



Township News

1720 Riverview Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49004
Telephone: (269) 381-8080 / Fax: (269) 381-3550
info@ktwp.org <http://www.ktwp.org>

Officials

Donald D. Martin, Supervisor - Supervisor@ktwp.org
Mark E. Miller, Clerk - Clerk@ktwp.org
Sherine M. Miller, Treasurer - Treasurer@ktwp.org

Trustees

Jeremy L. Hathcock – hathcockjl@ktwp.org
Nicolette Leigh – leighn@ktwp.org



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Editor

Molly K. Cole – Molly@ktwp.org

Steven C. Leuty – leutysc@ktwp.org
Jennifer A. Strebs - strebsja@ktwp.org

Medical Marijuana and Keeping Sidewalks Clear

Your Township board is grappling with two issues that we would like your input and constructive suggestions on.

Medical Marijuana

As you may know, the voters of Michigan decided to allow facilities for growing, testing, processing, transport and sale of medical marijuana. Each local government can decide if they want to opt out or opt in. If they opt in there are several other things they have to decide, although the state hasn't finished making all their rules yet, so it's a moving target.

The Township Board has been gathering as much information as they can from law enforcement, attorneys specializing in this area, and proponents of medical marijuana. The missing and most important piece is you. Here is a link to some unbiased information if you think you would like to study up a little before giving us your input. New Medical Marijuana Laws Q & A https://www.michigantownships.org/downloads/med_marijuana_qa.pdf

If the Township decides to opt out that's basically the end of the story. We are assured that there will be medical marijuana facilities in neighboring communities. It would also, most likely, be transported through Kalamazoo Township but a transport company would not be located in Kalamazoo Township.

On the other hand, if Kalamazoo Township opts in there will have to be several decisions made, such as:

- Which types of facilities would we allow in the Township?
- How many of each facility and where would we allow them to locate?
- How should it be decided who gets to locate a facility in Kalamazoo Township?

Those are the primary questions but there may be others that come up once the state has decided on its rules.

What we know now is that growing could probably be restricted only to areas zoned for agricultural, general industrial or light industrial. The other three parts of the business might also be allowed in those areas. Testing and distribution might be allowed in areas zoned local commercial or commercial corridor.

Other considerations could include restrictions such as not allowing any facilities near a church, school or correctional facility. As you can see it's not a simple issue. Predictions as to what the financial cost or benefit to the Township would be vary widely, some saying it will bring in revenue to the Township and others saying it may cost more than it brings in. Money may or may not be a deciding factor for you.

The Township Manager has been gathering information from other townships and cities as to how they're making their choices but the most important factor is you, the engaged citizen of Kalamazoo Township. Please share your insights, ideas and feelings by emailing info@ktwp.org. Please put "Medical Marijuana" in the subject line. If this has left you with more questions than answers you can contact Manager Mitchell by email at manager@ktwp.org

Keeping Sidewalks Clear



It's been proven that walking is good for your health both physical and mental. More and more research is showing the importance of getting out of our chairs and going for a walk. Some people have no choice but to walk or use a wheelchair to get from place to place. It has also been found that home values increase in areas that are considered "walkable". To accommodate these needs, Kalamazoo Township has been working on creating a network of sidewalks and multi-use trails.

The question that we need your help to answer is, how do you keep them clear and accessible in winter? In winter it may be even more critical to have clear sidewalks because of the additional hazard of walking on the road when it's slick or slushy and daylight is limited and students need to get to school early in the morning.

Currently the Township has an ordinance that requires everyone with a sidewalk to keep it clear 500 feet in either direction from a bus stop. This isn't proving to be practical because having clear sections interspersed with uncleared sections doesn't get people safely from one place to another. It also means equipping the ordinance officer with a new map each year showing all sidewalks and each bus stop from three different school districts and the transit system. Simply keeping all the sidewalks clear seems more logical but most of us have lived in Michigan long enough to know that isn't always a simple task and it's harder for some than others.

Below are some ideas that have come from other communities and organizations for keeping sidewalks accessible that might be used alone or more likely in combination. Please let us know if you think any of these might work in your neighborhood. Do you know how other communities have handled this situation successfully and how it was paid for? Do you have a creative solution we haven't considered yet? We'd love to hear how you think this challenge can be solved.

- The Township could buy the equipment and pay their maintenance staff to clear the sidewalks
- The Township could hire a contractor to clear the sidewalks
- The Township could have an ordinance to make everyone responsible for the sidewalk in front of their house. (How would you suggest enforcing such an ordinance?)
- Neighbors could help neighbors keep their sidewalks clear
- People could pay the person that plows their driveway to clear their sidewalk as well,
- People could see if they can get a discount by having several neighbors hire the same plowing service
- People could organize a group of volunteers that the elderly or disabled could call on to clear their sidewalks
- Service groups could organize to clear sidewalks and people that can could give them donations for their organization or other good cause.
- People could pay their neighbor kid to do it and help him or her get started in their own little business and saving money for college expenses.
- Neighbors could start a community tool shed that includes a snow blower and have everyone sign up for a time to be responsible for the sidewalks on their block

Please send your suggestions to info@ktwp.org with "Clear Sidewalks" in the subject line.

You can follow Kalamazoo Charter Township on Facebook to receive updates on this and other items we think may be of interest to you.

The mission of Kalamazoo Township is to provide government services that promote a safe, healthy, accessible, and economically viable community to live, work, learn, and play.