



# Hayes Township SENTINEL

*Keeping Watch and Shining Light on the Politicians and Political News of Hayes Township*

Published Monthly and Mailed Free to all Residences of Hayes Township, Charlevoix County

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
ROYAL OAK MI  
48068  
PERMIT #792  
EDRWSS EDDM  
POSTAL CUSTOMER

JUNE 2026

## PROTECTING WHAT MATTERS: Hayes Township Leaders Prioritize Residents, Environment

### MORATORIUM & ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN PLACE TO PROTECT OUR TOWNSHIP AGAINST ROGUE DEVELOPERS

The hot topic of Data Centers isn't just regional; it is international. What was once just new buildings being constructed for internet storage, are now met with protesters and lawsuits. Turn on your TV, open up your news app, and you can't avoid the data center chaos. This new issue is not so new, but it has caught the attention of savvy citizens who are peeling the layers off of this, which has spread like wildfire.

The citizens of Hayes Township are incredibly fortunate to have the leadership and forethought to who not only placed and unanimously approved a moratorium (a legal temporary restriction of an activity) on data centers, but are working to put information in place to create a robust Ordinance to protect our area from the environmentally hostile centers. (The complete approved Moratorium document is available on the Hayes Township Website.)

Members of the advisory group have been working to define the different kinds of data centers. They are also discussing the list of requirements that a potential developer would have to fulfill, which is long, tedious, and expensive. They include various reports from local environmental groups, studies on the effects it would have on wildlife, soil, water, energy, air

quality, well quality and testing, and sound/decibel restrictions and testing, to name a few.

The advisory group noted that Hayes is not a desirable area for a developer to even want to place a data center. The land, resources, and energy needed just are not in line with what would even draw attention to our small rural area. None the less, they will continue to study and compile information to present to the Planning Commission for them to construct the most durable and complete ordinance possible.

The township had several Michigan individuals dealing with data centers in their city/township join their board meeting on ZOOM. The ZOOM participants praised the board members for being pro-active, and shared their own negative experiences with data center developers, and encouraged the officials to protect their area and residents. The board members thanked these individuals for taking the time to share their knowledge and passed all documents that were shared to the Data Center advisory committee to review and utilize.

The question 'Why don't we just ban Data Centers?' has come up, and there is an actual legitimate response.

#### Understanding "Not In My Backyard" (NIMBY) and Zoning

**NIMBY** stands for *Not In My Backyard* — a term for residents who oppose new developments, especially housing projects, in their local area, even if they agree such growth is needed elsewhere. This opposition often focuses on perceived impacts like traffic, property values, and neighborhood character.

#### How It Relates to Zoning

Zoning laws define what can be built where — including density, land use, and setbacks.

**However, planning and zoning**

**boards cannot base decisions solely on generalized community objections.** They must find "substantial evidence" specific to the project, such as traffic studies or property appraisals. Courts often set aside denials based on uncorroborated fears.

#### Balancing Growth and Community

Supporters of growth argue that:

- Communities evolve over time; resisting change can exclude new residents who contribute to vibrancy.
- NIMBY is a response to perceived issues, not a legal doctrine.
- Zoning boards must base decisions on project-specific evidence, not just community sentiment.

**Hayes Township Sentinel Callout:** Knowing that our officials understand the dangers and long-term hazards of a Data Center in our township should fill each resident with pride and contentment. As everyone watches other communities (unfortunately) battle against their leadership on this serious issue, we are very fortunate to have our leaders stand with their residents and community to protect our precious and beautiful rural northern Michigan environment. Keep an eye on the Hayes Township website for future data center advisory meeting dates and come hear the work this group is doing for our protection.

# Lake Charlevoix EMS Authority:

*Improved response time, record number of runs, dedicated staff*

It is hard to believe that the five-year anniversary of the creation of the Lake Charlevoix EMS Authority is upon us. The Authority started operations in July 2021 after transitioning from the City of Charlevoix service. We will have a further report on the challenges and successes that our EMS program faces in the July issue.

To recap, prior to the creation of the Authority EMS coverage in Hayes, Charlevoix, Marion and Norwood Townships, and was provided by the City of Charlevoix under a contractual relationship. Over time the administrative portion of this relationship became strained. Rising costs, inconsistent billing and incomplete reports led to dissatisfaction on the part of the townships. Under the leadership of Hayes township's Ron VanZee, the supervisors of the townships met with City administration and the resulting decision to create an Authority was solidified. In a whirlwind of activity, the legal documents were filed, staff

interviewed and an organization was born. The handoff of service delivery occurred at midnight on July 26, 2021 with no interruption in coverage. The authority based its operations out of

**Each year the number of calls for service has increased and now is close to triple the number of calls since the beginning of operations.**

the station in downtown Charlevoix and continues to operate a station there.

The board of the Authority, is comprised of a representative appointed by each township, the City and a member at large chosen by the board

members oversees and supports the operations of the Authority. Jesse Silva a long-time leader in the community's public safety services is the service director and has guided the program through its growth. The staff now consists of primarily full-time employees and the ability to respond to calls for service has increased dramatically. Each year the number of calls for service has increased and now is close to triple the number of calls since the beginning of operations.

A major step in improving response time to people in need north of the bridge was the establishment of the new station in Hayes Township. Opening in March of 2023 the new station has reduced response times by up to 10 minutes and even more during the summer months of heavy traffic and the bridge operations. The station located on the



township property and attached to the fire barn is paid for by the rent that the Authority pays to the township to lease the facility.

Our next article will provide a deeper look into the operating statistics and performance of the Authority as well as the challenges the future holds.

## MAY PLANNING COMMISSION

*New Fiscal Year Budget, Zoning Ordinance Updates*

The Planning Commissioners met on Tuesday, May 19th. They made it through their agenda at a brisk pace and addressed all new business at hand. Zoning staff were challenged by an unhappy resident who is accusing them of 'padding' their monthly

report. Ron VanZee, the long-time Hayes Township Zoning Administrator, explained that the history of different items was included so a complete picture of the situation was documented.

New business consisted of reviewing and approving a new fiscal year

budget to submit to the BOT to consider. The PC members suggested adding several additional potential meetings given the plans for the zoning ordinance updates. The request had unanimous support and was forwarded to the Board of Trustees.

## MAY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*Budget Workshop and Public Hearing Set, Work for local roads approved*

The Hayes Township Board of Trustees met on Monday, May 11. They set a budget workshop for 1pm on Monday, June 1st and a public hearing on Tuesday, June 23, at 7pm. The draft budget for fiscal year 2026-2027 (beginning July 1, 2026) will be presented at the scheduled public hearing.

Road work bids were reviewed. The

BOT approved work for Pincherry and Shrigley. A representative from the Charlevoix Marathon, Jeff Suffolk, attended the meeting with a request for Hayes Township to co-sponsor the MDOT permit. A board vote passed to find out if the Marathon can submit a for a permit independent of the township. A special meeting will be held to

discuss this if necessary.

Public comment topics included concern for old septic systems in Susan Shores, appreciation for Board and Planning Commissioners hard work, concern for Data Centers, and positive feedback for sharing Short Term Rental and Data Center group meeting summaries on township website.

## PARK & RECREATION

*Third Annual Hayes Township Community Picnic Fundraising for our Parks!*

The Hayes Township Park and Recreation Committee invites everyone to their 3rd annual Community Picnic! Saturday, August 1st. There will be several art and craft vendors set up at 11am. Picnic food will be supplied for everyone: Serving will start at Noon.

There will be live music off of Lake Charlevoix and a silent auction with a huge variety of items-something for everyone!

The picnic is held at Hayes Township Park Camp Sea Gull, located at 8580 Boyne City Road.

# What kind of community do we want Hayes Township to be?

A strong community isn't just a nice idea — it's one of the most powerful forces for wellbeing, resilience, and joy. When people feel connected, supported, and seen, everyday life becomes lighter and more meaningful. A thriving community gives us a sense of belonging, a network to lean on, and a place to contribute our talents in ways that matter.

At its heart, community is about people showing up for one another. It's neighbors sharing resources, local businesses supporting local families, and friends celebrating each other's wins. It's the simple moments — a shared meal, a helping hand, a familiar face — that build trust and strengthen bonds over time.

Think about a time when you helped a neighbor or a neighbor helped you. Those small acts of kindness are the roots of simple humanity. Just like the flowers we can finally plant outside, the kind things that happen around us take root, and they truly bloom into the most beautiful perennials.

Strong communities also spark creativity and growth. When people collaborate, exchange ideas, and uplift



each other, they create environments where everyone can thrive. Challenges become easier to face, and successes feel even sweeter.

Most importantly, community reminds us that we're not alone. Whether through volunteering, attending local events, or simply checking in on someone, every small act contributes to a healthier, happier collective. Kindness is contagious, and it's a wonderful example to share with the younger members of our society.

Let's keep this in mind when something or someone threatens to destroy and spoil the wonderful community we live in. A few moments of drama/contention are not worth the long-term damage done to our neighborhoods.

If you're looking to deepen your own connections, you might explore community involvement, volunteering opportunities, or building local relationships.

## \$35K (and rising!) Cost for Conklin Appeal

### *Will Supervisor repay Hayes Taxpayers?*

The William Conklin VS. Hayes Township case will be heard at the Michigan Court of Appeals within the next two months. This lawsuit has been brought before the Honorable Judge Joe Hayes twice, and it was dismissed both times. Conklin changed attorneys, made demands to the Board of Trustees, and filed with the Michigan Court of Appeals.

Conklin will be holding a budget hearing for the new fiscal year budget at the end of June. He will be a part of making monetary decisions for the township for the next year. Conklin has already stated that the cost of his lawsuit to the township taxpayers is "Not his concern." Publisher of the Hayes Township Sentinel, David Zipp, has written an open letter encouraging Conklin to forego his salary for the next year to repay the money spent on his lawsuit. As of this edition going to print, Conklin has not responded to Zipp's letter.

Also, we have been contacted by private Hayes citizens that are being harassed by local attorney Ellis Boal and his wife. Boal has a long history of filing numerous lawsuits in our township, and residents are fed up with the costly and baseless abuse of the court system.

Publisher Zipp believes all of these people need to be "held accountable and repay the taxpayers for their costly attacks."

## Spring 2026 Clean Up

SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 2026

\*\*Limit of 2 yards per household (size of 8-foot truck bed)

### **Please do NOT put out:**

Electronics, old TV's, shingles, any fluids, tires, concrete/bricks, or hazardous materials



### **Okay to put out:**

mattresses (CANNOT BE WET, limit 4 per household), carpet (must be cut and bound in 3-foot sections, old couch (must be cut in 3-foot sections), appliances (freon needs to be removed from fridges), burn barrels (must be emptied of all debris)

**Please have all items out to your curb for pick up by: 6:00 a.m. on June 15th**

If you have any questions, please email: [treasurer@hayestownship.gov](mailto:treasurer@hayestownship.gov) or call the Hayes Township Office at (231)547-6961



"DEMOCRACY DIES IN DARKNESS"

# OPINIONS

Shining Light on Political News

David L. Zipp, *Publisher & Editor*  
davidzipp1@yahoo.com  
www.HayesTownshipSentinel.com

Published by:  
Hayes Township Sentinel,  
A Non-Profit Corporation  
P.O. Box 581 • Charlevoix, Mi. 49720

## EDITORIAL:

# Zero Integrity Individuals Continue to Lie, Work Against the Township

*Lawsuits, Disruption, Agitation, Aggravation, Baseless Accusations:  
Don't be fooled by the lies and scare tactics*

Our board members, both trustees and planning commission, are all against destructive large scale data centers being built ANYWHERE, not only in our township, but in our region, and possibly, country. The Board of Trustees made sure to put a moratorium in place that protects our community from any data center interest/applications. The Planning Commission has assembled an advisory group to put suggestions together to share with the PC members to put a very strong ordinance in place that will make any possible interest costly, timely, and detract as much as possible for a developer to want to go anywhere near our area.

And yet, we have insane accusations continue from individuals who are also against Data Centers. This should be an ideal time to come together, not pull apart. This has been discussed publicly several times, and the views of the board members is a resounding "NO!" When the Data Center group held a meeting, encouraging residents to come and ask questions, three in-

dividuals showed up. Of course, with her 'No Data Centers' sign propped up against a chair, she who must not be named chose to use her 3 minutes of public comment to whine about

**This issue is clear, our officials are united in their views, and the main goal is to protect our area from any data center in our community. Period.**

not being chosen for the advisory group. That was her biggest pressing concern: not the safety of our lakes, environment, water quality, wells, or any type of potential pollution. The group allowed her to speak several times during their meeting, hoping and waiting for something to be shared that

may be helpful for their task, but that never came to be.

Please don't let this person continue to lie and scare our residents. Here we have a moment to bring our community together, and she's trying to use it to further divide us. I have spoken privately to most members of the Board of Trustees, and every member of the Planning Commission has publicly stated that they are unanimously against any data center development in our township.

This issue is clear, our officials are united in their views, and the main goal is to protect our area from any data center in our community. Period.

So, if you are approached with any other information than this, shut it down. Ignore it. Tell anyone who pushes their agenda to STOP. This issue is one that

we can all agree on; yet, here we are, with a strange opposition to (drum roll please!) .... absolutely nothing. There is nothing to butt heads about-Data Centers have no place in Hayes Township. Our officials are in full support and working with our township attorney and Planning Commission members to heavily discourage any developer that may sniff around our township in the future with an ordinance as strong and specific as it can legally be.

Our confused protestor has been writing her real estate listings, with over-view photos and specific directions to property in our township, that would HELP potential developers. She's jumping on the bandwagon of people that have officials who do support Data Centers and aren't educating themselves on the danger, both current and future, they present to our area.

Our officials are working with residents and our community to prevent these disasters entirely. What a backward and muddled way to PROTECT our land. Don't get pulled into nonsense.

## Come to the Hayes Township Meetings!

9195 MAJOR DOUGLAS SLOAN RD. • CHARLEVOIX

Board of Trustee ..... Monday, June 8 @ 7:00 pm  
Planning Commission ..... Tuesday, June 16 @ 7:00 pm  
Budget Hearing ..... Tuesday, June 23 @ 7:00 pm

## CONTACT YOUR OFFICIALS:

SUPERVISOR Bill Conklin ..... 231-373-0059  
CLERK Kristin Baranski ..... 231-547-6961  
TREASURER Julie Collard ..... 231-547-6961  
TRUSTEE Doug Kuebler ..... 906-298-1416  
TRUSTEE Matt Cunningham ..... 231-881-1533