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# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

## Forsyth Township

### Township Manager

### Marquette County, Michigan



## **FORSYTH** TOWNSHIP



# Forsyth Township

Forsyth Township is seeking a strategic, innovative person with a passion for local government to serve as its second township manager. The ideal candidate will want to live and work in an outdoor paradise in the heart of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Natural beauty and a small-town atmosphere allow a laid-back lifestyle, with access to a full array of year-round recreational and cultural opportunities.

The community is engaged and proud of its rich heritage. Its 6,194 residents value the small-town atmosphere that offers significant amenities.

The township is a full-service, progressive community with 24 full-time employees, an overall budget exceeding \$8 million, and a taxable value exceeding \$246 million. The township is in sound financial shape and has a diversified economic base.

The new township manager will be responsible for daily operations, developing and maintaining relationships with elected officials, department heads, and all levels of township employees, and respecting and valuing township residents.

Forsyth Township will offer a competitive compensation and benefits package, including health, dental, and vision coverage; a salary range of \$100,000 to \$120,000 (depending on qualifications and experience); and a defined compensation plan with an 8 percent employer contribution, a 6 percent employee contribution, and 6-year vesting.



We love where you live.



# The Organization

Forsyth Township has a 5-member Township Board and a 5-member Planning Commission (with 1 alternate). Each meets monthly. The Township Board oversees the operation of the parks and recreation department. Marquette County is responsible for the Little Trout Lake recreation area and the Marquette County Forest, part of which is located within the township borders.

The township board is composed of an elected supervisor, a clerk, a treasurer, and two trustees. All township board members serve four-year terms. The board is responsible for adopting budgets and ordinances, and overseeing township programs and services.

In addition to the township board, there is a zoning board of appeals, a board of review, a planning commission, a blight committee, a road committee, a water and sewer committee, and a short-term rental committee.

Residents of Forsyth Township are served by a full-service police department with 8 officers and a Department of Public Works staffed by 4 employees and 1 mechanic. Township utility services include sewer lagoons and four wells that provide water service to approximately 800 customers in the Gwinn area.

Community facilities and amenities include a transfer and recycling station, numerous parks, a campground, a shooting range, a community and senior center, and a cemetery. Water and sewer services for approximately 3,000 residents in the Sawyer area of the township are operated by Marquette County.

Representing township employees, the Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM) represents 6 employees in the police department, and the Technical, Professional Office Workers Association (TPOAM) represents 22 employees of the township DPW and administrative department.

Operating from two stations, one at Sawyer and one at Gwinn, the fire department has 35 firefighters and 6 trucks.



The fire department averages between 125 and 140 runs per year. The department will be receiving a new \$900,000 Pierce fire pumper truck in early summer.

The township also operates an EMS/ ambulance service with 20 volunteers and averages between 850 and 1,000 runs per year. Rampart does the billing for the township.

Assessing services are contracted out to the Marquette County Equalization Department.

Recently, township leadership updated the master plan with the assistance of the Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development (CUPPAD).

Financial operations are managed using B&SA accounting software.

The township has licensed one marijuana-providing operation and one grow license, with additional licenses available.

There are several community events, including a Fourth of July celebration and fireworks, Fun Days in late June, one week of an alumni softball tournament, horse racing and rodeo, ice racing, the Big 3 concert, and the Gus Macker basketball tournament.

**We love where you live.**

# The Organization continued



## 2020 TOWNSHIP CENSUS INFORMATION:

- Persons 65 years and over – 24.6 percent
- Persons under 18 years – 22.9 percent
- Veteran population – 725
- Households – 2,571
- Persons per household – 2.42
- Owner-occupied housing – 78.1 percent
- Median value of owner-occupied houses - \$150,700
- High school graduate – 96.3 percent
- Bachelor's degree or higher – 26.2 percent
- Median household income - \$64,479
- Per capita income - \$31,355
- Persons in poverty – 11.8 percent
- 1980 population – 9,679
- 2000 population – 4,824

## SELECTED FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

- Number of full-time employees – 21
- Number of firefighters (volunteer) – 32
- Number of EMS (volunteer) – 22
- Part-time employees – 9
- Irregular part-time employees – 24
- Seasonal employees – 5
- General fund budget - \$3,703,991
- Total of all budgets - \$6,282,646
- General fund balance (as of 3/31/25) - \$2,825,167
- All funds fund balance (as of 3/31/25) - \$6,327,542
- Total long- and short-term debt (as of 3/31/25) - \$6,327,542
- Fiscal year beginning – April 1
- Overall millage rate – PRE – 30.993, non -PRE – 48.993
- Any unfunded pension obligations - \$2,473,308
- Any other unfunded obligations – 0
- Total unrestricted cash (as of 3/31/25) - \$594,691
- Total restricted cash (as of 3/31/25) - \$606,588
- Taxable value (2025) - \$254,993,805
- Operating millage – 6.0593
- Police – 3.5909
- Ambulance - .4965
- Library - .4947
- Clubhouse/senior – 1.7953
- Roads – 1.5944



# The Community

Forsyth Township, population 6,194, is located within Marquette County (population 66,017) in the heart of Michigan's beautiful Upper Peninsula. With Lake Superior to the north and the Hiawatha National Forest to the east, Forsyth Township is a great place to live and enjoy the great outdoors.

Covering approximately 182.9 square miles, Forsyth Township is one of 18 townships in Marquette County and is the largest township in the county as well as the largest township east of the Mississippi River. Marquette County is home to the Tilden iron ore open-pit mine, owned by Cleveland Cliffs, which is expected to operate until 2047. The township also has 5.1 square miles of lakes.

Located roughly 15 miles south of Marquette in Marquette County, Forsyth Township is home to several unincorporated communities, including Little Lake, Austin, Princeton, and New Swanzy, as well as the census-designated places of Gwinn and K.I. Sawyer. Census-designated places (CDPs) are population centers identified for statistical purposes and are often comparable to incorporated towns or cities in terms of population concentration and defined boundaries.

The township is also home to Marquette Sawyer Regional Airport. Prior to 2000, the community had the largest population of any township in the county but was surpassed by Chocolay Township following the closure of the K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base.



*History, Nature, Community, and Industry*

# The Community continued



Incorporated in 1863, Forsyth Township became a part of Marquette County. The first permanent settlement became Little Lake, founded as a logging community and later connected by the Peninsula Railroad Company's rail line. As the timber industry waned, agriculture came to have a greater presence in the region. Eventually, Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company established a rail line from the Swanzy Iron Pits to the junction at Little Lake. This proved a turning point in the township's settlement history, allowing the region's mines to operate with higher profit margins.

William P. Mather, president of Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company at the time, had plans for a community between Princeton and Little Lake developed by Boston-based landscape architect Warren Manning. The model town, inspired by the town of Coleraine in Minnesota, was called Gwinn, the maiden name of Mather's mother. It took less than three years to build this picturesque, planned community.

During World War II, mining activity began to decline, and the mines within the township ultimately closed.

In the early 1950s, the Department of Defense established the K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base is spurring rapid growth within the township. It closed in late 1995, leading to a major population decrease. Agriculture and lumbering still maintain a significant presence in the township, demonstrating community resilience and adaptability to changing resources and economic opportunities.

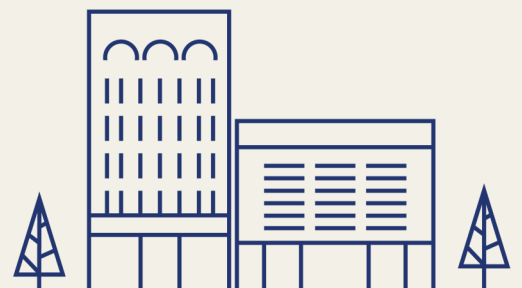
The township is served by the Gwinn Area Community Schools, an excellent K-12 public school district with 905 students and 165 employees. The school district has two elementary schools – Gilbert Elementary and Sawyer Elementary – and the Gwinn Middle and High School.

Major employers in the township include Envoy Airlines, Superior Extrusion, Potlach, MJ VanDamme, and the Gwinn Area Community Schools.

Forsyth Forward is a recently founded community organization that encourages the development of new hiking and biking trails to serve the township. In addition to local government bodies, Forsyth Township has a strong volunteer base, comprising both residents and non-residents who care about the area's future. These organizations, schools, and community groups often fill the gaps in recreational programming, trail maintenance, and events, focusing on community engagement and real community change.

Marquette County's Sawyer Regional Airport has daily air service to Detroit, Chicago, and Minneapolis.

We love where you live.



# The Ideal Candidate

The Township of Forsyth will consider applicants who value a small-town way of life and have knowledge of local government operations and management experience.

Applicants should have:

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or a related field. Experience may be substituted for educational requirements
- Three (3) years' experience in governmental management or five (5) years in business management or equivalent
- Must have a Michigan driver's license and be able to be bonded
- Probationary period: 6 months
- Residency is preferred

Other skills that the applicant can illustrate in a resume or cover letter include:

- Experience in DPW and operations
- Solid financial and budgeting skills, as well as an understanding of the requirements and strategies for infrastructure improvement financing
- Experience in human resources development, including hiring, mentorship, performance measurement, evaluation, and professional development
- Experience in labor relations and labor negotiations
- Successful acquisition and management of grant funds
- Demonstrated ability to exercise facilitative problem-solving techniques
- An understanding of the precepts of economic development and community development, and in the areas of housing, placemaking, and branding

- Code enforcement experience
- Open-door policy to respectfully interact with residents, township board, township employees, and department heads
- History of inter-governmental relations and collaboration
- An understanding of the chart of accounts, municipal accounting software, and daily, monthly, and year-end accounting functions. Experience with B&SA software a plus
- Capable of challenging processes
- Able to build shared visions
- A role model for appropriate behavior and professionalism
- Encouraging other people's success and ability to take action
- Ability to develop a sense of place and undertake township placemaking
- Honest with a high level of personal integrity
- Transparent in decision-making processes
- An active listener
- An innovative and creative problem solver
- Adaptive and resilient
- Self-confident with a secure sense of self
- Committed to volunteerism and community participation
- Tolerant of diverse opinions
- Familiar with wastewater treatment plant operations
- Support the department head's judgment and professionalism
- Encourage families to move into the township and new residential development
- Support business retention and expansion into the township



# Application Process

**Apply by close of business: June 22nd, 2026**

Please submit resume, cover letter, consent form, and five professional references to:

**Email:**

[execsearch@mml.org](mailto:execsearch@mml.org)

Subject Line: Forsyth Township Search

**Questions** can be directed to MML Executive Recruiter Glenn Anderson at [ganderson@mml.org](mailto:ganderson@mml.org).

Candidates desiring confidentiality of their interest, as allowed for and provided by Michigan law, must indicate such in a separate subject line above the body of the cover letter.

This search is conducted by an Equal Opportunity Employer.



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