



charter township

oshtemo NEWSLETTER

est. 1839

To advance the quality of life of all residents through a commitment to responsible growth, and value-driven municipal services that promote the relationships among economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity. (Adopted 2/14/2017)

January 2018

Oshtemo Township Board of Trustees

Supervisor

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

Clerk

Dusty Farmer 216-5224
dfarmer@oshtemo.org

Treasurer

Nancy Culp 216-5221
ncoshtwp@oshtemo.org

Trustees

Dave Bushouse 370-4307
dboshtwp@oshtemo.org

Deb Everett 375-4260
deverett@oshtemo.org

Zak Ford 271-5513
zak.r.ford@gmail.com

Ken Hudok 359-0787
khudok@oshtemo.org

Township Department Information

Assessor:

Kristine Biddle 216-5225 assessor@oshtemo.org

Fire Chief:

Mark Barnes 375-0487 mbarnes@oshtemo.org

Ordinance Enf:

Rick Suwarsky 216-5227 rsuwarsky@oshtemo.org

Parks Director:

Karen High 216-5233 khigh@oshtemo.org

Rental Info 216-5224 oshtemo@oshtemo.org

Planning Director:

Julie Johnston 216-5223 jjohnston@oshtemo.org

Public Works:

Marc Elliott 216-5236 melliott@oshtemo.org

Township Customer Service Hours

Monday thru Thursday

8am to 5pm

Friday

8am to 1pm

(1st Thurs of each month open at 9 am)

We will be CLOSED

Jan. 1—New Years

Jan. 15—Martin Luther King Day

Jan. 25—8am to 9:30am Training

Feb. 19—President's Day

Ordinance Enforcement Assistant



LouAnn grew up in Kalamazoo and moved to Oshtemo several years ago. She spent the majority of her career with the city of Kalamazoo where she worked in various departments including Human Resources, Public Safety, and Community Planning & Development, from which she eventually retired. LouAnn began working as an assistant in the Oshtemo Ordinance Enforcement

Department in early 2015, using her past experience and vast knowledge to support residents and businesses in the Township. Each day LouAnn assists with scheduling township apartment rental inspections and certifications, while also responding to resident concerns regarding zoning and general ordinances. Thanks, LouAnn!



2018 Dump Day Schedule

Township Hall Parking Lot
7275 W. Main St. 9am-3pm

March 31 April 14

April 28 May 12

May 26 June 30

July 28 August 25

Sept. 29 Oct. 27

Nov. 17

Fall Leaf Drop Off Days

Nov. 3rd & 17th

Proof of residency required.

Yard waste, kitchen garbage, dead animals, hazardous materials, or large quantities of building materials cannot be accepted.

** Reminder**

Winter taxes are due **Wednesday, February 14th**. If you did not receive your tax bill, please contact the Treasurer's Office immediately at 269-216-5221. You may pay your taxes in person at 7275 West Main, or you may mail them to the same address. If you pay after Feb.14th, there will be a 1% fee added to the total. If the taxes are not paid before March 1st, they will be sent to the County Treasurer.

If you would like to continue to receive a hard copy of the newsletter, please contact the Clerk's office at (269)216-5224 or dfarmer@oshtemo.org. You can also sign up on the Township website at Oshtemo.org to receive a digital copy.

BLOOD DRIVE NEWS

February 28, 2018

11 am—5 pm

Appointments can be made with
Michigan Blood by phone
1-866-MIBLOOD
or e-mail info@miblood.org



** Mark Your Calendar**

Shredding Days

April 21st—10am to Noon

September 22nd—10am to Noon

Free to Township Residents

At the Township Hall Parking Lot

7275 West Main Street

Proof of residency required.

Maximum—10 bankers boxes

Township Meetings

Township Board: First meetings of the month begin at 7:15 PM, and second meetings begin at 6 PM with public comment. IT and Joint meetings begin at 6 PM.

Regular Meetings

January 9
 February 13
 February 27
 March 13
 April 10
 May 15
 June 12
 June 26
 July 10
 August 14
 August 28
 September 11
 October 9
 October 23
 November 13
 November 27
 December 11

Budget Meetings

August 27 1PM-3PM
 August 28 5 PM
 September 25 4PM-8PM

IT Board Group

January 23
 March 27
 July 24
 November 27

Joint Meeting

February 20
 May 22
 September 18

Planning Commission:

All meetings are held in the Township Hall Meeting Room and start at 7pm.

January 11th & 25th
 February 8th & 22nd
 March 8th & 22nd
 April 12th & 26th
 May 10th & 24th
 June 14th & 28th
 July 12th & 26th
 August 9th & 23th
 September 13th & 27th
 October 11th & 25th
 November 8th
 December 13th

From Road Commission of Kalamazoo County The Snow Route System

The RCKC has designated a special network of roads within the county as a snow route system. Snow route roads receive our first attention. When winter weather affects road conditions, our goal is to provide the maximum level of service to the greatest number of people as quickly as possible. This network includes more than 260 miles.

Snow Removal Priorities:

1. Snow route roads
2. Balance of primary roads
3. Local Roads
4. Subdivision/plat streets
5. Dead-end and cul-de-sac roads

Everyday, service is provided to priorities 1, 2, and 3 during snow events. Every other day service is our goal for plat streets, dead-end and cul-de-sac roads. (If a storm is long lasting or a second storm starts before clean-up on priorities 4 and 5 have been completed, crews will return to priorities 1, 2, and 3.)



Property owners are responsible for clearing the sidewalks in front of their homes and businesses.

Is Your Streetlight Out?



Streetlight outages can be reported directly to Consumers Energy by calling: 800-477-5050

Or through their website at:

consumersenergy.com/outages/outage-center

Or there is a link on the Township's website (www.oshtemo.org) under the Frequently Asked Questions tab.



If you don't have an address number sign, they are available to order through the Township office for \$10.00.

Please contact Linda to order yours. 375-4260 or lpotok@oshtemo.org

CONNECT TO ROAD COMMISSION OF KALAMAZOO COUNTY ALERTS



Have You Signed Up?

Receive Message Alerts for:

- ◆ Road Construction
- ◆ Road Closures/Detours
- ◆ General Public News

RCKC CONNECT
RCKC ALERTS SIGN UP NOW

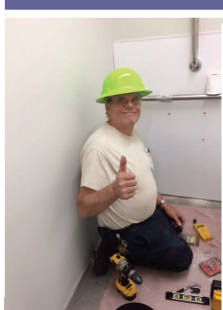
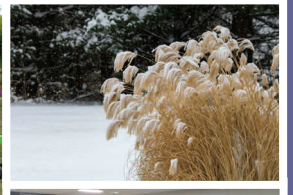
Visit : www.kalamazooountyroads.com

Are you or a hired contractor making improvements on your property?

Contact the Southwest Michigan Building Authority to find out which permit you need. Don't waste money with unnecessary fines. Call SMBA today!

(269) 585-4150





Happy New Year
From
Oshtemo Township
2018

From the Assessor

The Oshtemo Board of Review, appointed by the Township Board, is comprised of Township residents who are responsible for hearing property tax valuation appeals from Oshtemo Township property owners. The Board of Review can hear appeals regarding the following: State Equalized Value (SEV), assessment roll classification changes, disabled veteran exemption requests and poverty exemption requests. The 2018 Assessment Change Notices will be sent out mid to late February. After receiving your 2018 Assessment Change Notice and prior to March 9th, if you believe your property valuation is inaccurate or have general questions, please call the Assessor's Office (269) 216-5225 to discuss your concerns. If the Assessor is not able to address your concerns, you may schedule an appointment to appear before the 2018 March Board of Review to appeal the property valuation.

Notice from the Assessor 2018 MARCH BOARD OF REVIEW DATES

Monday, March 12: 9am-4pm
Tuesday, March 13: 1pm-4pm & 6pm-9pm
Wednesday, March 14: 9am-4pm
Thursday, March 15: 1pm-4pm

At the Township Hall, 7275 W. Main St.

Call the Assessor's Office at 216-5225 beginning **March 1st** for an appointment, or use the contact form at <http://www.oshtemo.org/officials-and-departments/assessing-department/>

By board resolution, residents are able to protest by letter, provided the protest letter is received by

5:00pm on Friday, March 9, 2018.

Kristine Biddle, Assessor



Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell:

With the lengthy process of budgeting for 2018 complete, the work in the New Year begins! There is much activity in the Township Office, Fire Department, and Police force, as the forecasted community growth continues. Some upcoming work and other highlights—

- Township Board early 2018 discussion with the Planning Commission on the **Master Plan Update**. Review and participation with the public is highly encouraged. (Refer Planning Department update).
- **2018 Police Protection** by the KCSO contracted officers, including the Oshtemo Lieutenant, Troy Faulk, Sergeant, Traffic Deputy, Community Policing Deputy, and five additional Deputies.
- View the **renovated Oshtemo Grange Hall** at one of the upcoming dance events-- 'Country Dancing in Kalamazoo' holds contra and square dances at the Grange Hall on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of most months, and English country dances on 3rd Wednesdays. Details at <http://people.albion.edu/ram/cdk/#upcoming>.
- Broad-based Steering Committee visioning work, with multiple Township departments and the community, to develop plans for integrated greenway, park, cemetery, non-motorized and sidewalk systems.



*Lastly, but so important to the myriad of Township operations, I would like to extend a sincere **Thank You** to residents, community business members, and organizations that helped to accomplish so much in 2017!*



From Clerk Dusty Farmer:

Happy New Year from the Clerk’s office! This year will be busy as I continue to represent Township residents as an Oshtemo Planning Commissioner, Central County Transportation Authority representative, Kalamazoo County representative to the South Central Planning Council, and Oshtemo Representative on the Metro Local Advisory Council. In the Clerk’s office we will focus on continuing to improve efficiencies in expenditures and budgeting, ensuring that elections run smoothly, and participating in a Township-wide project that will include developing a Cemetery Master Plan. In an effort to maintain a high level of service to Township residents, the Clerk’s office will be participating in various training opportunities this year. In early March, we will attend the Clerk’s Institute from the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerk’s to learn more about local government finances, media and community relations, and strategic planning for the Clerk’s office. Throughout the spring we will attend election training opportunities with the Michigan State Bureau of Elections that will include training for the Qualified Voter File and certification to train our own election workers in the Township. As a reminder, our election dates in Oshtemo are as follows:

May 8, 2018 - Local Election

August 7, 2018 - State Primary

November 6, 2018 - State General Election



You can be added to the permanent absentee list for any reason, so please contact our office at 216-5224 for more information.

Cemetery Update: In 2018 we will be ready for a cemetery clean up effort in each of the Township’s three cemeteries: Genesee Prairie, West Oshtemo, and Hill. In the spring we will begin cleaning up old flowers and displays that are weathered and have started degrading. We will be in contact with family members, and if you have any questions, please contact Deputy Clerk Amanda McMillon or Clerk Dusty Farmer at 216-5224.

Ordinance Enforcement Update

Oshtemo Township receives many resident concerns about traffic speeds, so the Township took action to respond to these safety concerns by investing in a second **radar speed trailer**. The technologically sophisticated speed trailer is dedicated for use on Oshtemo Township roads and neighborhoods. It is compact with a large speed display and a battery power system with solar panel charging, allowing the unit to be in nearly continuous use from location to location without downtime for recharging. The speed display for approaching traffic is a reminder of the speed limit and a caution for speeding drivers to slow down. On-board traffic data collection continuously captures vehicle speeds, direction, length and count for both approaching and departing vehicles. Partnering with the Kalamazoo County Sheriff’s Office, reports are shared to help direct traffic patrol officers to areas of concern. The Township remains committed to the safety of residents and visitors, and this provides an important tool toward that goal.



“Information garnered through this new speed trailer will prove invaluable with the reduction of accidents and related traffic issues.” - Lt. Troy Faulk, KCSD



Thank you! We would like to recognize the following people, businesses, and foundations for their support of the Capital Campaign for Drake Farmstead Park. Together, these civic-minded folks have donated approximately \$230,000 for improvements to our community's newest park, which will be located at 927 North Drake Road. Combined with Oshtemo Township's commitment of \$250,000, we have a grand total of \$480,000. **Just \$20,000 left to raise in order to meet our goal of \$500,000!** If you would like to help, please complete the form below or contact Karen High, Oshtemo Township Parks Director, at khigh@oshtemo.org or (269) 216-5233.

Curt and Liz Aardema
 Bob and Laura Ailes
 Apex Contractors, Inc.
 Balkema Excavating
 Christine C. Ballard
 Bob and Myra Baugher
 Cheri Bell
 Pat and Carl Benson
 Best Way Disposal
 Scott and Julie Betzler
 Nancy Biro
 Blackberry Systems
 Halli and Grace Borgford
 Jean Bourner
 Jim and Elaine Branch
 Larry Brelje
 Richard Brewer and Katy Takahashi
 James M. and Mary Anne Britvec
 BS&A Software
 William and Darlene Buell
 Dave and Kathy Campbell
 LaVerne and Deborah Caron
 Jack Cogswell
 David and Diana Corning
 Nancy Culp
 Irv and Alberta Cummings
 Adam and Lisa Danapolis
 Dan and Linda Derfny
 William E. Dimond
 Nancy Donovan
 Jesse Duranceau
 Edwards Garment
 Valerie and Ken Eisenberg
 ELC Leasing Corporation
 Kalamazoo River Community Recreational Foundation
 Rick and Deb Everett
 Janet Everitt and David Marousek
 Fader Equipment
 Fahey, Schultz, Burzych, Rhodes, PLC
 Kathryn A. Falor
 Dusty Farmer
 First National Bank of Michigan
 Lacey and Zak Ford
 Wes and Annmarie Freeland
 Jim and Roxanne Frey

Kathleen Garland-Rike
 Genzink Appraisal Company
 John W. Gesink
 Glas Associates
 Larry and Pat Glass
 Gloria J. (Slack) Greig
 Gary Greenop
 Sue Grossman
 Nancy Hamilton
 Libby Heiny-Cogswell
 Jim Hess
 Karen High
 Lydia Hines
 Jack and Andy Hopkins
 John and Peggy Hopkins
 Keith and Mary Kay Hopkins
 Connie Houts
 Steve Humphrey
 Matthew Hunt
 Irving S. Gilmore Foundation
 Pam and Mark Jackson
 Virginia Jacobowitz
 Jerre Locke James
 Phil Johnson and Mary Baggerman
 Kalsec Charitable Activities Team
 Ali Khan
 Lake Michigan Mailers
 Freya Lake
 Langeland Family Funeral Homes
 Robert Latterner
 Kenn and Irene Livingston
 Millard and Madelyn Loy
 MacAllister Rentals
 Betty Upjohn Mason
 Barb McMann
 Joyce McNally
 Stanley Medendorp
 The Meijer Foundation
 Metro Toyota
 Neal and Amy Miedema
 Charles and Doris Miller
 William L. Miller
 Moses Fire Equipment, Inc
 Mulders Landscape Supplies
 Natural Health Center
 Gary and Lillian Neff

Nelson Breech Nave, AIA
 North Coast Window Works
 OCBA Landscape Architects
 Kay Oppliger
 Ludwig and Marie Ouzoonian
 Anne and Paul Pancella
 Robert and Jane Pangle
 Becky and Denny Patzer
 Robert H. Pikkaart
 James Porter
 Todd and Carolyn Rhodes
 Cheryl Rodbard
 Julie Rogers and Ed Orloff
 Patricia Ruppel
 Karl and Joyce Sandelin
 Susanne L. Schipper
 Larry and Marilyn Schlack
 Terry and Jackie Schley
 Bill and Marcia Schrader
 Roy Secor
 David Sheldon
 William Slack
 Paul and Pam Sotherland
 Gary and Debra Start
 Kathryn Steadman
 Steensma Lawn & Power
 Kara and Robert Stewart
 Jim and Mary Jo Strehlow
 Brian and Jackie Stults
 Adam Tabor
 Steve Taplin
 Grant Taylor
 TGAP Ventures LLC
 Joyce and William Truscott
 Betty Upjohn Mason
 Richard and Carol Van Antwerp
 Ken Vandervest
 Bill and Starr Waldron
 Dr. Michael and Peggy Warlick
 Jennifer Wilson
 Dale Woodin
 Woodsmiths Custom Millwork
 Darla and Tom Wright
 Yoshi and Betty Yagi
 Mr. and Mrs. Charles Zhang

Add my name to the list! I'd like to contribute to Drake Farmstead Park too!

- To donate by credit card, please visit www.oshtemofriends.org/donate
- To donate by cash or check, please mail or deliver to: Oshtemo Township Hall, 7275 West Main Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49009. Checks should be made payable to Oshtemo Friends of the Parks. Please include your name and address so we know who to thank!

Oshtemo Friends of the Parks is a qualified 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. Your charitable gift is tax deductible to the full extent of state and federal law.

Now Accepting Reservations for 2018!

Planning a special event in 2018? Consider Oshtemo Township's convenient and affordable parks and community buildings for your next event! Our picnic shelters are clean, well-maintained, and feature plenty of outdoor space for fun and games. Or check out the unique indoor event spaces at the **Oshtemo Community Center** and **Grange Hall**, now with the option of serving alcohol. See below for an overview of each of our rental properties. **More details, rental applications, and reservation calendars are available online at oshtemo.org/parks-and-recreation-facilities/** or call the Township Hall at (269) 375-4260.

The picnic shelter at **Flesher Field**, 3664 South Ninth Street, is conveniently located close to our newest playground and features an attractive wood pergola. It is handicap accessible, has two charcoal grills, and holds nine picnic tables.

Flesher Field's newest feature is a gazebo and garden area with native wildflowers, grasses, flowering shrubs and trees. It can be rented for outdoor weddings, concerts, and other events. Rentals include the 20' wide gazebo, lawn area with space for approximately 300 guests, and crushed stone paths. Tent space and electricity are available if desired.

The picnic shelter at **Township Park**, located behind the Township Hall at 7275 West Main Street, is strategically placed between the playground, tennis courts, and wiffleball field. It is handicap accessible, has a charcoal grill, and holds 12 picnic tables.

Picnic shelter / gazebo rental fees for Oshtemo Township residents are \$35 for a half day or \$70 for a full day from Monday through Thursday and increase to \$50 for a half day or \$100 for a full day from Friday through Sunday. Fees are higher for those that reside outside of Oshtemo Township.

Grange Hall, 3234 North 3rd Street, is a charming historic building with ties to Oshtemo's agricultural heritage. It is a wonderful venue for family reunions, dances, or concerts. The upper level has an open floor plan with hardwood floors, a raised stage, and restroom. The lower level features a kitchen, tables, chairs, and restrooms. Completely renovated in 2017, the building is now fully accessible. A small playground and basketball court are also located on site. **Rental fee** is \$100 on weekdays (Monday through Thursday) or \$150 on weekends (Friday through Sunday). Security deposit and proof of insurance liability are required. If alcohol will be served, a Host Liquor Liability Insurance Policy and additional security deposit are required. Rental is available only to Oshtemo Township residents.

Originally a fire station, the **Oshtemo Community Center**, 6407 Parkview, features two rooms that can be rented separately or together. Each room includes a small refrigerator, sink, microwave, tables, and chairs. A shared foyer and restrooms are located between the two rooms. **Rental fee** is \$50 for a half day or \$75 for a full day from Monday through Thursday and \$75 for a half day and \$100 for a full day from Friday through Sunday. Security deposit and proof of insurance liability are required. If alcohol will be served, a Host Liquor Liability Insurance Policy and additional security deposit are required. Rental is available only to Oshtemo Township residents.



Picnic shelter at Flesher Field



Gazebo at Flesher Field



Picnic shelter at Oshtemo Township Park



Grange Hall



Oshtemo Community Center



Did You Know? Oshtemo Friends of the Parks offers FREE outdoor concerts at the Flesher Field gazebo and FREE outdoor movies at Township Park during June, July and August each summer! Dates, performers and films will be published in upcoming newsletters, or visit www.oshtemofriends.org for more information.

Oshtemo Fire and Rescue—Heating Fire Safety Tips

Our winter of 2017/18 has arrived with a vengeance. Its recent bone chilling temperatures are predicted to be with us for the foreseeable future. With that in mind, we wanted to remind everyone of a few home heating fire safety tips shared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Furnaces

Your furnace typically sits idle all summer long and although not in use, it can deteriorate during that slumber. Rust and even the arrival of an unwanted pest can negatively alter its functionality and safety. Therefore, an annual inspection is recommended.



Alternative heating sources.

As temperatures dip to new lows, installed heating systems sometimes struggle to keep up with demand. When alternative sources such as space heaters, fireplaces and kerosene heaters are employed, additional cautions must be taken to keep your family safe.



Wood Stoves and Fireplaces

Keep the glass or metal screen closed on a fireplace to prevent hot embers from landing inside your home. Only burn dried, seasoned wood. Put the fire out before going to bed or leaving your home.

Any chimney servicing a wood burning device needs an annual inspection and cleaning. Countless house fires are caused by fires inside a chimney that penetrate into the structural members of a home. Even if you are home, these fires can get a stronghold long before occupants are aware of their existence.

Kerosene Heaters

We always recommend that a unit be approved by an independent testing laboratory such as United Laboratories (UL). That will insure that the unit meets current industry safety standards. Never refill a Kerosene heater inside the house. Even when outside, always wait a few minutes until the unit has cooled before refueling. Hot surfaces and flammable liquids are not a good mixture.



Also, cold fuel can expand and overflow the container once taken into a warm house. Therefore, leave some space in the tank. At the least, spilled Kerosene onto your floor or carpet is nearly impossible to remove. Worst case is that this flammable liquid will act as an accelerant should a flame come into contact.

Finally, as is the case for any appliance that produces heat, keeping all combustible materials at least 3' away is critical.



Chaplain Steve Johnson joins Oshtemo Fire and Rescue

We are pleased to introduce Pastor Steve Johnson as our department's volunteer Chaplain.

Steve came to us with a public safety background which has allowed his nearly immediate integration into a supportive role for our fire and EMS professionals and the citizens we serve.

Early in his career, Steve spent four years as a volunteer firefighter in Fremont, Michigan before shifting his public safety interests into a full-time police officer position for nearly 9 years. Eventually he departed law enforcement to pursue studies in pastoral ministry.

As a graduate of Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music, Cornerstone University (BA), and Moody Graduate School in Chicago (MA), he has served as Pastor of Oakwood Bible Church in Kalamazoo for the past 30 years and continues to do so. In support of his role as Department Chaplain, he has completed the Community Service Chaplaincy program, is certified in Critical Incident Stress Management, and is scheduled for certification training in First Responder Counseling in January 2018. Steve and his wife Beth, remain committed to the needs of their church and our community while enjoying the growth of their 7 grandchildren.

If you have a related skill or interest that you are willing to share for the benefit of our community, please contact us. Fire Corps might be for you. 269-375-0487. mbarnes@oshtemo.org.

Oshtemo Police Protection Update

In 2015, the future of policing in Oshtemo Township was unclear. Negotiations between the Township and Kalamazoo County were stalled, and the possibility of the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department issuing pink slips to officers was likely. Instead, the Township and the County came together with an agreement to continue negotiations to maintain police service. By spring of 2016, Oshtemo Township and Sheriff Rick Fuller amended the contract to include an officer who would focus on community policing, to clarify the role of the lieutenant assigned to the Township, and to include more detailed reports regarding crime statistics, trends and calls for service.

Sheriff Rick Fuller, along with Oshtemo Township Officials, had a vision to provide an officer focused on specific community needs and spending time getting to know the community. Over a year later, Oshtemo using data extracted from the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office CAD system, the Township 'calls for service' are increasing from just over 16,000 in 2015, to over 21,000 calls in 2017. Lt. Faulk explained that some of this increase is a direct result of the increased directed patrols, up from 519 in 2015 to 2,145 in 2017. These patrols, combined with 920 public relations interactions, are part of the proactive community policing strategies that Sheriff Fuller and Oshtemo Township envisioned. Violent crime and property crimes, which had been steadily increasing in the Township since 2010, showed signs of leveling out in 2017, with some specific categories decreasing. In addition, recent December retail frauds from Oshtemo businesses were down 29% for the same time period in 2016. This very dramatic decrease in retail fraud is attributed to two key policing strategies: additional directed patrols strategized by the Oshtemo Lieutenant, and a zero tolerance policy adopted by Sheriff Fuller.

The community policing strategies in the partnership between Kalamazoo County, the Sheriff's Office, and Oshtemo Township are a success. As this model continues, Oshtemo officials expect to see continued improvement in crime levels in 2018.



Tax Season Warnings

The Sheriff's Office continues to warn residents about scam phone calls from thieves' intent on stealing their money or their identity. Criminals may pose as the IRS or other agencies to trick victims out of their money or personal information.

Tips on knowing a fraudulent call intent on gaining personal information:

- **Scammers make unsolicited calls.** Thieves call taxpayers claiming to be IRS officials. They demand that the victim pay a bogus tax bill. They con the victim into sending cash, usually through a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. They may also leave "urgent" callback requests through phone "robo-calls," or via [phishing email](#).
- **Callers try to scare their victims.** Many phone scams use threats to intimidate and bully a victim into paying. They may even threaten to arrest, deport or revoke the license of their victim if they don't get the money.
- **Scams use caller ID spoofing.** Scammers often alter caller ID to make it look like the IRS or another agency is calling. The callers use IRS titles and fake badge numbers to appear legitimate. They may use the victim's name, address and other personal information to make the call sound official.
- **Cons try new tricks all the time.** Some schemes provide an actual IRS address where they tell the victim to mail a receipt for the payment they make. Others use emails that contain a fake IRS document with a phone number or an email address for a reply. These scams often use official IRS letterhead in emails or regular mail that they send to their victims. They try these ploys to make the ruse look official.

The IRS will not:

- Call you to demand immediate payment. The IRS will not call you if you owe taxes without first sending you a bill in the mail.
- Demand that you pay taxes and not allow you to question or appeal the amount you owe.
- Require that you pay your taxes a certain way. For instance, require that you pay with a prepaid debit card.
- Ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to bring in police or other agencies to arrest you for not paying.

Never give personal information to anyone over the phone or the internet.

- Do not give out any information. Hang up immediately.
- If you do receive a letter in the mail, take the letter to a tax professional for help.
- To Report an IRS imposter tax collection scam to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) call 1-800-366-4484.

If you have questions regarding any type of solicited scams or you feel you may be a victim of a fraudulent scam call the Sheriff's Office and ask to speak with an officer.

KCSO Dispatch 269-383-8822

Public Works Update

Water Main Extension Project Wrapping Up

The public water extension project on North 2nd St, West J Ave, and Maple Hill Estates is now in service, with the remaining components nearing completion. This partnership project with the KLA Group provides public water service to residents with private wells affected by the State's tightening of safe drinking water standards for groundwater contaminants associated with the historic KL Ave Landfill. The project installed 9,200 feet of water main to provide public water service to 64 properties.

While the project necessarily removed many trees from the road right-of-way, the project scope will provide professionally recommended replacement trees. Because the pipe installation continued through October and November, the replacement tree work will now be completed in the spring when the weather improves. Per Road Commission of Kalamazoo County policy, the replacement trees cannot be planted in the road right-of-way. Therefore the Township will be seeking permission from the property owners to access their properties to plant the trees near the road right-of-way. A meeting with residents will be scheduled to coordinate this phase of the project and the types of trees the property owners want planted.

KL Ave Sewer Completed

Oshtemo Township completed a ½ mile sewer extension under KL Ave between 8th and 9th Streets, and a short extension south on 8th St to the railroad tracks. This project extends a major sewer interceptor and provides the primary sewage collector for the industrial-zoned area along KL Ave and 8th St. In accordance with newly adopted County Road Commission pavement preservation policies, residents should expect to see the new road chip sealed in 2018 or 2019 to enhance the longevity of pavement's water seal. Research studies have shown that a new pavement will last longer and require less maintenance (i.e., a tax payer savings) if a chip seal is applied 1-2 years following new roadway construction.



USDA Rural Development Loan for Sewer Expansion

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development agency has tentatively accepted the Township's loan application for sewer work in 2018-19. Due to budgetary constraints at the USDA, our overall public sewer project will be funded in stages. The first phase is \$8.35M to install sanitary sewers in Beech Ave, the plat neighborhoods of Fairlane, Meridian, Sky Ridge and Whitegate Farms, and a sewer extension along West Main between 7th and 8th Streets with a sewage pump station about ½ mile north on 7th Street. Subsequent stage(s) will be submitted as new loan applications to USDA each fiscal year thereafter, working in coordination with available USDA funds. Topographic survey and engineering design work has been initiated. The Township is in the final steps of working with USDA of the grant/loan process, and USDA underwriting. The USDA has stated Oshtemo is eligible for some grant money in addition to a steeply discounted-rate for loan financing.

Mandatory Sewer Connections

The USDA loan will be paid through fees for new sewer service connections. For fairness and consistency, this mandatory connection requirement is extended throughout the Township in the manner applicable to state statutes. That is, properties that have sewer service available will need to connect within two years of receipt of formal notice from the Township. Beginning in 2018 the Township will begin sending mandatory connection notices to the 300+ properties that have sewer service available but have not connected. Homes with septic systems installed within the last 15 years may be allowed to extend the window to complete their sewer connection out until their septic system reaches 15 years of age. The Township currently assists home owners with financing the sewer connection fee by offering an installment-payment agreement to home owners. A payment plan of up to 20 years is currently available, and may be extended further by the Board based upon the length of financing provided by USDA to the Township.

Public Works Update Cont.

WMU Business Technical Research Park 2.0

In 2018 Oshtemo Township will be partnering with Western Michigan University and the City of Kalamazoo to expand the WMU Business Technical Research Park, along the west side Drake Road, north of Parkview Avenue. The project is informally known as BTR 2.0. Oshtemo Township will be contributing the public water and public sewer system within the site in anticipation of future connection fees.

Drake Road Non-Motorized Path

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has informed Oshtemo we will receive grant money to help build (in two segments) a non-motorized path along Drake Road, from West Main Street to the railroad tracks. The Township is currently finalizing the lengthy process of acquisition of any remaining easements needed to proceed. The 2018 project is being constructed in two segments due to two separate grant programs being used by the Township. The remainder of the path from the railroad tracks to Stadium Drive is dependent on Amtrak's acceptance of the proposed railroad crossing improvements. If we receive timely Amtrak approval, we will proceed with a pending third MDOT grant to construct this remaining segment. Otherwise, the non-motorized path between the railroad tracks and Stadium Drive will be deferred until the following year.

Master Plan Update

The Oshtemo Township Master Plan provides the long-range vision for our community, guiding the use of land to better realize that vision. In 2017, the Township Planning Commission began work on updating this plan per the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. This five-year update focused on four main topics, which include:

- Planning Drivers – those key trends influencing land use planning and development at the local level.
- Rural Character Preservation Strategy – a set of goals and tactics to save rural character in the western portion of the Township.
- Maple Hill South Sub-Area Plan – an area of the Township outlined in the 2011 Master Plan where land use changes are expected to occur within the next 10 years.
- Future Land Use Plan – the desired land use vision for the Township.



The Planning Commission held their required public hearing on the draft Master Plan Update on December 14, 2017 and a recommendation of approval was forwarded to the Township Board. It is now time for the Township Board to begin their deliberations. The first meeting for this review will be a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, which is scheduled for Thursday, January 25th at 7:00 pm. The full draft Plan is currently available on the Planning Department's webpage at www.oshtemo.org.

Public comment is welcome! Comments on the plan can be provided at any time through either attending a Township Board meeting, writing a letter directly to the Township Board, or sending an email to Julie Johnston, Planning Director at jjohnston@oshtemo.org who will forward the message to the Board. If you would like to get information sent to you directly, consider sending your email to Julie to be placed on the Master Plan contacts list.



OSHTEMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

This last year brought us good news and sad news. On the good side, there was much progress made on the renovation of the house at the Drake Farmstead. Then, the community was saddened last July by the death of our OHS President, Millard Loy. He was a special person, one who loved this community. We all miss him.

As we did in 2017, there will not be any meetings/programs in the months of January and February. There will be a special meeting in March.

Thursday, March 15th - "March Springboard to 2018", 7:00 p.m. at the Township Hall, 7275 West Main St.

At this meeting we will focus on our organization, taking stock of our accomplishments, current projects, and what we want to accomplish in the future. Besides our OHS Members, we will include the Oshtemo Township Board & staff and Friends of the Park Board. We urge everyone to BRING A FRIEND to this meeting. We need new people and new ideas. Refreshments will be served.

Let's start the New Year off on a positive note, with lots of people and lots of ideas, in order to move us forward in 2018.

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

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