



FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK

BY WILL HATHAWAY, SUPERVISOR

The Board of Trustees is working on several issues that require balancing the delivery of core services with preserving the fiscal health of Scio Township. Here is an introduction to some of those issues.

The first issue of concern is the operating deficit in the General Fund. The General Fund, as its name implies, is the part of the budget that covers many of the Township's core functions. It is funded, in part, by revenue from Scio's general millage (currently .9104 mills), which brings in about \$1.3M per year. Some of the other General Fund sources include State-shared revenue, administration fees, and franchise fees. The General Fund annual operating expenditures are about \$4.2M. If the General Fund is like a checking account, the accompanying General Fund Balance can be thought of as the Township's savings account. Scio Township has long maintained a General Fund Balance more than equal to one year of its annual operating costs (a one-year operating surplus is a sign of a fiscally secure municipality). However, for the past few years the Township has spent about \$300-400K more from the General Fund than we've received in revenue. These operating deficits have caused the Township to dip into the General Fund, Fund Balance. In other words, we've been using some of our savings each

year. There have been good reasons for those above-budget expenditures. For example, the recently completed audit reiterated a mandate by the State to fully fund the Township's pension obligations. Funding employee retirement health costs will require a significant one-time expenditure from the General Fund. Another example occurred in the prior fiscal year, when the Township purchased land for a future fire station on Wagner Road. Both of these are necessary expenses, but deficit spending is not sustainable in the long-term.

Public safety is another, related, funding issue. The Township's public safety services include the Fire Department and the contracted police services provided by the County Sheriff. The Fire Department is currently funded by an assessment established in 2008, but the emergency response needs of the Township have grown over the past 15 years and are projected to continue to grow. On March 14, the Board voted to place a two-part question on the November 7 ballot. If approved by voters, the assessment would allow up to 3.75 mills for

Fire Department operating expenses and another .75 mills for capital costs. Police services delivered by the Washtenaw County Sheriff cost about \$1.6M annually. Scio receives a subsidy of \$300,000 from the County-wide mental health millage, but the remaining \$1.3M comes from

the General Fund, a sum equal to the entire general millage. This contracted police cost will increase at a rate of 5% annually, more if we add additional deputies. Over the coming weeks and months, your Board of Trustees will discuss whether and how to establish a dedicated revenue stream to fund police services, like our Fire Department, as a core government function.

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A Township-wide Special Assessment District (SAD) was established in 2013 for the purpose of fixing local roads. The collection of funds for that SAD ended with the winter taxes of 2022. The funds raised by the SAD enabled the Township to partner with the Washtenaw County Road Commission on local road maintenance and improvements. The harsh reality is that roads require regular maintenance and repair. They are impacted by the wear and tear of vehicles driving on them as well as by exposure to the weather. The greater rainfall in recent years has taken a heavy toll on road

surfaces. The Township's Roads Advisory Committee will provide recommendations for the Board on how to proceed with funding local roads improvements for the future benefit of our residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Board of Trustees meetings are open to the public. The regular meetings are every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 pm in Township Meeting Hall. We also have occasional special meetings. Information is available on the Township website. If you want to reach all members of the Board, you can write to us by emailing TownshipBoard@SciOTownship.org.

The Board of Trustees meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at Township Hall, 827 N Zeeb Rd, at 7 pm. Remote attendance is available. Find meeting materials and online access at SciOTownship.org. Upcoming meeting dates:

April 11, 25

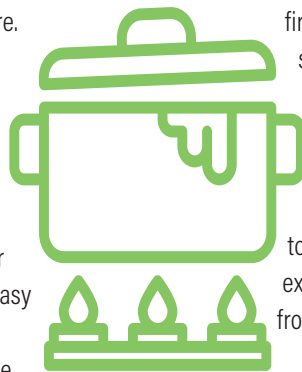
May 9, 23

June 13, 27

LETTER FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

Last year, between fires in Scio and our mutual aid partners, the Scio Township Fire Department responded to 20 building fires, most of them in homes. In Scio Township, we had 2 fire deaths in 2022, though they were not in homes, but the result of a single commercial vehicle accident. We recorded a total property loss in the community of \$1.1 million from fire.

The leading cause of fires in the US (and in Scio) is cooking. A tip to help prevent cooking fires is to never leave cooking food unattended—if you leave the kitchen while cooking remember to shut the burner off. It is very easy to become distracted and forget you have food on the stove. While



simmering, baking, or roasting food, set a timer to remind you to periodically check on the food. If you do have a small grease fire while cooking, smother the flames by sliding a lid onto the pan and turn the burner off. For a fire in the oven turn the oven off and keep the door closed. Having a fire extinguisher accessible to the kitchen is important when cooking fires are more than this kind of smothering can handle. If you are in doubt about your ability to fight a cooking fire, leave the home, closing the doors on the way out, and call 911. Firefighters will come to your home, make sure the fire is extinguished, and help remove smoke from the home.

BY ANDREW HOUE, CHIEF,
SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

In March the Scio Township Fire Department said farewell to a 22-year veteran of the Department. Doug Armstrong filled many roles throughout his years with us, most recently as Assistant Chief and Fire Marshal. His hard work and genial demeanor will be missed...though we expect to see him "around," as he is leaving Scio to become Fire Chief of the Dexter Area Fire Department. Congratulations and best wishes Doug!



Doug Armstrong
photo credit: Robert Read Photography

FROM TREASURER DONNA PALMER

A big thank-you from the Treasurer to all those who paid their winter tax bills on time. Look for your summer tax bills in July. Happy spring!

FREE NOTARY SERVICES

available at Township Hall, for residents
Monday – Friday, 8 am – 4 pm



CLERK'S COLUMN

BY JESSICA M. FLINTOFT, CLERK

Since taking office in June of 2019, I have worked with others here at the Township to improve the financial accounting of and planning for the Township. In November 2019, the Township revised its Purchasing Policy and Procedures to add a conflict-of-interest provision, and to reduce the Board authorization requirement for any single expenditure down to \$5,000 (from \$20,000). Our Finance Manager Rebecca Maute has improved internal compliance with our purchasing requirements and implemented a paperless process in 2021. And during this time the Township has improved its adherence to its own bidding requirements, though I believe there is more that can be done in this area to ensure that we are receiving the best service at the lowest price.

The current Board of Trustees has named better compliance with procurement best practices as a priority, and I hope will begin to place more emphasis on procuring goods and services that reflect Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors. It seems clear to me that to solve procurement and related finance issues, the Township must employ a sufficient number of qualified finance staff. While experts recommend a township of our size employ 2.5 to 3.0 full-time finance staff members, our Township employs only 1.0 finance staff member, who is Finance Manager Maute. To begin to remedy this deficiency, the Township is currently recruiting a Finance Director to lead the financial operations of the Township. By employing enough qualified finance staff, the Township will be able to improve

our accounting systems and business processes, strengthen the independence of the financial operation of the Township, and better comply with the increasing number of state requirements for local units' finances in Michigan.

One such state requirement, Public Act 202 of 2017, requires that the Township meet minimum funding requirements for retiree healthcare benefits. The Township was able to eliminate this unfunded liability only because of the cash available in the Township's fund balances. While Scio Township is fortunate to be able to use cash for these one-time expenses, I believe the Township should better plan for its use of fund balances. **As part of future annual budget planning, I hope that the Board of Trustees will also begin to plan ahead multiple years by committing or assigning certain amounts of fund balances for future one-time uses, such as capital projects.** To help guide the Board of Trustees, the Township adopted an Order of Resource Use and Fund Balance policy in February 2021. Since then, the Township has begun to align its fund balances more closely to recommended levels. Eliminating the Township's unfunded liabilities, planning for capital improvements, and strategic planning for our Township's future needs will help the Township deliver quality services while living within our current means.

A few last words regarding the results of the last financial audit: as requested, Treasurer Palmer and I submitted a Corrective Action Plan on January 30 to the State Treasury Department to address deficiencies found during our

annual audit. In February and March, the Board took the opportunity to correct two of the eight "material weaknesses" or violations of law identified by state auditors in the Fiscal Year Ending 2022 audit. I am hopeful that, with the Board of Trustees' full support, Treasurer Palmer and I will be able to correct the remaining six issues. I will continue to update residents during Board of Trustees meetings held every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 pm in Township Hall (with remote attendance option). I am available for resident feedback Monday through Friday, 8 am – 4 pm, in Township Hall, or at 734-369-9400, or anytime via email at jflintoft@sciotownship.org.

Find the documents referred to in this column by searching [ScioTownship.org](https://www.sciotownship.org)

- Purchasing Policy and Procedures
- Order of Resource Use and Fund Balance policy
- Corrective Action Plan of January 31, 2023

ELECTIONS

There will NOT be an election in Scio this May (though other jurisdictions in Washtenaw County WILL have an election)

A special election is a POSSIBILITY in Scio this August 8 or November 7



This January, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson received the Presidential Citizens Medal in a White House ceremony along with election workers and police who defended the US Capitol during the attack on January 6, 2021. The Presidential Citizens Medal is awarded to Americans for exemplary deeds or services performed for the country or fellow citizens. "I'm deeply honored to receive the Presidential Citizens Medal from the President of the United States for my work to ensure democracy prevails in Michigan and throughout the nation," said Benson.

VIEW FROM A TRUSTEE: JILLIAN KERRY *This article is part of an occasional series by or about a Township trustee*

BY MARY GILLIS, EDITOR

Jillian Kerry was elected to a two-year term as a Trustee when the timing of an opening on the Board of Trustees enabled the seat to be filled in a state-wide election, in this case the general election of November, 2022. I asked Jillian what it meant to her to become an elected official of the Township after years of advocacy work in the community.

It feels like I've been in a long apprenticeship preparing to serve the residents and taxpayers of the Township. I've put in countless hours educating myself and getting to know people since I first became involved in Township government 5 years ago. Now, stepping into this role as Trustee, it's an honor. But really, not much has changed in terms of what I've been doing. I just have a little more ability to be a voice for the people.

Jillian's life story has given her a broad range of experiences, from single mom to farmer to small-business owner. I asked Jillian to talk about which life experiences she has found most relevant to her work as trustee.

Raising three teenage daughters! (laughter) All my experiences lead to who I am now. But I've always had an insatiable appetite to learn so educating myself on every topic of interest has



*Trustee Jillian Kerry
Photo credit: Betsy Flinn*

been a great practice to bring into this new role of Trustee. I do my best to make choices based on study, observation, facts, evidence, and keen intuition. No assumptions!

Jillian's work with the Roads Advisory Committee, as a member, as Board representative, and now as chair, has inspired her to study the laws of the Township and of the State, and to become familiar with the financial workings of the Township past and present. What should residents be looking for

in the coming months and years in terms of our roads?

The number one responsibility of a Trustee is fiscal responsibility. For me this begins with the internal workings of Township Hall because it is the structure and foundation for the rest of our community. Without a solid foundation there in terms of following the laws and the statutes that govern Michigan townships we cannot be assured that Scio will be able to maintain its standing as a great place to live in southeastern Michigan. So, with regard to the Roads Advisory Committee, for example, adequate staffing in our Finance department will ensure that any millage funds or special assessment supporting our roads will be responsibly managed and spent efficiently.



A NOTE FROM THE ASSESSOR'S DESK

BY ANDREA GARRETT, ASSESSOR

In March, the Assessing Department successfully wrapped up another Board of Review. The annual March Board of Review is established to hear appeals for the valuation of property for the current year, property classification appeals, and to act on disabled veterans' exemptions and poverty exemptions.

Homeowners are reminded that they may still file a Disabled Veteran's Exemption or Poverty Exemption for 2023 at the July Board of Review. Please contact the Assessing Office by calling 734/369-9400, for an application, or download one from the township website, SciOTownship.org. The Board of Review that is held in July is not permitted to hear appeals for property valuation or classification for the current year.

As a reminder, you can always confirm we have your correct mailing address and, if you qualify for the Principal Residence Exemption, that we have the proper paperwork by accessing BS&A via the Township website by going to SciOTownship.org and choosing the action button "Pay Your Tax Bill".

COMPENSATION COMMISSION UPDATE

BY MONICA KNOWLES, CHAIR, SCIO TOWNSHIP COMPENSATION COMMISSION

In 2021, the Scio Township Board of Trustees established a Compensation Commission to review and make salary determinations for the four Trustees, Treasurer, Clerk, and Supervisor. The Commission's determinations go into effect at the start of the next fiscal year unless rejected by 2/3 of the Board of Trustees. (Read the full ordinance at [ScioTownship.org](https://www.sciotownship.org) under Democracy/Compensation Commission.)

When the Commission was formed, the length of the first-member terms was intentionally staggered to ensure some continuity year over year. Irwin Martin's term ended in December 2022 and the Board of Trustees appointed Jim Dries to a 5-year term. Spaulding Clark, whose term ends in December 2024, no longer lives in Scio Township and Diane Benson has been appointed to complete his term.

In reviewing compensation, there are nuances to making recommendations for elected officials. In the private sector, an individual may be given a pay increase, promotion, or bonus for strong performance. Or, in the case of not performing well in their role, they can be demoted, or possibly terminated. The

Compensation Commission is not designed to review, reward, or punish performance. All elected officials have defined responsibilities. They can embrace more duties but the core duties are dictated by the state statute. Consequently, as we review the compensation for these positions, we are looking at the position, not necessarily the person who holds that position today.

In both the private and public sectors, the full benefits package is factored into any evaluation of compensation. All Scio Township elected officials participate in the defined contribution plan offered by the Township, and receive a contribution of 8 percent of their gross salary (except the current Treasurer, who is grandfathered into a defined benefit plan that will end with her tenure). The Clerk, Treasurer and Supervisor may participate in the Township Medical Program, of which the Township pays their entire premium and the premium for all their dependents. These positions are also offered dental, hearing and vision cost-reimbursement of 80 percent up to \$2,287/year, life insurance, and short- and long-term disability insurance.

All Scio Township residents depend on our elected officials to make the best decisions for our Township. So yes, we want our leaders to be compensated appropriately. The Commission will work hard to accomplish this, on your behalf, by considering all factors to make well-considered determinations of our elected officials' compensation. The Compensation Commission's first meeting for this year is scheduled for Friday, June 2, 2023.

The Scio Township Compensation Commission meets Friday, June 2, 2023, at 2 pm in Township Hall. Zoom access will be available. The schedule for any subsequent meetings for this year will be set at this first meeting.

HERE ARE SOME RULES FROM THE MICHIGAN CENTER FOR INTERNET SECURITY TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM BECOMING A VICTIM OF A PHISH:

Rule 1: If an offer or deal is too good to be true, it probably is.

Rule 2: Hover your cursor over the link to confirm its true origin.

Rule 3: Look closely for misspellings of company names in subject headings.

Rule 4: Type the correct URL in the address bar yourself to ensure you are going to the legitimate site.

Rule 5: Look for misspellings in URLs. Some scammers use slight misspellings or letter substitutions in web addresses so that it is not easily noticed (e.g., legitimatebank.com instead of legitimatebank.com).

Rule 6: Never respond to an email with sensitive personal information (birthdate, Social Security Number, etc.).

Rule 7: Be wary of any message that is urging you to take immediate action.

ARE YOU READY TO GET OUTSIDE THIS SPRING?

Get outside with Scio Outside, Scio Township's Parks, Preserves, and Pathways, Community Engagement Program! Whether you want to get your hands dirty in land stewardship, or walk the trails birdwatching, there's a program for you. This spring, Scio Outside will have regular volunteer days focused on invasive species management, tree planting, and trail work. When you volunteer with Scio Outside, you get to help steward Scio's flora and fauna while building community with like-minded naturalists. **To see a calendar of spring programming and to get on the email listserv, search for "Scio Outside" at SciOTownship.org.** If you would like to schedule a Scio Outside volunteer day for your organization, please email ACone@SciOTownship.org.

On January 24, 2023, the Board of Trustees adopted the 2023 - 2027 Scio Township Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (PROS Plan). The PROS Plan articulates a vision for parks and recreation in Scio Township that will guide recreation planning and development

efforts of the Township over the next five-year period, through December 2027. The Plan incorporates new policies that have been implemented and new information that has been acquired since adoption of the Paths, Preserves, Parks, & Open Space Plan of 2018. The PROS Plan is the official document that meets the state's requirement to gain eligibility for grant programs. **Find the complete plan by searching "PROS Plan" on the township website, SciOTownship.org.**

This past winter, two committees (Transportation Alternatives Planning Committee and Parks Advisory Board) merged to create the Parks, Preserves & Pathways Committee (PPP). PPP will advise and assist the PPP director and the Board of Trustees in matters related to the implementation of the PROS Plan. The PPP Committee will also advise on the use of Parks & Pathway Millage, Tree Fund, and any other funds relevant to the accomplishment of its mission. PPP meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm at Scio Township Hall. The next meeting is April 12, and the public is welcome.

BY ANNA CONE, DIRECTOR OF PARKS, PRESERVES, AND PATHWAYS

SATURDAYS @ SCIO

If you have ever wanted to learn how to identify local wildflowers or recognize bird calls, this is the program for you! To see a calendar of spring programming and to get on the email listserv, search for "Scio Outside" at SciOTownship.org.

B2B

Construction is expected to resume on the section of the Border-to-Border (B2B) pathway along the Huron River in Scio Township this spring. A contractor for Washtenaw County Road Commission will continue to work on the retaining wall structures and begin constructing the bridge over the Huron River. However, due to the time required for fabrication and coordination with the railroad company, the bridge erection schedule is undetermined. This project represents a partnership between the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, the Huron Clinton Metroparks, and the Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative. WCRC is involved to administer a federal Transportation Alternative Program grant that is helping to fund this project.

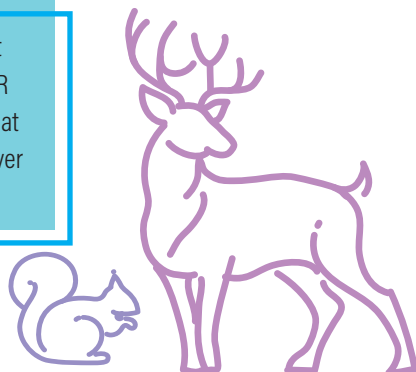
The Border-to-Border Trail is a non-motorized path that will extend the length of Washtenaw County and connects to the Iron Belle Trail, which itself is a network of hiking and biking trails stretching from Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula. Find news, maps, and volunteer opportunities at B2Btrail.org.

SUPPORT FORESTS OF ALL AGES

If you or someone you know owns private forest land, consider working with a forester to develop a plan for your forest to provide the habitat that different species need to survive. Explore the Michigan Department of Natural Resources pages at Michigan.gov/DNR to learn more about their Forest Stewardship and Forest Legacy programs.



Learn more about wildlife and habitat in Michigan by subscribing to the DNR monthly podcast "Wildtalk," available at Michigan.gov/DNRWildtalk, or wherever you find podcasts.



UPDATE ON TRASH MATTERS

BY MARY GILLIS, EDITOR

Look for an updated Recycling Pyramid flyer from GFL Environmental, the Township's only authorized residential waste hauler, in your mailbox this spring. GFL customers are advised to post these guidelines in a convenient place to help them keep the recycling stream "clean"—free of non-recyclable materials that can clog up the machinery at the materials facility. If you've got material you think should be recyclable that is not listed on the Acceptable Materials Guidelines Pyramid, look it up on the Waste Wizard search engine at WRRMA.org, where you

will be directed to the nearest collection station for that item type. Make the trip worthwhile by filling your car with similar recyclables collected by your friends and neighbors! FYI, Scio recycling is taken to a facility in New Boston (trash and yard waste go to the GFL facility in Northville).

GFL has started a Recycling Rewards program where customers can report their recycling efforts to earn coupons for local and national businesses. Activate your account by logging on to GFLUSARewards.com and begin earning rewards today.

A dedicated Customer Service phone line has been established for Scio Township customers: 734-224-5582, which is staffed by employees familiar with the area.

COMPOST and RECYCLE cart decals are available at the front desk in Township Hall.

GFL now has a dedicated phone number for customer service to Scio Township customers: 734-224-5582.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

The Washtenaw County Home Toxics Center is the county's Household Hazardous Waste Program for reuse, recycling, and safe disposal of common toxic materials such as paint, home toxics and pesticides. Call 734-222-3950 or go to

Washtenaw.org/hometoxics to find a list of acceptable materials, hours, and eligibility to use this resource. Located in the back parking lot of 705 N Zeeb Road, between the Washtenaw County Road Commission and Scio Township Hall, the Home Toxics Center has both weekday and weekend hours.



STATE PARKS

Before you visit a state park, boating site or trail, it is always a good idea to check the latest closures due to planned improvement projects, repairs and weather-related events. \$250 million in ARPA funds will be spent on state parks and trails in the next three years, including projects at Waterloo and Pinckney State Recreation Areas. A list of ongoing/updated alerts can be found at Michigan.gov/DNRClosures.

TREE-TRIMMING

DTE is stepping up its tree-trimming program in response to power outages caused by storms. Look for vested workers or a notice on your door if trees on your property are to be trimmed or removed. Remember that DTE will not trim around telecommunication wires or the wire going from the pole to the house, which is considered the homeowner's responsibility. Go to DTEenergy.com/treecare for advice on planting powerline-friendly trees.



SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY HABITAT GRANT

Does your school, community organization, or non-profit need expert consultation or plant materials to create a native garden, rain garden, food forest, wind break, or other native plant project? Award winners of the Washtenaw County Conservation District School and Community Habitat Grant receive plant materials, expert design plans, and installation assistance. Visit washtenawcd.org/schg to learn more, download the application, and explore past projects. If you are a consultant who may be interested in partnering to complete these projects, reach out to summer@washtenawcd.org.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

BY TIM REDMOND, ESTF MEMBER

Planning for a healthy and more sustainable future for Scio Township residents includes developing a stronger local food system. Comprised of local food producers and a network of farms, a thriving local food system both increases community vitality and, critically, ensures access to the freshest and most nutritious food possible. Local smaller farms operating CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) programs offer regular shares in their seasonal harvests from late April into early November. Typically, in joining a CSA you pay up-front for a weekly or bi-weekly bag or box of just-

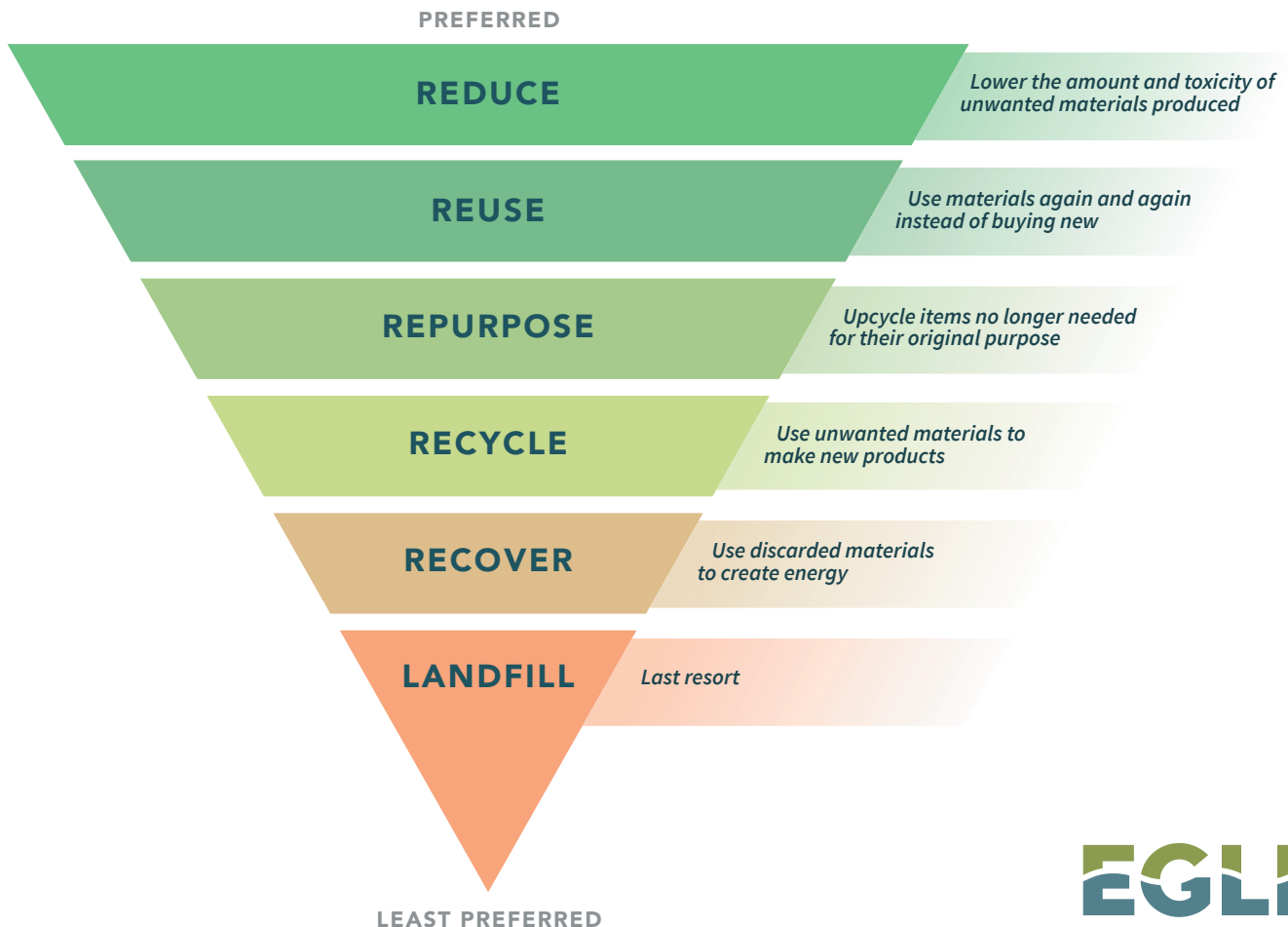
harvested vegetables or meats, often including fruit, flowers, eggs, and other local products. There are many small-farm CSAs operating in our county—a few of them are here in Scio Township, listed below. Now is the time to reserve your share:

- Seva Farm, 2279 Scio Rd
seva-farms.constantcontactsites.com/
Mohinder - 734-276-6520,
mohindersinghyogi@gmail.com
- Blue Spring Farm, 4710 Stein Rd
bluespringfarm.net
Jon - 734-761-5770
bluespringa2@gmail.com

- Tantre Farm UPick, 5700 Scio Church Rd
tantrefarm.com
734-475-4323, info@tantrefarm.com
- Vestergaard Farms, 4408 S Wagner Rd
vestergaardfarms.com
Mike - 734-604-4168
michaelvestergaard@sbcglobal.net

Note that some Scio Township farms also operate on-farm and roadside stores for their production as well as display their harvest at local farmers markets, both of which we hope to list for you in a future update.

SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT



BECOME A MASTER RAIN GARDENER!

Design your own rain garden, become the neighborhood expert, protect your home against flooding, and help birds and butterflies, all with a rain garden! Earn your certification – including a t-shirt and sign—by building your own or adopting a public rain garden. Upcoming in-person class held at Rolling Hills County Park starts April 19. Or take the on-demand free class (watch the videos and do the homework on your own schedule). Register for either, or just find out more at MasterRainGardener.org.



The Environmental Sustainability Task Force and the Parks Preserves and Pathways Department are collaborating to develop a policy for use of the Tree Fund, which are monies contributed by developers over the years for planting and maintaining trees and woodland resources within the Township. Find out more by attending meetings of the Parks Preserves and Pathways Committee on the second Wednesday of every month at 4 pm. The next meeting will be held on April 12 at Township Hall.

SCIO'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

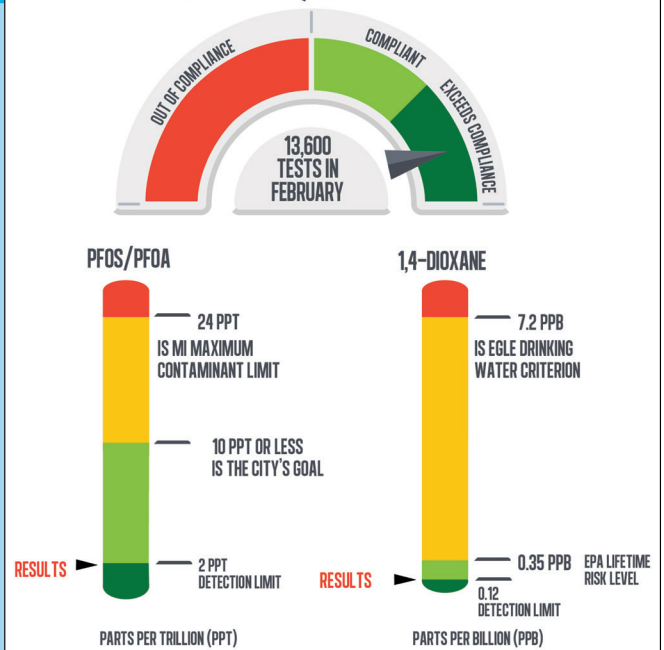
Scio Township's draft Environmental Sustainability Climate Action Plan (ESCAP) is available for public review. Please go to the Environmental Sustainability Task Force page on the Township website for a link to the plan that provides a roadmap for achieving community carbon neutrality by 2035. If you are interested in serving on the Environmental Sustainability Task Force to implement the plan email Jan Culbertson at PCchair@sciotownship.com.



WATER QUALITY DASHBOARD

The City of Ann Arbor, where Scio water customers' water is sourced, produces a monthly Water Quality Dashboard. Review monthly reports at a2gov.org/DrinkingWater. If you have any specific concerns or water quality questions, staff can be reached at 734-994-2840 or via email Water@a2gov.org. Scio Township produces an annual Water Quality Report that provides data on the previous calendar year. The most current report available covers 2021; the Report for 2022 will be issued by the Utilities Department this summer and may be found at ScioTownship.org/Community.

MONTHLY WATER QUALITY DASHBOARD



Check out the resources available through the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) at michigan.gov/egle/public, including drinking-water testing, radon testing, and water quality monitoring, as well as information on public meetings, grants, permits, and EGLE classroom resources for educators.

A WORD FROM THE UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

The Scio Township Utilities Department does its best to provide accurate and timely billing information to our customers. Meters are read on a quarterly schedule utilizing a transmitting device (called an MXU) that sends a signal to a receiving device that then uploads the information into our billing software program. Unfortunately, due to a microchip shortage, we have been unable to purchase new MXUs or replace the older MXUs in the system that are experiencing failure. This results in the Utilities

Department having to estimate usage based on prior history. **You can determine if you are being billed based on an estimated or an actual read by looking at your bill** for the code next to your Current Read data (in the center of the page). If the letter "A" is evident then you have received a bill based on an actual read of your meter. If your water bill has an "E" next to the Current Read number, your usage is being estimated. If your bill is being estimated and you would prefer an actual read, the simplest solution is to take a photo of your

STEVE WYZGOSKI, UTILITIES DIRECTOR

water meter and email it to the Utilities Billing Clerk at lcarey@sciotownship.org and include your home address in the message. That will get you an adjusted bill. Alternatively, you can call the Scio Township Utilities Department at (734) 369-9350 and schedule the installation of a "touch pad" so that our technicians can go to the exterior of your home and gather the correct reading. Thank you for your patience and understanding during the microchip shortage.

Search for "EPA eGrid Power Profiler" to find out how clean the energy you use really is. The Emissions & Generation Resource Integrated Database (eGRID) is a comprehensive source of data from EPA's Clean Air Markets Division on the environmental characteristics of almost all electric power generated in the United States.



HOW TO SECURE YOUR HOME NETWORK AGAINST CYBER THREATS

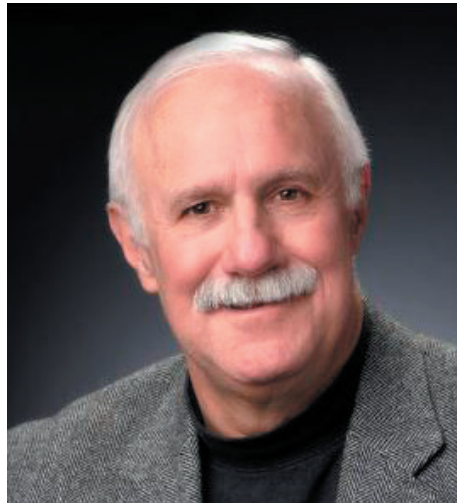
Computers, tablets, smartphones, TVs, thermostats, cameras, doorbells, and coffee pots may connect to your home network and the internet. Here are some steps you can take to keep your home network safe from potential cyber threats:

1. Use current hardware (within the last 5 years) to ensure your devices receive the support and security fixes you need to keep your home network safe;
2. Use a surge protector or uninterruptible power supply (UPS);
3. Disable remote management;
4. Change your modem and router passwords from defaults;
5. Enable automatic updates and enable the router's firewall and website filtering;
6. Reboot your modem and router at least once a month to clear malware from memory, refresh device connections and keep your internet connection fast;
7. Secure your WiFi:
 - Change the default wifi network name and disable broadcast of the wireless network name;
 - Enable wifi encryption and choose wired connections over wireless when possible;
 - Enable a wifi guest network to segregate your trusted devices from, say, your refrigerator;
 - Periodically review the devices that are connected to your network and block the ones you don't recognize. (Source: Center for Internet Security)

RALPH PASOLA RETIRES

Ralph Pasola, who has been Scio Township's Code Enforcement and Zoning Administration Officer for the past 14 years, retired from the position effective February 28, 2023. Most of Ralph's work for the Township has been in citing residents and businesses for a variety of blight ordinance violations, including vehicles with expired tags or no plates, hoarding, accumulation of junk, dangerous buildings, and zoning disputes over noise, lighting, fumes, and setback issues. Ralph recalls with pride the role he played in getting a large, abandoned building on Jackson Road torn down during his tenure. The job has also included appearances in court on a regular basis, contact with the township attorney, and keeping the county building department informed when blight and other issues cross over to building code concerns.

The one part of the job he won't miss is the hazardous side of things: falling because of



Former Code Enforcement Officer Ralph Pasola

uneven turf, stepping on nails, and walking into things that can't be seen immediately. The other concern has been unhappy residents on the receiving end of code enforcement tickets. Ralph anticipates a much less hazardous era in his life, busy as he is with his wife, grandchildren, and

BY MARY GILLIS, EDITOR

the family dog (who contributed the soundtrack to this interview).

"Ralph has played an important role in the functioning of the Township for many years," said Township Manager Marc Thompson. "We are grateful that he intends to continue to help out in his old role as the Township explores the best way to manage code enforcement in the future." Best wishes from everyone at Township Hall Ralph!

Scio Township commits itself to a just transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions due to township operations no later than 2030 and to the same goal through all sectors of the township by 2035.

*--Resolution 2022-11,
Declaring a Climate Emergency*

STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

The hardworking staff at Township Hall is grateful for the help of several part-time employees who have been hired during the past year: Laurie Carey in Utilities, Nancy Colasanti in Treasury, and Becky Baiocco in Assessing. Laurie comes to us from Manchester Township, where she served as Treasurer for 7 years. If you call the Utilities Department any morning Monday through Friday, hers is the friendly voice on the

other end of the phone, helpfully explaining your water bill or scheduling your work order. Nancy has worked for the Township in the past and is a welcome pair of experienced hands doing cash receivables and "anything else the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer need!" Becky comes to Scio from Pittsfield Township where she worked in the Assessing Office for 26 years. Since she is officially retired, she is here at Township Hall Monday through Wednesday every week,

BY MARY GILLIS, EDITOR

and available to answer your questions about both commercial and residential properties. In the words of Henry Ford, "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success." Many thanks to Laurie, Nancy, and Becky for helping the staff of Scio Township be a success.

CELEBRATE YOUNG HEROES!

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes celebrates inspiring young people from across the U.S. and Canada who are making the world a better place. If you know a young person aged 8-18 making a difference, be sure to encourage them to apply for the 2023 awards cycle. The online application is available at barronprize.org, with a deadline of April 15. The young heroes honored demonstrate that anyone can make a difference, no matter their age, and serve as an inspiration to others.



Scio Township Hall
827 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Postmaster: leave with current resident

To Scio Neighbor

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

TOWNSHIP HALL AND CLERK'S OFFICE

827 North Zeeb Road
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(734) 369-9400
Hours: Monday to Friday 8 am – 4 pm

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newsletter@sciotownship.org
website: sciotownship.org

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UTILITIES

In Scio:
8 am – 4 pm (734) 369-9350
After hours.....(734) 651-4770
In Dexter:..... (734) 426-4572
(with after-hours automated triage)

In Loch Alpine:
Water or sewer emergencies... (248) 433-8904
Non-emergencies (517) 715-9739
Account Management/Billing
(office hours M-F, 5-8 p.m.) ... (734) 433-0835

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1055 North Zeeb Road
For emergencies 911
Business line..... (734) 665-6001
Fire@sciotownship.org

WASHTENAW COUNTY

County Water Resources
Commissioner (734) 222-6860
drains@washtenaw.org
County Road Commission (734) 761-1500
wcrcc@wccroads.org

County Commissioners

District 1 – Jason Maciejewski
maciejewskij@washtenaw.org
District 9 – Katie Scott
scottk@washtenaw.org

County Sheriff Scio Station

For emergencies 911
Business line (734) 994-2911

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peters.senate.gov

President of the United States

Joe Biden..... (202) 456-1111
whitehouse.gov

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