



THE PAR-PLAN NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the Michigan Township Participating Plan

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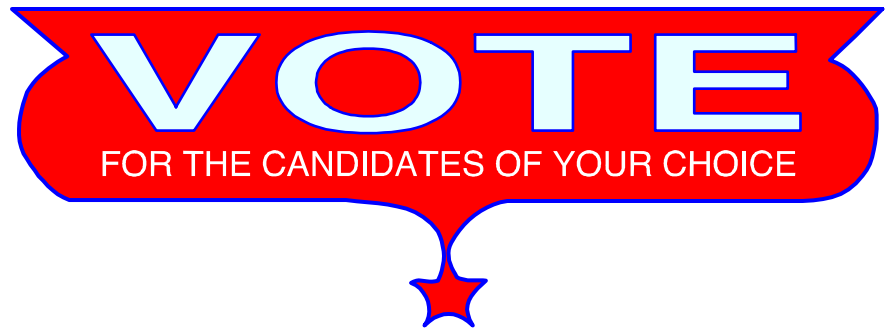
MTPP ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING



The *17th* annual business meeting of the Michigan Township Participating Plan will be held this year at Frankenmuth's Bavarian Inn Lodge nestled on the banks of the Cass River in Frankenmuth, Michigan on Thursday, July 12, 2001 at 9:00 am.

The Plan's annual business meeting is for members who are interested in the detailed activities of the program and its standing committees over the past twelve months. Additionally, each of the Plan's service providers will present their annual reports to the board.

Members who have attended our annual meeting before have indicated that it was very informative and enjoyable. Mark your calendars and try to attend.



DIRECTORS
Term: July 1, 2000
Through June 30, 2001

ZONE 1
Paul Lehto
Calumet Township
(906) 337-2410

ZONE 2
Danette Converse
Garfield Township
(906) 477-6481

ZONE 3
Pat Mead, Vice Chairman
Benzonia Township
(231) 882-4411

ZONE 4
Vacant

ZONE 5
Jim Beelen
Allendale Charter Township
(616) 895-6295

ZONE 6
Jon Sherwood
Beaverton Township
(517) 465-9176

ZONE 7
John Jones, Chairman
Ira Township
(810) 725-0263

ZONE 8
John Buckhout
Charter Township of Kalamazoo
(616) 381-8080

ZONE 9
Bob Skrobola, Secretary
Pittsfield Township
(734) 944-3140

Remember its time to VOTE!

Nomination forms were mailed on the 12th of April, 2001 and members should have received them by now. This year members are electing Zone Representatives to serve on the Par-Plan Board of Directors for Zones 3, 6, & 9. Elected representatives for these zones will serve a three year term. Additionally, we have special elections in Zone 2 that will serve a two year term and Zone 4 a one year term.

Remember to nominate an individual that you feel will take an active part in the Par-Plan's program and interest. If you are uncertain of the nomination and voting procedure, please contact the Chairman of the Election Committee, Joe Kreusel at (810) 765-5523, or the Par-Plan office at (800) 783-1370.

Below is the election time table:

April 12th	Nomination forms mailed to zone members
May 4th	Nomination forms must be postmarked to receive consideration
June 4th	Election ballots mailed to all zone members
June 22nd	Election ballots must be postmarked to receive consideration
June 29th	Election ballots counted
July 12th	Par-Plan Annual Business Meeting

SUPPORT YOUR PROGRAM AND VOTE

Family Independence Agency has guidelines for townships to implement Safe Delivery of Newborns Law.

On January 1, 2001, the Safe Delivery of Newborns Law amended to Probate Code and Juvenile Code to establish a process for anonymous parental surrender of a newborn baby to an emergency service provider. The act was passed to end the tragedy of unwanted newborns being hidden and left to die by making it an affirmative defense for a parent to surrender an unharmed infant up to 72 hours after birth. (MCL 712.1 et seq)

Under the Safe Delivery Program, a parent can surrender an infant to an emergency service provider (ESP), defined as a uniformed or otherwise identified employee of a fire department, hospital or police station who is inside the building and on duty. The parent has the choice to leave the infant without giving any identifying information to the ESP or to provide confidential personal and medical history information. It is important to note that township hall employees are not included in the Safe Delivery of Newborns law, and are not considered ESPs.

What does the Safe Delivery of Newborns Law Require?

If a parent surrenders a child who may be a newborn to an ESP, the ESP must assume that the child is a newborn and, without a court order, immediately take the child into temporary protective custody.

The ESP must make a reasonable effort to:

- 1) protect the physical health and safety of the newborn;
- 2) inform the parent that by surrendering the newborn, the parent is releasing the baby to be placed for adoption;
- 3) inform the parent that he or she has 28 days to petition the court to regain custody of the newborn; and
- 4) provide the parent with written material approved by the Family Independence Agency stating the parent's rights to regain custody. (MCL 712.3)

The ESP should make a reasonable attempt to encourage the parent to provide any relevant family or medical information and to identify him or herself. They must inform the parent of the availability of counseling or medical attention and let them know that the information the parent provides will not be made public. (MCL 712.3)

The ESP should transfer the newborn to a hospital, which must take the newborn into temporary protective custody.

How does the law impact other township employees?

Since the act took effect, the Family Independence Agency (FIA), which oversees its implementation, has become aware that a number of ESP agencies, including townships, do not have uniformed employees on duty on their premises at all times. Many townships with an on-call volunteer fire department may have a combined township hall and fire barn building where the staff on duty are primarily clerical or administrative personnel, and uniformed personnel are often not present. (For the definition of an organized fire department, see MCL 29.1)

As a result, the FIA is recommending informal guidelines for all employees of a fire department or township in the case where a parent wishes to surrender a new born and no uniformed or emergency service-trained employee is present. According to Jane Paterson of the Michigan Public Health Institute, which agreed to provide temporary technical assistance for the FIA to respond to questions from the ESPs, the first rule in accepting a newborn is to use common sense and keep the baby safe.

"If a parent brings an infant to the township hall, receive the baby and ask the mom if she needs help," advises Paterson. "It's okay to ask for any medical information, but don't pressure the parent. Check the baby's condition and then let the parent leave. The ultimate goal is to keep the baby safe."

"Call Children's Protective Services and/or law enforcement to investigate and arrange for custody/placement for the baby as soon as possible," says Paterson. The township employee should not attempt to transport the baby, but should keep the child safe and warm. "Be resourceful," suggests Paterson. "It's okay to have a used car seat, blanket and crib on hand, just in case, although it's not required."

In addition to governmental immunity under MCL 691.1401 et seq, an employee or contractor of a fire department or police station has the same immunity that MCL 712.1 et seq provides to a hospital or child placing agency's agent or employee.

What information is available to townships?

The FIA has extensive information explaining the Safe Delivery Program on its web site, including printable FIA-approved brochures aimed at parents-at-risk, fact sheets, and forms for voluntary release for adoption and voluntary medical background information. The web site also includes frequently asked questions and a model standard operating guideline (SOG) developed by the State Fire Marshal's office for the safe delivery of newborn infants. A township can use the model SOG, which includes checklists for fire departments with and without ambulance transport, to develop its own standard operating procedure. Visit the FIA web site at www.mfia.state.mi.us, and click on "Safe Delivery of Newborns" link.

Townships can also contact the Safe Delivery of Newborns phone support for ESPs at (517) 324-7383. A toll free, 24-hour phone number has been established to assist the general public at 1-866-733-7733.

This article appeared in the April 2001 issue of the Michigan Township News and was reprinted with permission from the Michigan Townships Association.

Rita Evans Promoted to Department Manager



We are pleased to announce the recent promotion of Ms. Rita Evans to Manager of Risk Control for the Par-Plan. Her many years of personal service and involvement with all facets of the program has been noted and appreciated by everyone she has worked with.

Over the past 14 years Rita has served in various support positions for the membership with specific focus on Risk Control, which she has recently served as assistant manager. Her duties include the Par-Plan's participation at MTA's annual conference, the Par-Plan Newsletter as well as administrative assistant to the Par-Plan Board of Directors.

Her personal passion for the program and its success is an inspiration to everyone. Join us in congratulating Rita in her promotion.

CONGRATULATIONS
SUE BESEY
Clerk – Colfax Township
Benzie County

Winner of the Par- Plan
Tiffany Lamp
given away as door prize
at the MTA District 5 Meeting

Bavarian Inn Lodge:

Just minutes east off I-75
between Flint and Saginaw, Michigan.

Use Northbound I-75 exit 136 or Southbound
exit 144.

