

Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan

2015-2019



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This plan is an update of the Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan for the Period 2008-2013, which was originally completed in August 2008 with the assistance of Donald L. Holley, PE, Consulting Engineer. This plan was written by the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC) in cooperation with Big Prairie Township and the Big Prairie Township Park Commission. The WMSRDC is a federal and state designated regional planning and development agency serving 120 local governments in Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana counties.

Cover Photo: Operators Village Day Park, Big Prairie Township Park Commission

Acknowledgements

Big Prairie Township Board

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| David Wright | Supervisor |
| Judy Baker | Clerk |
| Jannett Westfield | Treasurer |
| Julie Scott | Trustee |
| Mary Anderson | Trustee |

Big Prairie Township Park Commission

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| John Phillips | Chair |
| Sally Vander Galien | |
| Richard Frisbee | |
| Ernest Spence | |
| John Clark | |

Consumers Energy Hydro Division

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The mission of WMSRDC is to promote and foster regional development in West Michigan through cooperation amongst local governments.

INTRODUCTION

To say that “A river runs through it” would be an apt characterization of Big Prairie Township. Long before the advent of early settlers to Michigan, the Muskegon River flowed through the local prairies and majestic hardwood and virgin pine forests on its way to Lake Michigan. As the forests were decimated and a different type of economy evolved, the Muskegon River was exploited for hydro-power in the early 1900’s, resulting in the long-term impoundments of Croton and Hardy Dams. These large reservoirs are a focus for living and recreation for all who live in the area, and for the many visitors who are attracted by the simple beauty of the area.

The assessment and evaluation of the recreational needs of this community is being undertaken jointly by the Big Prairie Township Board and by the Big Prairie Township Park Commission.

The resulting plan is intended to reflect the needs of the permanent residents of Big Prairie Township as well as the needs of the many seasonal visitors who are attracted by the local natural and recreational assets and who contribute a good deal to the local economy.

It must be emphasized that the township, through its separately elected Park Commission, administers the very large Oxbow and Big Bend campgrounds through an agreement with Consumers Energy. This is a non-profit venture with all revenues used for operation and for funding of improvements to these campgrounds.

How the Planning Process Works

The purpose of recreational planning is to inventory and evaluate recreational opportunities, facilities and needs within the planning jurisdiction of Big Prairie Township and to develop a plan to fulfill unmet needs or to upgrade inadequate recreational facilities within the community.

In order to form a basis for potential applications for State of Michigan funding, the planning process involves community participation and public awareness. Also, defined needs and proposed projects are prioritized for the five-year period 2014-2019.

This current planning effort is in essence an updating and revision of an original recreation plan prepared in 1999 for the period 1999-2004. The plan was updated in 2008 as well.

During the planning period, the current Newaygo County Recreation Plan and some other local plans have been reviewed, not only for ideas, but as a way to anticipate and preclude duplication of other locally available or contemplated recreational facilities or programs, which would also be available in Newaygo County and thus available to residents of Big Prairie Township.

It must also be recognized that there are recreational facilities within Big Prairie Township, which while available to residents, are primarily used by non-residents and certainly travelers from other states. Thus the planning effort must focus dually on the primarily local residents’ needs as well as the facilities which serve a broader non-resident populace.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The Setting

Within a 30 mile or so drive from metropolitan Grand Rapids, Big Prairie Township and Newaygo County have long been a recreational destination for city folk needing a short respite or a seasonal home. No incorporated cities or villages lie within Big Prairie Township, which is on the eastern tier of townships within Newaygo County (See Figure 1).

As noted in the introduction to this plan, Big Prairie Township is bisected by the Muskegon River and its features are dominated by the enormous backwater lake of Hardy (Dam) Pond, containing in excess of 3,900 acres. Due to its hydropower purpose and heritage, a large percentage of Hardy Pond shoreline is owned, controlled and managed by Consumers Energy Company. They have been good stewards and maintained natural conditions to the extent feasible. Also, in accordance with federal (FERC) guidelines, recreational opportunities are provided for the public on lands abutting Hardy Pond and/or owned by Consumers Energy Company.

Thus the broadly appealing natural setting of Big Prairie Township, enhanced by the river dam now over 80 years old and by the healing re-growth of forests, is both a great year-around home and a recreation destination for many more.

The Past

The most recent (2012) Newaygo County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (the County Plan) aptly narrates the highlights of local history from Native American presence to early European white exploration/settlement, to lumbering, early agricultural efforts, and progression to the present. For those interested in more details, refer to the County Plan and its sources.

Climate and Land Use

The climate of the planning area, although with cyclical variations, is moderate and certainly influenced by the Great Lakes. Annual precipitation is about 30-35 liquid inches, of which is 70-80 inches of average snowfall. Weather extremes seem to vary from about 10 F winter to 100 F summer, with summer averages of about 80 F and winter averages of about 20-25 F.

Figure 1



Actual land use is somewhat governed by ownership, with perhaps 60% of Newaygo County land being covered by forest and close to 40% of that lying within the Manistee National Forest or owned by Consumers Energy Company. According to the County Plan, another 20% of forested land area is in private ownership.

While there is some land in agricultural use, aside from forest areas, much of the remaining land use is for recreational purposes. Keep in mind that about 6 square miles or about 15% of Big Prairie Township is occupied by Hardy Pond.

A Big Prairie Township zoning map is presented as Figure 2 but it may not be of sufficient detail for accurate interpretation. Also see Figure 3, land use cover.

Water Resources, Soils, Topography

As the County Plan states, “Newaygo County has abundant surface and ground water resources.” While there are fewer lakes within Big Prairie Township than in the rest of Newaygo County, the jewel that is Hardy Pond is one of the larger inland water bodies in the entire state.

Groundwater resources, while plentiful, must continue to be protected from pollution influences and excessive fertilization from aging septic systems constructed too close to water features and on sites which would not be acceptable under current guidelines.

Even recreational activities can contribute to pollution of water resources and such activities must be monitored. Some potential recreational expenditures may involve facilities to control potential of water pollution.

The local topography is a reflection of glaciation from the last ice age, and the natural erosion of the past 10,000 years, thus the glacial outwash deposits and moraines characteristic of this area of Michigan. The 3,900-acre Hardy Pond appeared over 80 years ago. Figure 4 shows topography of the township.

The County Plan contains a more detailed discussion of Newaygo County soil associations, which are similar to soils specific to Big Prairie Township, which are:

- 2 Cosad-Del-Rey-Sickles
- 5 Coloma-Spinks-Metea
- 6 Toogood-Boyer

The associations listed above are all sandy types located in glacial moraines or outwash plains and terraces. Cosad-Del-Rey-Sickle is more poorly drained and theoretically less suitable for septic tank absorption fields. Additional soil details are available by reference to the Newaygo County Soil Survey. Figure 5 graphically depicts the soil associations within Big Prairie Township.

Fish and Wildlife

The high percentage of forest cover and public or quasi-public land ownership within the township serves to preserve and enhance wildlife and fish habitats.

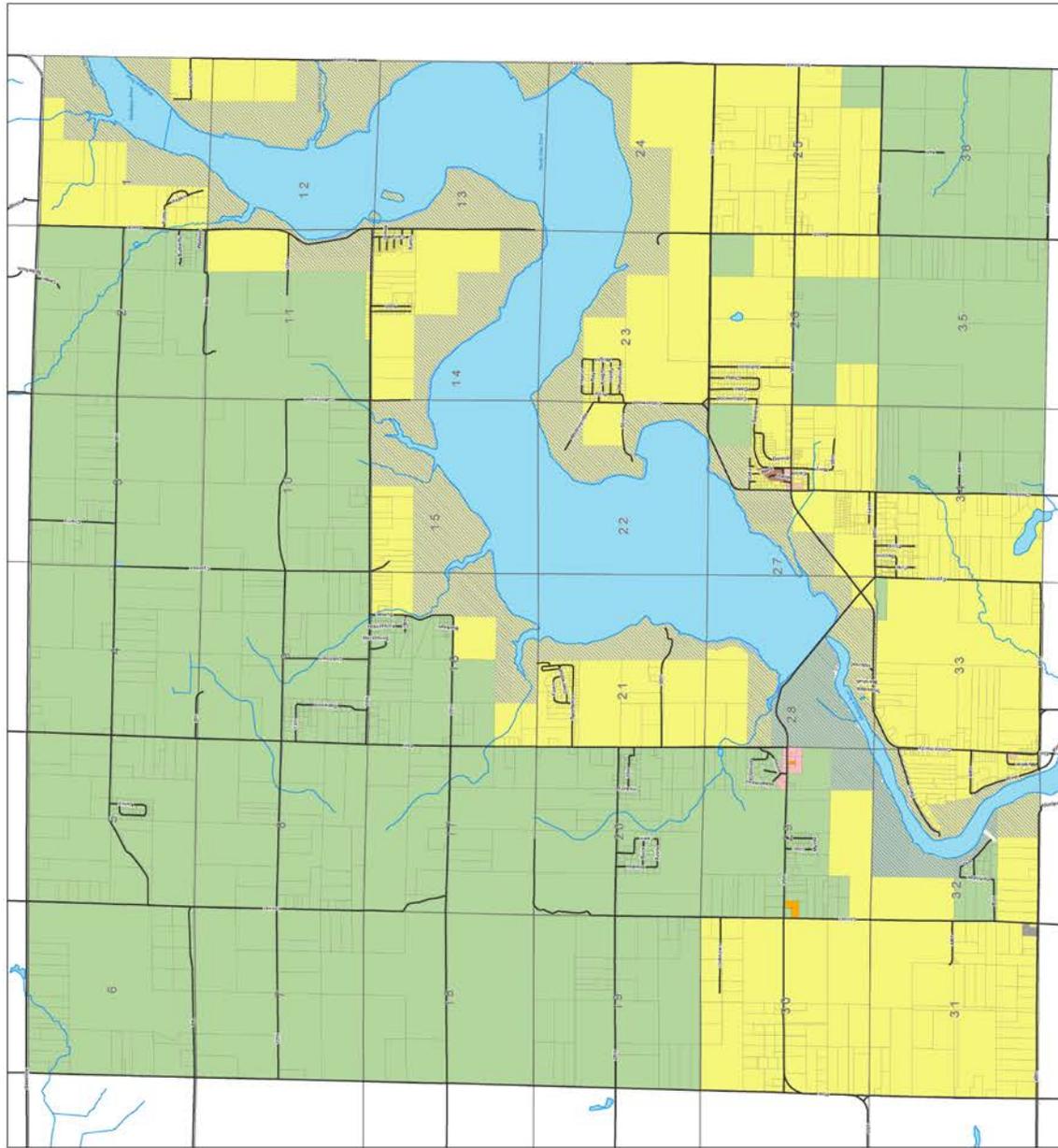
Deer and turkey populations are probably at higher levels than experienced during Native American occupation. Fishing regulations and fish management / stocking programs continue to permit an extremely productive sports fishery. Development of land adjacent to lakes and rivers must be adequately regulated to protect the habitat from encroachment and pollution. Stream banks are best protected by natural vegetation and root systems to control bank erosion.

Transportation System

Figure 6 illustrates the primary network of state roads. As in most Midwest states, local roads are aligned along section lines, but conforming to natural obstacles. There is only one Muskegon River road crossing within the township, which is at Hardy Dam.

Obviously, the ready access to visitors for the many recreational potentials of Big Prairie Township is a plus and even the current cost of automotive fuel has barely slowed seasonal recreational traffic. The possibility exists that more Michigan residents will seek closer recreation destinations as fuel costs rise even more, bringing more visitors to the area.

Figure 2



Big Prairie Township

Newaygo County, Michigan

Zoning Map

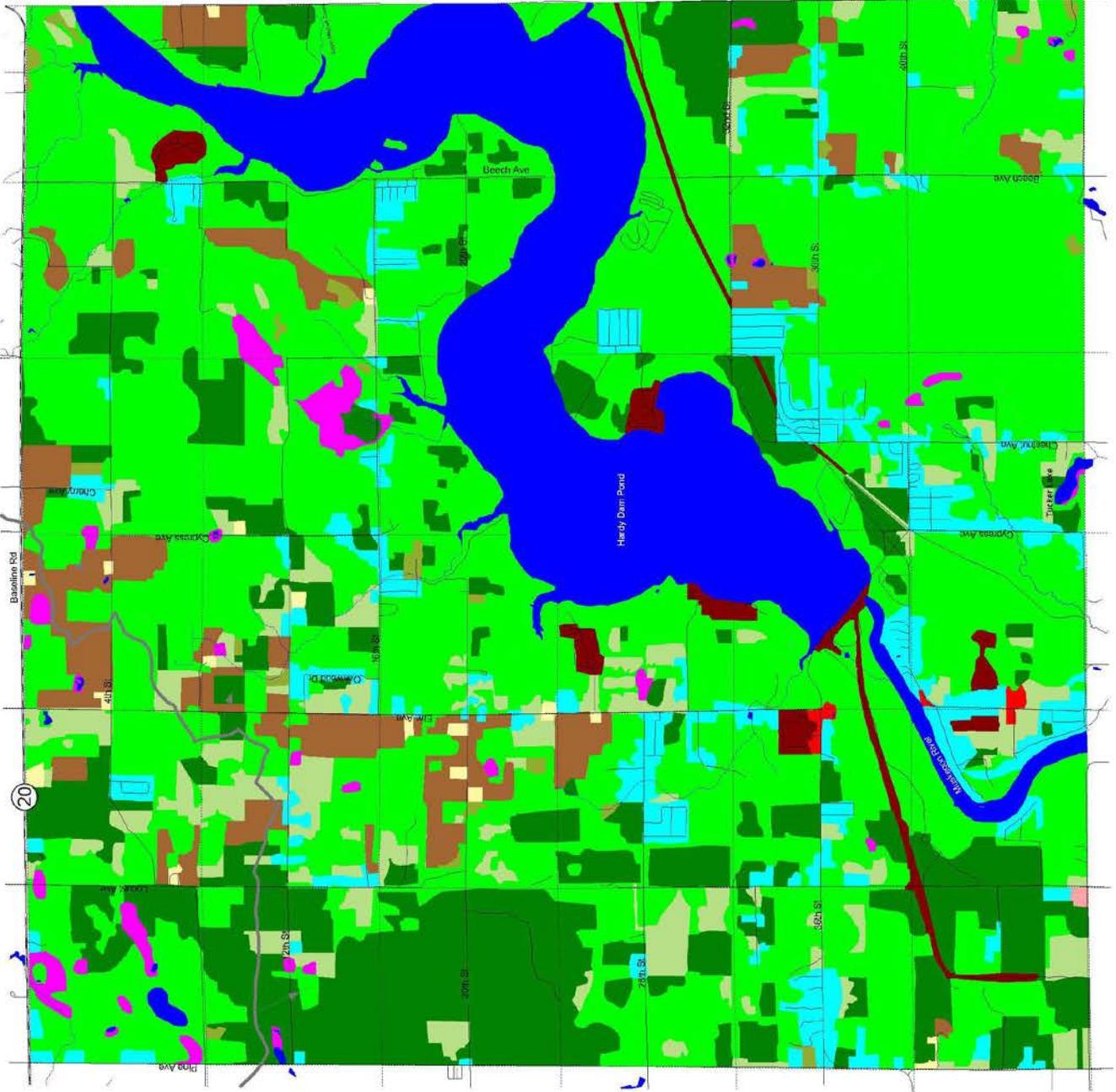
DRAFT: April 10, 2008

-  A-R: Agricultural Residential
-  L-I: Light Industrial
-  MHP: Manufactured Home Park
-  N-C: Neighborhood Commercial
-  R-R: Rural Residential
-  R-2: Residential
-  L-R: Lakefront Residential District
(Includes all parcels or lots having frontage on a body of water)



Land Use/Cover - 1998

Big Prairie Township Newaygo County, Michigan



Legend

- Muskegon River Watershed Boundary (Dashed line)
- Rivers/Creeks (Blue line)
- Drains/Intermittent Streams (Blue line)
- Lake (Blue area)
- Political Limits (Dotted pattern)
- Interstate (Thick red line)
- U.S. and State Highways (Thin red line)
- County Roads (Thin red line)
- Local Roads (Thin red line)
- Railroads (Black line)
- Section Lines (Thin black line)

Land Use/Cover Types

- Residential (Light Blue)
- Commercial/Institutional (Light Blue)
- Industrial (Red)
- Other Developed Area (Brown)
- Crop Land (Yellow)
- Orchards and Other Specialty Crop (Orange)
- Confined Feeding/Permanent Pasture (Light Green)
- Other Agricultural Land (Yellow-Green)
- Grasses and Forbs - Open Field (Light Green)
- Shrub Open Field (Light Green)
- Deciduous Forest (Green)
- Coniferous Forest (Dark Green)
- Water (Blue)
- Wetland (Pink)
- Sand Dune/Other (Grey)

Scale: 1:25,000

0 1320 2640 3960 5280 Feet

North Arrow

Base Data Source:
Michigan Center for Geographic Information,
Department of Information Technology, 2002.
Land Use/Cover Data Source:
Michigan Center for Geographic Information,
& Geographic Information Science, 2002.

Information Services Center
Annis Water Resources Institute
Grand Valley State University
Map Prepared: January 2003

Figure 3

Figure 4

Natural Features Map (USGS Quad.)

Big Prairie Township

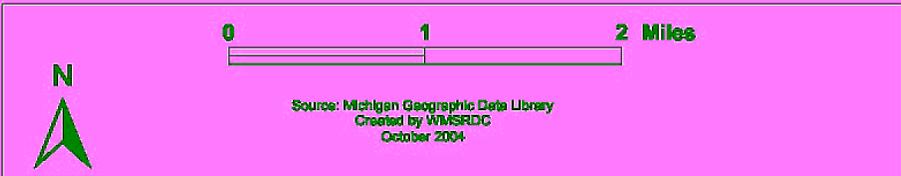
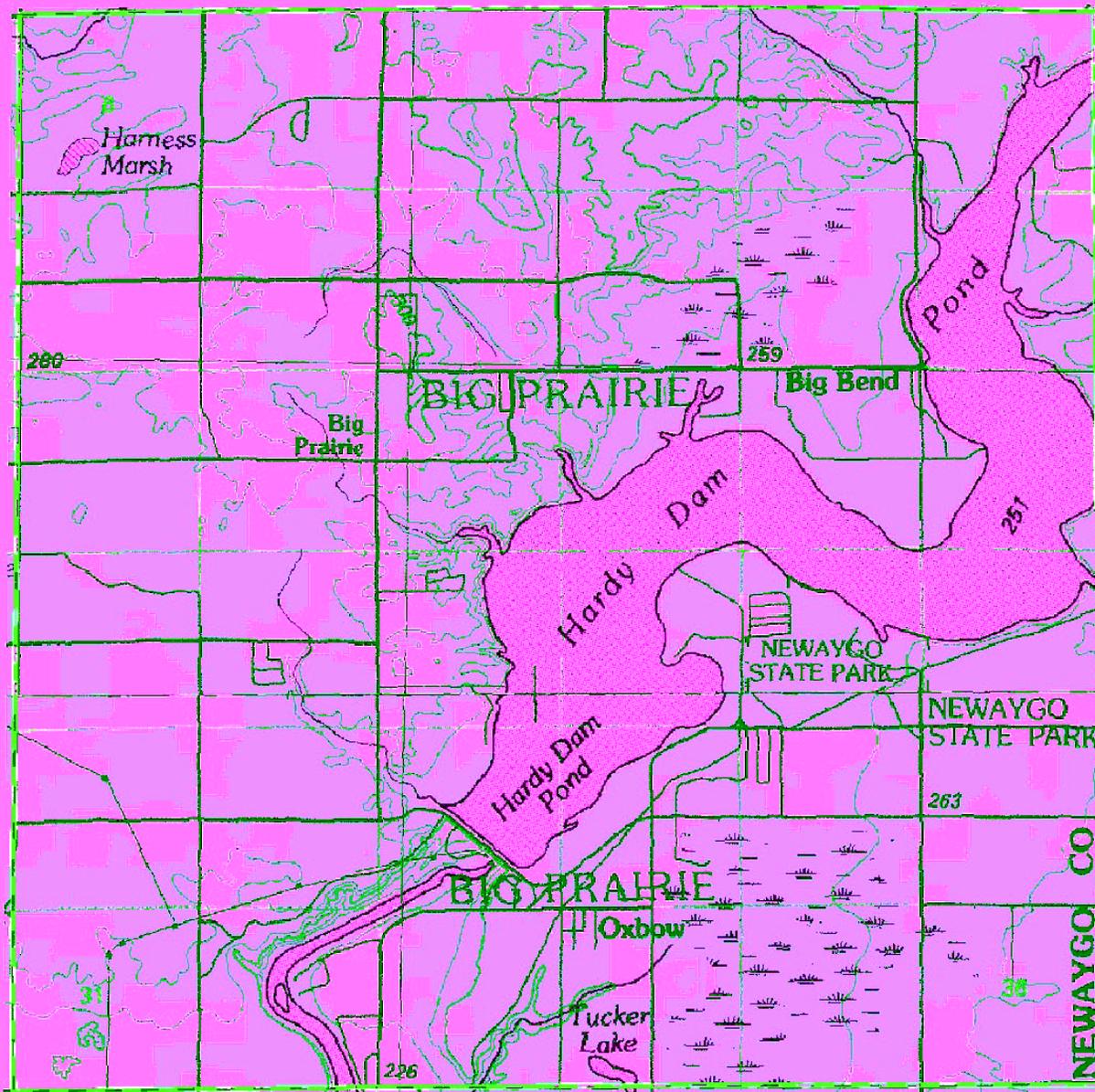
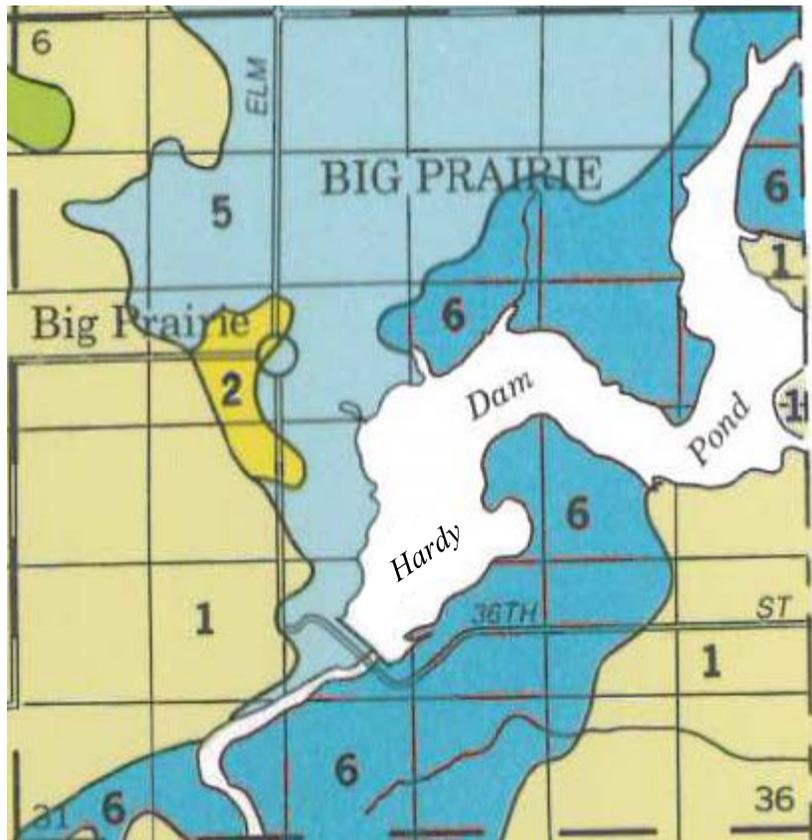


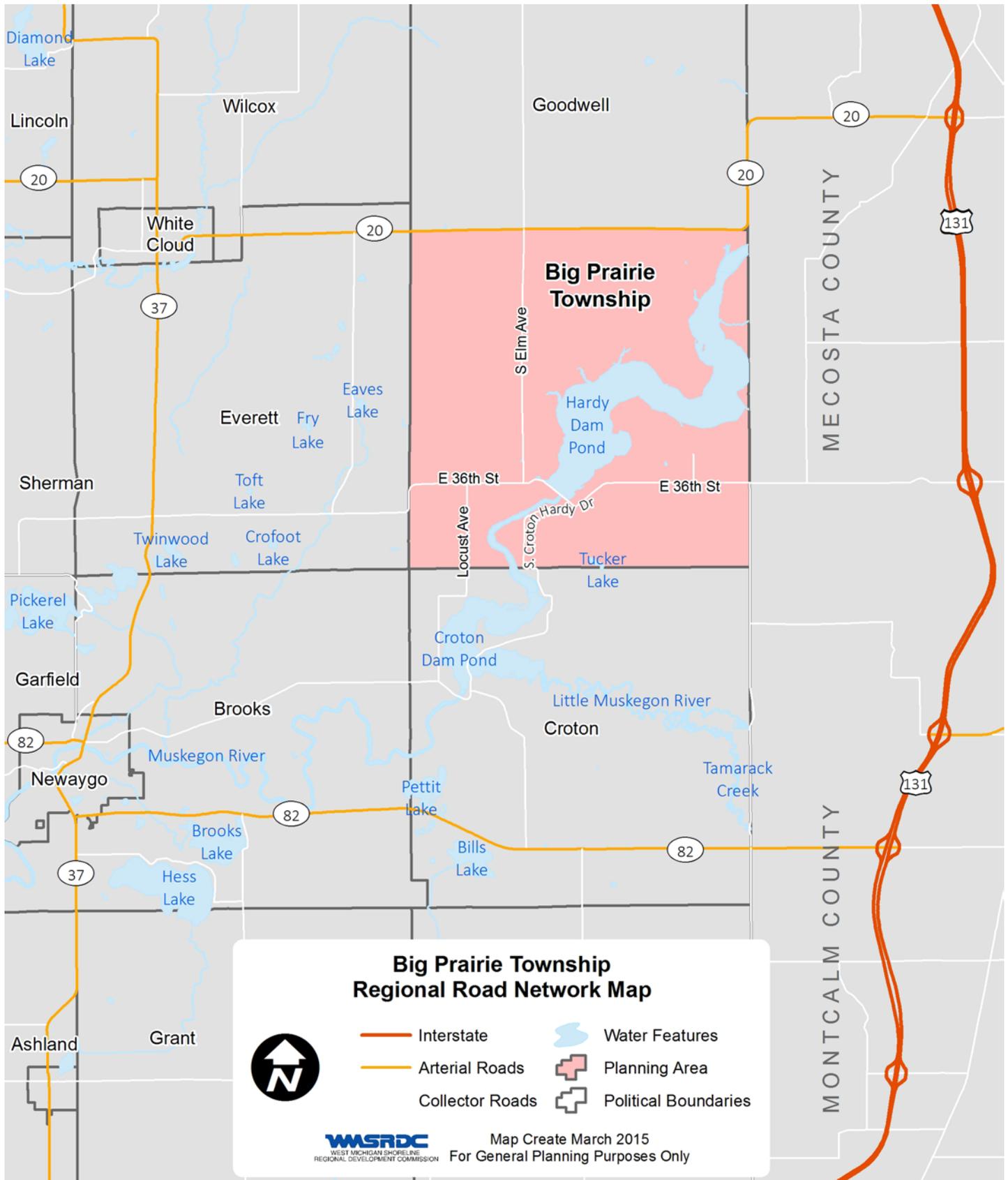
Figure 5

Big Prairie Township General Soils Map



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Plainfield-Grattan-Brems association |
| 2 | Cosad-Del Rey-Sickles association |
| 3 | Glendora-Abscota-Algansee association |
| 4 | Marlette-Metea-Spinks association |
| 5 | Coloma-Spinks-Metea association |
| 6 | Toogood-Boyer association |
| 7 | Adrian-Carlisle-Martisco association |
| 8 | Pipestone-Covert-Kingsville association |

Figure 6



POPULATION, HOUSING AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Population Trends

In this section, population trends and forecasts are presented; using actual Census data, American Community Survey estimates, and forecasts provided by the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission. Refer to Page 15 for tabulation of various county jurisdictions.

The most recent population projections released by WMSRDC anticipate a steady to slowly growing population through 2040. When compared to the Recreation Plan prepared in 2008, the most recent WMSRDC population projections are more subdued than those released in 2008. For example, the 2025 population forecasted for the township in 2008 was 3,251 people; while the 2014 forecast for 2025 is 2,517.

Comparing past population projections to actual census

figures, WMSRDC projections have tended to be slightly higher than actual growth in recent years. As noted by WMSRDC, population projections are based on trends only and do not consider projected economic development. As such, these figures should serve as a rough guide when considering future recreation investments.

Table 1

| Census and Population Projections | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------|--------|
| | Actual Census Figures | | | | Estimate | |
| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2013 (est) | |
| Big Prairie Township | 1,202 | 1,731 | 2,465 | 2,573 | 2,511 | |
| White Cloud | 1,101 | 1,147 | 1,420 | 1,408 | 1,389 | |
| Newaygo (City) | 1,271 | 1,336 | 1,670 | 1,976 | 1,969 | |
| Newaygo County | 34,917 | 38,202 | 47,874 | 48,460 | 48,001 | |
| 2014 WMSRDC Population Forecast | | | | | | |
| | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | 2040 |
| Big Prairie Township | 2,512 | 2,515 | 2,517 | 2,520 | 2,522 | 2,525 |
| White Cloud | 1,390 | 1,391 | 1,392 | 1,394 | 1,395 | 1,397 |
| Newaygo (City) | 1,970 | 1,972 | 1,974 | 1,976 | 1,978 | 1,980 |
| Newaygo County | 48,021 | 48,070 | 48,119 | 48,168 | 48,217 | 48,266 |
| (West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, 2014), (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) | | | | | | |

As shown in Table 2, Big Prairie Township and neighboring communities saw modest population increases between 1980 and 2000. After 2000, population growth began to taper off and growth remained relatively flat by 2013.

Table 2

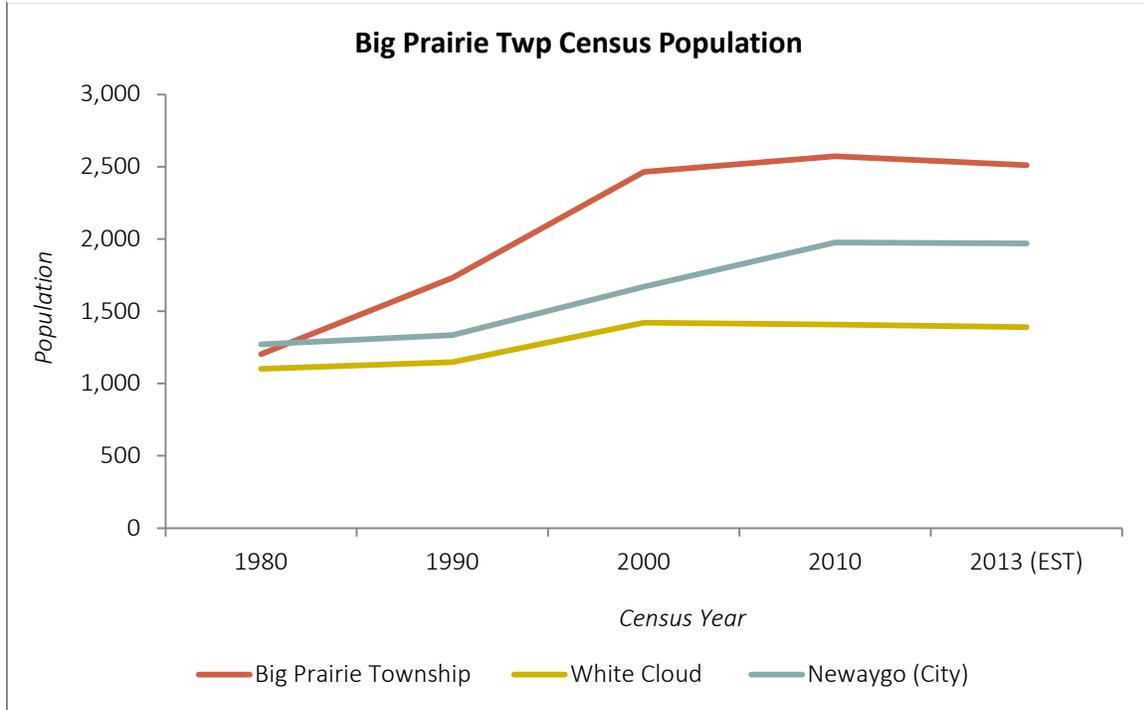
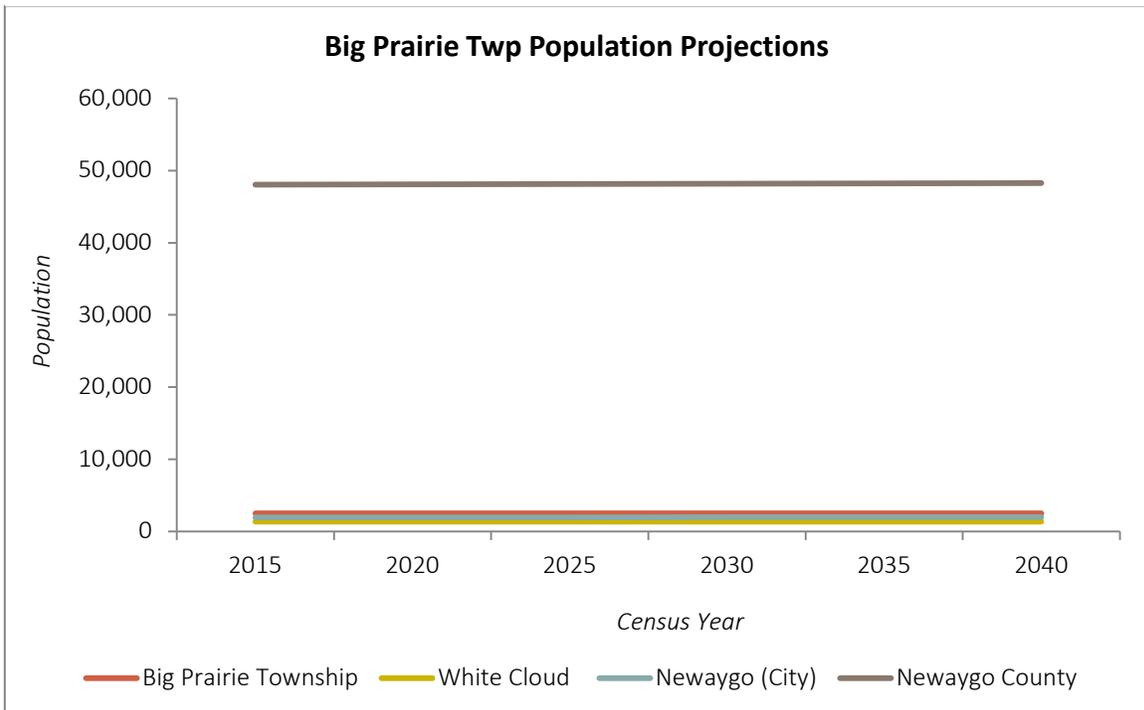


Table 3



The flat growth trend shown in Table 2 is reflected in the future population projections shown in Table 3. As shown, no significant gains in population were projected for Big Prairie Township, neighboring communities, or for Newaygo County between 2015 and 2040. Again, it's important to note that these projections are based on past trends and don't necessarily accurately reflect future conditions. Past population and future projections for all of the Newaygo governmental units are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

| Newaygo County Census & Population Forecast 2015 to 2040 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Actual Census Figures | | | | | Estimate | Forecasted Population | | | | |
| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2013 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | 2040 |
| Newaygo County | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2013 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | 2040 |
| Total Population | 34,917 | 38,202 | 47,874 | 48,460 | 48,001 | 48,021 | 48,070 | 48,119 | 48,168 | 48,217 | 48,266 |
| Ashland Township | 1,751 | 1,997 | 2,570 | 2,773 | 2,741 | 2,742 | 2,745 | 2,748 | 2,751 | 2,753 | 2,756 |
| Barton Township | 558 | 624 | 820 | 717 | 743 | 743 | 744 | 745 | 746 | 746 | 747 |
| Beaver Township | 443 | 417 | 608 | 509 | 503 | 503 | 504 | 504 | 505 | 505 | 506 |
| Big Prairie Twp | 1202 | 1731 | 2465 | 2573 | 2511 | 2512 | 2515 | 2517 | 2520 | 2522 | 2525 |
| Bridgeton Twp | 1562 | 1574 | 2098 | 2141 | 2109 | 2110 | 2112 | 2114 | 2116 | 2118 | 2121 |
| Brooks Township | 2349 | 2728 | 3671 | 3510 | 3474 | 3475 | 3479 | 3483 | 3486 | 3490 | 3493 |
| Croton Township | 1556 | 1965 | 3042 | 3228 | 3203 | 30204 | 3208 | 3211 | 3214 | 3217 | 3221 |
| Dayton Township | 1938 | 1971 | 2002 | 1949 | 1936 | 1937 | 1939 | 1941 | 1943 | 1945 | 1947 |
| Denver Township | 1422 | 1532 | 1971 | 1928 | 1900 | 1901 | 1903 | 1905 | 1907 | 1909 | 1910 |
| Ensley Township | 1461 | 1984 | 2474 | 2635 | 2616 | 2617 | 2620 | 2622 | 2625 | 2628 | 2630 |
| Everett Township | 1360 | 1519 | 1985 | 1862 | 1827 | 1828 | 1830 | 1831 | 1833 | 1835 | 1837 |
| Garfield Township | 1822 | 2067 | 2464 | 2537 | 2511 | 2512 | 2515 | 2517 | 2520 | 2522 | 2525 |
| Goodwell Township | 387 | 358 | 551 | 547 | 542 | 542 | 543 | 543 | 544 | 544 | 545 |
| Grant Township | 2274 | 2558 | 3130 | 3294 | 3308 | 3309 | 3313 | 3316 | 3319 | 3323 | 3326 |
| Home Township | 185 | 202 | 261 | 232 | 229 | 229 | 229 | 230 | 230 | 230 | 230 |
| Lilley Township | 568 | 565 | 788 | 797 | 786 | 786 | 787 | 788 | 789 | 790 | 790 |
| Lincoln Township | 885 | 969 | 1338 | 1275 | 1257 | 1258 | 1259 | 1260 | 1261 | 1263 | 1264 |
| Merrill Township | 508 | 451 | 590 | 667 | 658 | 658 | 659 | 660 | 660 | 661 | 662 |
| Monroe Township | 263 | 247 | 324 | 320 | 316 | 316 | 316 | 317 | 317 | 317 | 318 |
| Norwich Township | 450 | 499 | 557 | 607 | 600 | 600 | 601 | 601 | 602 | 603 | 303 |
| Sheridan Township | 2465 | 2252 | 2423 | 2510 | 2490 | 2491 | 2494 | 2496 | 2499 | 2501 | 2504 |
| Sherman Township | 1810 | 1866 | 2159 | 2109 | 2089 | 2090 | 2092 | 2094 | 2096 | 2098 | 2101 |
| Troy Township | 199 | 173 | 243 | 283 | 297 | 279 | 279 | 280 | 280 | 280 | 281 |
| Wilcox Township | 772 | 831 | 1145 | 1098 | 1076 | 1076 | 1078 | 1079 | 1080 | 1081 | 1082 |
| Fremont City | 3672 | 3875 | 4224 | 4081 | 4050 | 4052 | 4056 | 4060 | 4064 | 4068 | 4072 |
| Grant City | 683 | 764 | 881 | 894 | 889 | 889 | 890 | 891 | 892 | 893 | 894 |
| Newaygo City | 1271 | 1336 | 1670 | 1976 | 1969 | 1970 | 1972 | 1974 | 1976 | 1978 | 1980 |
| White Cloud City | 1101 | 1147 | 1420 | 1408 | 1389 | 1390 | 1391 | 1392 | 1394 | 1395 | 1397 |
| Hesperia Village | 347 | 300 | 364 | 339 | 338 | 338 | 338 | 339 | 339 | 340 | 340 |

Readers should bear in mind that the local population numbers only come into play when certain types of locally specific recreation needs are evaluated. In all likelihood, visitors and transient users will place more demand on local recreation venues than imposed by year round township residents.

While the overall local population numbers are of some use in estimating size of facilities required, other population characteristics also influence the type of recreational needs.

Population by Age

When comparing the 2013 age distribution data (Table 5) with the 2000 census data found in the 2008 plan, the distributions were quite similar. Overall, less of the population fell within age groups 64 and below while age groups 55 and over accounted for a higher share of the overall population than in 2000.

Table 5

| Population By Age | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------|------------------|--------|--------------|--------|----------------|--------|
| | Big Prairie Township | | White Cloud City | | Newaygo City | | Newaygo County | |
| Under 5 years | 118 | 4.6% | 90 | 6.3% | 154 | 8.1% | 2,931 | 6.1% |
| 5-9 Years | 144 | 5.7% | 78 | 5.4% | 126 | 6.6% | 3,250 | 6.7% |
| 10-14 Years | 145 | 5.7% | 94 | 6.6% | 131 | 6.9% | 3,315 | 6.9% |
| 15-19 Years | 127 | 5.0% | 134 | 9.4% | 118 | 6.2% | 3,503 | 7.3% |
| 20-34 Years | 313 | 12.3% | 280 | 19.5% | 405 | 21.2% | 7,605 | 15.8% |
| 35-54 Years | 670 | 26.4% | 416 | 29.0% | 389 | 20.4% | 13,197 | 27.3% |
| 55-64 Years | 471 | 18.5% | 166 | 11.6% | 226 | 11.9% | 6,693 | 13.9% |
| 65 Over | 553 | 21.8% | 175 | 12.2% | 358 | 18.8% | 7,786 | 16.1% |
| Total | 2,541 | 100.0% | 1,433 | 100.0% | 1,907 | 100.0% | 48,280 | 100.0% |
| (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013) | | | | | | | | |

As shown in Table 6, the population distribution in age cohorts 19 and under was relatively consistent as each cohort maintained a population between 100 and about 150 people. A higher proportion of people living in Big Prairie Township fell within age cohorts 20 years and above. The township’s largest cohort was the 35-54 group, which totaled 670 people. The second largest cohort was the 65 and over group, which totaled 533 people.

Big Prairie Township’s population distribution approximately mirrored that of Newaygo County, as shown in Table 7. The population distribution was also close to that of the neighboring cities of White Cloud and Newaygo City although Newaygo City’s proportion of 20-34 and 35-54 year olds as a percentage of total population was less than the aforementioned communities.

Table 6

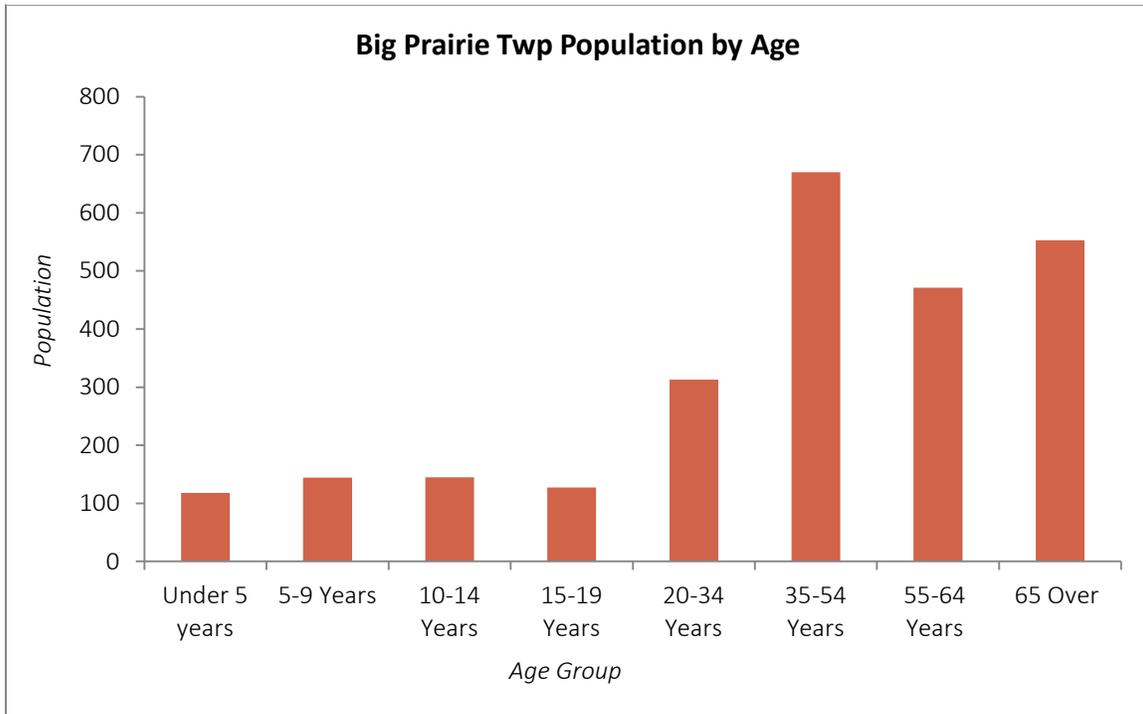
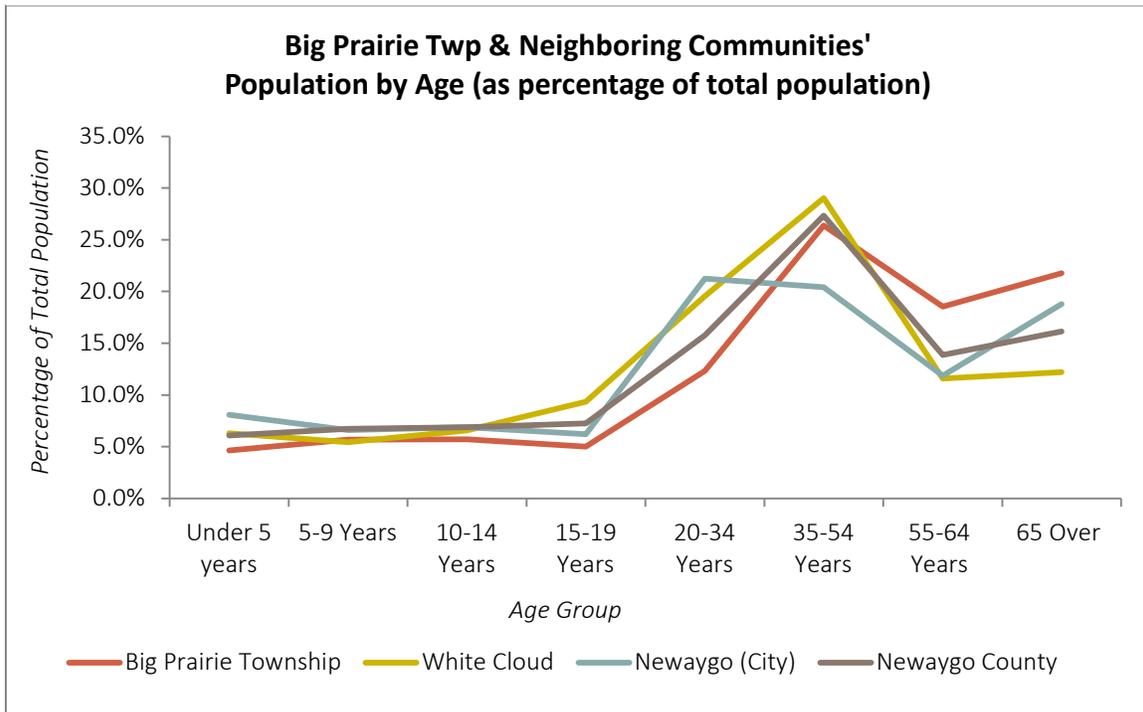


Table 7



Housing Unit Occupancy

Between the 2000 Census and 2012 Census, housing units in Big Prairie Township increased by 124 from 1,474 units to 1,598 units. Vacant units in Big Prairie accounted for about 36% of the total housing stock, or 582 units. As shown in Table 8, 455 of these vacant units were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use which accounted for about 28% of the total housing units.

Table 8

| Housing Unit Occupancy | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|---|-------|---------------|
| | Occupied | Vacant | | | | | | Total Housing |
| | | For Rent | Rented, Not Occupied | For Sale Only | Sold, Not Occupied | For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use | Other | |
| Big Prairie Township | 1016 | 7 | 0 | 33 | 7 | 455 | 80 | 1598 |
| White Cloud City | 467 | 25 | 2 | 20 | 0 | 10 | 13 | 537 |
| Newaygo City | 786 | 38 | 1 | 11 | 1 | 18 | 37 | 892 |
| Newaygo County | 18406 | 272 | 33 | 458 | 108 | 4,885 | 913 | 25,075 |

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)

Race and Ethnicity

According to 2013 Census estimates, the race/ethnicity distributions within Newaygo County and Big Prairie Township were as follows in Table 9:

Table 9

| Race and Ethnicity | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--------|----------------|--------|
| | Big Prairie Township | | Newaygo County | |
| Total Population | 2,541 | 100.0% | 48,280 | 100.0% |
| White | 2,461 | 96.9% | 45,423 | 94.1% |
| Black of African American | 17 | 0.7% | 612 | 1.3% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 6 | 0.2% | 355 | 0.7% |
| Asian | 17 | 0.7% | 176 | 0.4% |
| Native Hawaii Or Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Other Race | 18 | 0.7% | 950 | 2.0% |
| Two or More Races | 22 | 0.9% | 764 | 1.6% |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 38 | 1.5% | 2,705 | 5.6% |
| Not Hispanic or Latino | 2,503 | 98.5% | 45,575 | 94.4% |

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2013)

Disability Characteristics

According to 2013 Census estimates shown in Table 10, approximately 25.1% of Big Prairie Township residents were disabled. Those in the 18-64 age cohort had the highest percentage of disability as compared to other age groups, with 12.8% of the total population falling within this group.

It is hard to draw any conclusion from these statistics as the data does not provide insight into the extent or type of disability reported. It should be noted that the 2013 census estimates did provide information defining the type and extent of disabilities for Big Prairie but the margin of error was extremely high and therefore would not be useful.

Table 10

| Disability Characteristics | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|------------------|--------|
| | With a Disability | | Without a Disability | | Total Population | |
| Under 5 | 0 | 0.0% | 118 | 4.6% | 118 | 4.6% |
| 5-17 years | 48 | 1.9% | 312 | 12.3% | 360 | 14.2% |
| 18-64 years | 326 | 12.8% | 1,184 | 46.6% | 1,510 | 59.4% |
| 65 and over | 264 | 10.4% | 289 | 11.4% | 553 | 21.8% |
| Total | 638 | 25.1% | 1,903 | 74.9% | 2,541 | 100.0% |

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2013)

Income Statistics

The data within Table 11 is derived from 2013 Census estimates for Big Prairie Township. Overall, the median household income for Big Prairie Township was \$32,917 and the mean or average household income was \$42,323. Per capita income for Big Prairie was \$17,972, which was \$2,651 less than Newaygo County's per capita income.

Table 11

| Income Statistics | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Big Prairie Township | | Newaygo County | |
| Median household income | 32,917 | | 42,571 | |
| Mean household income | 42,323 | | 53,398 | |
| Per capita income | 17,972 | | 20,623 | |
| Income Per family | <i>Families</i> | <i>Percent</i> | <i>Families</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
| Less than \$10,000 | 69 | 9.34% | 815 | 6.34% |
| \$10,000 to 14,999 | 77 | 10.42% | 543 | 4.22% |
| \$15,000 to \$24,999 | 87 | 11.77% | 1,364 | 10.61% |
| \$25,000 to \$34,999 | 124 | 16.78% | 1,523 | 11.84% |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999 | 96 | 12.99% | 2,156 | 16.76% |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999 | 157 | 21.24% | 2,989 | 23.24% |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999 | 66 | 8.93% | 1,722 | 13.39% |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 52 | 7.04% | 1,134 | 8.82% |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999 | 11 | 1.49% | 373 | 2.90% |
| 200,000 or more | 0 | 0.00% | 242 | 1.88% |
| Total Families | 739 | 100.00% | 12,861 | 100.00% |

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2013)

IMPACTS OF PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

It might appear that the relatively low (year around) population of Big Prairie Township may be attributed to lesser or fewer opportunities for employment, and reflective of a higher proportion of retirees.

As noted in the Population Trends section, the population of Big Prairie Township has remained relatively stable over the past 15 years and is projected to remain relatively stable into the future. This is not to say that rapid growth could not occur, as the township grew by almost 50% between 1990 and 2000. It is likely that based on trends outlined in the Population by Age section that the population of younger people (19 and younger) will continue to decline. As the population ages, the population distribution will shift, and the township will have more adult and elderly residents than in the past.

There is no doubt that the natural physical attractions, including woods and water, appeal broadly to both permanent and seasonal residents. The presence of large areas of public lands and access points is welcomed by residents and visitors alike. The same attractive features in Big Prairie Township extend into the adjacent townships, creating a “Newaygo” recreation destination especially from metropolitan Grand Rapids.

The local governing bodies will need to be vigilant to protect this environment from side effects of an increasing influx of visitors, and in such a way that extends an open invitation, but with understandable guidelines. Some “recreational” dollars may need to be allocated for the protection of the environment including but not limited to erosion control and nutrient/pollution control for ground and surface waters.

With such a large extend of forest area in the Manistee National Forest and on Consumer’s Energy property, forest management and sustainability seems a realizable goal, which will maintain the natural heritage of the area.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

As a general law township, the governance of Big Prairie consists of an elected supervisor, clerk, treasurer and two trustees. The township board meets monthly at the township hall on Elm Street. Meetings are open to the public. The Park Commission meets every Monday.

The township also has an appointed township planning committee and zoning board of appeals to exercise its zoning and planning activities. Other committees may be set up as appropriate, and there is a separate township recreation committee to administer strictly township recreation functions.

Due to the unusual circumstances of the parks and campgrounds located on Consumer’s Energy Company property within the township, a separately elected park commission was created to manage these unique facilities, which are mandated under federal (FERC) regulations. While the township board apparently has oversight on the park commission budget, the township does not contribute township

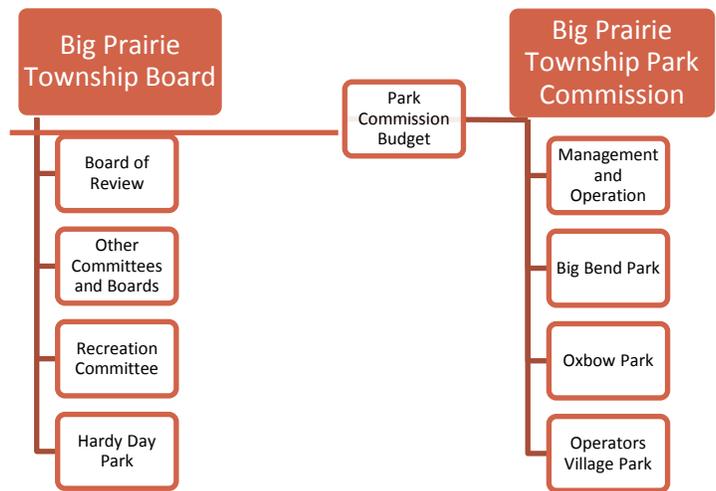
funds to the park commission. Park commission revenues are dedicated solely to operation, maintenance and capital improvements to the three parks currently in the program. There are apparently some circumstances wherein revenues from Big Bend and Oxbow Parks could be used on “other” recreational facilities within the Township.

Potentially other similar facilities could be created on Consumer’s Energy land in the township, subject to mutual consent. The result is that Consumer’s Energy meets FERC criteria and the public reaps the benefits.

A simple administrative organization chart is presented as Figure 7. In essence, the park commission operates autonomously, albeit with oversight by the township board.

The township recreation programs administered by the township board are limited in nature and tend to focus on local needs; whereas the large campground facilities operated by the separate park commission attract primarily regional and seasonal visitors. Thus while the campgrounds are mostly quiet in the winter off season, the park commission must recruit, train and organize a relatively large seasonal workforce and arrange for some contracted services during the off-season.

Figure 7



While there are other publically owned and operated recreational facilities within Newaygo County, there are no administrative links between them and the township. It is conceivable that Big Prairie Township could enter into a cooperative effort on a project such as a trail extending through multiple townships.

There are definitely recreational facilities and programs, operated and administered by other governmental entities, which are available for residents of Big Prairie Township, particularly programs sponsored by different school districts. School districts that reach into Big Prairie include: Morley Stanwood Community Schools, Newaygo Public School District, and White Cloud Public Schools.

ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

Big Prairie Township has a committee that oversees the Hardy Day Park recreation area at no cost. The Big Prairie Township Parks Commission typically does not use volunteers.

Following are summaries of Big Prairie Township and Park Commission budgets.

**Big Prairie Township
2015-2016**

| <u>Cash on Hand</u> | | <u>Account</u> | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------|----------------|--------------|--|--|--|-------------------|
| General Fund Checking | 101.005 | | \$104,286.05 | | | | |
| Savings Account | 101.002 | | \$50,495.70 | | | | |
| Certificate of Deposit | | | \$25,518.48 | | | | |
| Certificate of Deposit | 101.003 | | 22,239.13 | | | | |
| Tax Collection Fund | | | \$4,500.00 | | | | |
| Trust & Agency Account | | | \$11.43 | | | | |
| Certificate of Deposit | | | \$15,221.19 | | | | |
| TOTAL: | | | | | | | 222,281.99 |

| | | <u>Original 2013-2014 Proposed</u> | <u>Projected 2013-2014 Actual</u> | <u>Proposed 2014-2015 Budget</u> | <u>Proposed 2014-2015 Actual</u> | <u>(Over) Under</u> | <u>Proposed 2015-2016 Budget</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------|--|---|--|--|-------------------------|--|
| General Fund Revenue | | | | | | | |
| Current Property Tax | 101.402 | \$56,000.00 | \$61,641.42 | \$46,000.00 | \$51,795.62 | (\$5,795.62) | \$0,000.00 |
| National Forest Money | 101.425 | \$1,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,500.00 | \$1,294.81 | \$205.19 | \$1,500.00 |
| Trailer Tax | 101.427 | \$500.00 | \$470.25 | \$500.00 | \$158.25 | \$341.75 | \$500.00 |
| Property Tax Admin Fee | 101.447 | \$23,000.00 | \$13,382.49 | \$20,000.00 | \$13,479.02 | \$8,520.98 | \$15,000.00 |
| Nonbus. License & Permit | 101.476 | \$500.00 | \$600.00 | \$500.00 | \$1,000.00 | (\$500.00) | \$1,000.00 |
| Electrical Permits | 101.477 | \$2,000.00 | \$2,955.00 | \$2,000.00 | \$3,058.00 | (\$1,058.00) | \$2,000.00 |
| Building Permits | 101.478 | \$2,000.00 | \$3,500.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$3,870.00 | (\$1,370.00) | \$2,500.00 |
| O.C. Deposit Forfeit | 101.479 | \$6,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$6,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$6,000.00 | \$6,000.00 |
| State Revenue Sharing | 101.574 | \$160,000.00 | \$191,275.00 | \$180,000.00 | \$198,586.00 | (\$16,586.00) | \$180,000.00 |
| State Annual Mic. Fee | 101.575 | \$3,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$3,000.00 | \$3,756.95 | (\$4,756.95) | \$3,000.00 |
| Charges for Service Fee | 101.607 | \$1,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$500.00 | \$2,882.55 | (\$2,382.55) | \$500.00 |
| Charges for Service Sales | 101.642 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Grants | 101.660 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Interest | 101.665 | \$500.00 | \$501.38 | \$500.00 | \$877.97 | (\$377.97) | \$500.00 |
| Rents | 101.687 | \$3,000.00 | \$2,600.00 | \$3,000.00 | \$459.00 | \$2,540.00 | \$500.00 |
| Refunds-Rebates | 101.687 | \$1,000.00 | \$4,049.84 | \$3,000.00 | \$4,834.94 | (\$1,634.94) | \$3,000.00 |
| Other Revenue | 101.694 | \$1,000.00 | \$24,254.39 | \$1,000.00 | \$834.18 | \$185.81 | \$1,000.00 |
| Donation | 101.674 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Trail Donations | 101.675 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL | | 280,000.00 | \$281,045.58 | \$270,000.00 | \$284,648.30 | (\$14,848.30) | \$287,000.00 |
| TOTAL INCOME: | | \$488,598.24 | | \$469,723.70 | | | \$489,281.99 |

| | | <u>Original 2013-2014 Proposed</u> | <u>Projected 2013-2014 Actual</u> | <u>Proposed 2014-2015 Budget</u> | <u>Proposed 2014-2015 Actual</u> | <u>(Over) Under</u> | <u>Proposed 2015-2016 Budget</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--|---|--|--|-------------------------|--|
| GENERAL FUND EXPENSES: | | | | | | | |
| Township Board | | | | | | | |
| Wages | 101.101.702 | 12,920.00 | 12,020.00 | 12,020.00 | 12,020.00 | \$0.00 | \$12,120.00 |
| Per Diem | 101.101.703 | \$500.00 | \$400.00 | \$300.00 | \$150.00 | \$150.00 | \$400.00 |
| FICA | 101.101.710 | \$12,000.00 | \$12,764.19 | \$12,000.00 | \$10,314.51 | \$1,885.50 | \$12,000.00 |
| Office Supplies | 101.101.728 | \$500.00 | \$112.00 | \$500.00 | \$0.00 | \$500.00 | \$100.00 |
| Prof Services | 101.101.801 | \$10,000.00 | \$4,014.24 | \$5,000.00 | \$2,034.80 | \$2,965.20 | \$5,000.00 |
| Contracted Services | 101.101.802 | \$3,000.00 | \$8,681.15 | \$8,000.00 | \$3,614.36 | \$2,385.64 | \$6,000.00 |
| Transportation | 101.101.890 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$100.00 |
| Printing & Publishing | 101.101.900 | \$1,500.00 | \$986.06 | \$1,500.00 | \$844.02 | \$855.98 | \$1,000.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 101.101.955 | \$50.00 | \$260.00 | \$50.00 | \$0.00 | \$50.00 | \$50.00 |
| Donations | 101.101.956 | \$300.00 | \$0.00 | \$300.00 | \$200.00 | \$100.00 | \$300.00 |
| Dues | 101.101.957 | \$1,400.00 | \$1,181.02 | \$1,400.00 | \$1,185.91 | \$204.09 | \$1,400.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.101.960 | \$2,600.00 | \$0.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$2,600.00 | \$2,500.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$38,170.00 | \$38,397.65 | \$41,970.00 | \$30,173.60 | 11,796.40 | \$41,970.00 |
| Supervisor | | | | | | | |
| Salary & Wages | 101.171.702 | 14,000.00 | \$14,000.00 | \$14,000.00 | \$14,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$17,000.00 |
| Per Diem | 101.172 | \$250.00 | \$200.00 | \$250.00 | \$150.00 | \$100.00 | \$250.00 |
| Professional Services | 101.171.801 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Mileage | 101.171.860 | \$300.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$100.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.171.960 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,028.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$235.00 | \$765.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$15,550.00 | \$15,228.00 | \$15,350.00 | \$14,385.00 | 985.00 | \$18,350.00 |
| Elections | | | | | | | |
| Salary & Wages | 101.191.702 | \$2,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$2,000.00 | \$2,253.00 | (\$253.00) | \$2,000.00 |
| Supplies | 101.191.726 | \$800.00 | \$274.55 | \$600.00 | \$243.74 | \$325.45 | \$800.00 |
| Professional Services | 101.191.801 | \$700.00 | \$270.53 | \$700.00 | \$1,153.79 | (\$453.79) | \$1,000.00 |
| Transportation | 101.191.860 | \$322.74 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$165.72 | (\$85.72) | \$200.00 |
| Printing & Publishing | 101.191.900 | \$300.00 | \$0.00 | \$300.00 | \$323.38 | (\$23.38) | \$300.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$3,700.00 | \$545.08 | \$3,700.00 | \$4,139.63 | (\$439.63) | \$4,100.00 |
| Assessor | | | | | | | |
| Salary & Wages | 101.209.702 | \$23,000.00 | \$22,354.80 | \$25,000.00 | \$25,265.62 | (\$265.62) | \$25,000.00 |
| Supplies | 101.209.726 | \$3,000.00 | \$8,136.48 | \$3,000.00 | \$2,358.79 | \$841.21 | \$3,000.00 |
| Prof. Services | 101.209.801 | \$5,000.00 | \$766.12 | \$5,000.00 | \$2,085.00 | \$2,915.00 | \$5,000.00 |
| Prof Card File | 101.209.802 | \$6,200.00 | \$8,379.00 | \$6,800.00 | \$9,829.00 | (\$3,029.00) | \$6,800.00 |
| Mileage | 101.209.860 | \$300.00 | \$640.05 | \$1,000.00 | \$482.22 | \$537.78 | \$1,000.00 |
| Communications | 101.209.850 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$300.00 | \$0.00 | \$300.00 | \$300.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$38,400.00 | \$38,276.45 | \$41,350.00 | \$38,276.45 | \$3,073.55 | \$41,100.00 |
| Clerk | | | | | | | |
| Salaries & Wages | 101.215.702 | \$19,800.00 | \$19,800.00 | \$19,800.00 | \$19,800.00 | \$0.00 | \$19,800.00 |
| Per Diem | 101.215.703 | \$250.00 | \$200.00 | \$250.00 | \$150.00 | \$100.00 | \$250.00 |
| Deputy Wages | 101.215.703 | \$1,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$260.00 | \$740.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Office Supplies | 101.215.728 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,630.20 | \$2,000.00 | \$1,337.39 | \$662.61 | \$2,000.00 |
| Prof. Services | 101.215.801 | \$500.00 | \$50.00 | \$250.00 | \$193.75 | \$86.25 | \$250.00 |
| Communications | 101.215.850 | \$500.00 | \$598.91 | \$700.00 | \$540.85 | \$159.15 | \$700.00 |
| Mileage | 101.215.86 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$110.16 | (\$10.16) | \$100.00 |
| Repairs | 101.215.930 | \$800.00 | \$0.00 | \$800.00 | \$0.00 | \$800.00 | \$800.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.215.960 | \$1,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$185.00 | \$815.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Equipment | 101.215.977 | \$800.00 | \$0.00 | \$500.00 | \$874.99 | (\$374.99) | \$500.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$26,650.00 | \$22,280.11 | \$28,400.00 | \$23,482.14 | \$2,917.86 | \$26,400.00 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Board of Review | | | | | | | |
| Salaries & Wages | 101.247.702 | \$1,125.00 | \$1,125.00 | 1,200.00 | \$110.00 | \$1,090.00 | \$1,200.00 |
| Office Supplies | 101.247.726 | \$50.00 | \$0.00 | \$50.00 | \$0.00 | \$50.00 | \$50.00 |
| Prof. Services | 101.247.801 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Mileage | 101.247.860 | \$400.00 | \$0.00 | \$400.00 | \$42.84 | \$357.16 | \$400.00 |
| Printing & Publishing | 101.247.900 | \$400.00 | \$291.00 | \$400.00 | \$294.00 | \$106.00 | \$400.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.247.980 | \$300.00 | \$316.00 | \$400.00 | \$129.00 | \$271.00 | \$400.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$2,350.00 | \$1,735.00 | \$2,450.00 | \$575.84 | \$1,874.16 | \$2,450.00 |
| Treasurer | | | | | | | |
| Salary & Wages | 101.253.702 | 18,800.00 | \$19,800.00 | \$19,800.00 | \$19,800.00 | \$0.00 | \$19,800.00 |
| Per Diem | 101.253.702 | \$250.00 | \$200.00 | \$250.00 | \$150.00 | \$100.00 | \$250.00 |
| Deputy Wages | 101.253.703 | \$1,000.00 | \$380.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$240.00 | \$760.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Supplies | 101.253.726 | \$1,900.00 | \$736.19 | \$1,000.00 | \$472.94 | \$527.06 | \$1,000.00 |
| Prof. Services | 101.253.801 | \$9,000.00 | \$7,738.54 | \$9,000.00 | \$8,074.01 | \$925.99 | \$9,000.00 |
| Communications | 101.253.850 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Mileage | 101.253.860 | \$1,500.00 | \$1,395.10 | \$1,500.00 | \$1,181.43 | \$318.57 | \$1,500.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.253.960 | \$1,000.00 | \$99.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$195.00 | \$805.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Repairs | 101.253.930 | \$100.00 | \$187.50 | \$200.00 | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$200.00 |
| Equipment | 101.253.977 | \$500.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$34,150.00 | \$31,841.79 | \$34,150.00 | \$30,103.38 | \$4,146.62 | \$34,250.00 |
| Building & Grounds | | | | | | | |
| Wages | 101.265.702 | \$600.00 | \$695.00 | \$1,500.00 | \$780.00 | \$720.00 | \$1,500.00 |
| Supplies | 101.265.726 | \$300.00 | \$199.07 | \$300.00 | \$325.94 | (\$25.94) | \$300.00 |
| Hall Heat | 101.265.761 | \$5,000.00 | \$5,280.05 | \$8,000.00 | \$4,177.19 | \$1,822.81 | \$6,000.00 |
| Communications | 101.265.850 | \$3,000.00 | \$2,527.14 | \$3,000.00 | \$3,821.25 | (\$821.25) | \$3,500.00 |
| Utilities | 101.265.920 | \$3,000.00 | \$3,365.60 | \$4,000.00 | \$3,412.57 | \$587.43 | \$4,000.00 |
| Repairs | 101.265.930 | \$22,000.00 | \$23,414.64 | \$22,000.00 | \$23,329.70 | (\$1,329.70) | \$22,000.00 |
| Rentals | 101.265.940 | \$2,500.00 | \$796.90 | \$1,500.00 | \$797.22 | \$732.78 | \$1,500.00 |
| Misc. | 101.265.940 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$100.00 |
| Operating | 101.265.740 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Equipment | 101.265.977 | \$2,000.00 | \$1,259.29 | \$4,000.00 | \$234.78 | \$3,765.22 | \$2,000.00 |
| Capital Outlay | 101.265.970 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$25,000.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$38,500.00 | \$37,483.69 | \$42,400.00 | \$36,248.65 | \$5,751.35 | \$65,600.00 |
| Cemetery | | | | | | | |
| Cemetery Matching | 101.276.801 | \$12,000.00 | \$10,422.74 | 12,000.00 | \$10,186.04 | \$1,813.96 | \$12,000.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$12,000.00 | \$10,299.12 | \$12,000.00 | \$10,186.04 | 1,813.96 | \$12,000.00 |
| Building Inspector | | | | | | | |
| Salary | 101.371.702 | \$3,000.00 | \$2,579.95 | \$3,000.00 | \$1,397.40 | \$1,802.60 | \$3,000.00 |
| Supplies | 101.371.726 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$851.82 | (\$451.82) | \$500.00 |
| Prof. Services | 101.371.801 | \$50.00 | \$0.00 | \$50.00 | \$0.00 | \$50.00 | \$50.00 |
| Transportation | 101.371.860 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 101.371.955 | \$0.00 | \$248.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.371.960 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$100.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$3,250.00 | \$2,827.75 | \$3,350.00 | \$2,049.22 | \$1,800.78 | \$3,650.00 |
| Electrical Inspector | | | | | | | |
| Salary | 101.372.702 | \$2,500.00 | \$2,344.81 | \$2,600.00 | \$2,495.10 | \$4.90 | \$2,500.00 |
| Supplies | 101.372.726 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$88.70 | (\$88.70) | \$0.00 |
| Prof. Services | 101.372.801 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Transportation | 101.372.860 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 101.372.955 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.372.960 | \$500.00 | \$145.00 | \$250.00 | \$308.69 | (\$56.69) | \$250.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$3,000.00 | \$2,489.61 | \$2,750.00 | \$2,890.39 | \$0.00 | \$2,750.00 |
| Big Prairie Township | | | | | | | |
| Planning | | | | | | | |
| Salary & Wages | 101.400.702 | 5,000.00 | \$2,362.25 | \$5,000.00 | \$3,200.00 | \$1,800.00 | \$4,000.00 |
| ZA Wages | 101.400.703 | \$7,000.00 | \$4,384.00 | \$5,000.00 | \$4,838.00 | \$164.00 | \$5,000.00 |
| Supplies | 101.400.726 | \$200.00 | \$148.63 | \$200.00 | \$188.10 | \$3.90 | \$200.00 |
| Contracted Services | 101.400.802 | \$10,000.00 | \$1,726.40 | \$10,000.00 | \$6,275.05 | \$3,724.95 | \$10,000.00 |
| Communications | 101.400.850 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 | \$100.00 | \$0.00 |
| Transportation | 101.400.860 | \$500.00 | \$622.19 | \$500.00 | \$805.80 | (\$305.80) | \$500.00 |
| Printing & Publishing | 101.400.900 | \$100.00 | \$144.57 | \$1,000.00 | \$322.79 | \$677.21 | \$1,000.00 |
| Education & Training | 101.400.960 | \$1,500.00 | \$358.00 | \$1,500.00 | \$611.00 | \$889.00 | \$1,500.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$25,300.00 | \$9,745.04 | \$25,300.00 | \$16,248.74 | \$7,053.26 | \$22,200.00 |
| Streets | | | | | | | |
| Repairs | 101.448.930 | \$30,000.00 | \$27,546.96 | \$30,000.00 | \$28,675.00 | \$1,325.00 | \$30,000.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$30,000.00 | \$27,546.96 | \$30,000.00 | \$28,675.00 | \$1,325.00 | \$30,000.00 |
| Street Lighting | | | | | | | |
| Utilities | 101.448.920 | \$3,500.00 | \$2,681.14 | \$3,500.00 | \$2,939.90 | \$818.00 | \$3,500.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$3,500.00 | \$2,681.14 | \$3,500.00 | \$2,939.90 | \$818.00 | \$3,500.00 |
| Parks | | | | | | | |
| Utilities | 101.751.920 | \$400.00 | \$401.50 | \$400.00 | \$319.64 | \$80.46 | \$400.00 |
| Repairs | 101.751.930 | \$8,000.00 | \$7,324.00 | \$8,000.00 | \$8,520.68 | (\$520.68) | \$8,000.00 |
| Equipment | 101.751.977 | \$7,000.00 | \$7,324.00 | \$7,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$7,000.00 | \$7,000.00 |
| TOTAL | | \$15,400.00 | \$14,628.50 | \$15,400.00 | \$8,840.22 | \$6,559.78 | \$15,400.00 |
| Insurance & Bonds | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | \$25,000.00 | \$20,922.50 | \$25,000.00 | \$20,687.40 | \$4,312.60 | \$25,000.00 |
| Transfers In/From Gen Fund | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 101.999.000 | \$0.00 | \$50,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$50,000.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES: | | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$50,000.00 |
| Contingency | | | | | | | |
| | | \$136,269.55 | \$0.00 | \$144,552.70 | \$349,402.00 | \$90,261.99 | \$399,020.00 |

BIG PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT
 Keith Baker - Chief
 5260 Croton-Hardy Dr., Newaygo, MI 49337
 231-652-3807

Fire Fund Budget For FY 2015-2016

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| <u>Cash on Hand</u> | <u>3/9/2015</u> | |
| Cash General Fund | \$221,955.12 | |
| Sub Station Checking | \$2,175.32 | |
| Grant Fund | \$3,193.93 | |
| Certificate of Deposit | \$0.00 | Fire Equipment |
| Certificate of Deposit | \$0.00 | CD |
| Certificate of Deposit | \$51,437.37 | Fire Truck |
| Total: | \$276,761.74 | |

| | <u>2013/2014</u> | <u>Original</u> | <u>Amend</u> | <u>Amended</u> | <u>2014/2015</u> | <u>(Over) /</u> | <u>Proposed</u> |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Revenue</u> | <u>Actual</u> | <u>2014/2015</u> | <u>2014/2015</u> | <u>2014/2015</u> | <u>Actual</u> | <u>Under</u> | <u>Budget</u> |
| Property Tax Fire Fund | \$54,890.32 | \$56,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$56,000.00 | \$48,536.39 | \$7,463.61 | \$56,000.00 |
| Charges for Services | \$21,177.10 | \$23,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$23,000.00 | \$18,696.46 | \$4,303.54 | \$20,000.00 |
| Interest Income | \$1,121.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$524.40 | \$475.60 | \$500.00 |
| Grants | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Refunds | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$750.00 | (\$750.00) | \$0.00 |
| Other Revenue | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Transfers in/out Gen. Fund | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$50,000.00 |
| Total: | \$77,278.42 | \$80,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$80,000.00 | \$68,507.25 | \$11,492.75 | \$126,500.00 |

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Total Income: | \$405,261.74 |
|----------------------|---------------------|

| <u>Fire Expenses</u> | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Salaries | \$30,343.04 | \$30,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$16,038.04 | \$13,961.96 | \$32,500.00 |
| Employer FICA | \$0.00 | \$2,295.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$2,295.00 | \$2,486.25 |
| Office Supplies | \$0.00 | \$1,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,073.45 | \$426.55 | \$1,500.00 |
| Operating Supplies | \$2,852.00 | \$3,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,512.18 | \$1,987.82 | \$3,500.00 |
| Heat | \$5,030.76 | \$4,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$4,177.17 | \$322.83 | \$5,000.00 |
| Professional Services | \$0.00 | \$18,450.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$530.00 | \$17,920.00 | \$13,950.00 |
| Communications | \$64.00 | \$500.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$544.50 | (\$44.50) | \$500.00 |
| Insurance / Accidental | \$0.00 | \$1,100.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,099.00 | \$1.00 | \$1,100.00 |
| Transportation | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Utilities | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | \$9,209.21 | \$13,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$14,227.67 | (\$727.67) | \$14,500.00 |
| Education & Training | \$2,005.07 | \$4,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,670.00 | \$2,330.00 | \$5,000.00 |
| Capital Outlay | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$200,000.00 |
| Equipment | \$47,846.94 | \$62,600.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$23,742.45 | \$38,857.55 | \$68,400.00 |
| Principle Payment | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Interest Payment | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Miscellaneous | \$98.39 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Total: | \$97,449.41 | \$142,945.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$64,614.46 | \$78,330.54 | \$349,436.25 |

| <u>First Responder Expenses</u> | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Salaries | \$9,353.64 | \$12,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$12,000.00 | \$10,364.25 | \$1,635.75 | \$20,000.00 |
| Employer FICA | \$715.55 | \$918.00 | \$0.00 | \$918.00 | \$0.00 | \$918.00 | \$1,530.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$200.00 |
| Operating Supplies | \$856.01 | \$1,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,500.00 | \$1,269.69 | \$230.11 | \$2,100.00 |
| Prof. Services | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$403.00 | \$597.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Repairs | \$1,044.96 | \$1,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$343.65 | \$656.35 | \$4,500.00 |
| Transportation | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$0.00 | \$200.00 | \$500.00 |
| Capital Outlay | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Education & Training | \$2,603.88 | \$2,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$2,000.00 | \$595.00 | \$1,405.00 | \$2,000.00 |
| Equipment | \$1,100.00 | \$3,400.00 | \$0.00 | \$3,400.00 | \$0.00 | \$3,400.00 | \$2,725.00 |
| Total: | \$16,674.04 | \$22,218.00 | \$0.00 | \$22,218.00 | \$12,975.79 | \$9,242.21 | \$34,555.00 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Sub-total Budget: | \$113,123.45 | \$165,163.00 | \$0.00 | \$22,218.00 | \$77,590.25 | \$87,572.75 | \$383,991.25 |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|--|--|--|--------|--|--------------|
| Contingency: | | | | | \$0.00 | | \$ 21,270.49 |
|--------------|--|--|--|--|--------|--|--------------|

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Total Budget: | \$113,123.45 | \$166,163.00 | \$0.00 | \$22,218.00 | \$77,590.25 | \$87,572.75 | \$405,261.74 |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|

| <u>Fund Balance</u> | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Tax Collection Carry-over | \$0.00 |
| Grant fund carry-over | \$0.00 |
| Sub Station fund carry-over | \$0.00 |
| Fire Truck Reserve Fund | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL FUND BALANCE: | \$0.00 |

PARK BOARD

Budget 15-16.xlsx

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| Cash on Hand | \$304,907.05 |
| CD | \$60,108.15 |
| Total | \$365,015.20 |

| ANTICIPATED REVENUES | BUDGET | INCOME | BUDGET | INCOME | BUDGET |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| | 2013-2014 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 14-15 | 15-16 |
| Use & Admission Fees | \$510,000.00 | \$521,083.00 | \$510,000.00 | \$504,438.82 | \$510,000.00 |
| Visitors Fees | \$40,000.00 | \$35,385.00 | \$40,000.00 | \$40,037.70 | \$40,000.00 |
| License Income | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$15,000.00 | | (put w/docks) |
| Interest Income | \$300.00 | \$234.00 | \$250.00 | \$257.96 | \$250.00 |
| Other Income(Docks) | \$20,000.00 | \$20,310.00 | \$20,000.00 | \$39,867.66 | \$40,000.00 |
| Ice | \$7,000.00 | \$10,082.00 | \$7,000.00 | \$9,691.77 | \$9,000.00 |
| Pop | \$1,500.00 | \$2,884.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$2,043.90 | \$2,000.00 |
| Wood | \$2,500.00 | \$2,876.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$2,771.00 | \$2,500.00 |
| Ice Cream | \$3,000.00 | \$3,147.00 | \$3,000.00 | \$3,225.33 | \$3,000.00 |
| Other | | | | \$66,476.29 | \$0.00 |
| CD | \$48,000 | \$48,000.00 | \$59,676.15 | Listed w/cash on hand not income | |
| TOTAL ANTICIPATED REVENUES | \$0.00 | \$659,061.00 | \$659,926.15 | \$668,810.43 | \$608,750.00 |

| ANTICIPATED EXPENSES | BUDGET | SPENT | BUDGET | SPENT | BUDGET |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2013-2014 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 14-15 | 15-16 |
| CAPITAL OUTLAY (Land) | \$10,000.00 | \$4,000.00 | \$8,000.00 | \$6,614.00 | \$55,000.00 |
| Capital Outlay (Building) | \$15,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$35,951.32 | \$10,000.00 |
| Capital Outlay (Equipment) | \$10,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$10,000.00 | \$11,847.38 | \$10,000.00 |
| Equipment rental | \$500.00 | \$358.00 | \$500.00 | \$743.30 | \$500.00 |
| Salary And Wages | \$220,000.00 | \$186,355.00 | \$200,000.00 | \$187,275.07 | \$209,000.00 |
| Per Diem | \$15,000.00 | \$12,763.00 | \$15,000.00 | \$17,162.50 | \$17,000.00 |
| Social Security | \$17,000.00 | \$16,784.00 | \$17,000.00 | \$15,450.05 | \$16,000.00 |
| Unemployment | \$23,000.00 | \$23,259.00 | \$25,000.00 | \$18,971.69 | \$20,000.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$4,000.00 | \$7,203.00 | \$6,000.00 | \$6,187.81 | \$6,000.00 |
| Operating Supplies | \$20,000.00 | \$30,511.00 | \$30,000.00 | \$29,920.68 | \$30,000.00 |
| Attorney Fees | \$500.00 | \$422.00 | \$500.00 | \$1,698.85 | \$1,000.00 |

| | BUDGET | SPENT | BUDGET | SPENT | BUDGET |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | 2013-2014 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 14-15 | 15-16 |
| Security | \$20,000.00 | \$20,280.00 | \$20,000.00 | \$25,461.00 | \$20,000.00 |
| Audit | \$7,000.00 | \$5,975.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$8,000.00 |
| Insurance Liability/WorkComp/Auto. | \$30,000.00 | \$25,312.00 | \$27,000.00 | \$16,707.00 | \$25,000.00 |
| Communications/Internet | \$10,000.00 | \$10,116.00 | \$10,000.00 | \$9,990.70 | \$7,000.00 |
| Internet | \$250.00 | \$397.00 | \$400.00 | \$0.00 | put under communications |
| Credit Card Expense | \$16,000.00 | \$17,441.00 | \$17,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Transportation | \$3,500.00 | \$2,037.00 | \$3,500.00 | \$4,634.37 | \$4,500.00 |
| Professional Services | \$2,000.00 | \$1,817.00 | \$2,000.00 | \$20,334.57 | \$2,000.00 |
| Advertising | \$1,000.00 | \$975.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$695.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Printing | \$2,500.00 | \$1,902.00 | \$2,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| Electricity | \$73,000.00 | \$79,387.00 | \$80,000.00 | \$72,045.22 | \$80,000.00 |
| Garbage | \$10,000.00 | \$11,233.00 | \$10,000.00 | \$15,689.34 | \$10,000.00 |
| Sewage | \$5,000.00 | \$5,009.00 | \$5,000.00 | \$0.00 | \$5,000.00 |
| Gas & Diesel | \$17,000.00 | \$12,791.00 | \$17,000.00 | \$9,315.60 | \$10,000.00 |
| Propane | \$3,000.00 | \$4,346.00 | \$5,000.00 | \$3,051.42 | \$4,000.00 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | \$30,000.00 | \$29,434.00 | \$30,000.00 | \$30,541.55 | \$30,000.00 |
| Property Taxes & Leases | \$3,200.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$3,200.00 | \$4,222.36 | \$4,500.00 |
| Education | \$300.00 | \$300.00 | \$300.00 | \$0.00 | \$300.00 |
| Refund of Fees | \$7,000.00 | \$9,789.00 | \$5,000.00 | \$12,570.27 | \$7,500.00 |
| Community Promotions | \$2,000.00 | \$4,977.00 | \$3,000.00 | \$1,562.73 | \$3,000.00 |
| Ice | \$4,000.00 | \$5,695.00 | \$5,000.00 | \$6,303.08 | \$5,000.00 |
| Pop | \$1,200.00 | \$3,028.00 | \$2,000.00 | \$2,748.95 | \$2,500.00 |
| Wood | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Ice Cream | \$2,000.00 | \$1,944.00 | \$2,000.00 | \$2,046.27 | \$2,000.00 |
| Hall Rental | \$2,500.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Street Lighting | \$850.00 | \$850.00 | \$850.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL ANTICIPATED EXPENSES | \$588,300.00 | \$541,681.00 | \$580,750.00 | \$569,742.08 | \$595,800.00 |
| Anticipated Revenue 14/15 | \$689,926.15 | Anticip. Rev. + cash on hand | 15-16 | \$971,765.20 | |
| Anticipated Expenses 14/15 | \$530,750.00 | Anticipated Expenses 2015-2016 | \$595,800.00 | | |
| Contingency Fund 14/15 | \$79,176.15 | Contingency Fund 2015-2016 | \$375,665.20 | | |
| Twp. Board 14/15 | \$16,000.00 | Township Board 2015-2016??? | \$0.00 | | |
| | \$69,176.15 | | | | |

INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Description of Methods Used to Conduct the Inventory

The inventory of existing recreational facilities highlights existing recreational assets within Big Prairie Township as well as facilities in adjacent communities, which are available for public use. For facilities in adjacent communities, only facilities owned by Newaygo County were included in the inventory as sufficient data for other locally owned and operated parks was unavailable at the time of this writing or had no significance to Big Prairie Township.

Regional Commission staff worked closely with township officials to update the inventory carried over from the 2008-2013 Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan. Additions included park size, type, accessibility ranking, and service area. Regional staff used several other methods in compiling a comprehensive and inclusive inventory. First, regional staff along with township officials completed tours of facilities located within Big Prairie Township in late October 2014. Second, staff reviewed the 2012- 2016 Newaygo County Recreation Plan and the Newaygo County Parks & Recreation website in detail. Finally, staff analyzed the Michigan Department of Natural Resources website and included information about state facilities in the following comprehensive inventory.

Status Report for all Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

No parks within Big Prairie Township have received grants for park improvements or acquisition in recent history. In 1999, a grant was submitted for improvements to Big Bend Park for \$342,000 which was to be used for general park infrastructure upgrades but was subsequently withdrawn.

Recreation Facilities in Big Prairie Township

As noted in the Administrative Structure section of this plan, there are two recreational administrative entities within the township. The larger role is played by the Big Prairie Township Park Commission, which operates two campgrounds and a day use park under a lease agreement with Consumer's Energy. The primary users of these facilities are from outside the township. The township board is more concerned with the (smaller scale) recreational needs of permanent township residents, overseeing the development of Hardy Day Park.

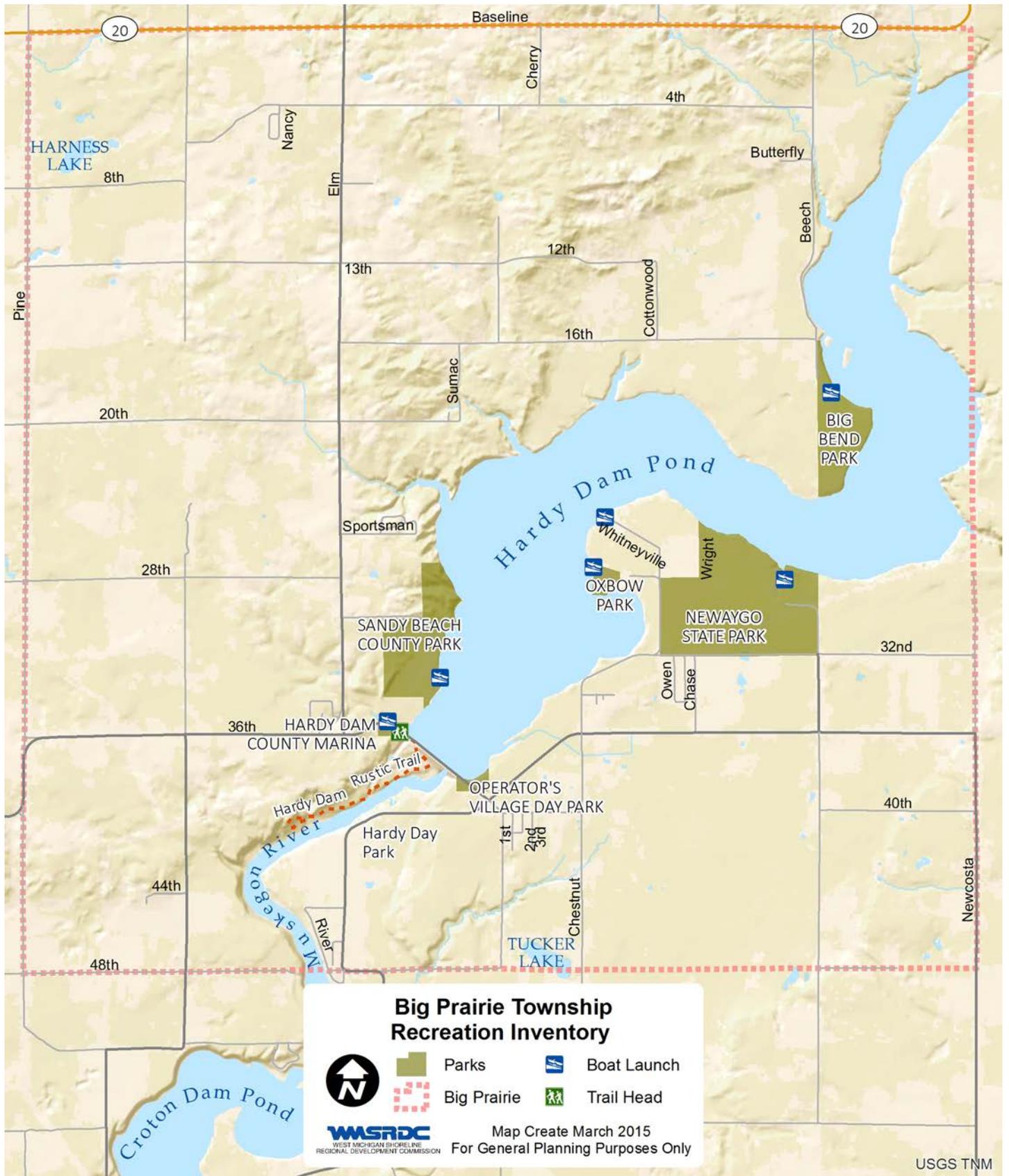
Table 12 summarizes all park facilities within Big Prairie Township. A descriptive narrative for parks operated by the Big Prairie Township Park Commission and Township is provided in the following table. Narrative for parks owned or operated by other entities such as Newaygo County or the State of Michigan, were captured from facility descriptions available on their respective websites at the time of this plan's writing. ADA Accessibility assessments were not performed for parks outside of the Big Prairie Township or Big Prairie Township Park Commission's jurisdiction.

Table 12

| Recreation Facilities Within Big Prairie Township | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|--|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Park Name & Size (Acres) | Ownership/ Operator | Park Type | Facilities/ Features | Accessibility Ranking* (1-5) | Accessible Elements | Service Area |
| Big Bend Park | BPT Park Commission | Campground | -230 Semi-Modern Sites -Boat Launch -Restrooms -Marina -Nature Area | 2 | -Bathrooms | Region |
| Croton-Hardy Pathway (6 Miles) | Newaygo County | On-Road Trail | -Paved Trail | N/A | | Local |
| Hardy Dam County Marina | Newaygo County | Marina | -35 Slips -Boat Rental -Boat Launch -Potable Water -Vault Restrooms -Pump-Out Service | N/A | | Region |
| Hardy Day Park (30 Acres) | Big Prairie Township | Community Park | -Picnic Pavilion -Softball Field -Vault Toilet | 2 | -Picnic Pavilion | Township |
| Newaygo County State Park (257 acres) | State of Michigan DNR | Campground & Day Use | -90 Rustic Campsites -Boat Launch -Vault Restrooms -Picnic Area -Playground -Beach | N/A | | Region |
| Operators Village Day Park | BPT Park Commission | Regional Park | -30 Parking Spaces (N. side 36 th) -10 Parking Spaces (S. side 36 th) -Vault Restrooms -Fishing Pier -Picnic Area -Canoe Takeout (N side of 36 th) -Canoe Launch (S side of 36 th) -Portage Trail | 2 | | Region |
| Oxbow Park | BPT Park Commission | Campground & Day Use | -197 semi-modern sites -Central Restrooms -Showers -Public Boat launch -Marina -Beach | 2 | -Bathrooms | Region |
| Sandy Beach County Park (129 acres) | Newaygo County | Campground & Day Use | -225 Semi-Modern Sites -Restrooms -Showers -Picnic Area -Beach -Playground -Boat Launch -Dock Rentals | N/A | | Region |

*Accessibility Rankings: 1 = none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design; 2 = some; 3 = most; 4 = all; and 5 = the facility meets the Principles of Universal Design

Figure 8



Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Newaygo State Park

Newaygo State Park is a 99-site rustic campground, which sits atop 20-foot embankments overlooking the Hardy Dam Pond, a six-mile flooding of the Muskegon River. The park caters primarily to campers, anglers, and recreational boaters. There are several picnic sites overlooking the reservoir for day users. The campground is nestled in oak and poplar forests and is noted for its large, private sites and scenic beauty. There is a 20-30 foot forested buffer between sites, and each site is provided with a picnic table and a fire ring (State of Michigan).

Newaygo County Parks & Recreation

Croton-Hardy Pathway

The 6-mile pathway from the Croton Dam to Hardy Dam along the Muskegon River was completed in fall of 2013. This “dam-to-dam” section is part of a county-wide project to build over 80 miles of connected, paved pathways for walkers, runners, and cyclists (Michigan Trails Magazine, 2014).

Hardy Dam County Marina

Hardy Dam County Marina is located in a protected cove right next to the Hardy Dam on 4,000-acre Hardy Pond. The marina provides access to 17 miles of open waterway with miles of undeveloped shoreline. The marina currently offers 35 slips with daily and seasonal rental, boat launch, potable water, vault toilets, and pump-out service (Newaygo County).

Sandy Beach County Park

Sandy Beach County Park is situated on 129 acres along the shore of the 4,000-acre Hardy Pond. The park offers modern and semi-modern camping with 25 water, sewer, and electric sites, 72 water and electric sites, 28 electric sites, and 100 sites without hookups. The campground has 2 bathroom/shower buildings and a sanitation station. There is a large semi-modern group campground for youth organizations, families, church groups, and camping clubs. Also available are picnic areas, large sandy swimming beach, playground, boat launch, and dock rentals (Newaygo County).

Big Prairie Township Park Commission

Big Bend Park

Located on the west side of Hardy Pond and accessed off Elm Road via 16th Ave (refer to Figure), this park has three separate semi-modern camping areas separated by a nature area. There are 230 sites at Big Bend. Camping facilities include restrooms, electric service, marina, and some area water (no sewer) hydrants. A public boat launch is available adjacent to the southerly camping area. After the summer camping season, park usage drops off; but the park is used for ice fishing access during winter. This park is extensively wooded with Hardy Pond views everywhere.

Accessibility analysis: Some elements of the park are accessible, including bathrooms.

Operators Village Day Park

This popular facility is located on the east side of Hardy Pond with vehicular access to parking on the north side of 36th St. and was developed in 2001.

Accessibility analysis: Some elements of the park are accessible.

Oxbow Park

Containing about 197 semi-modern sites with electrical service and water service (no sewer), Oxbow Park has slightly fewer sites than Big Bend. It also has central restrooms with toilets and showers, and a large marina. Some of the sites are reserved for seasonal use and the park is host to many short-term visitors. It has a pleasant beach, all around shore exposure and a nice boat launch area. Like Big Bend Park, park usage drops off in the fall, with winter use primarily for ice fishing access.



Accessibility analysis: Some elements of the park are accessible, including bathrooms.

Big Prairie Township

Hardy Day Park

This park is located on the east side of Hardy Drive in Section 33 and contains about 30 acres, of which about half is wooded. Presently, the open area has a picnic pavilion and a softball field. This park is used primarily by local residents and it will be a focus for improvements planned and implemented by the Big Prairie Township Board.

Accessibility analysis: Some elements of the park are accessible, including the pavilion.

Big Prairie Township Conceptual Recreation Facilities

Hardy Dam Pond Loop Trail Concept

In summer of 2013, the Newaygo County Board of Commissioners voted to make the Hardy Pond Trail concept a community priority by bringing the project under the County's purview. The county established a joint committee that includes Mecosta County and is bringing together a number of other stakeholders to participate in the development of the trail.

A financial commitment was made by the Fremont Area Community Foundation for an economic impact study and trail design was completed in 2014 by the International Mountain Biking Association. The Newaygo County Board of Commissioners has earmarked \$150,000 for this trail and has received a commitment from Mecosta County for a dollar for dollar match. The remaining costs of the trail will be covered by grants and donations.

“The Edge” Newaygo County Pathways

In fall of 2013, the first 6 miles of “The Edge” Newaygo County Pathways was completed. This pathway is known as the Croton Dam to Hardy Dam Pathway (See Croton-Hardy Pathway heading above). “The Edge” trail is part of a county-wide project to build over 80 miles of connected, paved pathways for walkers, runners and cyclists. When completed, the pathways will connect 12 townships, including Big Prairie Township and the communities of Fremont, Grant, Hesperia, Newaygo and White Cloud.

Ultimately, the pathways will be extended with connections to the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail to the East and the Muskegon Area Trail system to the West. Construction on this trail system began in summer 2014. (Michigan Trails Magazine, 2014)

Adjacent Recreation Facilities

Adjacent recreation facilities include facilities near Big Prairie Township that are accessible to township residents. For the purposes of this plan, only Newaygo County facilities were included. The facilities, along with their type, facilities (facility elements), and service area are included below for reference. Because these facilities are all county facilities, they are available to Big Prairie Township residents for recreation and leisure.

Table 13

| Newaygo County Parks & Recreation Facilities (Adjacent to Big Prairie Township) | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|------------------|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Park Name & Size (Acres) | Ownership/ Operator | Park Type | Facilities/ Features | Accessibility Ranking* (1-5) | Accessible Elements | Service Area |
| Henning Park Campground (82 Acres) | Newaygo County | Campground | -Boat Launch -60 Modern Campsites -Baseball Diamonds -Soccer Field -Volleyball Court -Basketball Court | N/A | N/A | County |
| Pettibone Lake Park Campground (3 Acres) | Newaygo County | Campground | -16 Semi Modern Campsites -Beach -Boat Launch | N/A | N/A | County |
| Sports Park County Park (89.91 Acres) | Newaygo County | Sports Park | -Educational Building (Lodge) -Office -Outdoor Stage -Two Toboggan Runs -Ice Skating Area -Maintenance Facility -Snowmobile Trailhead | N/A | N/A | County |

*Accessibility Rankings: 1 = none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design; 2 = some; 3 = most; 4 = all; and 5 = the facility meets the Principles of Universal Design

RESOURCE INVENTORY

The resource inventory of this plan identifies open space that the community feels is important to protect into the future. Communities choose to protect open space land for many reasons; but the most common are that the land is ecologically significant. Wetlands, floodplains, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, farmland, wildlife habitat, rare species, and scenic viewsheds are all examples of ecological features that may have significant value from a conservation standpoint.

Native Prairie Grass Project

In 2007, Big Prairie Township entered into a cooperative arrangement with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to restore a 34-acre prairie grass habitat as existed in the area over 150 years ago. The actual area is part of a township-owned cemetery in the SW ¼ of section 18.

The restoration process involved removing most woody vegetation, prescribed burning, invasive plant species control, and re-seeding. The project intended to restore rare and declining (grass) habitats. Initially, the invasive species Scotch Pine was removed by hydro axing the trees. Prescribed burns followed. The initial effort extended into 2009 with costs shared between the USDA and Big Prairie Township.

Subsequent to these initial efforts, a grant from the Fremont Area Community Foundation was made available to help eliminate additional woody species. In 2014, the Big Prairie/Everett Township Cemetery was awarded an additional grant from I.T.C. (a private energy transmission company) for continuing work on the prairie and to install signage and build a handicap accessible walkway.

Big Prairie Township considers the prairie grass effort a significant part of its efforts to create a more sustainable community. As such, the project will be noted as an on-going “green” project in the five-year recreation plan.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Planning Methods

In order to effectively evaluate future recreation needs in Big Prairie Township, a number of planning methods were used. The State of Michigan provides a framework for evaluating certain types of recreational facilities, through a select set of criteria. These criteria in most circumstances should only be used as a guide in determining whether or not certain types of recreational facilities are warranted or needed in relation to the population of Big Prairie Township.

In addition to reviewing facilities against state recreation standards, the township board and park commission reviewed results from input received at public meetings, citizen comments, professional planning input, and used their local community knowledge to reach conclusions about the township’s future recreation needs.

It should be understood that the specific recreation needs of residents of Big Prairie Township may differ from the recreational needs of the many seasonal visitors to the community. Users of the Big Prairie Township Park Commission facilities are predominantly non-residents, and these facilities are essentially public facilities operated as non-profit ventures. The local economic spin-off is significant. Big Prairie Township officials must strike a balance between continuing to support facilities that contribute to the local economy and serving the recreational needs of township residents. This balance is reflected in the Goals & Objectives and Action Plan of this document.

Public Input Process

The public was invited to participate in a public meeting on November 18, 2015 which was designed to gain a better understanding of resident recreation needs within Big Prairie Township. During the meeting, residents were asked to complete a brief questionnaire and share comments in a town hall format. Attendees at the meeting included three members from the general public, one representative from the Township Board, one representative from the Parks Commission, and two staff members from the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission. A copy of the questionnaire and comments received from this meeting are included in Appendix C.

After the draft plan was completed, residents were invited to review the plan and provide comment about its contents during a 30-day public review period. The opportunity for public review notice was posted at the Big Prairie Township Hall and on the Big Prairie Township website from September 11, 2015 through October 12, 2015. Copies of public meeting notification and public comment opportunities are available in Appendix A.

NARROWING THE FOCUS – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION PLAN

The function of this section is to synthesize information gleaned from the community with data collected for this plan, evaluate recreation needs against state recreation criterion, weigh public comment, and articulate needs from an administrative prospective.

Goals and Objectives

Big Prairie Township

Goal 1: Maintain a long-term commitment, in participation with other public and private entities, to develop and complete a hiking trail system around Hardy Pond.

Goal 2: Maintain a long term commitment to the prairie grass restoration program, but with a very modest local fund outlay.

Goal 3: Devise a development plan and a phased program of improvements at Hardy Day Park focusing primarily upon the needs of local residents.

Goal 4: Attract funding from entities such as the State of Michigan to support development of the Hardy Pond Trail as well as for improvements at Hardy Day Park.

Big Prairie Township Park Commission

Goal 1: Upgrade aging infrastructure at Big Bend and Oxbow Campgrounds.

Objective 1.1: Add electric meters to pedestals on a phased basis at both campgrounds.

Objective 1.2: Add sanitary dump stations or renovate existing stations at both campgrounds.

Objective 1.3: Add new wells at both campgrounds.

Objective 1.4: Add a wastewater system at Big Bend Campgrounds.

Objective 1.5: Pave access roads from park entrances to boat launches at both campgrounds.

Objective 1.6: Pave parking lots at both campgrounds.

Goal 2: Renovate or replace aging facilities at Big Bend and Oxbow Campgrounds.

Objective 2.1: Replace restroom facility at Oxbow Campground.

Objective 2.2: Replace restroom facility in the “point” area of Big Bend Campground.

Goal 3: Construct new facilities at Big Bend and Oxbow Campgrounds where necessary.

Objective 3.1: Develop two fishing piers at Big Bend Campground.

Objective 3.2: Develop a fishing pier at Oxbow Campground.

Objective 3.3: Construct camping cabins at both campgrounds.

PROPOSED FIVE YEAR ACTION PLANS

Over the next five-year period, the Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan will be used by Big Prairie Township and the Big Prairie Township Parks Commission to accomplish the goals set forth through this planning process. Through the planning process, it became apparent that the community values the existing recreational opportunities, both local and regional in nature, currently available in the township.

Through the process of developing the plan, community leaders stressed the need to bring campground/RV facilities up to date, and expressed an eagerness to cooperate with Newaygo County and others to develop a regional trail that would traverse Big Prairie Township. All upgrades and new improvements to recreation facilities will be designed to meet ADA accessibility standards. It is also a priority to maintain the rehabilitated prairie lands to preserve the township's history.

The proposed action plans for the Township and the Park Commission are detailed below, and presented in a parallel format, similar to the goals and objectives section.

Big Prairie Township Action Plan

Year 1 (2015-2016)

| | |
|--|---------|
| Hardy Day Park – Development Plan | \$1,000 |
| Set-aside for future improvements @ Hardy Day Park | \$2,500 |

Year 2

| | |
|---|------------|
| Soccer area grading/seeding (to be done with volunteers) | \$3,500 |
| Hardy Day Park Phase 1 | \$100,000* |

Year 3

| | |
|---|---------|
| Set-aside for Hardy Day Park improvements | \$3,500 |
|---|---------|

Year 4

| | |
|---|---------|
| Set-aside for Hardy Day Park improvements | \$3,500 |
|---|---------|

Year 5

| | |
|---|---------|
| Set-aside for Hardy Day Park improvements | \$3,500 |
|---|---------|

Note: Set-asides are shown as a budget tool to allow accumulation of funds for a larger project or as a basis for matching funds for potential grants. The assumption is that the Township would create a specific Hardy Day Park account and actually fund it. Further assumption is that Township recreation budget will be about \$6,000 annually.

*Obviously this project will require more funds than allowed for normal budget expenses. The Township may opt to use its money as matching funds for a grant which would possibly allow completion of the entire proposed Hardy Day Park Trail, and perhaps another related project.

Big Prairie Township Park Commission Action Plan

Year 1 (2015-2016)

| | |
|--|----------|
| Electrical pedestal meters (20 @ 110*) | \$2,200 |
| Camping cabins (2 @ 3,500) | \$7,000 |
| Upgrade/redo dump station @ Oxbow Park | \$15,000 |

Year 2

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Electrical upgrades (20@ 115) | \$2,300 |
| Camping cabins (2 @ 3,500) | \$7,000 |
| Plan and design new bathrooms | \$5-6,000 |
| Pave main road (Oxbow and Big Bend), & Parking (Oxbow) | \$125,000 |

*Year 3***

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Design/build new dump station @ Big Bend Park | \$17,500 |
| Construct new restroom (w/wastewater system) in point area of Big Bend Park | \$135,000 |
| New well for restroom @ Big Bend Park | \$12,500 |
| Dock repair @ Oxbow Park | \$37,500 |

*Year 4***

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Construct new well @ Oxbow Park | \$12,500 |
| Pave main road entrance to boat launch @ Big Bend Park | \$160,000 |

*Year 5***

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Construct new restroom @ Oxbow Park | \$110-120,000 |
| Dock repair @ Big Bend Park | \$37,500 |

*Note to Park Commission – Rather than spend \$110-115 to add meters to older pedestals it may be better to spend slightly more for a few new pedestals with integral meters at an installed cost of about \$220 each.

**Perhaps apply for a grant in Year 2 or 3 to construct new wells and restrooms.

Additional Comment

Financial Issues

Due to the somewhat complex nature of the administrative relationship between Big Prairie Township and Big Prairie Township Parks Commission, financial issues arose during the planning process. For example, it is not clear whether there is a legal bonding mechanism available to the Park Commission. Bond financing is a way to accomplish a larger project, or even a combination of projects simultaneously in a way that saves time and achieves some economies of scale. The actual feasibility and political will of bond-type financing for a recreation project is unknown at this point.

Based upon cursory cost estimates, some of the potential projects would be difficult for the Park Commission to accomplish during a 5-year pay-as-you-go program in lieu of outside assistance. With repayment from Park Commission funds, it may be possible for the Township to help fund a project “package,” in combination with grant funds from the State of Michigan or other sources.

As an example, consider a project of improvements shown below. This is an illustration presented solely for comparison and does not necessarily represent any local intent to pursue bonding as means of financing.

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Example Project Total Cost | \$1,000,000 |
| Assume State of Michigan Grant | \$500,000 |
| Local Match for Grant (by bonding) | \$500,000 |
| Estimated annual bond debt cost at 4.5%, | |
| Over 10 years | \$63,200 per year |
| Over 15 years | \$46,555 per year |

Parallel Action Programs

The primary need in Big Prairie Township, and the surrounding area in general, for the Campground/RV parks operated by the Park Commission is not to address a lack of open space or greenway space. Rather, the need for supplemental funding to reconstruct aging infrastructure at these beautiful facilities, which to a large extent, serve mostly people from outside the township. In this respect, Big Bend and Oxbow Parks function as “regional” parks that are publicly owned and operated, and provide significant benefits to the local economy.

Public Participation

Copies of meeting notices and comments from the public are included in appendices D and E.

The lack of public interest in the recreational planning is regrettable and not fully understood. It is possible that residents appreciate what they already have and do not perceive additional needs. It may also be true that the visitors who are the primary users of the campgrounds and other area recreational facilities don’t believe that it is their problem.

APPENDIX

A. Public Notification

Notice of Availability of the Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment

Date of Notice: September 11 through October 12

Type of Notice: Township Hall and www.bigprairietownship.org

Plan Location: Big Prairie Township Hall, 2815 S. Elm Ave., White Cloud, MI 49349

Duration of Draft Plan Public Review Period: 32 days

The Draft Plan of the Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan 2015-2019 is available for public review at the Big Prairie Township Hall. The draft will be available from September 11, 2015 through October 11, 2015. Following the review period a public meeting will be held at the Township Hall on October 12, 2015 at 3:30 PM to solicit input from the public and discuss the Draft Plan. Written comments may be submitted prior to the public meeting to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, 316 Morris Avenue Suite 340, Muskegon, Michigan 49440 or via electronic mail at scarlson@wmsrdc.org. If there are any questions, please contact Mr. Stephen Carlson, Senior Planner, WMSRDC, 231-722-7878 extension 11.

Copy of the Notice for the Public Meeting held after the One Month Public Review Period and Before the Plan's Adoption by the Governing Bodies

Date of Notice: Monday, September 28, 2015

Name of Newspaper: River Valley Shopper

Date of Meeting: October 12, 2015

MONDAY, Sept. 28, 2015 • RIVER VALLEY SHOPPER

PIERSON TOWNSHIP
Special Meeting Synopsis
September 15, 2015 • 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order 7:00 p.m.
Roll Call: Present: Bogner, Gitchel, Longcore, Slater Absent: Bryant
Approval of Meeting Agenda
Consideration of Resolution No. 4
Consideration of Assessment Roll (Exhibit A)
Consideration of Warrant of Township Clerk (Exhibit B)
Consideration of Notice of Special Assessment Big Whitefish Lake Weed Control Special Assessment District (Exhibit C)
Public Hearing - No comments made by the public
Approval of Special Assessment Resolution No. 4, Assessment Roll (Exhibit A), Warrant of Township Clerk (Exhibit B), and Notice of Special Assessment Big Whitefish Lake Weed Control Special Assessment District (Exhibit C)
Board Comments
Adjournment 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC NOTICE
ATTENTION ENSLEY TOWNSHIP CEMETERY LOT/SPACE OWNERS

Please note that our fall clean-up day will be conducted on or after October 17, 2015. All faded, damaged, unapproved, unsightly and/or inappropriate memorabilia/glass objects and permanent plantings shall be removed from cemetery grave sites after that date. Please have any items you wish to keep removed before October 1, 2015.

A copy of the current Ensley Township Cemetery Ordinance is available at the Ensley Township Office.

Cynthia Harwood
Clerk, Ensley Township

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING THE BIG PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP RECREATION PLAN

Please be advised that Big Prairie Township and the Big Prairie Township Parks Commission, with the assistance of the West Michigan Shoreland Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC), will hold a public meeting on **October 12, 2015** to receive input for the proposed Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan. The meeting will take place at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Hall located at 2815 S Elm Ave., White Cloud, MI 49349. Copies of the proposed plan are available for review at the Township Hall. Written comments may also be submitted prior to the public meeting to the West Michigan Shoreland Regional Development Commission, 316 Morris Ave., Sida 340, Muskegon, Michigan 49440 or via electronic mail at s.carlson@wmsrdc.com. If there are any questions, please contact Mr. Stephen Carlson, Senior Planner, WMSRDC, 231-722-7878 extension 11.

Judith Baker, Clerk
Big Prairie Township

Meeting in Brief
Maple Valley Township Board Regular Meeting
September 14, 2015

Board Present: Schwandt, Sanders, Miller, Frandsen and Tatar
Board Absent: None

Action Items:
OTION: Frandsen 2nd, Miller to approve the regular meeting minutes for August 10-15. Motion Passed.
OTION: Frandsen 2nd, Sanders to accept the treasurer's report as read. Motion Passed.
OTION: Sanders 2nd, Frandsen to increase the budget for Roads by \$10,000 and an allot on the Coral Community Center by \$20,000. Motion Passed.
OLUTION: Frandsen 2nd, Tatar to enter into agreement with the County Drain Commission and agree that any housing developments projected within our township sent to the Drain Commissioner for direction. Yes: Tatar, Frandsen, Schwandt, Miller, Sanders. No: none. Resolution Passed.
OTION: Tatar 2nd, Frandsen to pay bills as presented Ck # 645 through Ck # 6479 in the amount of \$134,227.48.
This also includes payment of \$111,720.70 to the County Road Commission for uncontracted work. Motion Passed.

Discussion Items:
Discussed millage renewal for fire protection and roads due to expire in December, 2016.

Next Regular Meeting:
October 12, 2015 Township Board Meeting 7pm in Coral
October 1, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting 7pm in Coral
Coral Community Committee will be the 2nd Thurs in Coral at 7pm
Full Minutes: Clerk Shirley Sanders at 231-954-5674 or 354-6496

600 Special Notices

SMILE

COIN AND STAMP SHOW
October 3, 9am - 4pm
Baymont Inn & Suites
Eadington, MI
Buy, Sell, Trade
Free Admission

ORDINANCE NO. 41
CONSUMERS ENERGY COMPANY ELECTRIC FRANCHISE ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE granting to CONSUMERS ENERGY COMPANY, its successors and assigns, the right, power and authority to construct, maintain and commercially use electric lines consisting of towers, masts, poles, crossarms, guys, braces, feeders, transmission and distribution wires, transformers and other electrical appliances on, under, along and across the highways, streets, alleys, bridges, waterways, and other public places, and to do a local business in the VILLAGE OF PIERSON, MONTCALM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, for a period of thirty years.

THE VILLAGE OF PIERSON ORDAINS

GUN SHOW - OSCEOLA County
Event, Mt. Sunapee, N.H.

NOTICE

Copy of the Minutes from the Public Meeting on October 12, 2015

Big Prairie Township Parks Commission
2973 Cottonwood Dr.
Newaygo, Mi. 49337

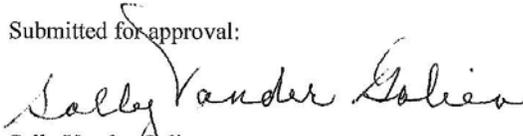
Monday, October 12, 2015 at 3:30 P.M. The Big Prairie Township Parks Commission, with the assistance of Mr. Stephen Carlson, Senior Planner at West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, opened the meeting to receive input for the proposed Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan.

Roll Call: Stephen Carlson, Sally Vander Galien, John Clark and Richard Frisbie.

No one has appeared to comment or question the new Recreation Plan. Also no written comments have been received. Big Prairie Township Parks Commission supports the plan.

Motion by Clark seconded by Frisbie to adjourn at 4:45. Motion carried.

Submitted for approval:


Sally Vander Galien
secretary

OCT 16 2015

B. Ratification

Official resolution of adoption by the Big Prairie Township Board dated October 13, 2015

BIG PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP
NEWAYGO COUNTY, MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION # 2015-11

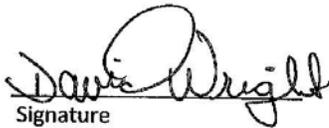
WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources(DNR) requires a completed parks and recreation master plan as part of the criteria for grant funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund and other DNR grant programs.

WHEREAS, the Big Prairie Township Board and the Big Prairie Township Parks Commission have developed a five-year recreation plan covering the years 2015-2019 ;and

WHEREAS, the plan was developed with public input, including a public meeting, public review, and a comment period of 30 days; and

WHEREAS, the plan identifies the Township's commitment to provide recreational opportunities within Big Prairie Township.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Big Prairie Township hereby adopts the proposed Big Prairie Township Recreational Plan for the period of 2015-2019.


Signature

DAVID WRIGHT - SUPERVISOR
Printed name and Title

10-16-15
Date

Official resolution of adoption by the Big Prairie Township Parks Commission dated October 12, 2015

BIG PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP PARK COMMISSION
NEWAYGO COUNTY, MICHIGAN

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources(DNR) requires a completed parks and recreation master plan as part of the criteria for grant funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund and other DNR grant programs.

WHEREAS, the Big Prairie Township Board and the Big Prairie Township Parks Commission have developed a five-year recreation plan covering the years 2015-2019 ;and

WHEREAD, the plan was developed with public input, including a public meeting, public review, and a comment period of 30 days; and

WHEREAS, the plan identifies the Township's commitment to provide recreational opportunities within Big Prairie Township.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Big Prairie Township Parks Commission hereby adopts the proposed Big Prairie Township Recreational Plan for the period of 2015-2019.


Signature

SALLY VANDER GALIEN
Printed name and Title

Secretary
Date

10-12-15

NOV 02 2015

Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to the Newaygo County Board of Commissioners

October 16, 2015

Mr. Pat Gardner, Chairperson
Newaygo County Board of Commissioners
12325 S. Delta Street
PO Box 361
Grant, MI 49327

Dear Mr. Gardner,

On behalf of the Big Prairie Township Board and the Big Prairie Township Parks Commission, and as required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, we are transmitting to you the recently adopted Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan 2015 – 2019.

Please contact me at (231) 689-1250 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" and "W".

Dave Wright
Township Supervisor

Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

October 16, 2015

Ms. Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
West Michigan Shoreline Development Commission
316 Morris Ave, Suite 340
PO Box 387
Grant, MI 49440-1140

Dear Ms. Kuhn,

On behalf of the Big Prairie Township Board and the Big Prairie Township Parks Commission, and as required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, we are transmitting to you the recently adopted Big Prairie Township Recreation Plan 2015 – 2019.

Please contact me at (231) 689-1250 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" at the beginning.

Dave Wright
Township Supervisor

Summary of comments received at the public meeting held on November 18, 2014:

1. What do you like about the existing recreation facilities in Big Prairie Township?

- Sandy Beach improvement will be a great attraction for the area.
- As a retiree, I love this area (fishing, boating, etc.).
- Revenue creation (from existing parks).

2. What don't you like about the existing recreation facilities in Big Prairie Township, or what would you like changed?

- Would like to see good conditions of trails.
- Parks need upgrading.
- Safety on park is a concern.
- More year-round opportunities.

3. What new programs or facilities would you like developed in Big Prairie Township?

- Capitalize on activities resulting from Hardy Pond.
- Family activity center at a campground.
- The "pond trail" is a good idea.

4. Other comments regarding recreation in Big Prairie Township:

- More ATV trails that connect to longer distances.
- Promote fall color in this area.

Summary of comments received at the public meeting held on October 12, 2015, following 30-day review period:

- No members of the community attended the public meeting.
- No comments regarding the draft plan were submitted in writing prior to the public meeting.