

# Mantrap Township Annual Newsletter

## February 2026

Annual meeting: March 10th, 2026 @7 pm in the town hall

(if postponed due to weather or other reasons, alternate date is March 17, 2026)

### Other Important Dates

1st Monday of the month: Planning Commission meeting @7 pm  
(moves to Wednesday if Monday is a holiday)

2nd Monday of the month: Township Board meeting @7 pm  
(moves to Tuesday if Monday is a holiday)

Township Board work sessions: 4th Monday @1 pm

Local Board of Appeal and Equalization: April 10th, 2026 @1 pm

Next year's annual meeting: March 9th, 2027 @7 pm in the town hall

### Your Township Board

Kim Olson, Chair, (907) 382-0473, [mantrapsupervisorb@gmail.com](mailto:mantrapsupervisorb@gmail.com)

Milica Stanfel, Vice Chair, (218) 536-1474, [mantrapsupervisora@gmail.com](mailto:mantrapsupervisora@gmail.com)

Eric Landstrom, Supervisor, (218) 255-5518, [mantrapsupervisorc@gmail.com](mailto:mantrapsupervisorc@gmail.com)

Alexis King, Clerk, (218) 252-4913, [mantrapclerk@gmail.com](mailto:mantrapclerk@gmail.com)

Laura Scanlon, Treasurer, (612) 751-6666, [mantraptreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:mantraptreasurer@gmail.com)

### Milestones

Alexis King joined the board as our new clerk! She's already proven to be an exceptional asset for the township. She jumped right in spearheading the townhall files project, switching our tax reporting to online, getting us in compliance with sick and safe time and paid leave programs, and many other things.

Jim Stanfel resigned from the Planning Commission. Thank you, Jim, for your many years of service!

Pete Shaw joined the Planning Commission. He brings a much needed seasonal/part-time perspective.

At the end of this year, the treasurer position will change from elected to appointed. We will start the hiring process in the fall to ensure a smooth transition.

# Notes from the Chair

By Kim Olson

Last year, my goal was to find places where we could press the “easy” button in order to save time and money. I don’t view that as a goal we should ever consider being met—we should always look for ways to save time and money. This past year, we definitely made progress. Most of that progress is described in the road report. We had success in other areas, too. To make sure we meet all deadlines/not let anything fall through the cracks, focus the township meetings appropriately, and to distribute workload, we implemented a perpetual calendar that is working very well. Other examples include using electronic filing for tax documents, designing a claim form and spreadsheet to simplify paid leave reporting, and starting the transition to google business workspace through the government procuring program.

This year, my goal is to keep eating the elephant one bite at a time. We have a lot of projects that at times seem overwhelming for a small township board. If we keep chipping away at small pieces, though, eventually we’ll see big progress.

## Road Report

By Kim Olson

In accordance with MN Statute 164.03, subd 4., here is the annual road report.

1. 2025 Income:
  - a. The amount of road taxes levied and the amount collected: \$198,000 levied and \$197,064.32 collected
  - b. All money paid into the road and bridge fund from all other sources: \$74,339.22
2. Expenses:
  - a. Expenses and damages occasioned by establishing, altering, or vacating roads: none
  - b. All sums expended for machinery, implements, tools, stone, gravel, and other material
    - i. During 2025 (includes application of material):
      1. Graveling: \$34,325
      2. Weed control: \$6,360
      3. Island View culverts and patching: \$12,338
    - ii. Anticipated for 2026 (includes application of material):
      1. Graveling: \$54,000
      2. Durablend: \$21,500

- iii. 2025 improvements:
  - 1. Island View culverts and patching: \$12,338
  - 2. Graveling of 275th Ave between County 85 and State Highway 34: \$3,022.02
  - 3. Graveling of Inspiration: \$34,325
  - 4. Tree removal on Garland: \$3,500
- iv. 2026 planned improvements:
  - 1. Graveling of Hillview and first quarter mile of Great Pine Dr: \$40,000
  - 2. Repair of Heritage and Ingress Forest intersection: \$10,000
  - 3. Island View resurfacing and Spider Island causeway planning: \$10,000

## Status of Major Projects and Other Initiatives

By Kim Olson

We are juggling quite a few major projects! They all take time and money. We are doing our best to prioritize and to do some longer range planning to make sure we have the resources we need to complete them.

1. Island View Culvert/Bridge: The project is complete.
2. Island View Repair: Repair of an approximately 40' section of the road is complete. This year we will research options to repair the remainder of the road.
3. Spider Island Causeway: This project has expanded to three areas: the width of the road (trees in the middle make the lanes very narrow), erosion, and the hill/banking on one end. This year we will research options to fix all three.
4. Road Recording: There are a lot of roads that appear to have never been formally recorded. Documentation for some may be in the piles of old records in the town hall. Hubbard County is helping us sort through some of the record books. The board has been going through the rest. As we determine which roads still need to be recorded, we will contact the property owners to make it happen. Expected completion is 2026-27.
5. Repair of Heritage/Ingress Forest Intersection: Expected completion 2026.
6. Switch to Google Workspace for Business (federal program): Expected completion 2026. Switch will increase security and provide electronic storage of documents.
7. Durablend (Calcium Chloride): The experiment to skip a year was a success. This year, we will be experimenting further and applying Durablend only to the center 12' of our

most problematic roads. The board is researching how property owners who want Durablend on the road in front of their parcel at their own expense can do that.

8. Road Contract: We were able to switch to an 18-month rather than a 12-month contract, which saves both time and money in administrative matters.
9. Gravel: This year, Hillview will be graveled. That will exhaust our gravel pile. (We've made arrangements for spot graveling should any other road repairs be necessary.) The first quarter-mile of Great Pine Dr. will also be graveled. We are finalizing an overall gravel plan/schedule.
10. Ordinance Update: The amended ordinance went into effect on 12 May 2025. The Planning Commission is in the process of reviewing it in case another minor update is needed.

If you have any questions or comments about these topics or any other, please come to a township meeting or contact a supervisor, clerk, or treasurer.

## Elections

2026 is an election year! For the township, two seats for supervisor are on the ballot.

We will need election judges. If you are interested, please email the clerk at [mantrapclerk@gmail.com](mailto:mantrapclerk@gmail.com).

Important dates for the elections are:

Jul 17th: last day for primary election judges to be appointed

Jul 14th-28th: candidates file for town office

Jul 30th: deadline for a candidate to withdraw from the election

**Aug 11th: Primary election; polls open 7 am-8 pm**

Oct 9th: last day for election judges to be appointed

**Nov 3rd: Election day; polls open 7 am-8 pm**

# Financial Matters

By Laura Scanlon

On January 27, Mantrap Township Board held its annual Budget Meeting. Table 1 provides data that includes the 2027 proposed levy totaling \$300,000. This is a decrease of 1.2% from the 2026 levy.

Table 1	2027 Proposed Levy/Comparison			Change over 2026 Levy	
	2025 Levy	2026 Levy	2027 Proposed	Amount	%
Road & Bridge Fund	\$198,000	\$188,500	\$176,000	-\$12,500	-6.6%
General Fund	\$71,000	\$75,000	\$80,900	+\$5,900	+7.8%
Fire Fund	\$35,000	\$40,350	\$43,100	+\$2,750	+6.8%
Capital Improvement Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total	\$304,000	303,850	300,000	-\$3850	-1.2%

The township operates four funds as outlined in Table 1.

Road & Bridge Fund: The board of supervisors continue to develop and implement strategic and cyclical maintenance goals for the 29.4 miles of township roads. This planning helps tremendously in budgeting costs for: Hubbard County gravel contract services, spot graveling, road grading, snow and ice control, application of binding products, weed control, ditch and shoulder mowing, tree removal, recording of township roads, purchase and installation of signage, special project expenses. The 2027 road and bridge fund accounts for 59% of the total levy.

General Fund: This fund supports the operational and human resource expenses encountered by the township. The board of supervisors are working to utilize as much online operations and presence as possible. In addition, there is a commitment to obtaining as much knowledge as possible in order for all board members to manage duties effectively and efficiently. The 2027 general fund accounts for 27% of the total levy.

Fire Fund: Mantrap Township is responsible for 20% of the shared fire budget. The 2027 fire expense payable is \$43,100 and accounts for 14% of the total township levy.

Capital Improvement Fund: No levy request for Capital Improvement for 2027.

Why Township Reserves Matter. The board is committed to maintaining a solid financial status. This means being prepared for unexpected and unpredictable weather and hardships. It also means having the ability to pay for all expenses on time. Reserves provide financial peace of mind in the event of adverse conditions for the township just as personal savings do for each household. Currently, the township has reached 63% of reserve savings goals.

Table 2: Reserve Goals			
Road & Bridge	General Fund	Fire Fund	Total
\$250,000	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$400,000

Did You Know? Reserves provide that necessary buffer during the first six months each year to pay for expenses. The Hubbard County auditor’s department is responsible for property tax administration. It is common for taxpayers to submit their property tax payments in May and October each year. After these payments are processed, the county can distribute levy payments to each township. Mantrap Township will receive 2026 levy money in three installments from Hubbard County. Current levy payments are expected to arrive during the months of June, 2026, again in December of 2026 and again in January of 2027. This means that the township does not have access to the current year levy funds until midway through the levy year.

Year-End Financial Status: Table 3 reports the township’s liquid assets at the end of 2025. Please keep in mind that this is a financial snapshot on one day. Township funds arrive incrementally throughout the year, however, expenses remain constant on a monthly basis and liquid cash must be available to meet those needs.

Table 3: Mantrap Township Financial Status 2025		
January 1, 2025	Opening Balance	\$ 450,243.24
	Plus Revenues	\$ 393,116.09
	Minus Expenses	\$ 276,628.93
December 31, 2025	Closing Balance	\$ 566,730.40

# Nevis Fire District News

By Eric Landstrom

The Nevis Fire Department held its annual Budget Meeting on January 8th, 2026. At the meeting, five local municipalities consisting of The City of Nevis, as well as Nevis, Crow Wing, Mantrap, and Thorpe Townships, voted to approve the 2027 Fire Budget of \$215,290. The 2027 budget represents a 4.1% cost increase over the 2026 Fire Budget of \$206,657. Mantrap Township's portion of the annual fire budget is determined by a rolling three year average of calls, and for 2027, Mantrap's cost for contracting with the Nevis Fire Department will cost our Township a total of \$43,058. As it sits, Mantrap Township represents 22% of the year-round population that is served by the Nevis Fire Department and has received approximately 20% of the Nevis Fire Department's calls over the last three years on average.

For 2025, The Nevis Fire Department has a total of sixteen paid on-call licensed firefighters, with an additional firefighter expected to complete the licensing process by springtime of this year bringing the department's total to seventeen licensed firefighters. For our part, Mantrap Township had 18 fire calls and 48 medical calls that the Nevis Fire Department responded to in 2025. In addition, the Fire Department is increasingly responding to rescue calls where people need to be extracted from vehicles down steep ravines. These recoveries require specialized rigging and rope techniques and as a result, the Fire Department added "Low Angle Rescue" techniques to their training regimen. Finally, due to the changing needs of fire response, space constraints for training and parking fire trucks, and the inability to increase the size of the existing 40-year-old fire hall, The City of Nevis and the Nevis Fire Department has begun to discuss raising the capital needed to build a new, larger fire hall as well as researching any grants that are available for building new, rural fire halls.

## Zoning

All structures in Mantrap Township require land use permits and all driveways connecting to a township road require a permit. Both are issued by the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator is Al Winterberger, 218-255-1722 or email [winterberger@arvig.net](mailto:winterberger@arvig.net). Check out the township website for copies of the land use ordinance and other helpful info.

## Mantrap Township Lakes and AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species)

By Laura Scanlon

**AIS infestations in Hubbard County lakes increased by 84% in 2025.** Below is the list of aquatic invasive species that were discovered in area lakes in 2025 alone. This is extremely alarming! Sadly, these 16 new confirmations were identified in just one year—increasing Hubbard County infestations to 35. **AIS is nasty. AIS is persistent. AIS is in Hubbard County and**

getting closer and closer to Mantrap Township lakes. Click on the links in Table 1 to learn more.

Table 1: 2025 Hubbard County Infestations			
Water Body Name	County	Listed for AIS	Year Listed as Infested
Benedict	Hubbard	<a href="#">starry stonewort</a>	2025
Big Sand	Hubbard	<a href="#">zebra mussels</a>	2025
Eagle	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Fish Hook	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Fish Hook River Dam	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Fish Hook River from Fish Hook to Shell River	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Garfield	Hubbard	Starry Stonewort	2025
Hay Creek from Island to Potato	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Ida	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Island	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Little Sand	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Lower Bottle	Hubbard	<a href="#">faucet snails</a>	2025
Mud	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Potato River from Potato to Fish Hook	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Shell River, confluence of Fish Hook River to Upper Twin	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025
Upper Twin	Hubbard	Zebra Mussel	2025

From the Hubbard County Website: <https://www.co.hubbard.mn.us/ais>

Whether or not a lake has any invasive species, Minnesota law requires people to:

- Clean watercraft, trailers and equipment to remove aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- Drain all water and leave drain plugs out during transport.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.
- Never release bait, plants or aquarium pets into Minnesota waters.
- Dry docks, lifts and rafts for 21 days before moving them from one water body to another.

[Decontamination Station Information](#)

PLEASE [CLEAN. DRAIN. DISPOSE.](#) PLEASE

For complete list of Hubbard County AIS since 2009, click on the link below:

[Infested Waters List | Minnesota DNR](#)

Mantrap Township Board of Supervisors continue to budget \$8,500 for AIS detection and prevention. Watercraft inspections and early detection continue to be the most effective means of preventing AIS from getting out of control.

The township partnership with Hubbard County Environmental Services includes supporting 200 hours of watercraft inspection. The three lakes listed in Table 2 continue to support additional inspection hours, for their respective lakes, through lake association funding. When AIS arrives, a committed lake association will bear the cost of bringing in experts to help contain the infestation. State-wide funding for AIS will be reduced substantially in the future.

<b>Table 2: 2026 Supplemental at \$27.00 per Hour</b>				
Lake	Spider	East Crooked	Big Mantrap	Total
Hours	95	75	30	200
Cost	\$2,565	\$2,025	\$810	\$5,400

Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) will continue to test township lakes for veligers and spiny water fleas. To reduce costs, Ojibway and Middle Crooked will be tested in alternating years. Cost for this testing in 2025 was \$2,918.64.

<b>Table 3: Veliger/Spiny Water Fleas Testing</b>		
Testing Completed by Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)		
2025	4 lakes	Spider, East Crooked, West Crooked, Ojibway
2026	4 lakes	Spider, East Crooked, Middle Crooked, West Crooked

## Question of the Year: What's the deal with donations?

By Kim Olson

Contributions and donations are always a hot topic at the annual meeting despite being a very small amount of the levy. There are obviously a lot of pros and cons to a township making contributions. In Mantrap, the donation levy request has only been about 1% of the levy and the contributions help fund services for the township residents. On the other hand, everyone has their own opinion on which organizations should receive donations. Last year, there was a line item in the 2026 levy allocating \$3000 for donations. The electors approved the proposed levy minus the amount designated for donations. So does that mean donations go away? To figure that out, you have to know how the process works.

First, the board must ensure contributions and donations satisfy three requirements to be legal:

1. The contribution must be authorized by statute.
2. The contribution must be for a public purpose and in the township's interest.
3. The town board must be able to satisfy all the conditions, requirements, and procedures associated with the contribution.

Second, the board has to determine if a contribution requires elector approval. Normally that approval is requested at the annual meeting. Some common contributions that require elector approval are:

1. grant to a private, nonprofit, or public hospital, or emergency medical services agency (including first responders), that serves the town
2. contract with a nonprofit organization for up to \$10,000 a year to provide health services
3. contract with a nonprofit organization for up to \$10,000 a year to provide social and recreational services
4. construction of a library

Third, if a contribution doesn't require elector approval, the board can appropriate funds (normally from the general fund) to make the donation. Some common contributions that don't require elector approval are: county historical society, food shelves, library book/material lending, senior centers, youth centers.

Fourth, the board needs to maintain good records to show that the three requirements were met.

So, donations haven't completely gone away. The town board will always ensure that we are good stewards of the township's money. Donation requests can be submitted/considered year-round. The Board will review the requests, determine if they meet statutory requirements, and determine if they are fiscally prudent. Donations will not be addressed during the Annual Meeting unless they have been reviewed by the board and require elector authorization. They will be included in the Annual Meeting agenda.

## It Takes a Village...How Can You Help?

Your township government is made up of five board members doing their very best to handle everything on a limited budget. They'd love your help!

1. Slow down on the gravel roads and don't cut corners. The faster you go and the closer you cut corners, the more dust (binder for the gravel!) there is.
2. Keep right-of-ways clear. Vehicles or other objects in the right-of-way interfere with road maintenance and plowing.
3. Report road and tree problems and spotted knapweed to the supervisors.