



Gain More Connection

JULY 2026

Supervisor, Bob Terpstra

"The Nation is shaped by its communities."

Does that sound like a paradox to you? The concept of paradox has been a favorite of mine for years! I remember teaching it to my high school students using a riddle. What appears to be true, an accepted reality on the surface may in fact be a bit absurd. Upon closer examination, an underlying truth is revealed. When teaching, covering many topics to prepare students for each next level seems most appropriate; however, teaching fewer topics with deep critical thinking actually develops the skills for life-long learning. Sprinkling your yard daily to keep it green seems ideal, but deep watering less often develops roots that prevent disease and rot. Leadership by obtaining power is common practice, **but real leadership is the power you give away through empowering others.**



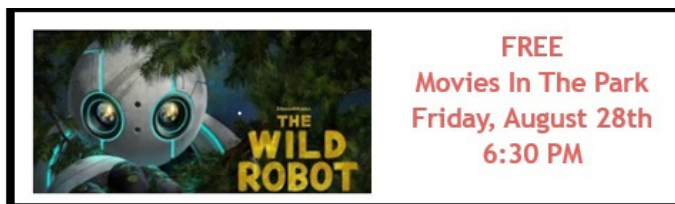
Recently, I enjoyed the 60 Minutes interview of Ben Sasse on YouTube. As a former Nebraska Senator, college professor and president, Ben stepped away from leadership. Recently diagnosed with terminal Pancreatic Cancer, Ben shared wise words for the nation; "the Nation is shaped by its communities". All of that to say, gaining more community is not just minding my own privacy but rather being friendly neighbors, laboring together to build great communities and a healthier nation overall. Let's fulfill the Gaines Charter Township Mission together: honor each other's heritage, create hospitable and engaging spaces, labor together, serve together and ensure our vibrant future.

Gain More Engagement



Logo Designed by Dakota Swan
Planning Department

- July 29th - Kent County Community Fest (Brewer Park)
- August 4th - National Night Out
- September 14th - Property Taxes Due
- August 4th - Election Primary
- August 28th - Movies in the Park
- September 19th - Taste of Gaines 4:00 PM- 8:00 PM



Visit www.gainestownship.org for event details.

Township Growth

Tracy Lawrence, Water and Sewer Administrator



Thank you for your help by limiting water use in May during the odd/even outdoor water restrictions! The City of Wyoming's multi-year construction project of a third transmission main will improve the drinking water transmission system reliability and functionality for the entire region, including our township, as we are one of their wholesale customers.

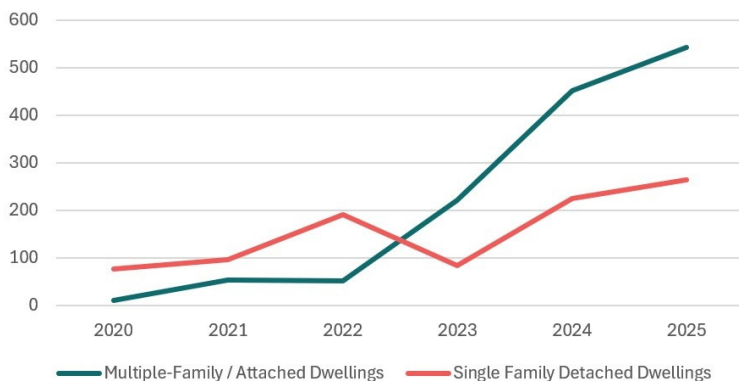


To comply with EGLE regulations as explained in Part 14 of the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act, the township now has a Residential Cross Connection Control Program. The Byron-Gaines Utility Authority (BGUA) is running the program for the township. Each home with an irrigation system will be required to have their backflow device tested once every five years. You will receive a testing notice letter if you are in the current testing zone for the year. For more information, please visit www.bgua.org/crossconnection.

The Township offers paperless billing and auto pay to make receiving your bill and making payment easier. If you are interested, email karen.rounds@gainestownship.org to sign up.

From Blueprint to Doorstep

Dwelling Units Approved 2020-2025



As communities grow, single family housing continues to be in demand. However, multi-family housing is increasingly viewed as important for meeting housing needs, while supporting economic development and responsible land use. These units help address housing shortages, and provide housing choices for people at different income levels.

Multi-family units provide lower-cost, lower-maintenance options that appeal to young professionals, retirees, and smaller households.

We've Got You Covered



The Township's fire protection services have been strengthened with the addition of our new \$1.8 million platform truck and the addition of three (3) full-time firefighters.

The modern platform truck has improved emergency response capabilities, particularly for structure fires, rescue operations, and incidents involving multi-story buildings. Its advanced equipment is designed to enhance both firefighter and public safety.

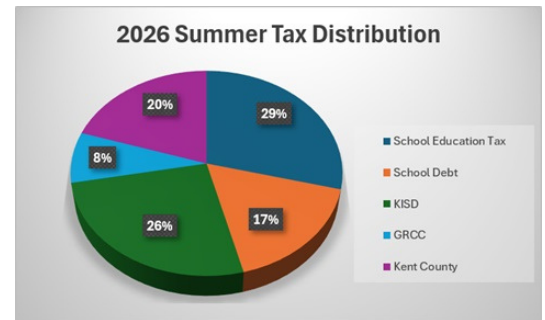


The additional full-time firefighters will improve staffing levels and response times, helping ensure residents and businesses continue to receive reliable emergency services. These investments demonstrate the Township's commitment to protecting lives and property.

Treasurer, Laurie Lemke MiCPT, CPFA

Where do My tax dollars go?

Your property taxes are based on the taxable value of your home, multiplied by the millage rates set by the various taxing authorities listed on your tax bill. Gaines Charter Township collects the debt tax levies for the three school districts in our township, Byron Center, Caledonia, and Kentwood Schools. The 1% administrative fee goes to offset the cost of our Assessing and Treasurer Departments.



Clerk, Michael A. Brew

MICHIGAN VOTERS

DON'T "SPLIT YOUR VOTE" THIS AUGUST!



Per the Michigan Bureau of Elections, voters can only vote in one party column (Democrat or Republican) when voting in the statewide August primary.



Splitting the ticket on the August ballot will invalidate the party section of your ballot!

For additional information visit: Michigan.gov/vote or give your local clerk's office a call!

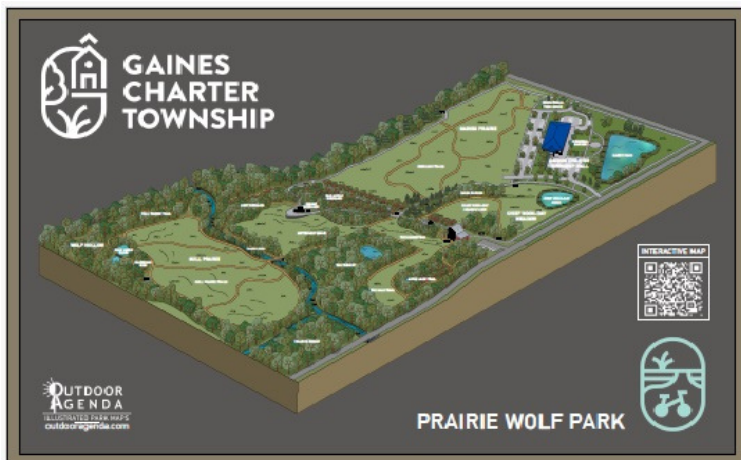
August Primary Election:

Michigan voters cannot vote a split ticket in the August primary election. You must choose one political party and vote for candidates within that party only. This is called voting a straight ticket. If you select candidates from more than one party in a primary election, your ballot will be invalid and will not count.

Prairie Wolf Park - Interactive Map



INTERACTIVE MAP



Visitors to Prairie Wolf Park (PWP) now have an easier way to explore the park's trails thanks to a new interactive map created by Parks & Trails Committee member Phil Steffes. Park visitors can access the map by scanning the QR code posted at each trailhead or by visiting the Township's website: www.gainestownship.org.

Additional improvements are also underway at Prairie Wolf Park. The final section of the Prairie Establishment Project, which began in 2010, has now been seeded, marking another milestone in the park's long-term habitat restoration efforts.

Looking ahead, the Parks & Trails Committee has been developing a new signage system for the park. The updated signs are intended to improve navigation and enhance visitors' experience, with installation expected to be completed by the end of the summer.

Celebrating a Lifetime of Community Service



Shirley Bruursema has dedicated decades of her life to strengthening her community through volunteerism, leadership, and civic engagement. Shirley's boundless energy and commitment earned her the nickname of "Energizer Bunny," and the title of Person of the Year in both Dutton and Cutlerville in 2011. An ardent champion of local history, she was instrumental in the restoration of the DeTray School (constructed in 1887). Her work helped preserve an important piece of the community's heritage for future generations.



Known throughout the state as the "Millage Queen," her devotion to library advocacy can't be matched! She has been instrumental in the successful passage of more than 80 library millage campaigns. Always an enthusiastic supporter of the Heritage Festival, and key organizer of the event from 2017 – 2025, Shirley has helped ensure that the community's rich history continued to be remembered and celebrated. Shirley Bruursema's legacy continues to be one of service, preservation, and unwavering commitment to the people and institutions that make Gaines Charter Township a special place to call home.

Summer Wonder Returns to Kent District Library



Summer Wonder is back at KDL, offering readers of all ages exciting opportunities to stay curious, creative and connected all summer long. Running June 1 through August 7, the annual program encourages lifelong learning through reading, hands-on activities and free events designed for a variety of interests, learning styles and abilities. Participants can join Summer Wonder by picking up a reading log at any KDL branch or registering online at kdl.beanstack.org. The program is free and includes activities, adventures and prizes for children, teens and adults. Learn more at kdl.org/summer.

What Is D.A.C.I.A.?

Ever wonder what a Dah-Cah is? It is not a thing, it's an Authority, the **D**ivision **A**venue **C**orridor **I**mprovement **A**uthority! **D.A.C.I.A.** consists of corridor business owners whose goal is to make the Division Avenue corridor the best it can be. Flags, flowers, benches, weed control, trash receptacles, decorative light poles (with banners); this is all due to the efforts of some very resolute individuals. The Authority is funded by tax dollars captured via Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Restrictions are in place which allow the dollars to be used only for the improvement of the three-mile corridor (60th Street south to 84th Street). Watch for special events designed to improve your corridor shopping experience.



Authority Members: Tom Werkema
Paul France, Jay Niewiek, John Huizinga,
and Zac Herrema

Let's build something remarkable together!

Stay Engaged



Visit gainestownship.org for
more information and updates

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on Facebook and soon on Instagram



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