

St Joseph Co Gop Top 3 Issues for July 2026

Next Issues Comm Meeting Aug 4th, noon Royal Cafe

1. BIG GOV OVEREACH, DATA CENTERS: Whether you hate them or love them, data centers that support AI are here, and they will not be going away. There are legitimate environmental concerns about the centers, water usage and emissions from backup generating systems among them.

Michigan has somewhat lessened the water usage problem by requiring data centers to use closed loop cooling rather than simply emitting “used” water steam. The centers still consume vast amounts of water. The backup generator emissions do not appear to have been addressed yet. Diesel exhaust contains nitrous oxide, the fifth most damaging greenhouse gas: 298 times worse than CO₂. As we Michiganders know, backup power will be needed with the current state of our electric grid.

Noise is another concern as the residents of Dowagiac have found out. They are currently involved in a lawsuit in a class action lawsuit with Alliance Cloud Services over the noise the data center emits. This is not a one-off situation. Microsoft is being sued over noise from its data center in Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin.

There are very real concerns with the energy consumption of the centers. The “Barn” data center in Saline is expected to consume 1.4 gigawatts of power, more electricity than 1 million homes (MLive). Michigan power companies are scrambling to increase generating capacity to meet the needs, and who will pay?

Across the country data centers are pumping vast amounts of money into local communities. Yet the data center in Saline, Michigan, is asking for as much as a 50% tax break for 12 years (CBS News). One wonders why when the cost estimates for that project were \$7 billion in 10-25, \$16 billion in 6-26, and \$43 billion 14 days ago (WXYZ); the company appears to have sufficient funds. Such economic development tax breaks cost Michigan’s five largest cities nearly \$3.9 billion between 2017 and 2021 alone. (good jobsfirst.org)

Finally, the companies behind the data centers focus on the jobs they will create. The Saline data center claims it will create 2500 construction jobs, 450 permanent jobs, and 1500 more across Washtenaw County. The construction jobs are temporary and may not go to local companies. The creation of the rest of the high-tech jobs remains to be seen. Ron A

2. FOIA FEST: As more of us across Cass, Branch and St Joe Counties, are attending township meetings, we're meeting our neighbors and learning who is actually running our townships and villages. We're really encouraging our precinct delegates to start attending meetings of their township, villages and cities. Maybe you have a dream of running for a local office first, or just to have a say in the way things are run in your neighborhood. We're collecting job descriptions and info from Michigan Township Association, so people will be the informed candidate to vote for!

We're also learning about " How they are running meetings, where to find the information and what their websites look like, along with many other items".

Is it Roberts Rules of Order 12th edition, is it conversation and question answer over every topic? The ones I like the best are the public comments twice in the meeting! Interesting, to say the least.

The question some people have is how to find information that is not available, what if the meeting is not being conducted by OMA (Open meetings act) standards? That's where the FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) comes in. All websites for villages and cities should have a FOIA site on their website or you can go to the county website. There will be some training coming up soon, so people can find information. Reggie C.

3. GUN FUN @ ST. JO CO CONS. CLUB: many of the Issues Com have interest in a fun get together in the fall(?) to shoot various guns, train and become familiar with firearms, eat good food and just fellowship for a day or part of a day at our local Conservation club. If you have interest let us know! Craig, Ron Adams, Chuck Padgurskis, are contacts. This will be a fun time to get around like minded patriots and learn gun safety and just practice, eating and shooting!