

## ROCHESTER TOWNSHIP 2019 ANNUAL LETTER

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**Annual Meeting & Elections:** 2019 Annual Meeting - Tuesday, March 12, 8:15 pm, Rochester Town Hall. In person voting open 5:00pm – 8:00pm. Early voting by mail began February 8. Town Hall open for early voting in person on Saturday, March 9, 10:00am – 12:00pm. The ballot will present the following question: “Shall option B, providing for the appointment of the clerk-treasurer by the town board, be adopted for the government of the town?” and the election of one township officer. The Annual Meeting provides an opportunity to review last year’s activities and approve the 2020 proposed budget. We will discuss the 2019 road work program and the 20-year township road maintenance plan.

**Township Clerk:** Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Sara Rudquist has been carrying out the duties of Gary Swenson until he is able to retire in the spring of 2019. Email: [rochestertownshipclerk@gmail.com](mailto:rochestertownshipclerk@gmail.com)

**Winter Operations and Road Maintenance:** Protecting property is a concern for our drivers during the winter snow season: parking vehicles or trailers on township roads longer than 24 hours is prohibited. Mailboxes must be installed so that they will not be in the way of maintenance activity. Trash containers should be placed off the pavement and on your driveway to avoid interfering with plowing of snow. Driveway markers must be placed outside the ROW limits.

**Storm Water Management:** Annually the Township is required to update our MS4 Storm Water Management Plan that is aimed at reducing runoff and pollution. We can all contribute to the success of our plan by reducing the use of yard chemicals, pumping septic tanks every 2 years, proper disposal of toxic chemicals, hazardous waste, etc. Rain gardens have been shown to be effective for reducing runoff. Contact Olmsted County Environmental Resources at 328-7070 for more information.

**Mowing Township Ditches:** Native prairie grasses and flowers in our ditches may play a critical role in providing habitat for wildlife (cattails for red-winged blackbirds, milkweed for monarch butterflies, etc.), increase water filtration, catch snow and help take up excess water runoff. Contact DNR and request program information on “Roadsides for Wildlife.” Rochester Township supports permitting the mowing of our road ditches to control noxious weeds and to enhance safety.

**Fire Protection:** We continue to receive fire protection from the City of Rochester. This purchased service has a beneficial effect on our insurance rates and contributes to the health and welfare of our community.

**Burn Permits:** Recent snowfall this winter has reduced the chance of grass fires. However, caution should be exercised whenever a burning activity is conducted. The DNR website states a burn permit is required if there is less than 3 inches of snow on the ground. Spring fire restrictions take effect after the snow melts. Open burning is restricted until vegetation turns green. DNR reminds us that 98% of fires are caused by humans. Residents can call the Township Hall to request a burn permit.

**Right-of-Way Reminder:** The Township is responsible for the road right-of-way (33 feet on each side of the road centerline). Please do not plant, build, or construct anything in the right-of-way before contacting the Township.

**Town Hall Utilization:** The Town Hall may (for town residents) be available for meetings. Call the Township Clerk if you would like to reserve the hall. The rental fee is \$50.

**Sheriff Protection:** Our thanks to Deputy Tracy Pagel for keeping our township safe this past year. Deputy Pagel attends each board meeting and updates us on all township calls the sheriff’s office has responded to in the previous month.

We are all fortunate to live in a community with low crime rates, but it’s important to stay vigilant. If you see any suspicious activity, someone or something that doesn’t seem quite right, do not approach a suspicious vehicle or person, instead report it to our local law enforcement. **Non-emergency: 507-328-6800.**

**Emergency: call 9-1-1.**

**Township Website:** The Township has recently launched a new website. Check out [www.rochester-township.com](http://www.rochester-township.com) for the latest news and announcements. Minutes, ordinances, contact information and other resources are available to you. We will soon offer to you the ability to receive email or text notifications. You will need to sign up to receive notifications. Stay tuned!

**Free Folding Chairs:** The Township has recently acquired new meeting room chairs. The old folding chairs are free to anyone who is interested. Please contact a Township Supervisor if you are interested in these chairs.