

TALK OF THE TOWNSHIP

News You Can Use from Port Huron Township

Fall/Winter 2017

www.PortHuronTownship.org

Volume 20 Issue 1



TOWNSHIP OFFICE

3800 Lapeer Road
Port Huron, MI 48060
(810) 987-6600
Fax: 987-6712
Office Hours:
Monday-Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

BOARD MEETINGS

Public Welcome

Township Board
1st & 3rd Monday 7:00 p.m.

Park Commission
1st Wednesday 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission
1st Thursday 7:00 p.m.

TOWNSHIP OFFICERS

Robert G. Lewandowski, Jr.
Supervisor

Benita E. Davis
Clerk

Peter Shonka
Treasurer

Trustees
Donald Dudas

William E. Livingston

John Reno

Steve Riehl

SUPERVISOR'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer. One thing I would like to mention with winter coming is for residents to please make sure that the fall leaves and any other debris are cleared from your driveway culvert, if you have one. This will help prevent drainage problems in the spring.

Finally! The last portion of Lapeer Road running through the Township is getting rebuilt. Along with the road, there will be a sidewalk on the south side and a bike path on the north side. This will compliment what was done on Lapeer to the east. Once the work is completed, I would like to look at extending the decorative lighting as well.

Another road project for next year will be the intersection of Michigan and Lapeer. The majority of the work will be done on Michigan Road to extend the length of the left turn lanes. The current lanes only allow for one or two cars, which impedes those cars going straight on Michigan or turning right onto Lapeer. Most of the cost of this work will be covered under a grant.

One other thing that I have mentioned before is, please pay attention to the posted speeds in the Township. Speeding is a problem here; I'm sure you don't want people speeding through your neighborhood, so don't speed through theirs. I don't think some people look at roads like West Water, Michigan, Range, or even Lapeer as neighborhoods, but they are.

It is an honor to serve the residents and businesses of Port Huron Township as your Supervisor. Please feel free to contact me with your questions, concerns or ideas by either stopping in, with a phone call, or via email.

Have a good holiday season,
Bob

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

The Port Huron Township Building, Planning and Zoning Department handles these three areas related to construction and development in the township. The first staff person that you will usually talk with is Amy Hurd, who is our nationally certified "Permit Technician" and also a certified Michigan Assoc. of Planning "Citizen Planner". She can answer your general questions and process all the applications and plans required for all residential, commercial or industrial projects.

The Building Official, Kirk Lavigne, reviews development projects to provide recommendations to the township officials and assists individuals through the development process from Planning Commission approval to final construction. Our website has information regarding this and a number of other items, as well as the applications required for your project. Please feel free to visit our website and look over the information provided, such as our 2015 Master Pathways Plan or our online ordinances, and please feel free to call or email us with any questions you may have.



Port Huron Township is a proud member of St. Clair County's Northeastern Watershed Group and has been protecting and enhancing our rivers and lakes since 2002. Check out the programs and activities offered for families to support clean water in our area. For more information, visit www.sccwater.org.

FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

FIRE CHIEF FOR THE DAY



Friday October 20th, three students from Michigamme Elementary were selected for the *Fire Chief For The Day* contest. All students in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades submitted essays about fire safety. Port Huron Township Firefighters, acting as the judges, chose one winner from each grade. Fifth

Grader Megan Hoy was chosen Fire Chief, Kelsey Rogers, 4th Grade, was chosen Assistant Fire Chief, and Third Grader Sophia Gradowski was selected as Fire Marshal. All three students rode on Ladder -1 to pick up pizza donated by Happy's Pizza. Each of the winning classrooms received prizes for all of the students as well.

WHAT DOES A PAID ON CALL FIREFIGHTER COST?

Once someone comes to the fire station, they fill out an application just like for any other job. If the person meets the requirements, a background check is conducted. This includes criminal history, driving record, work history, social media look up, and a background check through Central Dispatch. With the time involved, it can cost up to \$100.

From there the individual is brought in for a panel interview. Five members of the department ask a fixed set of questions over about an hour; again, about \$100. If approved, the individual goes on to be introduced at the Township Board meeting for a vote to hire. This is pending successful passing of a physical exam costing about \$350. After that, their training starts. Within one year, the candidate will attend a six month fire academy, two nights a week and every other Saturday. They do not get paid during the training but all training is paid for by the Township. The cost of an academy is \$1,500 per student, \$1,000 of which is paid for by the State of Michigan Fireworks funding.

Once they graduate the academy, they are issued new protective equipment; mask (not including the air pack), coat, helmet, gloves, boots, pants, hood, and reflective vest, which totals about \$3,000. The next step in training is Emergency Medical Technician training. This is another 6 months of class twice a week at night for 4 hours. Upon successful completion, the student must pass a test to be licensed with the State. Total cost, \$1,000. The member is then issued a medical equipment vest and supplies worth \$150. The last step is issuance of a radio at a cost of \$3,000.

The final cost is approximately \$9,500 and more than two years of work to be able to operate on an emergency scene.

LITTLE LEAGUE

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendar for the 2018 Port Huron Township Little League (PHTLL) registration dates:

Location:

Port Huron Township DPW
4134 West Water, Port Huron Township

Dates:

Wednesday, February 7, 2018 from
5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 10, 2018 from
9:00 a.m. – Noon

Wednesday, February 28, 2018 from
5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 3, 2018 from
9:00 a.m. – Noon

Questions:

Call Marcy Cameron @ 810-300-8531

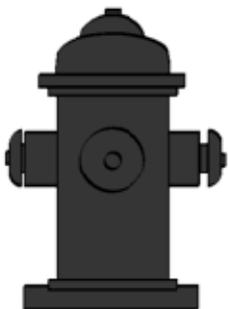
Documentation needed:

Player: Birth certificate (Unless you played for PHTLL last year we already have it)

Parent/Guardian:

Utility Bill

Valid Driver's License or Michigan ID



This winter, please clear the snow away from fire hydrants on your property so that they are easily accessed. This can save emergency personnel precious time when needed.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

DID YOU BUY A HOME IN THE TOWNSHIP IN 2017?

If you did, you need to be aware that your 2018 property taxes may be higher than what they were in 2017.

Why does this happen?

There are two values on properties, the State Equalized Value (SEV) and the Taxable Value.

The State Equalized Value is approximately 50% of fair market value. It rises and falls with property values in the neighborhood. The Taxable value is the amount upon which your property taxes are calculated. It starts out equal to the SEV. Unlike the SEV, by law, the Taxable Value can only increase 5% or the rate of inflation, whichever is less, under the current owner. When property values are strong, the SEV typically increases at a greater rate than the Taxable value, which creates a difference between the two amounts.

When a property sells, the Taxable Value is uncapped and must be brought up equal to the SEV in the year following the sale.

So what does this mean to a recent purchaser? Here is a typical scenario:

John and Jane Brown have owned and occupied their home for 35 years. The 2017 SEV is \$50,000. The 2017 Taxable Value is \$35,000. They put their house up for sale in April, and Joe and Mary Green bought it on December 15th.

The 2017 tax bills for the property are as follows:

Summer: $35,000 \times .0189961$ (millage rate) = \$648.86

Winter: $35,000 \times .0138555$ (millage rate) = \$484.94

In 2018, the SEV for the property increases to \$53,000.

Because of the required uncapping, the Taxable Value is brought up equal to the SEV at \$53,000. Joe and Mary Green's taxes for 2018 will be as follows:

Summer: $53,000 \times .0189961$ (millage rate) = \$1,006.79

Winter: $53,000 \times .0138555$ (millage rate) = \$734.34

That's a difference of \$607.33. Escrows are usually calculated based on the previous year's taxes, which can result in a shortage of funds. When there is a shortage in escrow funds, mortgage companies typically feel they will fall short the next year too, so they double the shortage amount and divide it by 12 to determine the increase in monthly escrow payment. Depending on the date of annual escrow calculation, this increase could result in the Green's house payment going up by over \$100 per month.

What should I do?

Be prepared! The Assessor's Office can assist you in estimating the additional funds you will need to contribute to avoid an escrow shortfall. Call Penny at 810-987-6600, ext. 20 to get started. Remember, uncapping is required by statute. Share this article with anyone purchasing a home in Michigan to help them avoid financial complications later.



ATTENTION SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS!

Is the combined true cash value of all of your personal property less than \$80,000? If so, you are probably eligible to receive the personal property tax exemption, which eliminates your personal property tax bill. Here is the most important information regarding the exemption:

- You must apply for the exemption annually by completing Form 5076
- The Assessor will mail Form 5076 to you in January
- (it will be in the same envelope as the Personal Property Tax Statement)
- Complete Form 5076
- Return the completed, signed form to the Assessor's Office by **FEBRUARY 10TH**
- Postmark is acceptable
- Postmarks after February 10th cannot be accepted
- **LATE FORMS CANNOT BE PROCESSED**
- Call the Assessor's Office at 810-987-6600 for more detailed information

REMOVING A DECEASED PERSON'S NAME FROM PROPERTY TITLE

If you wish to remove the name of a deceased person from the title of a property, this can be done by simply recording their death certificate at the St. Clair County Register of Deeds Office. Contact the Register of Deeds Office at 810-989-6930 for hours and their new fee schedule. Once you have recorded the death certificate, please contact the Assessor's Office with the liber and page of recording so that we can make the change to our ownership records.

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP OFFICE

3800 Lapeer Road
Port Huron, MI 48060

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Permit No. 747

DDA

The retail space north of Big Lots, Save-a-Lot and Family Dollar has been completely remodeled by Grifols Talecris Plasma Resources. 15,000 square feet was remodeled to house a blood plasma collection facility.

The site, originally built in the 1960's, has also benefited from the major rehab of sidewalks, parking lot repairs, landscaping and building cover design.

This is an excellent example of repurposing that works. Plasma Resources is providing extra income to clients and securing blood plasma needed for research. The increased foot traffic is benefiting adjoining businesses as well. Fast food restaurants and retail outlets nearby are enjoying increased business, as reported by managers.

The building still has additional space available next to the plasma center that they hope to fill soon.

Paul G. Maxwell DDA Director

WINS

Port Huron Township utilizes St. Clair County WINS (Warning Information Notification System) to notify residents of water outages, traffic accidents, and any number of other situations that may impact you.

To sign up, go to the St. Clair County Emergency Management website, or for more information, call them at (810) 989-6965.



**ANNUAL HOLIDAY
DECORATING CONTEST**

Open to all residents. Nominate yourself or your neighbors! Call the Township or stop in for your nomination form, which must be completed in order to compete. Judging will be held on December 11th – Lights need to be turned on by 6 pm. Plaques will be awarded to the top four homes.