

# Fire/Rescue Millage Renewal

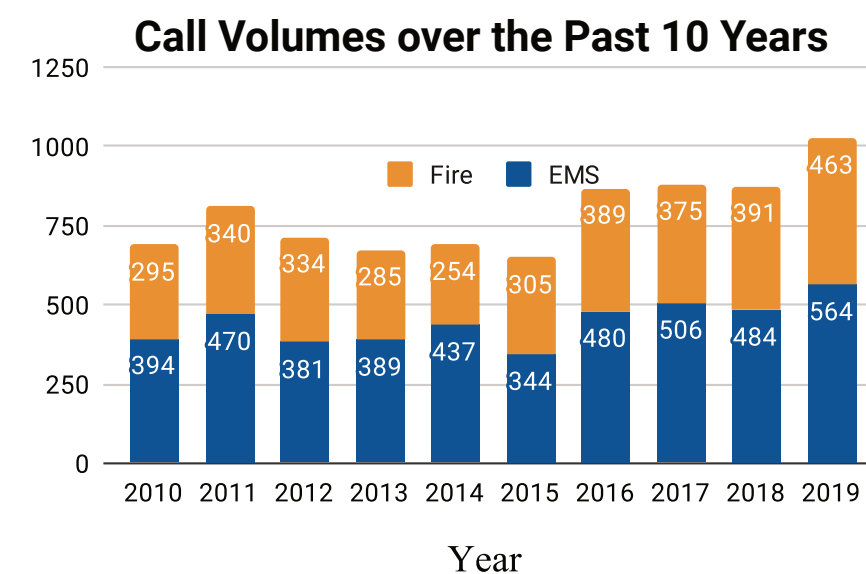
## .9933 Renewal for 15 years

### August 4, 2020 State Primary Ballot

On your August 4, 2020 Election ballot, you'll see the Texas Charter Township Fire Proposal asking for .9933 mills - of which .4933 is a renewal of the millage rate that expired in 2019 and .5 is a new additional millage - for 15 years (2020-2034) to provide funds for purchasing, operating and equipping the fire department.

In the past ten years, the call for service volume has steadily increased with the population of Texas Township, which has grown 17.2% in that time. That growth trend is expected to continue, as will the volume of calls for service.

Currently, the Fire Department has 5 full-time staff - a Chief, a Captain, and 3 Firefighter/Engine Operators. Firefighters work 48-hour shifts, with 1 on duty at all times. We rely heavily on paid-on-call staff to respond to calls, but there is currently a nationwide shortage of paid-on-call firefighters.



The estimate of revenue collected in the first year if the millage is approved is approximately **\$942,000**.

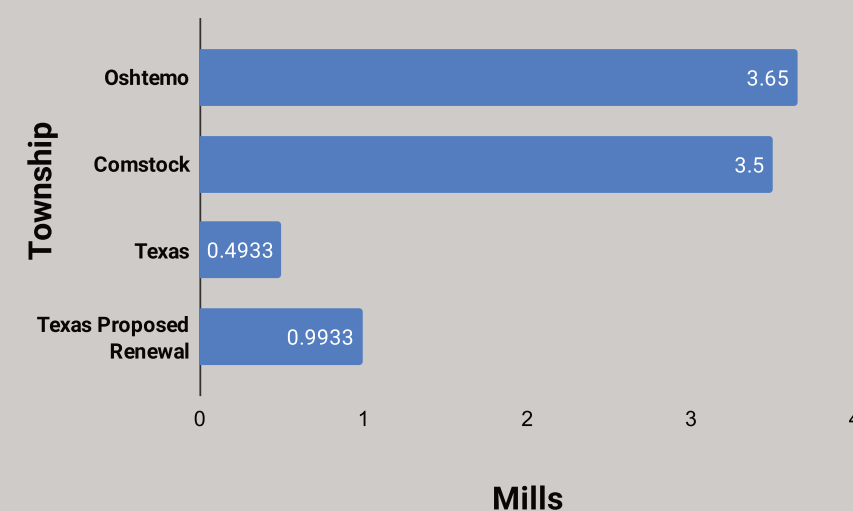
The funds generated from the millage renewal would pay to staff the Fire Station with **two** Firefighters per shift, working 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Funds would also replace existing equipment at the end of its reliable life span.



How do we compare with other Townships?

Texas Fire and Rescue operates on .4933 mills, supplemented with some general operating funds



### Questions? Learn more at [www.texasfire.org](http://www.texasfire.org)

You can also contact the Texas Township Hall at 269-375-1591 or [info@texastownship.org](mailto:info@texastownship.org) for more information.

## Your Community. Your Investment. Your Peace of Mind.



THE STAR | SUMMER 2020



TEXASTOWNSHIP.ORG

## Summer Taxes due September 14

Your 2020 Summer Property Tax bill is due in the Township Office no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, September 14th. Any payment placed in our Drop Box (located on the west side of the Township Hall Parking Lot) by 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 15 will be recognized as an "on-time" payment. Late payments will incur 1% interest each month.

### Payment options for 2020

- In Person** – by cash, check or by credit card. Credit card payments incur a 3% third party convenience fee.
  - Mail** – we do not honor postmarks, so please mail early.
    - If using bill pay through your financial institution, please allow 10 business days for processing and delivery.
- Drop Box** – located on the west end of our parking lot.

- Online** - Visit [www.texastownship.org](http://www.texastownship.org); Scroll down to the "View and Pay 2020 Summer Taxes" button. In left column select "Current Tax Payments", and follow instructions.

- OPTION #1 - CHECK (ACH) PAYMENT** - \$3.00 flat charge for each transaction up to \$10,000; if over \$10,000, a \$10 fee is charged.
- OPTION #2 - CREDIT CARD** – third party convenience fee of 3% on total amount paid will be added.

The Township does not earn any revenue from ACH or credit card transaction fees.



- Pay your taxes online by credit/debit card or check (ACH) payment**
- View your tax payment history**
- See your home's assessed and taxable values**

[WWW.TEXASTOWNSHIP.ORG](http://WWW.TEXASTOWNSHIP.ORG)

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE E-NEWSLETTER



To receive regular updates on the flooding, as well as other Township events, subscribe to The Star E-Newsletter

[www.texastownship.org/newsletter](http://www.texastownship.org/newsletter)



7110 West Q Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

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## Texas Township Board of Trustees



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Trustee Nick Loeks  
[nloeks@texastownship.org](mailto:nloeks@texastownship.org)

## 2020 Meeting Schedule

Texas Township Board Meetings are held on the second and fourth Monday evenings, unless otherwise noted by an asterisk, at the Texas Township Hall (7110 West Q Avenue) at 6:00 p.m. and are always open to the public

Due to COVID-19, meetings have been held electronically via Zoom meeting to ensure social distancing. Stay tuned to the website for more information about when in-person meetings will resume.

July 13  
July 20  
August 10  
August 24  
September 14  
September 28

October 12  
October 26  
November 9  
November 23  
December 7\*  
December 21\*

To view upcoming agendas or meeting minutes, please visit our website at [www.texastownship.org](http://www.texastownship.org).



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park Project Takes Shape

With a great deal of planning, a MDNR Land and Water Grant award, and a private/ public partnership, the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park is expected to be opened to the public in mid to late July 2020. Phase I of the park project includes two multi-purpose sports fields, an approximately .5 mile paved non-motorized trailway, eight pickleball courts, and a paved parking lot. Once the pickleball courts are completed, the park will be open to the public from dawn to dusk for use of the pickleball courts and trailway. The multi-purpose sports fields will not be opened this summer as the grass needs time to grow in. Additionally, the paving of the parking lot will be completed after the City of Kalamazoo has constructed the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Water tower expected to begin fall 2020.

This is a great addition to the Texas Township Park System. Later in the summer when social distancing requirements have relaxed, a grand opening event will be held. The pickleball courts would not have been constructed in Phase I without the significant contributions made by Kalamazoo Pickleball Outreach for the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park courts. The Township is truly thankful for this partnership!



## Fresh on Q! Farmers' Market Brings Fresh Food to the Community

Farmers' market season is in full swing in Texas Township, and the market continues to offer fresh, local food while taking precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These include limiting the number of vendors in the pavilion (and therefore increasing distancing), requiring vendors – and encouraging shoppers – to wear masks, providing hand sanitizer at entry points, and encouraging 6-foot distancing and directional traffic flow. The Farmers' Market Committee has been committed to ensuring that both shoppers and vendors stay safe. We understand that this will make the market look and feel different during this time, but we want to be able to provide food access to our community, as well as a venue for our producers to sell their goods.

This time of year, as we approach peak season, vendor tables are filling up with the bounty of the summer season, like blueberries, raspberries, tomatoes, beans, cucumbers and more, with sweet corn anticipated by the end of the month.

In addition to the market's Saturday hours from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., shoppers can get Fresh on Q! during the week on Tuesdays from 4 to 7 p.m. through August 25th. This weekday market is the perfect spot to get fresh ingredients to take home for dinner or grab prepared foods to take home to enjoy (as onsite food consumption is limited at this time as a safety precaution).

Both markets feature local farmers and food businesses selling their seasonal fruit and vegetables, meats, eggs, baked goods, preserves, honey, hot and ready-to-eat foods, cut flowers, plants, Michigan wine and so much more. Everything at the Fresh on Q! Farmers' Market is grown or prepared locally, either by the vendor selling it or a neighboring farm or business, and shopping at the market supports our community, small farms and businesses, and local economy.

Subscribe to the e-newsletter which goes out before each market to see what's in season and what vendors will be there each week, or follow the market on Facebook and Instagram. You can also tune in to WKZO on Friday mornings at 8:25 a.m. to hear highlights of what's in season. Thanks to WKZO and The Morning Show with Ken Lanphear for this fantastic partnership!

Don't have cash? Don't worry! The market also accepts credit and debit cards, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits via the Michigan Bridge Card, Pandemic-EBT, Double Up Food Bucks, WIC Project FRESH and Market FRESH. Due to COVID-19, there is currently no limit to the Double Up Food Bucks daily match, and the program also works with P-EBT! Visit the Information Table at the east end of the pavilion to learn more or to swipe your card in exchange for market tokens to spend with vendors.

Visit [www.texastownship.org/farmers-market](http://www.texastownship.org/farmers-market) to learn more.

## Be Ready to Vote this 2020 Election Season!

The August 4, 2020 State Primary Election is coming up quickly! Precincts will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on election day for in-person voting, and COVID-19 precautions will be in place to protect both voters and the election inspectors working in the polling places.

All registered voters in the state of Michigan received an Absent Voter Ballot Application by mail for both the August 4 and November 3 elections. Voting by mail is easy, convenient, and secure. During the outbreak of COVID-19, it also enables you to stay home and stay safe while still making your voice heard in our elections.

After you have signed the form, you can submit it in any one of the following ways:

- Option 1 – Scan or take a photo of the form that clearly shows your signature, and email it to [election@texastownship.org](mailto:election@texastownship.org)

- Option 2 – Mail or drop-off the form to the Township Office at 7110 West Q Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49009. There is also a secure drop box located at the West end of the parking lot.

You can now also complete and submit your absent voter ballot application online at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote). In the Michigan Voter Information Center, you can:

- Check your registration status and make sure you're registered at your current address

- Find your polling place

- See your sample ballot for the upcoming election

- Request and Track your Absentee Ballot

- Find answers to Frequently Asked Questions, and more!



## NOW HIRING ELECTION WORKERS!

Interested in the political process and how our voting system works? Want to make a little extra money and fulfill your civic duty, too? Texas Township is looking for Election Inspectors to work the August 3 and November 4 2020 elections.

Election Inspectors are paid \$175 per election day, or more for precinct chairs and co-chairs, as well as being compensated for election training.

Precautions will be in place to protect workers from COVID-19 in the polling place for these elections, including plexiglass guards, face masks, gloves, and sanitizer.

Please contact the Clerk's Office at 269-375-1591 or visit [www.texastownship.org/elections](http://www.texastownship.org/elections) to learn more or complete an Election Inspector Application.



## Texas Township Master Plan Public Input

A new Master Plan has been under development over the past year that will outline the future vision for Texas Charter Township. A master plan is a policy document that assists the Township in making decisions that affect the physical, social, and economic development of the Township. It analyzes existing conditions to create a desired vision for the future. This vision is achieved through a specific set of goals and strategies related to land use, infrastructure, transportation, housing, recreation, the natural environment, economic development, community appearance and design, and regional coordination.

An important component of any master planning effort is community outreach and input. Several outreach efforts have already occurred as part of the planning process, which included a community survey in the summer of 2019, an outreach meeting at Pretty Lake Camp in October 2019, additional meetings at Starbucks on South 9th Street and Texas Corners Brewing Company in January 2020, and a future land use survey during the COVID shelter at home time period.

As part of the final adoption process for the draft Master Plan, the Planning Commission will be completing their review of the document and requesting the Township Board open the required 63-day public comment period. We anticipate this comment period will occur through the months of August and September. At the close of the public comment period, the Planning Commission and Township Board will also hold public hearings for final adoption, which will likely occur in October and November.

We welcome your input on the draft Master Plan! The document can be found on the Texas Tomorrow webpage at: <https://www.texas-tomorrow.com/documents>. Comments can be provided to the Township at any time either through a letter to the Planning Commission or by email to [planner@texastownship.org](mailto:planner@texastownship.org). Please access the Township's website or the Texas Tomorrow webpage for additional information on the upcoming public comment period and public hearings, when posted. If you would like to be included in our email list related to the Master Plan, please provide your email address to Julie Johnston, AICP at [planner@texastownship.org](mailto:planner@texastownship.org).

## LOL 5K Race Goes Virtual on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020



Feeling cooped up and ready to run out of your house screaming?!! We've got JUST the event for you! Due to COVID-19, the 6th Annual LOL5k in Texas Corners will be VIRTUAL this year! That means you can run YOUR race anytime, anywhere, with a mask, without a mask, whatever your preference might be! AND the best part..... EVERY participant will receive the awesome race prizes, including a t-shirt and medal at packet pick-up on Friday, August 7!

The virtual LOL5k is scheduled for Saturday, August 8, and you can complete your 5k wherever and however you choose! Walk, run, skip, scoot, jump, jog, wog or bike.....be a part of the LOL5k (COVID-19-ain't-got-nothing-on-us) fun this summer and support your community! Register at [LOL5k.net](http://LOL5k.net).

## Summer Safety Reminders

### Drive, Bike and Walk Safely!

- Share the road! Many people are out this summer utilizing roads, sidewalks and trailways. Be aware of bikers and pedestrians if you're out driving, and use extra caution on winding and hilly roads.
- Don't leave children or pets in vehicles unattended. The temperature in a vehicle can quickly rise to lethal levels during the summer, even with a window cracked.

### Water Safety

- Make sure that children are always closely supervised when playing in the water.
- Pools should always be fenced or covered when not in use to keep children, inexperienced swimmers and pets safe.
- Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket when out on the water.

### Fire Safety

- Obtain a Burn Permit from the Fire Department each time you plan to burn brush, leaves, or grass clippings. You can apply for the permit online at [texastownship.org/burning-permits](http://texastownship.org/burning-permits) or by calling the Fire Department at 269-375-4610. If it is too dry or too windy, a permit may not be issued.
- Use caution, and never leave a fire burning unattended!

## New Building Department Fee Schedule, effective August 1, 2020

On June 23, 2020, the Township Board approved a new Electrical and Mechanical Fee Schedule for the Township Building Department. This new schedule updates these fees based on the 2017 Bureau of Construction Code Permit and Inspection Fee Schedule; the Township is currently using fees based on the 2001 fee schedule.

These new fees will be comparable with other local Kalamazoo area building departments, as well as the State of Michigan. The new fee schedule will take effect on **August 1, 2020** for any new electrical and mechanical permits.

Doing a summer project? Did you get your building or zoning permit? Many common projects, like remodels, re-roofs, sheds, barns, decks, fences and pools require a permit and inspections. Contact the Building Department at 269.978.0715 or visit [www.texastownship.org/building](http://www.texastownship.org/building) or [www.texastownship.org/planningzoningdevelopment](http://www.texastownship.org/planningzoningdevelopment) for more information.



Shed or Barn



Deck



Re-roof



Fence



Pool



Outdoor Fireplace

## Dumpster Days

Texas Township offers dumpster service to its residents several times per year. This service is an excellent way for residents to dispose of extra household junk & debris.

The 2020 Dumpster Dates are as follows:

- Saturday, August 1st | 9:00am-12:00pm

- Saturday, October 3rd | 9:00am-12:00pm

**Event Location: Texas Drive Park, 6603 Texas Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49009**

Please note that drop off is ONLY available on the dates specified above during the hours of 9:00am-12:00pm. Anyone who leaves items outside of the specified dates and times may be prosecuted. All residents choosing to partake of this service are required to unload their own vehicle, and there is a 10 minute time limit.

Visit <http://www.texastownship.org/dumpster-service/> for a list of acceptable and non-acceptable items.

In addition, the Township has a contract with the Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Center to provide residents household hazardous waste disposal services for items like electronics, batteries, automotive products, cleaning products, and other hazardous items. Visit <https://www.kalcounty.com/hhw>.

## Shred Day

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 1ST

As a service to our residents, Texas Township hosts a Shred Day for both residents and non-residents to dispose of sensitive documents in a safe and secure way. We contract with Rapid Shred, who provides a large shredding vehicle to dispose of documents quickly. Please note that there is a six standard file sized box limit. In 2020, Texas Township will only be hosting ONE Shred Day on Saturday, August 1 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Texas Drive Park. This year's event will be held in coordination with the August 1 Dumpster Day.

**Event Location: Texas Drive Park, 6603 Texas Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49009**



## Upcoming Events

**August 1** - Dumpster Day and Shred Day at Texas Drive Park

**August 4** - State Primary Election

**August 25** - Last Tuesday Farmers' Market

**September 7** - Labor Day (office closed)

**September 14** - Last Day for on-time Summer Tax Payments

**October 3** - Dumpster Day

**October 17** - Last Saturday Farmers' Market

**November 3** - General Election

For a full list of events, visit [www.texastownship.org/calendar](http://www.texastownship.org/calendar)



## Absent Voter Frequently Asked Questions

**I've never voted by mail before. How does it work?**

Voting by mail is easy! Simply complete and sign an Absent Voter Ballot Application (either what was mailed to you or the application posted on our website at [texastownship.org/elections](http://texastownship.org/elections)), then return it to the Clerk's office. You can email, mail or fax it back, or complete the application online at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote). We'll mail your ballot to you, which you will vote, then secure in the secrecy sleeve inside the green envelope. Don't forget to sign and date the envelope!

Ballots can be returned by mail, in person, or via our secure drop box, before 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. If you know you'll be out of the area approaching election day, you can provide an alternate address where we will send your ballot. Please note that ballots do not forward! Mail takes times, so please allow adequate time for delivery, as ballots received after election day do not get counted.

You can also come to the Clerk's office with your photo ID before the election to get your ballot in person.

**I signed up to be on your Permanent Absent Voter List. Why do you keep sending me applications?**

An application to vote is required for every ballot, for every election, whether you vote in person or by mail. Being on the Permanent List means that we'll automatically send you an application for every election so that you can request an absentee ballot, but we still need that signed application back in order to send your ballot to you.

**I haven't gotten my ballot yet!**

You can check the status of your absentee ballot at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) or by calling the Clerk's office.

**I made a mistake on my ballot! How do I fix it?**

If you made a mistake (for example, voting for candidates from more than one party during a primary election), you can request that we spoil your ballot and issue you a new one. That request must be made in writing. Do not attempt to use white-out or "X" over the mistake.

## WHERE DO I VOTE?

**Precinct 1** - Calvary Reformed Church, 7829 South 5<sup>th</sup> St

**Precinct 2** - Texas Township Hall, 7110 West Q Ave

**Precinct 3** - KVCC Groves Campus, 6107 Elm Valley Rd

**Precinct 4** - Southridge Reformed Church, 6726 Texas Dr

**Precinct 5** - Southridge Reformed Church, 6726 Texas Dr

**Precinct 6** - Calvary Reformed Church, 7829 South 5<sup>th</sup> St

