



charter township

oshtemo NEWSLETTER!

est. 1839

June 2014

How to contact YOUR Oshtemo Township Officials

Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell 216-5220 libbyhc@oshtemo.org

Clerk Deb Everett 216-5224 deverett@oshtemo.org

Treasurer Nancy Culp 216-5221 ncoshtwp@oshtemo.org

Trustee Dave Bushouse 370-4307 dboshtwp@oshtemo.org

Trustee Nancy Carr 271-4359 nancycarr@bhhsmi.com

Trustee Dusty Farmer 389-9355 dfarmer@oshtemo.org

Trustee Lee Larson 375-0068 lee.larson@ameritech.net

Assessor Cathy Harrell 216-5225 choshtwp@oshtemo.org

Planning Director Greg Milliken 216-5223 gmilliken@oshtemo.org

Ordinance Enforcement Rick Suwarsky 216-5227 rsuwarsky@oshtemo.org

Fire Chief Mark Barnes 375-0487 mbarnes@oshtemo.org

Don't know who to call....General Information = 375-4260 or www.oshtemo.org

2014 Dump Days

Township Hall Parking Lot,
7275 West Main Street

9 am—3pm

May 31	June 28	July 26	Aug 30
Sept 27	Oct 25	Nov 8	Nov 22

No yard waste, kitchen garbage, dead animals, hazardous materials, or large quantity of building materials can be accepted!

Nov 8th is leaf drop off only

Nov 22nd is a Leaf & Dump Day

Proud of Our Parks

Township Park: A Hidden Gem. Most residents are aware of this 70 acre park located behind the Township Hall at 7275 West Main Street. In fact, since the renovations were completed in 2012, we've heard lots of compliments and praise for our beautiful park. And judging by the busy parking lot on sunny days, it is a popular destination. Township staff and officials enjoy this positive feedback and are proud of the work that has been completed. However, we occasionally talk to residents who don't know about our "hidden gem." If you haven't visited Township Park yet, please come and check it out! The active recreation area includes a playground, tennis courts, pickleball court, basketball courts, a wiffleball field, two paved loop trails, and a restroom building. The wooded area includes an 18-hole disc golf course and unpaved walking paths over gently rolling hills. There are two picnic shelters in the park; visit our website to view the use calendar and obtain a copy of the reservation application for the larger pavilion.

Flesher Field: Still Open for Fun! The first phase of construction at Flesher Field is well underway. A new restroom building, new roof on the picnic shelter, .17 mile paved loop trail, and parking lot will be completed this month. The park will remain open throughout construction, although parking may be limited at times. Additional parking is available along Erie Street and at Chime Elementary School after school hours. The second phase of construction is expected to begin in September. It includes a new playground, a second picnic shelter, a new gazebo with garden space, and relocation of two wiffleball fields. The gazebo and garden space, designed to host outdoor weddings, concerts, and family events, will be available for reservation. The playground was designed with advice from our very own experts, a group of students from Prairie Ridge Elementary School. All of the park improvements will provide barrier-free access to those with disabilities.

Funding for the park improvements, at both Township Park and Flesher Field, is primarily from development grants through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF). Generous donations were also received from the Consumers Sunburst Run and the Oshtemo Rotary Club. For more information about our parks, contact Karen High, Parks Administrator, at (269) 216-5223 or khigh@oshtemo.org.



Wanted: Fans of Outdoor Music. The new gazebo to be constructed at Flesher Field this fall will be a perfect place for outdoor concerts. Wouldn't a free "Concert in the Park" be a wonderful asset to our community? If you or your organization would like to sponsor or help organize a concert in the park, or if you have a local band that might perform in Flesher Field, we'd like to hear from you! Please contact Karen High, Parks Administrator, at (269)375-5223 or khigh@oshtemo.org.



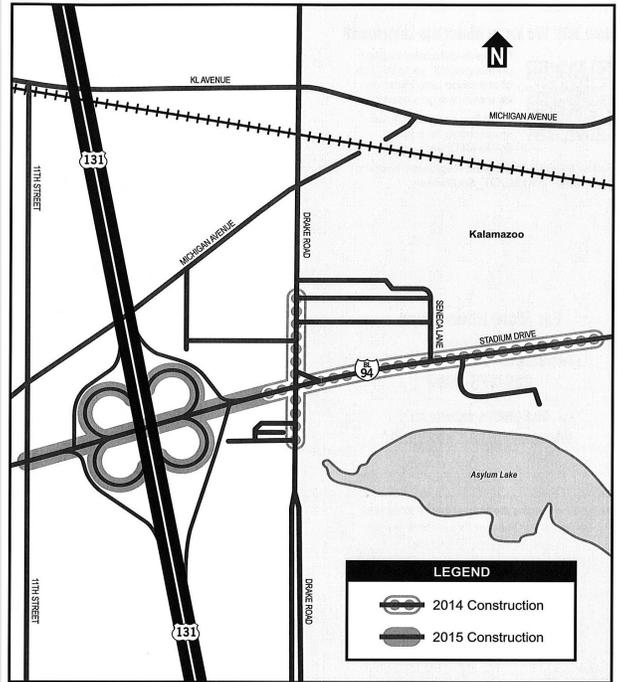
ROAD PROJECT UNDERWAY

Construction is underway on MDOT's US-131/Stadium Drive/Drake Road project. Work has begun on Stadium Drive east of Drake Road as well as on portions of the US-131/Stadium Drive interchange. The project is scheduled to be completed in two phases.

The first phase, currently underway, will focus on improvements to Stadium Drive, Drake Road, and the Stadium/Drake intersection. They will include improvements to the storm water drains along Stadium, widening of the intersection to include dual left turns in all directions, widening of Drake Road to accommodate additional turn lanes and a new intersection to the north, and new sidewalks along Stadium Drive.

The second phase will begin in the spring of 2015 and focus on the replacement of the Stadium Drive bridge over US-131 and reconfiguration of the freeway interchange. This will be done in segments allowing traffic to continue to cross the freeway – one lane in each direction.

This is a significant project that has involved coordination of many agencies. We appreciate your patience during the process and encourage you to take a little extra time if your travels take you in this direction. For the latest information on the status of the project and lane/ramp closures, go to www.michigan.gov/drive or the Township website (www.oshtemo.org) to find information provided by MDOT. The Kalamazoo Transportation Service Center of MDOT can be reached at 269.375.8900.



Township Office Hours
Monday thru Thursday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Friday 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
(1st Thurs each month open at 9 am)
We will **CLOSED**
Friday, July 4 — Independence Day
Monday, September 1st—Labor Day

BLOOD DRIVE NEWS!!

Wednesday, June 25, 2014 from 11am to 6 pm
Come in for Gourmet Chicken Salad Sandwiches and a chance to win a \$25 gift card!



Then again on **Wednesday, August 20 from 11 am to 6 pm**
February /April gift card winners were A. Correa and M. Malek!!
Congratulations to all!!!

3RD ANNUAL SEASON OF MOVIES IN THE PARK



Oshtemo Friends of the Parks will host three evenings of "Movies in the Park" sponsored by the Consumers Sunburst Run and Kalamazoo Public Library. This season's schedule is:

Thursday, June 19th – **"Chimpanzee" - a Disney Nature film**
Thursday, July 17th – **"His Girl Friday" - a Cary Grant Classic**
Thursday, August 21st – **"Ghostbusters" - a Family Favorite**

The movies begin at sunset at the Township Park, 7275 West Main (weather permitting). Bring your lawn chair or blanket and bug spray. There will be activities for the children prior to the movie and popcorn provided during the show!



Sadly, due to unavoidable scheduling conflicts we will not have the S2 Games **Independence Day Fireworks** display this year. Check for updates around this time next year!!



Charter Communication Customers To See Public Media Network Changes

As a result of Charter Communications decision to go fully digital on June 10th, Public Media Network's five channels will change. This digital switchover means that video and audio quality on PMN channels should improve. PMN's public, education, and government channels will move to 187, 188, 189, 190, & 191, from their current channels 95-99 on the Charter system. The digital switchover with Charter Communications will not affect AT&T U-Verse customers. U-Verse customers can still view PMN channels by going to channel 99 and following the drop-down menu system.

Public Media Network exists to help develop and distribute local video, radio and multimedia. PMN operates five channels on Charter Cable, and streams their channels on AT&T U-Verse. PMN is also home to WKDS 89.9 FM. PMN provides educational workshops on video production techniques, free use of television and radio production equipment and facilities, and programming distribution on television and radio. For more information please visit PMN on the Web at www.PublicMediaNet.org or call 343.2211.

2014 Summer Tax Information.....From the Treasurer's Office

Summer tax notices will be mailed June 30. If you receive a tax bill but have an escrow with your mortgage company, you should forward the tax bill to them with a reminder that they must re-request the bill each taxing season. If your mortgage company has requested the tax bill, you will not receive a copy, but you may contact us and we will be glad to send you a copy. You may also verify taxes have been paid by contacting the Treasurer's Office at 216-5221, or visit the website (updated daily) at www.oshtemo.org.



Oshtemo Township now accepts tax payments via credit card at the counter, and online www.oshtemo.org. We are working with Point & Pay to provide this service, your transaction will include a 3% fee.

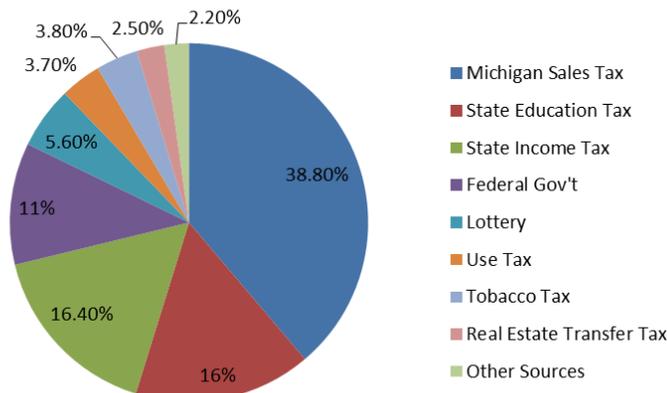
2014 TAX DATES

Summer taxes are due September 15. On September 16, a 1% fee will be added and another 1% will be added each month thereafter. Payments made by mail, with a postmark of September 15, will be accepted **but must be received on or before September 19...NO EXCEPTIONS!** If taxes are received in our office between September 16 thru February 28 without the interest included, we will receipt the taxes and send you a bill for the interest owed.

Please note the change in hours for the Township Office. We are open Monday thru Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. We have a **DROP BOX** in the parking lot, which is checked every day. Please feel free to contact the Treasurer's Office if you have any questions.

Notes from the Assessor.....

Money sources for School Aid Fund



Since the approval of Proposal A in 1994, Michigan schools have been funded through the School Aid Fund.

This Fund has a **13 billion dollar budget.**

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS?

If not, you may not be receiving important mailings. Tax bills are NOT forwarded; they are returned to the Township. Please contact us to confirm your mailing address so that you may receive important items in a timely fashion.





17th Annual Oshtemo Rotary

OSHTEMO FUN DAY



Saturday, August 16th

Flesher Field (South 9th Street just south of Stadium Drive)

Pancake Breakfast: 8:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

Lunch: 11:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Rides, games, activities for kids, magician, music, craft/vendor booths, tethered balloon rides, Oshtemo Fire Department bucket rides and live burn demonstration, Big Yellow Banana Car, BMX Grudge Bike Show, and much more!

www.oshtemorotary.org or **Oshtemo Rotary on Facebook**

Oshtemo Fire Department Saves Lives.....AND MONEY!!

Each year, Kalamazoo County fire departments brainstorm opportunities to enhance regional efforts that will benefit all participants. In 2011, Oshtemo researched, wrote, and hosted a grant award of \$570,800 toward replacing inadequate two-way radios and emergency alerting pagers. This project provided a benefit to all of the fire agencies in Kalamazoo County by covering 80% of the hardware and programming costs of these critical communications devices.

In 2012, the City of Portage took the lead by providing fiduciary services for another regional grant application. This time the target was replacement of aging and unserviceable self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). This has been a collaborative effort between six local jurisdictions consisting of the Townships of Oshtemo, Alamo, Texas, and Pavilion, the City of Portage and South County Fire Authority.



During Oshtemo Fire Departments 2009 long term fiscal planning process, we had recognized that various components of our self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) units would reach their anticipated life expectancy starting in 2012. These devices are absolutely mandatory to perform the duties of firefighting and all other tasks that place our members in an immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) environment as identified by OSHA and other regulatory agencies i.e. hazardous materials, oxygen deficient atmospheres and high carbon monoxide situations.

A projected future budget of nearly \$300,000 would be needed to replace these mandatory units. With great hopes of receiving a regional grant award, and wanting to position ourselves to collaborate with our neighboring jurisdictions, we were able to find and purchase just enough used bottles that allowed us to temporarily keep the system operational into 2014. This stopgap approach has been rewarded.

Our grant request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was bestowed and we will soon take delivery of 54 replacement SCBA units costing Oshtemo \$71,791. This regionalized approach realized benefits including a reduction in the per unit cost due to bidding a larger quantity of 196 units. Another is that we have improved our emergency interoperability by having units that neighboring firefighters are already trained to use.

The fire and rescue agencies of Kalamazoo County are continuously working to discover ways to support each other with the goal of serving our respective citizens.

Burn Permits made EASY!!



In our efforts to continuously improve service, we are seeing a continued increase in citizens using the Township's website to obtain their burning permits. Although phone calls remain acceptable, crews are not always in the building and thus multiple calls are sometimes necessary. The website works every time:

www.oshtemo.org



2014 Election News

DATES/TIMES TO REMEMBER

Michigan Election Law requires you be registered at least 30 days prior to any election.

Primary Election – August 5th – deadline to register is July 7th

General Election – November 4th – the deadline to register is October 6th

Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.



REMINDER - August Primary

You cannot "split" your ticket (i.e., vote in more than one party column) when voting in the August primary. Voters participating in an August primary must confine their votes to a single party column.

WHERE DO I VOTE?

Some precinct locations were changed in 2012 – a precinct map is available on our website. Click "About Oshtemo" on the home page then go to the "Maps/Directions" link. You can also find your voter registration information and a sample ballot through the Secretary of State Michigan Voter Information Center at <https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/>

ABSENTEE BALLOTS**

Required Criteria to qualify for an absentee ballot are:

- ◆ age 60 years old or older
- ◆ unable to vote without assistance at the polls
- ◆ expecting to be out of town on election day
- ◆ in jail awaiting arraignment or trial
- ◆ unable to attend the polls due to religious reasons
- ◆ appointed to work as an election inspector in a precinct outside of your precinct of residence

Voters age 60 or older or those with a permanent disability can request to be placed on our permanent absentee voter list and will automatically receive an [application for an absentee ballot](#) prior to each election.

Any voter meeting the required criteria can request an absentee ballot application by phone or complete the application available on our website under the "Applications" link. A ballot can also be requested by mail, fax, or e-mail but **should include** your name, registered address, the address where the ballot should be mailed, date of birth, date of election, reason for needing to vote by absentee ballot and your signature.

NEW!! PHOTO ID REQUIREMENT FOR ABSENTEE BALLOTS Per Michigan Election Law, if you are obtaining your [absentee ballot](#) in person, you will be requested to show photo ID. This requirement does not apply if requesting your ballot via mail.

Please call the Clerk's Office at 216.5224 or e-mail deverett@oshtemo.org with any questions you have regarding voter registration, polling locations or absentee ballots.

****Please note a first time voter, who registered by mail, must vote in person in the first election in which they participate. This restriction does not apply to voters who are active duty military, overseas, disabled or 60 years of age or older.**

9th Street & West Main Overlay Zone

In 2012, the Township completed a master planning study of the West Main Street and 9th Street corridors. The Planning Commission has recently initiated the implementation phase of that process, beginning with the development of Zoning Ordinance amendment language consistent with the goals and objectives of the sub area plans.

The proposed amendments implement the vision of the sub area plans that allow for a broader variety of uses in these areas, much of which is vacant and currently zoned residential. The amendments also include expansion to the Township's regulations for Planned Unit Development (PUD) requests to allow this development technique to occur in non-residential applications as well as residential.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on a very initial draft set of amendments in late March in order to receive input from property owners in the sub areas. After two such meetings, the Commission has scheduled work sessions to be held prior to their upcoming meetings, which are held on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. It is anticipated that this work will be ongoing for several meetings. Agendas are available on the Township web page at www.oshtemo.org.

A copy of the draft amendment language is available on the Township website notice board or by contacting Greg Milliken, Planning Director, at gmilliken@oshtemo.org, or 216-5223 if you have any questions.



OSHTEMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Summer can be a busy time, but we hope you will have time to visit the Drake House to see the progress we have made on the restoration. You will have two opportunities to stop by this summer.



July 19th - 10 am to 3 pm

We will be celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Oshtemo Historical Society at the historic Drake Farmstead with free tours and cake and hosting a bake sale. Vendors will have tables of vintage, shabby chic, collectibles, arts and crafts. There will be games for children, live music, and Animal Rescue will bring some furry friends to meet!

August 16th

2 pm to 4 pm—The Drake House will be open for free public tours.

10 am to 4 pm—We will have a booth at Oshtemo Fun Day, at Flesher Field, on S. 9th Street. Hope to see you at this family event!

For more information about the Oshtemo Historical Society, please visit our website at:
www.oshtemohistoricalsociety.org

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Ph 375.4260 Fax 375.7180
<http://www.oshtemo.org>

