroically met by remaining members who filled in until two new team members came on board. Our main hero, Building Assistant Libby Greeley, was our steadfast friendly professional, representing the township to incoming callers and visitors. Our new Planning Assistant Jennifer Morris quickly demonstrated her deep knowledge and experience as she took ownership of her role, coordinating development projects and supporting township office operations. Joining us later in the summer,

Building Assistant Jae Elliot completed our team, bringing her great blend of adeptness and sense of humor.

It takes teamwork to make our township office run like the well-oiled machine that it is. When you call or visit the office give a friendly hello to our team.

Members Needed

Farmland and Open Space Preservation Board

The purpose of the FOSPB is to review applications submitted by property owners and, using the ranking system defined in [Ann Arbor Township's Code of Ordinances section 48-25](#), select and make a recommendation to the Township Board of Trustees of properties upon which development rights should be purchased. The FOSB is actively recruiting members to join the board for a 3 year term. It meets every other month on the fourth Monday at 7:30 p.m. The meetings are open to the public except for the discussion about current applications. A complete description of the FOSPB can be found in [Section 48-26 of Ann Arbor Township's Code of Ordinances](#).

Climate Resilience Committee

The Climate Resilience Committee addresses the impact of climate change on the local environment, and also addresses policy initiatives and data that could be developed locally to address local impacts. The committee makes recommendations regarding mitigation and adaptation policies. Members meet monthly on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 pm.

Additional information about Ann Arbor Township Boards and Commissions can be found at aatwp.org. Click on Township Government.

Interested candidates should contact Supervisor Diane O'Connell for more information at supervisor@aatwp.org.

Supervisor
Diane O'Connell

Clerk
Rena Basch

Treasurer
Carlene Colvin-Garcia

Board of Trustees
John Allison
Michael C. Moran
Kris Olsson
Rodney Smith



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Water Wells And Groundwater

Increase your knowledge and understanding about groundwater, water wells and owning a private water well at the website wellowner.org. Testing of your drinking water can be done by the Washtenaw County Environmental Health office: <https://www.washtenaw.org/1442/Drinking-Water-Testing>.

New Location To Dispose Of Household Hazardous Waste

Washtenaw County offers a new location for you to drop off your household hazardous waste. The HHW Center is located on the premises of GFL Arbor Hills Landfill at 10843 Five Mile Road, Northville. The HHW Center is open on weekdays. Search online for "[Washtenaw Hazardous Waste](#)" to see details regarding hours of operation, what items are accepted, scheduling a drop-off appointment, directions, and more. You will also find information about the

county's original location, Home Toxics Center on Zeeb Road, on the website.

Tractor Tire Drive

This year's [Tractor Tire Drive](#) will take place on December 9th from 9am-1pm at Freedom Township Hall. This event is free and available to residents within Washtenaw County. The goal of this event is to provide a recycling opportunity specific to large tractor tires, preventing them from leaching chemicals into groundwater and reducing the breeding grounds for mosquitoes. [Registration for the event is required](#) as space is limited and there is a limit of four tires per address or operation.

While they are unable to accept automotive tires, there are several events throughout the year that can. Events can be found through Manchester, Bridgewater, and Dexter Townships. Washtenaw County Public Works Department also hosts a County Cleanup Day event that accepts automotive tires.