

Life & Times of Ford Township Township

Township Annual Meeting

Tuesday, March 13, 2007

8:05 p.m. at Ford Town Hall

Election: 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Ford Town Hall

Ballot

Positions open: 1 Supervisor & Treasurer

Town Question: Move Election from March to November?

Annual Meeting Program:

Sheriff Steve Schulz – “Neighborhood Watch - A good thing?”

Following the business meeting, Sheriff Steve Schulz will be speaking and providing a Power-Point presentation about the Neighborhood Watch program and how it might benefit our area. This is an issue that affects residents and non-residents alike with break-ins becoming more and more prevalent.

Sheriff Schulz has over 25 years of experience in law enforcement. He was hired in 1980 as a Deputy Sheriff for Kanabec County, appointed to

the position of Chief Deputy in 1998, elected County Sheriff for the first time in 2003 and is just beginning his second term in office. A resident of Kanabec County for over 40 years, Steve is a strong advocate for the Neighborhood Watch program which he believes gives many more “eyes and ears” to community safety than he and his deputies can ever hope to provide.

Neighborhood Watch is one of the oldest and most effective crime prevention programs in the country, bringing citizens together with law enforcement to deter crime and make communities safer.



**TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME®**

Did you know????

While the Annual Meeting keeps eligible voters involved, the Open Meeting Law assures that **all** township meetings are open to the public. The citizens decide how and where the notices will

be posted and/or published at the Annual Meeting. It also requires that records of those meetings must be kept and available for the community to view.



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A Pure Democracy

At a time in our country when many believe they are powerless in the decision-making process, there is yet one example of a pure democracy. The Township Annual Meeting is unique because the power is controlled by the people who live within the township. It is a "people's meeting" because it gives every voter the opportunity to be heard. Townships are small close-knit communities where democracy is alive and well.

The Annual Meeting is where the

residents elect the officials to administer the business of the township. The citizens introduce and discuss problems/concerns as well as make motions for possible solutions. They decide on what contributions will be made to civic organizations. And, perhaps most importantly, they authorize the tax levy for the following year which limits and regulates the way money is spent within the township. Township government gives every citizen the opportunity for their voice to be heard and to be involved in the decisions that af-

fect their lives.

The township supervisors live just down the road from you but to successfully do their jobs they need to hear from you. Mark your calendar now for Tuesday, March 13, 2007 for the election (held from 5 to 8 p.m.) and the Township Annual Meeting at 8:05 p.m. Don't miss this opportunity to join your neighbors and participate in the democratic process.

Should the Town Election Move To November? You Decide.....

The Federal HAVA act mandates that beginning in 2008 every election must have the new Automark voting equipment available for use. This includes township elections. Since the decision of whether or not to move the township election from March to November is one that must be made by the electors, the Ford Town Board decided to put the question to a vote at the upcoming meeting on March 13, 2007.

It is believed by some that moving the election to November will ensure the best possible voter turnout. On

the other hand, while the move would certainly decrease costs (election judges, equipment programming, etc. for a separate election) it could also result in less attention being paid to township issues and lower attendance at the annual meeting.

Another issue to be considered is that if the town election is moved to November, there will be a transition schedule prepared to switch all town officers to four year terms. Currently Supervisors are elected for three year terms and Clerk and Treasurer are each elected to two year terms. This

means that two Supervisors will be on the ballot every other election cycle.

The move to a November election is strictly a local decision. If the move is approved, it will take effect with the 2008 election. If not, the town election will remain in March and terms for the officers will remain as is. This is an important issue that needs your thoughtful consideration and your vote on March 13.

2007 & 2008 Ford Township Road Work

This summer culvert work, cleaning of ditches, right of way and overhanging branches plus the laying of Class 5 gravel will begin between Sections 27 and 34. Next year the Township will begin clearing all right of ways in an effort to promote safety and open up the roads for better air movement. All trees and brush within the right of way will be cleared. Land owners own trees that are six inches in diameter measured at a point two feet above the ground. Land owners can remove these trees or with written permission the township will remove them and leave them on the land owner's property. Send permission letters to Doug Bassett, 2138 330th Avenue, Mora or contact him with any questions at 320 679 5780.



Township Road Recording

Ford Township has contracted with Barry Blomquist Law Office of North Branch for the purpose of recording the Town roads. To that end a Public Hearing was held on Dec. 6, 2006 with a continuance on February 8, 2007 to gather input from affected landowners. Using that information, the Town Board is in the process of completing an inventory of Town roads, describing same, and adopting a road map. Upon completion of that process, by resolution the Board will direct recording of the map and legal descriptions with the Kanabec County Recorder.



Operation Bird Flu Defense

On November 8th, 2006 the Kanabec County Public Health and Emergency Management conducted a "mock" pandemic flu vaccination exercise that the Ford Town Hall. The drill was carried out to assess the town hall for building and parking lot size. They

also wanted to measure the size of the building to determine if it could hold a large group of people. The building's exits were also evaluated to determine if large numbers of people could move through them in a reasonable amount of time. "Mock" pandemic

flu vaccination drills are being held at multiple locations. In the event of an actual flu pandemic they would like to disseminate the vaccine from several locations in order to avoid the congestion that would occur at only one location.

Donations?? The Ford Town Hall could use the following:

- * 30 cup coffee pot
- * Folding chairs
- * Small microwave
- * Small refrigerator

Planning Commission

In our last newsletter we outlined the process the Township has embarked on to create a Comprehensive Plan that will provide a guideline to future land use and community issues within Ford Township. With extensive input from the community, the Board has written and approved a working draft of the Comp Plan. In addition, the board has authorized the creation of a Planning Commission and is pleased to announce those residents who have volunteered to act as our first Commissioners: Jim Cole, Robert Jagusch, Frank Kriz, and Ken VonBank. Kim Johnson is the Board liaison.

The first task that the Planning Commission is charged with is to review and make recommendations to the Board for final adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. After adoption of the Plan, the Planning Commission will be working to develop zoning ordinances for the Board to consider. If zoning ordinances are enacted, the Planning Commission will be involved in the review and permitting process for land use decisions in Ford Township.

These duties are extensive and will have a profound impact on Ford Township for many generations to come. Your input to this process is also vital. The Board will be holding public hearings throughout this development period and you are invited to attend our Board meetings as well as Planning Commission meetings. Dates and times for both will be posted at the Town Hall or you can contact any Board member for information.

Ford Township

Noxious Weeds—Come Spring, They'll Be Back!



Ford Township Board Members and Contact Information

Doug Bassett, Chair
320-679-5780
dcbassett@ncis.com

Katie Kerr, Supervisor
320-679-5184
kerr@northhc.com

Kim Johnson, Supervisor
320-679-0512
snakerivermn@yahoo.com

Penny Simonsen, Clerk
320-679-8374 or 8375
tinshack@ncis.com

Edna Cole, Treasurer
320-679-3137
n40cole@ncis.com

**“We’re
there
because
we care”**

Kanabec County
First Responders
Team, Inc.

Each year the township participates in a county-wide inspection to determine where noxious weeds reside. Typically the inspection takes place during the months of May or June.

Once the inspection is completed, the township is required to notify property owners whose land is afflicted with noxious weeds. Initial notifications are simply that, notices of the

condition and suggestions for removal/reduction of the noxious weeds. It is the expectation of the township that affected property owners devise a plan and that it be carried out before the next inspection.

If no action is taken by the property owner, and noxious weeds continue to thrive, the township has the obligation to enforce the inspection

and in some cases remedy the noxious weed condition—something that we all want to avoid.

For information about the process contact: Doug Bassett at 320-679-5780. If you received a letter about noxious weeds “hanging out” around your place, don’t hesitate to call Doug to let him know what you’re planning to do.

Ford Township E-Mail Address:
fordtownship@yahoo.com

Kanabec County First Responders Team, Inc.

Many residents of Ford Township have strongly supported the formation of the Kanabec County First Responders Team to combat the distance from ambulance/hospital facilities. Once in place, a call to 911 will dispatch an ambulance and then a call will be put out for First Responders via 2 way radios and pagers. The new repeater on the tower right here in Ford Township will make this possible for the northern portion of the county. Although more local volunteers are needed, Ford Township already has three applicants for the Team, Vicki Smith, Kathy VonBank and Jim Cole

(current chair and active McGrath Area First Responder). KCFRT has received their 501(c)3 status as a non-profit organization and plans are moving ahead for fundraising efforts for training and equipment. If you are interested in participating in this effort or providing a tax deductible donation, contact the organization at (320) 679 4479 or visit their website at www.kcfrt.org. for more information. The Team also plans to have representation at all the Township Annual meetings on March 13.

