



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ...

### TOWNSHIP POPULATION

1980	10,364
1990	14,533
2000	20,112
2010	25,146

**Gaines Charter Township** is a community which places high value on family life, good moral standards, a sense of community and a desire to enrich the lives of all its residents. The goal of the Township officials and staff is to provide exemplary service to the residents and businesses within the Township in an active, positive, and respectful manner, and to utilize the resources of the Township in the best and most efficient manner possible.

### CONTACT US

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## ELECTED OFFICIALS ...

### **SUPERVISOR**

Robert DeWard

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### **CLERK**

Angela Burnside

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### **TREASURER**

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### **TRUSTEES**

Crystal Osterink

Dan Fryling

Tim Haagsma

Kathy VanderStel

Email: [info@gainestownship.org](mailto:info@gainestownship.org)

## MEETINGS...

Township Board, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings are all held in the Township Board room, located at 8555 Kalamazoo Ave., SE.

- Board of Trustees – 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at 7:00 pm
- Planning Commission – 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm
- Zoning Board of Appeals – 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month (as needed)

Visit our calendar at [www.gainestownship.org](http://www.gainestownship.org) for more information.

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Work,  
Worship,  
Shop,  
Play!*

All at your fingertips...

Visit [www.gainestownship.org](http://www.gainestownship.org)

And discover what our Township has to offer...

## Township Government Is Citizen Government...

Michigan's local government structure can be a bit bewildering. Michigan's 1,242 Townships govern the vast majority of Michigan's land area and serve over forty-five percent of Michigan's residents. Townships were the brainchild of Thomas Jefferson and were created before Michigan became a state. Andrew Jackson's philosophy of direct democracy further shaped the Township Government structure that services and thrives today.

*Townships embody the values of "grassroots government".*

Your Township Government ensures that the community's health and safety needs are adequately addressed. Either through its own police, fire, and emergency medical services departments or in cooperation with other governmental and private organizations. Townships have evolved as the primary provider for essential public safety services.

Balancing private property rights and the impact on the community resulting from land use decisions is a very important township

In Townships, citizens contribute their talents, skills and ideas to preserve the quality of life and to deliver important programs and services.

Townships officials live in the communities they serve and stay in touch with ever changing needs. Limited by law in the amount of taxes they can levy, Township Officials are creative in delivering quality services with the least possible burden to taxpayers.

Efficient, Effective, Accountable, Accessible, Michigan's Township Governments embody America's great democratic principles.

## What Do Townships Do?...

responsibility. Township Governments also make communities more pleasant places to live by providing leisure and recreational activities.

Townships do not have direct responsibility for roads and drains, but they cooperate with county agencies that have direct responsibility for these services, and our court systems.

## How Are Townships Governed?...

The Township Board consists of a Supervisor, Clerk, and Treasurer and depending on the township's population, two or four trustees. Each of these officials have specific duties that contribute to effective Township Governance.

The elected members of the Township Board adopt an annual budget that determines the scope and character of Township services. They also adopt ordinances to protect the community's health, safety, and welfare. The Township Board oversees Township programs and services.

Elected Township Board members also oversee administration of important Township functions. The Township Supervisor, besides moderating meetings, also ensures that assessments on taxable property conform to State laws. The Township Clerk has custody of vital records, accounts for Township finances, and oversee elections conducted by the Township. The Township Treasurer collects property taxes for the Township, schools, the county, and other tax levying entities. Board members also perform other duties as directed by the Township Board.

## Elected Officials Also Administer Township Programs...

Some Townships also employ a manager or superintendent to oversee day-to-day operations. Township Boards frequently delegate managerial responsibilities to the Supervisor. Other full-time or part-time Department Heads provide technical and managerial expertise for the Township programs and services.

## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Your Township Government welcomes citizen involvement. Many Township programs and services rely on volunteers. Citizens serve on appointed boards or commission which decide important public matters. Some Townships hold Annual Meetings where electors directly participate in decisions allowed by law.

Democracy is Government by the people. While Township Boards are lawfully responsible for Township Governance, the Township Board needs to hear the perspective and views of residents on many issues. Keeping abreast of Township issues and providing your viewpoint on issues is essential to Township success.