

Elk Rapids Updates

MARCH – MAY 2021

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER FROM
THE VILLAGE
GOVERNMENT

STAFF CORNER

This newsletter we are featuring our new Village Manager, Bryan Gruesbeck! Bryan moved up from North Carolina when he accepted this position, but he is originally from Michigan. He attended Central Michigan University for his undergrad and graduate degrees. He has over 20 years of experience in government management. Bryan is excited to serve the Elk Rapids Community.

WELCOME TO ELK RAPIDS, BRYAN!



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Happy Retirement, Bill Cooper!

After serving the Elk Rapids community for five years, former Village Manager Bill Cooper is looking forward to his well-deserved retirement.

Mr. Cooper's favorite part about the job was dealing with challenges on a day-to-day basis and helping the people of Elk Rapids by maximizing local government efficiency. In his time as Village Manager, Mr. Cooper was able to make several changes that improved the ease of operations for the village.

Mr. Cooper noted that he is proud that he was able to lead the village through completing the first phase of the water project, as well as overseeing the implementation of the asset management program.

Although Elk Rapids has a new Village Manager, Mr. Cooper will be finishing up some projects at the village office before officially leaving village government work behind.

Mr. Cooper is also assisting with the Village Manager transition, ensuring that the new manager Bryan Gruesbeck is briefed on village affairs, as well as the operations to keep the government management process as smooth as possible.

Thanks for your dedication to the Village of Elk Rapids, Mr. Cooper, and have a great retirement!



MEET THE HARBOR COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON, JOE FISHER

Joe Fisher has served on the Harbor Commission for over two decades and has been chair since 2000. He has lived in the Elk Rapids community for 42 years. Joe is an avid boater in the Chain of Lakes and has boating experience on the Great Lakes.

Joe is proud to have tackled issues such as rising shorelines, building the harbor pavilion, and overseeing all of the improvements to the harbor. He says he is deeply humbled to serve the community of Elk Rapids alongside all the hard-working members of the Harbor Commission.



The Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor has been a spot where boaters and locals can enjoy the water and natural resources that Elk Rapids Has to offer.

The staff and harbor commission work hard to make sure this important landmark is maintained and improved for the recreation of boaters and the community. Harbor staff have been winterizing harbor areas the past few months but are looking to the summer and doing necessary projects before the harbor opens for boaters. Staff worked on projects such as building new steps on the fuel dock, installing safety panels for overhead heaters

and lights in the grilling area, and booking music acts for the summer season. Applications are still being accepted for seasonal staff.

The harbor has been at the heart of this community for over sixty years.

After an unconventional summer in 2020 due to COVID-19, the harbor commission is looking at refining their opening rules to ensure that everyone appreciating the harbor can do it in a safe manner. They plan on tweaking the protocols from last summer based on what they learned about running a harbor during a global pandemic. Changes will be posted to the harbor page on elkrapids.org when finalized.

What's Been Happening at the Harbor

The Harbor Commission and staff have been very busy getting ready for the upcoming summer season.

Moving forward, the harbor commission is considering ways to better integrate the local community into enjoying all that the harbor has to offer through more events. There is potential for the "Spring into SummER," an event that the Parks & Recreation Commission is attempting to organize and is planned for the weekend before Memorial Day, and the Harbor Commission plans on creating some events for this.

Tentative plans are coming together for Harbor Days. While no one knows exactly what the summer season is going to look like, those planning the festival are hopeful that the festivities, while potentially scaled back, will still be able to engage the community in a safe way.



Major Website Update for elkrapids.org

Since starting to work for the village, the new Clerk Kaitlyn Szczypka has been overseeing the redesign of the village website.

“We wanted to ensure that the website was more user friendly and easily navigable for the residents of Elk Rapids, as well as for visitors who want to learn more about our unique community,” said Ms. Szczypka.

Focus areas for the improvements include better organization of tabs, consolidation of areas where documents are located on the site, and ease of finding relevant information on the home page.

The biggest improvement that Ms. Szczypka detailed was the new “Document Center” that she was developing. The purpose of this new

page will be to house all village documents, including past agendas, permits, forms, past presentations, and more.

Ms. Szczypka has many years of digital archivist and website management experience to draw on for making these improvements.

Look forward to seeing the new and improved website soon!



COUNCIL CORNER

Meet Tracy Fosdick! Newly elected to council last November, Tracy has lived in the village for two years and grew up in the Greater Elk Rapids area. She is an educator in the Traverse Bay Intermediate School District.

Tracy and her husband have three children ages 8, 11, and 14. In their free time, Tracy and her family enjoy dining downtown, going for long walks around the village, and catching sunsets over the lake together.

Elk Rapids Gems: Memorial Park Ice Rink

While it was open for a few weeks this year due to unseasonably warm winter weather, the ice rink hosted lots of seasonal fun for 2021!

Operating for a few years, the ice rink has been a seasonal fixture that locals love. Every year once the temperatures drop, DPW floods the tennis courts, allowing residents and visitors to get outside and enjoy winter.

Ice skates are available for borrowing at the rink in the shed. If you are borrowing skates, please return them to the shed when you are done.

The ice rink is now closed for the season, and we are looking forward to many more years of skating at the ice rink at Memorial Park!





For More Community Event Info...

Please view the Elk Rapids community calendar on the Elk Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce's website at:

elkrapidschamber.org

A big THANK YOU to everyone who took time for interviews and contributed photos that highlight our beautiful community!

We look forward to putting together more newsletters to keep the community informed 

Upcoming Dates:

- **Regular Village Council Meetings**
Every first and third Mondays of the month, except for holidays.
MARCH 1 & 15, APRIL 5 & 19, AND MAY 3 & 17
- **Downtown Development Authority Meetings**
Every second Wednesday of the month.
MARCH 10, APRIL 14, & MAY 12
- **Harbor Commission Meetings**
Every second Monday of the month.
MARCH 8, APRIL 12, & MAY 10
- **Parks & Recreation Meetings**
Every first Thursday of the month.
MARCH 4, APRIL 1, & MAY 6
- **Brush Collection Start Date**
Will continue on first Monday of the month through summer and fall.
APRIL 5 & MAY 3
- **Green Elk Rapids Recognizes Earth Day**
Check out www.greenelkrapids.org for more details.
APRIL 21-25 (EARTH DAY IS THE 22ND)
- **Green Elk Rapids Recycle Day**
MAY 15
- **Public Restrooms Open**
MAY 15
- **Spring into SummER**
An event the Parks and Recreation Commission is planning that will happen the weekend before Memorial Day weekend.
MAY 21 - 23
- **Village Curbside Spring Clean Up Day**
MAY 22
- **Arts & Crafts Show**
The Elk Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce will be hosting an Arts & Crafts Show in the downtown area.
MAY 22, 10 AM – 4 PM

PHOTO CREDIT:

Elk Rapids Cherry Blossoms, pages 1 & 3: Kristen Turick Photography - www.kristenturickphoto.com

Harbor Drone Photo, page 2: Harbormaster Mike Singleton

Ice Rink Drone Photo, page 3: Parks & Recreation Commission Member Kwin Morris