

# South Branch Township News – Winter 2025

## Office Hours

### Supervisor Anna Sylvester

The treasurer and clerk's offices are open Monday, Wednesday thru Friday from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and Tuesday from 9 a.m.-Noon. The zoning administrator and supervisor are here Monday – Thursday during the office hours. The assessor is here Wednesday-Friday from 9 a.m.-Noon.

The winter holidays are upon us, and the township office will be closed Dec. 24, 25, 31 & Jan. 1, 19; and Feb. 16.

You are invited to attend the Township Board meetings, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m., except for March, which is an annual meeting and is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

## Fire Department

### Chief Mike Umphrey

### Asst Chief Phil Lewis

If you would like to be part of our volunteer fire and/or EMS crew, please stop by for an application. Remember:

\*Make sure your address is visible from the road by use of the 911 signs.

\*Change your smoke detector batteries! Your life is important!

\*If you need a smoke detector or 911 road sign, check with the fire department.

\*Have plenty of clearance in your driveways-both width (12+ feet) and height (15+ feet)-and have sufficient area to turn around.

\*Turning off your seasonal light decorations and other electrical when leaving your home can reduce your chance of a fire.

\*Burn safely outside. Permits can be obtained by calling the DNR at 866-922-2876.

## Treasurer's Office

### Treasurer Cathy Lewis

### Deputy Treas. Brooke Miller

The township mourns the loss of Treasurer, Kate Barkley. She was a dedicated official and advocate for the residents. Kate was with the township for 7 years.

Winter tax season is upon us once again. Taxes can be paid in person with cash, check, money order or visa/debit card. Please note that an additional fee of 3% will be incurred if you use your card. A drop box is located at the entrance of the township hall for your payment. Please do not put cash in the drop box. If you are unable to pay your taxes in full, we will gladly accept your partial payment. Please remember that if you are mailing your tax payment, postmarks are not accepted as date received.

February 17, 2026 is the last day to pay your winter taxes without a 3% interest fee applied.

Our office will be open on Dec. 30, 2025 until 5:00 p.m. if you want to make your payment before the end of the year.

March 2, 2026 (9am-5pm) is the last day our office can accept your tax payment. As of March 3, 2026, all taxes that have not been paid will be turned over to Crawford County as delinquent. After this date, you will need to contact them to make payment arrangements at: 989-344-3204.

## Dog Licenses

Dog Licenses are now available until February 28, 2026, while supplies last. The fee is \$8.00 for spayed/neutered dogs or \$15.00 for unaltered dogs. Please stop by the township office with a copy of

your dog's current rabies vaccination to obtain your dog license.

## News From the Clerk's Office

### Clerk Brenda Nelson

### Deputy Clerk Robin Wayco

New election news for 2026: General Primary Election is August 4, 2026, and the Michigan General Election is November 3, 2026. Early Voting Dates are to be determined, please check our website for updated information.

To register to vote you can register online at the Secretary of State, <https://www.michigan.gov/sos>, or when you renew your drivers' license. You can also register at the clerk's office, and you will need proof of residency with you. Please call the Clerk's office for more information.

**Reminder** to all voters on our Permanent Mail Ballot list please remember to update the Clerk's office with any address changes to where you want the ballot sent as the ballots cannot be forwarded, i.e., snowbirds and college students. Those that are on the Permanent Absentee Voter list will still receive an application for the current election year. Please call the Clerk's office for any questions or concerns.

## Roads

The township road millage expires after this year's taxes. Would you like it to continue? This renewal will be on the 2026 ballot for you to voice your opinion.

Road projects for the last three years of millage include: Repaving of Steckert Bridge and Deerheart Valley Roads. Reshaping and

**South Branch Township, Crawford County, MI**

5245 N. M-18, P.O. Box 606, Roscommon, MI 48653

P: 989-275-8232 F: 989-275-4860

Hours: M, W-F, 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.; Tues 9:00 a.m.-Noon

[www.southbranchtownship.com](http://www.southbranchtownship.com)

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additional gravel on Pioneer, Pere Cheney, and Leline Roads.

We are fortunate to have an excellent working relationship with the Crawford County Road Commission, and this has saved the township \$180,598 over the last three years.

Are there more projects in the Queue? Yes, we would like to continue the work you have entrusted us to do.

## **Zoning Administrator Shelly Pringle**

Camping permits are required if you do not have a dwelling on your property. We offer either Annual or Temporary camping permits. You can find the Camping ordinance on our website, along with the application. Please contact me before setting up your camper to be sure you are complying with the Township's ordinance.

There are several rules and regulations if you live within the Stream Corridor District of the AuSable River, or the South or North Branch of the river. You can find a copy of the Natural Rivers Act on the DNR website. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Natural Rivers Act, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you are planning on any new construction projects, such as new structures, additions, alterations to the land, full or partial demolition of any existing structure or driveways, please contact my office before you begin, as you may need a permit.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

The Planning Commission is an advisory board, and their role is to utilize the Township Master Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and input from the residents to shape the future of our community.

All meetings are open to the public and meeting times are published on the Township website. We welcome your input! If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us.

## **Assessing News**

### **Megan VanWormer**

As a reminder, the assessor periodically inspects properties within the township for value assessment after a qualifying event, such as a sale, transfer of ownership, or property improvements. Taxpayers must both own and occupy their home to qualify for a Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) and may only claim this exemption on one home. Please contact the Assessor's office with updates to your PRE status or address changes. Contact Megan on Wed-Fri from 9am-noon.

## **Refuse Station Updates**

### **Pioneer: Don Pennell & Linda Schade**

### **McMasters: Greg Stansbury & Kay Baker**

The bright green bins are for clean and flattened cardboard only. Dirty, soiled or oily cardboard should go into the compactor or dark green bins.

If there is a residence on your property, your trash and recycling

costs are included within your taxes. Residential trash and recycling are for normal and customary everyday refuse. It is not for commercial services or a total clean-out of a house after renters or before selling.

If you have scrap metal, consider placing it in the scrap metal locations at the refuse sites. The funds collected help our fire association and support the fire fighters in South Branch.

Remember: take your trash to the stations regularly and help keep our township beautiful.

Refuse hours are Sat, Sun, Mon & Wed from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Commercial properties, including those used for short-term rentals, are not eligible for the residential refuse and recycling service.

Have a large item? We offer several days to take these large items to the refuse stations. If you cannot wait, talk with your refuse attendant for the best disposal method, before hauling it to the site.

Construction debris can be taken to the Waste Management landfill in Waters or hire a company to provide a dumpster. This is also the situation if you are cleaning out a home before sale or for a new rental. You will incur a cost for these options.

\*Reminder, the refuse stations will be closed on Christmas and New Year's Day.

\*Your 2026 refuse permits can be obtained after Dec. 1, 2025.

## **Happy 2026**

Stay safe and enjoy the holidays! We wish you the best for 2026!

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