

# Wabana Warbler

A newsletter for residents of Wabana Township



Winter 2020, Vol. 24, Issue 1

## Attend Wabana's Annual Meeting

Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

*Grassroots Government in Action!*



You have the opportunity to participate in your township government at Wabana's Annual Meeting, which will be held on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. We hope you will attend to vote on the recommended levy, among other issues. Township supervisors recommend the following levy:

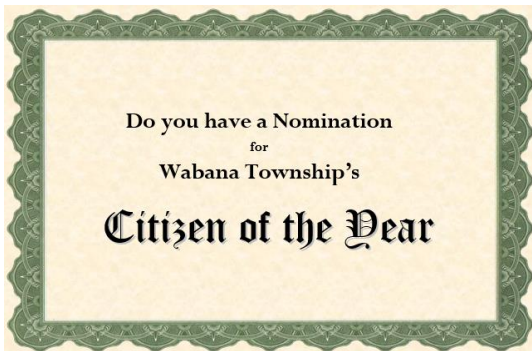
We based our recommendations on balancing current and anticipated township

expenses with what we think is a responsible amount to hold in each account. The recommendation for this year's levy is \$3,410 less than last year's.

Members of the Advisory Committee who have been researching how to proceed with addressing issues in the Shoreland Overlay District of the township will provide an update on their work and seek residents' perspectives. Also on the agenda will be updates on major township functions, decisions regarding service contracts, and plans for future projects. Residents will also vote on nominations for Wabana Citizen of the Year. (See below for information on how to nominate someone you think should be recognized with this award.) We hope to see you at the Annual Meeting!

### Recommended Levy

GENERAL FUND:	\$59,200
ROAD & BRIDGE:	\$40,400
FIRE:	\$28,000
RESERVE:	-0-
TOTAL:	\$127,600



## Nominations Sought for Wabana Citizen of the Year

This award recognizes a citizen for outstanding contributions to Wabana Township such as leadership, providing services to residents, or other activities that enhance the environment or quality of life for residents. Send your nomination with a brief description of why you think your nominee is deserving of the award to Loree Miltich at [lmiltich@aol.com](mailto:lmiltich@aol.com).

**Township Officers & Staff:** Lloyd Adams, chair (999-9749 or cell: 259-1987, [lradams\\_94@msn.com](mailto:lradams_94@msn.com)), Steve Bjerke, supervisor (507-327-5230, [bjerkehome@hotmail.com](mailto:bjerkehome@hotmail.com)), Loree Miltich, supervisor and newsletter editor (327-1492, [Lmiltich@aol.com](mailto:Lmiltich@aol.com)), Ruth Fordham, clerk (218-259-0228, [ruthwabanaclerk@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthwabanaclerk@yahoo.com)), Deb Kee, treasurer (326-2115, [dk317322115@gmail.com](mailto:dk317322115@gmail.com)), Bob Moore, warming house and rink (326-2432), Scott Widmark, maintenance (259-5970). Check out Wabana Township's web site at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/wabanatownship/>

# Ordinance 101 Update

By Steve Melin, chairperson of the Advisory Committee



Photo by Gail Otteson

The Township shoreland overlay ordinance (Ord. 101) was revised with the Township's legal counsel's help to address variances, change the side setback to 15 feet to match Itasca County's requirements, and eliminate the cell tower requirement. This revision became effective on or after the first day of publication in June 2019.

The Township then authorized the formation of a Citizen Advisory Committee to examine issues related to the ordinance. The Advisory Committee consists of a great group of seven volunteers: Deb Kee, Wayne Speedling, Bob Moore, Gary Oja (Secretary), Jim Corrigan, Jim Olijnek, Steve Melin (Chairperson), and Steve Bjerke (Township Supervisor). The committee started out meeting a couple times a month, but now meets weekly.

The committee agrees that we want to protect the shoreland overlay areas in Wabana Township from back-lot development, campgrounds, RV-parks, and planned unit developments (PUDs).

Through our research and various meetings with County officials and other townships dealing with similar issues, it became apparent that our first priority is to develop a Comprehensive Plan for the township that sets forth residents' vision for the township. A Comprehensive Plan would also provide Itasca County with a clear statement of how our township envisions future development. Harris Township, south of Grand Rapids, has a Comprehensive Plan and has talked with our committee about its benefits in terms of working with the County.

While a Comprehensive Plan does not have the authority of an ordinance, it is a clear statement that addresses many items throughout the Township. It would:

- be a guide for discussions and investments and assist the township, both now and in the future, to make decisions that affect the township,
- address how we want to develop and maintain the land within the township,
- articulate how we want to invest funds into community facilities,
- provide a guide to local community resources and services,
- discuss coordination with other public and private entities,
- map out the township and detail its land uses (residential, farm, public lands, etc.),
- provide population demographics,
- provide a history and township government background,
- list ideas for opportunities (recreation, infrastructure, community events) for the area,

**We are seeking residents willing to volunteer to serve on the Planning Commission. The Advisory Committee reports to the Planning Commission which makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Contact Lloyd Adams or Steve Bjerke if interested.**

A Comprehensive Plan is required for any grant applications the township may make.

The development of a Comprehensive Plan will involve facilitator-led community meetings with township citizens to get their input for what they would like to see addressed in the plan. Community meetings are being planned for late spring and summer 2020. The Advisory Committee is working to keep the cost of developing a Comprehensive Plan minimal through volunteer efforts, grants, in-kind services, and other low-cost supports.

If any Wabana Township citizens have time to volunteer with skills to support this effort (i.e. document preparation, grant writing, printing, professional services, working with GIS maps, historical information, etc.) please contact Steve Melin (steven.melin@juno.com) or Gary Oja ([gdoja@msn.com](mailto:gdoja@msn.com)). The Committee welcomes Wabana residents' ideas.



## Wabana Community Fund News

- **Now accepting 2020 Scholarship Applications**

Applications for the Wabana Community Fund are now available on the Wabana Township website: <https://sites.google.com/site/wabanatownship/> and at the counselor's office at Grand Rapids High School. Applicants must be a resident of Wabana Township and be pursuing the first or second year of post-secondary education in the fall of 2020. Applicants may receive the scholarship only one time. Applications must be received by April 17, 2020. Funding for the scholarship comes from proceeds of the annual Hunter Supper. For more information, contact Jean Koewler ([djkoewler@paulbunyan.net](mailto:djkoewler@paulbunyan.net)).

- **2019 Hunter Supper a Success!**

Not only was it fun to get together with neighbors and enjoy the delicious meal at the Wabana Community Fund's 2019 Hunter Supper, the event raised \$ 2,222 that will be used to support scholarships and funeral lunches.

- **Next Community Fund Meeting – Everyone is welcome to get involved**

Everyone is welcome to participate in the Wabana Community Fund. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. The group will award scholarships, set a date for the ice cream social, and set a date for the deer hunter's supper. Everyone is welcome to attend and get involved!



### Free Tax Preparation Help Available

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program is now offering free tax preparation assistance in Grand Rapids. You don't have to be an AARP member and there are no age or income restrictions to get tax help from the IRS-certified volunteers. The Tax-Aide service is located at the Grand Rapids Airport. During February the hours of operation are: Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. In March, the hours are Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.



### Minnesota Presidential Primary – March 3

Wabana Town Hall is the Polling Place

For more information about the Primary, see: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/how-elections-work/presidential-primary/>



March 17 – June 5

Tuesdays & Fridays, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Wabana Town Hall

Tai Chi is a program of Elder Circle and will be led by Lloyd Adams. Everyone is welcome!

Contact Lloyd for more information: 999-9749 or cell: 259-1987, [lradams\\_94@msn.com](mailto:lradams_94@msn.com).



**Plan to Attend Wabana's Annual Meeting!**  
**Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall**  
*Grassroots Government in Action*

*If you would like to receive The Warbler by email, contact Loree Miltich at: [Lmiltich@aol.com](mailto:Lmiltich@aol.com)*

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