



# DULUTH TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

DULUTH TOWNSHIP WEB SITE: [WWW.DULUTHTOWNSHIP.ORG](http://WWW.DULUTHTOWNSHIP.ORG)

MARCH 2010

## What's Coming Up...

- Township Supervisor Election** is Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>  
Polls open at 7am at our Town Hall on Homestead Road, and close at 8pm. There are two open positions. Candidate statements are in this Newsletter.
- Absentee ballots** are available at the Town Hall during office hours and also Saturday morning, March 7<sup>th</sup> from 10-12.
- Annual Town Meeting**, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 8:15pm is where the 2011 Town budget is discussed and approved. *Please do not enter the Town Hall until 8:15pm to give time for election materials to be put away and chairs set up for the Annual Meeting. (see insert)*
- Public hearing to be announced** on a request for rezoning a parcel near Alseth and Hwy 61 for a proposed new kayak and surf board rental business.
- Stormwater Meeting** — April 8<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm Town Hall. *(See article, page 1)*
- Operating Levy** is being considered by School District 381. *(See IDS #381 News article, page 5)*
- Planning Commission opening**, applicants sought. *(See information on page 8)*

## THE HOMESTEADERS

Helen Hendrickson

- March 3<sup>rd</sup>**, Wednesday, 12:30, Potluck, Town Hall, and a program by Steve Dahl, author of *"Knife Island: Circling a Year in a Herring Skiff"*, 2009.
- April 7<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday, 12:30pm, Town Hall. Program by Jodi Johannessen from Regency Home Health Care to talk about their services. Coffee-time follows.
- May 5<sup>th</sup>**, Wednesday, 12:30pm, Town Hall. Program to be announced.
- . Everybody is welcome.**  
*For information call Helen Hendrickson at 525-4154.*

### Thanks to all contributors to this issue:

Jody Anderson, Leo Babeau, Valerie Brady, Ann Cox, Steve Dahl, Bob Engelson, Helen Hendrickson, Janis Hooey, Sue Lawson, Dave Mount, Beth Mullan, Jim Munger, Shawn Pad-den, Sherry Rovig, and our Webmaster, Linda Hollinday.

## Community Education/Recreation Events In Peril

81% of Township residents in our recent survey want a community ed/recreation program at the Community Center. HOWEVER, no one has stepped up to take on the leadership in organizing and overseeing a program for the Township. The Town Board has advertised for someone to take over this important task and even offers a modest budget to work with and a stipend.

*You or you and a friend could be the ones to help out!* If you can help, please leave a note with contact information at the Town Hall or email the editor.

## Land Use Permit Fee Schedule

The new, approved land use permit fee schedule is now posted on our web site. You can also call the Planning Commission (393-8500) for fee information. The fee schedule resulted from some comment at the 2009 Annual Town Meeting that the Planning Commission's work should be funded in larger part from fees.

## Township Stormwater Plan Meeting

Valerie Brady

Please join us April 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at the Town Hall for our annual citizen's meeting about the Township stormwater plan. Holding this meeting to inform Township residents about our requirements concerning stormwater fulfills part of our State mandate. Come and learn about local stormwater issues or get your runoff questions answered. Then stay for the regular Town Board meeting at 7pm.

## Thanks for a Great Winter Dance Break!

Valerie Brady

Special thanks to Jody Anderson and Mary Tennis for organizing a dance for townfolk at the Town Hall on Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>. About 40 people enjoyed swing dance lessons and then a variety of dance music including swing, country-western, waltz, foxtrot/two-step, polka, tango, rumba, cha-cha, and others. Extra help was provide by Bob Fabbro, Mark Bogey, Barb Crow and Sheri Rovig (*sound system*), Lynn MacLean (*swing instructor*) assisted by Sara Duke and David Devere, Stacy LeVres and Ann Utyro (*DJs*), Korina Hansen, and many who brought home-made refreshments. Future dances are in the works, so watch for signs and announcements to join the fun.

## Clifton Volunteer Fire Department Profile

*Bob Engelson, Chief*

The Clifton Volunteer Fire Department provides fire-fighting and medical first response to the Townships of Duluth and Alden, a primary response area covering approximately 90 square miles. We also serve neighboring communities under a mutual aid agreement as a member of the Lakehead Mutual Aid Association, giving and receiving assistance from other fire departments as needed.

Clifton Fire Department consists of three fire stations, two in Duluth Township and one in Alden. Station 1, our main hall, is located on Ryan Road just above the expressway. Station 2 is next door to the Duluth Town Hall on Homestead Road, and Station 3 is next door to the Alden Town Hall on the Laine Road. Housed within these stations are a total of eight vehicles. We have two primary, first-out engines, also known as pumpers, and a third backup pumper. Each of these engines carries 1000 gallons of water. These trucks are supported by a 5000 gallon water tender and a 3000 gallon water tender/pumper, our newest apparatus. Rounding out the fleet are two wild-land/brush fire trucks and a support van.

Recently, several new volunteers have joined the Department and are attending firefighter and first responder training. Our membership roster will be much improved when their training is completed.

In addition to emergency response, one of the non-emergency tasks the Department has been involved in over the years is making ice for the skating rinks at our Community Center.

The Clifton Volunteer Fire Department appreciates the support of the community and that of our active Clifton Auxiliary who deliver free calendars to every household, and the annual Harvest Dinner which they serve for our benefit.



*Ann Cox responds to an emergency call with a new first responder equipment cart supplied by the Clifton Fire Auxiliary*

### North Shore Locavores

*Sherry Rovig*

The next meeting will be Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, (4<sup>th</sup> Sun.) at our Town Hall. An educational hour starts at 3pm, followed by 4pm meeting with a pot luck meal following.

#### Upcoming Education sessions:

Mar 28<sup>th</sup> — Doug Hoffbauer on multi-cropping and soil amendment.

Apr 25<sup>th</sup> — sheep shearing

May 23<sup>rd</sup> — drip irrigation

*(check the web site for updates)*

For more information, see our Township web site: [www.duluthtownship.org/locavore](http://www.duluthtownship.org/locavore), or call: Sherry at 525-0489 or Georganne at 525-4679.

**Meetings are free and open to the public.**



**Ann Cox** is a First Responder with our Clifton Volunteer Fire Department dealing with on-scene medical and safety as many in our Township have appreciated. She has been a member of the Department for 15 years. Ann is also the Department's treasurer. She and her husband, Robert, live on the Korkki Road. Their family includes Brian, Renee, Sara and Robb and 7 grand kids! Ann works part time as our official Town Clerk. Ann is proud of the Department's new volunteers and how hard they are working together—a great group of people. She is also an active member of the St Louis Rescue Squad.



**Keith Darsow** is Assistant Chief of Clifton Volunteer Fire Department and also a First Responder and is in charge of communications. He has been a volunteer firefighter for 7 years. Keith lives on the Wildwood Road with his wife, Andrea (who is a co-owner of the Lighthouse Restaurant) and their children Ryan, Brady, and Lydia. Keith works for the local Coors distributor. He is most proud of the grants

the Department has received for a grass fighting skid unit and the new tanker/pumper, and also our 5000 gallon "Liberty" tanker. Keith noted that morale and camaraderie of the Department is impressive. Keith volunteered when he was invited to a fire meeting and loved the idea.



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### Duluth Township Community Center

#### Skating Rink Rules & Hours

##### Skating Rink Hours

Weekdays: 4pm—9pm; Weekends: 10am—9pm

- No one under 13 will be allowed on the rink without adult supervision.
- Children under 12 have priority on the hockey rink until 7:00pm
- No rough playing or fighting will be allowed.
- Obscene gestures or language will not be tolerated.
- Hockey and broomball may ONLY be played on the hockey rink.
- Recommended protective gear must be worn by all hockey players.
- No smoking or alcohol is permitted on Duluth Township Community Center property.
- The Township and/or North Shore Community School will not be responsible for thefts, accidents or injuries.

**Duluth Township Information — 2010**

Duluth Town Hall, 6092 Homestead Road, Duluth, MN 55804  
 Phone (218) 525-5705 (voice message),  
 fax (218) 525-3845, web site: [www.duluthtownship.org](http://www.duluthtownship.org).  
 or Email: [TownHall@duluthtownship.org](mailto:TownHall@duluthtownship.org)

**Town Office Hours:** Tues. and Wed. 8:30am-12am  
 Thursday 9am-12 and 4-6pm

**Planning Office Hours:** No posted hours, call the  
 Assistant Director for an appointment (393-8500)  
**Supervisors:**

**Stephen Dahl**, (2007-2010) 525-4679 or  
 Email: [SteveDahl@duluthtownship.org](mailto:SteveDahl@duluthtownship.org)  
 (Responsibilities: Shares Roads, Community Center,  
 Recreation Facilities (JOC) )

**Wendy Meierhoff** (2008-2011) 525-0263  
 or Email: [Wendy@duluthtownship.org](mailto:Wendy@duluthtownship.org)  
 (Responsibilities: Community Education/Recreation  
 Coordinator, Police, Alternate on Planning, Shares:  
 Recreation Facilities (JOC) and Community Center)

**Dave Mount** (2007-2010) **Board Chair** 525-7961  
 or Email: [DaveMount@duluthtownship.org](mailto:DaveMount@duluthtownship.org)  
 (Responsibilities: Board Chair, Planning &  
 Zoning, North Shore Mgmt Bd, Shares Town Hall, )

**Mary Ann Sironen**, (2009-2012) **Vice Chair** 525-2010  
 or Email: [MaryAnnSironen@duluthtownship.org](mailto:MaryAnnSironen@duluthtownship.org)  
 (Responsibilities: Personnel, Newsletter/web site,  
 Duluth/County Assn of Twps, Senior Housing, Board  
 of Adjustment, Duluth/North Shore Sanitary District,  
 Alternate: North Shore Management, Board Chair)

**Dan Tanner** (2008-2011) 525-4087  
 or Email: [DanTanner@duluthtownship.org](mailto:DanTanner@duluthtownship.org)  
 (Responsibilities: Cemetery, Fire Dept, RSPT,  
 MPCA, SWPPP, Shares Town Hall and Roads)

**Town Clerk:** **Ann K. Cox** 525-5705 (Town Hall)  
 or Email: [TownClerk@duluthtownship.org](mailto:TownClerk@duluthtownship.org)

**Treasurer:** **Janet Johansen** 525-5705 (Town Hall)  
 or Email: [TownTreasurer@duluthtownship.org](mailto:TownTreasurer@duluthtownship.org)

**Attorney:** **Tim Strom** 722-4766 (office)  
 or Email: [TownAttorney@duluthtownship.org](mailto:TownAttorney@duluthtownship.org)

**Cemetery:** **Denise Connolly** 525-7161 or 525-1902  
 or Email: [Cemetery@duluthtownship.org](mailto:Cemetery@duluthtownship.org)

**Planning Director:** **Sue Lawson**  
 Assistant Director: **John Kessler** 393-8500,  
 Email: [JohnKessler@duluthtownship.org](mailto:JohnKessler@duluthtownship.org)

**Planning and Zoning Secretary:** **Beth Mullan**  
 Email: [PlanningZoning@duluthtownship.org](mailto:PlanningZoning@duluthtownship.org)

**Planning and Zoning Commission:** **Dave Chura** (Chair),  
**Barbara Crow, Jan Green, Michael Kahl,**  
**Bill Lannon, Seth Levanen, Yvonne Rutford**  
 Email: [PlanningZonng@duluthtownship.org](mailto:PlanningZonng@duluthtownship.org)

**Peace Officers:** **Chief Shawn Padden,**  
**Officers: Mike Peterson and Steve Peterson.**  
 Emergencies 9-1-1, Messages 525-5705 or 393-8407  
 Email: [DuluthTwpPolice@duluthtownship.org](mailto:DuluthTwpPolice@duluthtownship.org)

**Fire Department:** **Chief Bob Engelson, Assistant Chief**  
**Keith Darsow, President Bill Cox**  
 Email: [FireHall@duluthtownship.org](mailto:FireHall@duluthtownship.org)

**Burning Permits** are available from the **Town Hall** during office  
 hours, and from **Fire Wardens:** Jay Zink (525-5589),  
 Jeff and Caroline Marino (525-6431), or the **DNR**  
 office in Two Harbors (1568 Hwy 2, 834-6609).

**Community Education Coordinator:** Supervisor Meierhoff  
 Email: [EducCoordinator@duluthtownship.org](mailto:EducCoordinator@duluthtownship.org)

**Note:** Where possible, email is forwarded to the person, other-  
 wise it is sent to the Town Hall where it is picked up.

**Township Calendar**

See updates on [www.duluthtownship.org](http://www.duluthtownship.org).  
 Our Official Calendar is posted at the Town Hall.

**MARCH 2010**

- 2, Tue, Community Center Facilities Committee  
 3, Wed, 12:00 **Homesteader's**, Town Hall  
 3, Wed, 7pm **Volunteer Fire Dept:** business  
 meeting, Fire Hall #1, Ryan Rd

- 9, Tue, 7am-8pm **ELECTION** for a Town Supervisor  
 Town Hall — Be sure to vote!  
 9, Tue. 8:15pm **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**,  
 Town Hall  
*Please do not enter the Town Hall until 8:15 to allow voting to  
 end, equipment to be stored and chairs to be set up.*

- 11, Thu, 7pm **TOWN BOARD**, Town Hall  
 11, Thu, NSCS Open House 3:30pm-6:30pm  
 15, Mon, 6:30pm, **North Shore Community School**  
**Board** meeting, NSCS Library  
 15, Mon, 2010-2011 NSCS New Student Application  
 deadline.  
 16, Tue, **7am Duluth/North Shore Sanitary District**  
 meeting, French River Lutheran Church  
 17, Wed, 7pm **Volunteer Fire Dept** training, Hall#1  
 18, Wed, NSCS Spring Concert 1pm and 6pm  
 25, Thu, 7pm **Planning Commission**, Town Hall  
 28, Sun, 3pm Locavores meet, Town Hall

**APRIL 2010**

- 6, Tue, Community Center Facilities Committee  
 7, Wed, 12:30 **Homesteader's** meet, Town Hall  
 7, Wed, 7pm **Volunteer Fire Dept:** business  
 meeting Fire Hall #1, Ryan Road  
 8, Thu, 6:30pm Stormwater meeting, Town Hall  
 8, Thu, 7pm **TOWN BOARD**, Town Hall.  
 19, Mon, 6:30pm, **North Shore Community School**  
**Board** meeting, NSCS Library.  
 20, Tue, **7am Duluth/North Shore Sanitary District**  
 meeting, French River Lutheran Church  
 21, Wed, 7pm **Volunteer Fire Dept** training Hall #1  
 22, Thu, 7pm **Planning Commission**, Town Hall  
 23, Tue, **Deadline for May Newsletter**  
 25, Sun, 3pm Locavores meet, Town Hall

**MAY 2010**

- 4, Tue, Community Center Facilities Committee  
 5, Wed, 12:30 **Homesteader's** meet, Town Hall  
 5, Wed, 7pm **Volunteer Fire Dept:** business  
 meeting, Fire Hall #1, Ryan Road  
 13, Thu, 7pm **TOWN BOARD**, Town Hall  
 17, Mon, 6:30pm **North Shore Community School**  
**Board** meeting, NSCS Library  
 18, Tue, **7am Duluth/North Shore Sanitary District**  
 meeting, French River Lutheran Church  
 19, Wed, 7pm **Volunteer Fire Dept:** training, Hall #1  
 23, Sun, 3pm Locavores meet, Town Hall

**Township Recycling Center**

At the Town Hall, on Homestead Road —Staffing by  
 Carolyn Marino, Al Anderson, Marlys Livingston, and Kathy Peer  
**Nov-March: Tues. 7-11am, 2-6pm, Thurs. 2-6pm,**  
**and Sat. 8-noon.**

April-October: and Sat. 8-noon.

**(Drop off only during recycling hours)**

Curb recycling pickup service is available below the freeway,  
 (Bags available for glossy paper—but drop off at NSCS!)

**Police Department**

*Shawn Padden, Chief*

**Recorded Police Events**

2009	??
2008	1034
2007	1088
2006	881
2005	972
2004	1057
2003	969
2002	773

In January the Department had 79 events including 42 home vacation checks, 5 medical emergencies, 4 public assists and 4 suspicious person complaints. In addition they responded to 3 fire alarms and 3 burglar alarms and 3 reckless or drunk driving incidents.

In 2010 the Police Dept. budget allowed for updating their old computer equipment so that emails can be better processed.

**CRIME MAPPING web site**

There is a web site that shows a map of crimes in the area. You can also sign up to have crime information in your neighborhood sent to you by email. The web site is: [www.crimemapping.com](http://www.crimemapping.com).

Once connected, you can enter your address and see a map with the location of our Police Office and any recent crimes in your area. The site provides some detail about the police events as well. It's a pretty slick way to get local crime information and alerts.

Crime-mapping was developed, in part, through a grant that the Northeast Law Enforcement Administrators Council was awarded by Congressman Oberstar's office and is part of President Obama's Stimulus effort.

**Call 911 for all emergencies**

To leave messages and non-emergency information:  
 Duluth Township Police: 393-8407 or 525-5705,  
 St Louis County 911 or their office: 727-8770



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**Open daily at 11am Specials**

Wed. night: All you can eat Fish Fry  
Sat. & Sun. Breakfast 11am-2pm  
Saturday: Prime Rib  
Sunday: Turkey Dinner  
Monday: Kids 10 or under eat free  
Irish music Tues Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> & Apr 6<sup>th</sup> 6-8pm  
 5730 Homestead Road • 525-4525

**High-Speed Fiber-Optic Network Possibility**

The *USDA Rural Utility Service* announced a second round of Stimulus Funds through their Broadband Infrastructure Program (BIP). The plan is to enable homes and businesses in Lake County and, now, parts of St Louis County connect to a fiber-optic line for high speed voice, video and data service. The Township is writing a letter of support for the project's application, which now includes our Township. There is no cost to the Township.

The Lake County Board issued a *Request for Proposals* and selected *National Public Broadband, Inc.*, a new non-profit company, to submit a proposal. No local taxpayer funds will be pledged to fund the network. If successful, construction could begin in 2010 or 2011.

**Summary of Town Board Meetings**

*(Official minutes by Town Clerk Ann Cox are available at the Town Hall and on our Township web site: [www.duluthtownship.org](http://www.duluthtownship.org)).*

**January 14<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.** All Supervisors attended (*Steve Dahl, Wendy Meierhoff, Dave Mount, Mary Ann Sironen, and Dan Tanner*). There were no concerns from the audience. Our year-ending balance was \$922,564.10 (which includes the Community Center capital fund of approximately \$650,000. The remaining funds carry us into June when 2010 tax levy funds become available). \$12,000 of the money we received from the Taconite Fund will be moved to our Township Capital Improvement fund. We have had two recent satisfactory audits so we may not need one this year. Six roadside "welcome/permit-required" signs need to be updated and will be sought.

**Department Reports:** *Police:* A new 3-year contract was approved. It lowers hours from 2160 to 1920 (hours were increased for another officer which was deemed unnecessary) and provides for small annual increases (\$0.50/hr). *Fire:* numerous first responder and one fire call to Two Harbors. *Planning:* St Louis County is redoing their subdivision ordinance and will contact us. There was a request for a sign for Stoney Point cottages. A hunting cabin built on Jim Ulland's tree farm without permit and without his knowledge is being resolved. *Roads:* We applied for a \$60,000 road grant which involves \$15,000 in matching funds from the Township's road budget for projects already prioritized by the Township. MPCA is seeking our letter of support for a grant to use GIS mapping to determine sources of stormwater for this end of Lake Superior. EPA rules assigned the Township 33% of the Knife River sediment discharge responsibility (*later proposed to reduce to 16.5%*). *Community Center:* Peak Construction will be sent a letter of thanks for their work on re-roofing. Steve Dahl will check on the adequacy of insurance for the pavilion and a kiln the school plans to purchase. An outhouse for the skating shack was rented to minimize students coming back into the school. George Sundstrom developed a resolution for St Louis County to support the Township's request not to have property taxes assessed on the Township's Community Center as the State has proposed. The proposed tax for 2010 was dropped but there may be efforts to tax in later years. *Town Hall:* Proposed election judge list was approved. The Town's telephone has been out since the Christmas day storm. Qwest was called for repairs. *Recycling:* Shed light will be replaced. *Communications:* The Township Resident Feedback Survey was mailed to all 929 addresses on the mailing list (*Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> deadline*). St Louis County is offering for sale, two parcels of tax forfeit land in the Township. One parcel along a trout stream may not be buildable and that problem will again be brought to the County's attention.

**The Next Town Board meetings: (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday) March 11<sup>th</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Town Hall. Residents are urged to attend these public meetings**

## Why all the Fuss about Stormwater?

Valerie Brady, Researcher, Natural Resources Research Institute, University of Minnesota Duluth and Duluth Township resident.

Stormwater runoff is the rain that hits the ground and then runs over the land, down roads and driveways, through ditches, etc. It "runs off" instead of soaking into the ground. There is a perception that stormwater is mostly a problem for cities, but stormwater causes environmental problems in rural areas too. One problem occurs when stormwater from our roads and ditches runs quickly into our streams, causing a rapid rise in stream water depth and flow. These high storm flows can erode vulnerable clay stream banks, causing quite a bit of bank loss and slumpage. This process dumps many tons of dirt into north shore streams and rivers.

Recent research on the Knife River as part of the Knife River TMDL (see article in January 2010 Newsletter) determined that many tons (e.g. 1300 tons in 2006 and 2800 tons in 2005) of dirt wash down the river each year. Most of this dirt comes from bank erosion, and the likely cause is high storm flows. Road ditches are part of the cause of these high sudden stream flows because they deliver stormwater to the streams very quickly. Anyone living near a north shore stream mouth knows how muddy the water can become after a rainstorm. As you can imagine, all this dirt and muddy water are hard on stream fish and bugs (the fish food). Even worse, as the stream banks erode away, the river becomes wider but shallower, making the water less shaded and therefore warmer in the summer. This combination of shallow and warm water is quite hard on sensitive fish species such as trout.

Unfortunately, high and powerful stream flows are not the only environmental issue relating to stormwater. The flip side of the runoff coin is that water that runs off the land into streams does not soak into the ground. While this is stating the obvious, we don't always think about the implications. If the water runs off to the streams instead of soaking into the ground, it does not become groundwater. Groundwater is what provides most of us with drinking (well) water. But beyond that, groundwater is what keeps our streams flowing during the winter and in the summer between rainstorms. Groundwater is also cool or even cold, helping to keep stream water temperatures cool in the summertime.

Many folks who've lived in the Township for years will remember that our streams used to be deeper and colder than they are now. One of the apparent causes of our streams becoming warmer and shallower is the reduction in groundwater flows into the streams, which in turn is caused by groundwater not being replenished as well during rainstorms.

The good news is that there are simple (and not so simple) things that everyone can do to help reduce the amount of water in the ditch and increase the amount that soaks into the ground.

- 1) **Mow less lawn;** instead plant wildflowers, trees and shrubs. Grass roots are shallow, but wildflower, tree and shrub roots are deep and help water soak into our clay soils.
- 2) **Direct gutter runoff toward trees and shrubs,** not the yard or driveway.
- 3) **Pile snow in the yard or next to the woods,** not near the ditch.
- 4) **Slope your driveway** so water flows into your yard or the woods, not the ditch or road.
- 5) **Be a good stream steward** and keep your ditch free of trash — all trash in the ditch is just one rainstorm away from getting washed into the nearest stream.

## Land Use Permits

Beth Mullan

Year	Single Family	Total Permits
2009	9	30
2008	10	39
2007	3	28
2006	10	44
2005	20	67
2004	23	70
2003	24	69
2002	18	57
2001	18	66
2000	17	56

## Pre-school Registration

NSCS Pre-school is now accepting registrations for 2020-2011 school year. Classes will be held on Tues, Wed and Thurs. both morning (9:15-11:30) and afternoon (12:15-2:30) sessions are offered for children 3-5 yrs old. Call Kathy Johnson for more information: 834-5429 or 525-0663 x106.

## Lake Superior School District (IDS 381) News

Leo Babeau, School Board, Duluth/Alden Twps

IDS 381 has balanced its budget by cutting over 25 positions. Electives have been lost, and class sizes increased in elementary grades. Bus purchases have been postponed; curriculum upgrades in reading and English for all grades have been deferred. These are unsustainable steps to deal with declining State K-12 funding.

In 2010 the District's goal is to reduce operational costs while seeking additional revenues that a modes local operating levy provides. Currently, ours is one of only a dozen districts statewide (out of 340) that have been able to make ends meet without local funding through voter approved operating levies. We are aware that everyone's budget is tightening, and the District's has too. Every District employee has taken a two year hard freeze of wages; health insurance and energy costs have been further reduced.

The District plans a transition to a 4-day school week, beginning this September, which saves over a quarter million dollars annually. Public informational meetings on the change are underway. Meetings upcoming: 6:30pm March 1st at Two Harbors High School and 5:30pm March 8th at William Kelley School in Silver Bay.

The School Board is proposing a two-question referendum by mail-in vote in May, 2010. The **first question** asks for approval of a \$425 per student levy to fund purchases of buses and curriculum, as well as funding arts and extra-curricular programs and year-round swimming pools. The **second question** is for

(continued on page 7)



## Summary of Planning Commission Meetings

(Official minutes by Planning Secretary Beth Mullan are available at the Town Hall and on our Township web site: [www.duluthtownship.org](http://www.duluthtownship.org))

**December 17<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.** Present: Dave Chura, Barb Crow, Jan Green, Mike Kahl, Seth Levanen and Bill Lannon. The new land use permit fee schedule is posted on the Township web site. Planning Director Lawson reported on a St Louis County request to verify gravel pits in the Township (Warren Peterson's, Johnny Hagglund's and two others). Ulland was notified of an unpermitted structure on his tree farm (and unknown to Ulland). Worden's short term rental permit expires Jan. 2010. The permit was issued 2 years ago and there have been many complaints. It is unclear whether there are issues with putting time limits on STR permits. Preliminary County plat approval for the Stoney Point subdivision may be acted upon at their February meeting. Once we receive an official letter of the County action it will come back to the Township's Planning Commission for final approval then it goes back to the County for their final approval. Another Township public hearing apparently is not required, just Planning Commission action. The Bieraugel court hearing is Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> (later, the Judge remanded the issue to our Planning Commission to take account of some hardship/practical difficulty language).

Chair Dave Chura reported that the January meeting will prioritize Planning Commission 2010 goals and review the budget. He noted that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan was developed in 2002 and the Commission may want to consider whether any revisions are needed. Town Clerk Ann Cox needs the Commission's 2011 budget request for the Annual Town Meeting.

Old Business: The Town Board's moratorium on short term rentals expired so the Ordinance is as it was. The Board asked the Commission to revisit the issue (although the Commission had earlier recommended that short term rentals not be allowed in our Ordinance). STR's could be limited to certain areas or have specified conditions on their use. The definition of a short term rental in our Ordinance is: "A single family, two family or seasonal dwelling where the dwelling is rented by the owner for periods of less than 30-days and is not occupied by its owner during rental periods." Problems of noise control and general disregard for neighbors in the community were common issues identified in earlier research. The issue was discussed along with a list of possible conditions proposed by Supervisor Dave Mount. It was decided to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

The Commission discussed wind generation options and how they fit with the Township Ordinance. A Working Group on Wind Energy Generation is looking at a variety of small residential size options. It was suggested that they look at the Maine State Planning Office's website on Model Wind Energy and at Minnesota Project's report called "Lessons and Concepts for Advancing Community Wind". The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

**The Next Planning Committee meetings (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday at 7pm in the Town Hall): March 25<sup>th</sup> and April 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

Special hearings are posted at the Town Hall.

Residents are urged to attend these public meetings.

## From our Town Board Chair

Dave Mount, Supervisor

With the Annual Town Meeting just around the corner, I wanted to take a moment to discuss some of the financial issues facing our Township. Two important threats to the Town's finances involve changes in State policies.

Last year, Governor Pawlenty balanced the State budget through a number of cuts, one of which was in something called "aid to local governments". This is State money that is provided to local units of government to offset some of their financial needs, and thereby reduce the property tax burden. *The Town received a cut in these funds of about \$8,000 in 2009 and is scheduled for a cut of \$11,000 in 2010.* In effect, the Governor's action forces the Town to offset the State budget shortfall, and creates the likelihood that property taxes will rise as a result. I am concerned that additional cuts may be coming, as the State is currently facing additional budget shortfalls.

Another important issue was the State Department of Revenue informing the Town that it intended to impose property taxes, an estimated \$49,000 per year, on our Community Center, which also houses the North Shore Community School. Later in 2009, the Department of Revenue postponed implementation of this tax for 2010, pending further evaluation by the Department. Fortunately, the Town's objections to this property tax have received support from our local State legislators, in part through the efforts of resident George Sundstrom, who has been very effective in coordinating with those offices. We remain watchful of the situation, and are hopeful that a positive resolution will be found.

On the plus side, in 2009 the Town began receiving support from Taconite Production Tax funds, which we had not previously received. In 2009, the Town received \$50,000, \$38,000 of which was combined with \$165,000 in FEMA grant funds to purchase a new fire tanker for our Volunteer Fire Department. Because of the economic downturn, we are expecting a substantial decrease in these funds during 2010. At the 2009 Annual Meeting, the electorate decided to use \$20,000 of the expected funds to offset the property tax levy.

*These and other important aspect of the Town's finances will be discussed at the Annual Town Meeting at 8:15pm on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to attend.*

(School levy, continued from page 5)

a \$300 per student levy to fund essential purchases of busses and curriculum materials.

Your home should soon receive a copy of the District's *Good News* newsletter. Inside you'll find the levy questions and a table showing taxpayers the levy's cost for various taxable market values. Informational meetings will be held from mid-March through mid-May. Meetings in Duluth Township will be listed on the Township web site's calendar. I can be reached at 834-2247, or by email: [leobabeu@lakenet.com](mailto:leobabeu@lakenet.com).

Email me if you'd like to be on my school issues group mailing list.

# DULUTH TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2010

## Inside this Issue:

- Survey results.
- **Annual Meeting & Election**
- Budget information
- From our Town Board Chair
- Township **Calendar**
- Town Board & Planning Meetings
- Police and Fire Information
- NSCS News insert
- News on IDS #381 operating levy
- What's Coming Up



Duluth Township Newsletter  
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*If your name or address are in error or you know of someone who is not receiving a Newsletter, please send a note to the Newsletter Editor at the Town Hall (email: Editor@duluthtownship.org). Extra copies are also available in the Town Hall.*

929 are mailed to Duluth Township homes, businesses and on request. Copies are available at the Town Hall. Please send your comments and suggestions to the volunteer Newsletter editor, Don McTavish at the Town Hall, 6092 Homestead Road, Duluth, MN 55804 or use the NewsBox on the Town Hall porch.

## Vacancy on the Township Planning and Zoning Commission

This year marks the end of Seth Levenen's term on the Township Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Commission, and he leaves with everyone's thanks for the time he has committed to serving our Township. While we are sorry to see Seth go, this provides an opportunity for another Township citizen to step forward to serve.

The P&Z Commission is a 7 member board that guides the implementation of the Township's Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan. No special qualifications are necessary to serve on the P&Z Commission, other than an interest in the Township's future and a willingness to serve. Commission members serve 3-year terms and cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. The Commission holds regular monthly meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday each month, with occasional special meetings as the need arises. Commission members receive a per-meeting stipend.

Interviews to fill the Commission vacancy will be held by the Town Board after the March 15<sup>th</sup> application deadline. Interested citizens should submit a letter of interest and relevant past experience to Duluth Township, Attn: P&Z Commission Vacancy, 6092 Homestead Road, Duluth, MN 55804, or email: TownClerk@duluthtownship.org. If you have questions or would like more information, please leave a message for Supervisor Dave Mount, at the Town Hall: 525-5705.



By Jim Munger

## Community Services in Duluth Township

**AA** meets Monday at 8pm at French River Lutheran Church on Ryan Road.

**Clifton 4-H Club:** call Kate Edblom 525-1276

**Cub Scouts:** call David Hooey 525-6617

**Boy Scouts:** call Jim Atkinson 343-0119; or  
Email: jbatkinson@allete.com

**Girl Scouts:** call Julie Igo 726-4710

*(Note: If other community service groups should be listed, please leave a note for the Editor at the Town Hall.)*

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Boarding Kennels  
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Reservations  
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Two Harbors

Paid Advertisement

## Candidates for Town Supervisor

Each candidate was asked to provide a statement and picture for the Newsletter. These statements are presented as written to provide residents with background information. There are two Town Supervisor openings and our incumbent Supervisors, if elected, are willing to continue for another term .



### Stephen Dahl

My name is Stephen Dahl. Some of you may be familiar with me as I have been one

of your Township Supervisors for the past nine years.

I feel fortunate to be a part of this community. There are so many people who contribute to making this a great place to live. And as your Township Supervisor, it makes it much easier when people are willing to help — to share ideas, information or just pitch-in with a hands-on project.

During my last nine years as a Supervisor, I feel we've accomplished some positive things. Our Zoning Ordinances were updated. I felt the residents of our Township spoke clearly about maintaining the rural character of our community while still allowing for some growth. I believe our updated zoning ordinances provide for this.

One of my responsibilities since I became a Supervisor has been as a liaison between the North Shore Community School and the Township. I've also been a member of the Buildings and Grounds committee. The School's and Township's commitment to maintaining our facilities is at a very high standard. A number of significant improvements and repairs have been accomplished including a sprinkler system, a paved parking lot, new energy efficient windows and more. Last summer, a new roof was installed. As part of this project, we were able to greatly increase the insulation value in the roof to R37. This should help to decrease the heating bill substantially. A project that was exciting for me to see completed was the installation of a  
*(continued on other side)*



### Dave Mount

My name is Dave Mount and I am running for re-election to the Town Board. I am currently completing my third year

on the Town Board, serving as chair for the last two years. I've enjoyed my time on the Board, which has provided the opportunity to meet and work with a broad range of community members.

I feel we have a strong Town Board and we work effectively together, each taking on responsibilities that fit our individual skills. In addition to the duties of the chair, I serve as liaison to the Planning Commission, working closely with Commission members and the Planning Director on a variety of land use issues. I also represent the Township on the North Shore Management Board, a joint powers board that establishes overall land management policies for the Lake Superior shoreline.

I also share responsibility for oversight of the Town Hall with fellow Supervisor Dan Tanner. Working with Dan and others, we've made several improvements to the Town Hall, including correcting some drainage problems that were threatening the Hall's foundation, bringing the well up to State specifications, re-roofing the Town Hall and Fire Hall #2, extending the roof of the Fire Hall #2 to cover the adjacent sidewalk, replacing the Town Hall entry steps, and creating a lockable space for the Township's copier. More work will be needed in the future, as the Town Hall is in need of paint, and more drainage improvements are also needed.

I've also been involved with several aspects of our Community Center. During the past two years I wrote two grants securing a total of \$28,000 in outside funds to support the planning  
*(continued on other side)*

### What Happens at our Annual Town Meeting

For those who many not have attended a Town meeting, here's a bit of background. We gather in our Town Hall on Homestead Road after the polls close (8:15pm). Our Town Clerk, by law, calls the meeting to order and we nominate and elect a resident to lead the meeting.

Our Town Clerk, Ann Cox, hands out a packet, including minutes from last year's meeting plus summary information provided by various Township departments—2009 activities and expenses, the previously approved 2010 budget and the proposed 2011 Township budget (*see the table in this Newsletter*).

This Annual Meeting votes on the budget for 2011...a year away because our figures have to be included with County and School District figures for tax statements you receive in 2011. In 2010 we are operating on the budget adopted at our 2009 Annual Town Meeting.

Last year's minutes are approved, we vote on official posting and our official bank. Then the proposed 2011 budget is discussed and approved. Other business of the Township is raised and discussed and results of the election are announced. The meeting is usually suspended rather than adjourned. This permits a special meeting to be called later in case there is business that needs to be conducted by Township residents.

This meeting is grass-roots democracy but it depends upon the participation, respect and good ideas of all of our citizens. The Town Meeting is also a good place to meet your neighbors and to discuss important Township issues.

*Absentee ballots* are available from the Town Hall. The Town Hall is open, by law, Saturday, March 7, from 10-12 for absentee voting.

Township Departments	Actual Expenditures for 2007	Actual Expenditures for 2008	Actual Expenditures for 2009	Approved budget for 2010	Proposed budget for 2011
Police Department <sup>(2)</sup>	\$32,789	\$65,707	\$32,187	\$47,395	<b>\$47,395</b>
Fire Department <sup>(2)</sup>	92,156	77,384	281,299	69,500	<b>64,550</b>
General Township	109,425	158,865	161,220	116,350	<b>138,730</b>
Planning & Zoning	24,828	32,453	25,037	25,050	<b>18,590</b>
Cemetery	6,131	4,919	5,358	5,000	<b>3,000</b>
Road & Bridge <sup>(2)</sup>	66,233	85,399	59,969	97,000	<b>70,000</b>
<i>Total expenses<sup>(1)</sup></i>	<b>\$331,562</b>	<b>\$424,726</b>	<b>\$332,755</b>	<b>\$360,295</b>	<b>\$342,265</b>
Community Education	<i>(self sustaining from fees)</i>				
Recycling	<i>(paid by a WLSSD grant)</i>				
Community Center	<i>(paid from school lease funds)</i>				
<b>Tax Levy Budgets</b> <i>(excludes income from fees, grants and other sources)</i>					
<b>Approved/proposed levy<sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>\$305,785</b>	<b>\$327,304</b>	<b>\$332,755</b>	<b>\$360,295</b>	<b>\$342,265</b>
<b>Approximate average annual cost per household<sup>(4)</sup></b> <i>(using 740 households, depends on assessed property value.)</i>	<b>\$413</b>	<b>\$442</b>	<b>\$450</b>	<b>\$487</b>	<b>\$463</b>

**Footnotes:**

- (1) Note that the **actual** expenditures include expenses that may be partially covered by fees (e.g. permits, Community Education class fees etc.), grants (e.g. Fire Dept FEMA grant and Alden Township's contract for fire coverage), or carry-over funds. Amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar.
- (2) Some Departments designate funds for special projects: Road and Bridge emergencies (\$35,000), Fire and Police to replace aging fire and police vehicles. These funds are included in the year end balances shown in the Clerk's report at the Annual Meeting.
- (3) The budget amount we approve may be reduced, when levied, by State or County aid to local governments. These funds have been severely cut or eliminated in recent years. State "unallotment" also reduces anticipated levy funds that the Township would otherwise receive.
- (4) The average annual cost per household uses 740 as the number of households for comparisons here. The *Newsletter* is currently mailed to about 929 addresses, 779 are households in the Township (the U.S. Census counted 704 homes in Duluth Township in 2000 and estimated 724 for 2008).

**Stephen Dahl statement** *(continued from the other side)*

photovoltaic system (making electricity from the sun). This was a project I instigated at the Township level. A committee then formed at the school—expanded greatly upon this project—secured a number of grants—and saw it through to completion.

I would appreciate your support in the election on March 9<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions, please contact me at 525-4679.



**Dave Mount statement** *(continued from the other side)*

and implementation of improvements to the grounds to support greater use by both school students and the community at large. The Community Center and the charter school we lease space to are great resources for the Town and offer great opportunity for the future.

With that as background, I ask for your vote in the March 9<sup>th</sup> Township elections and encourage your attendance at the Annual Town Meeting at 8:15pm that evening. In the Township form of government, citizen involvement in the Annual Meeting is critical. If you have questions for me, please contact me by email at: [davemount@lakenet.com](mailto:davemount@lakenet.com) or by phone at 525-7961. Thank you.

**Township Expenses and Budget for 2011**

The table at the left shows actual expenses for 2007, 2008 and 2009 plus the approved budget for 2010 and the proposed budget for 2011.

Actual expenses include income from various sources other than the tax levy, such as permit fees, grants (we've been successful in getting several including a large FEMA grant for a fire tanker), and carryover from budget savings in a prior year.

**There is an decrease of 5% in the proposed 2011 budget**, from the budget approved for 2010.

Other than 2008, actual Township expenses have been pretty flat since 2000. Decreases come from savings on Township road projects, anticipated permit fees, and paying off fire equipment.

The General Township budget has remained constant. The apparent increase from the levied amount for 2010 is because we received Taconite Relief Funds and used \$20,000 to decrease the levied General Township amount for 2010.

Detailed information will be distributed at the Annual Town Meeting where each budget will be presented.

Your total property tax includes County and State levied budgets, any State aid for local governments, and from special assessments (e.g. school district, sewer).

For added information, see our Town Board Chair's article in this Newsletter.

The 2011 budget will be voted on at the upcoming **March 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Meeting**. Plan to attend!