

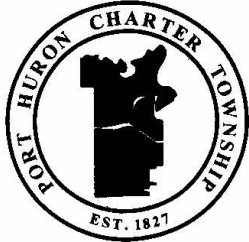
TALK OF THE TOWNSHIP

News You Can Use from Port Huron Township

Fall/Winter 2011

www.PortHuronTownship.org

Volume 11 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

Nancy G. Collins
Treasurer

Trustees
Bill Johnson
Mark T. Reilly
Peter Shonka
William E. Livingston

SUPERVISOR'S MESSAGE

This past summer has proven to be a very busy one in Port Huron Township. There has been a lot of activity on projects, and I anticipate that there will be much more to come. Watch for a huge announcement regarding business development coming soon.

The Bakers Field Project should be 95% complete at the end of this construction season, with just a few items to finish up in the Spring of 2012. The project recently received a \$50,000 donation from CN Railroad. CN donated the money to the Bakers Field Project in lieu of payment of a \$32,000 fire services invoice that they had disputed. Instead of lengthy court proceedings over the billing, the Township met with CN and negotiated the \$50,000 contribution. The Township recently received a \$7,000 grant from the Community Foundation, which will be applied toward constructing the kayak launch at Bakers Field.

The Bakers Field Project is being funded by a grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund and monies the Township receives from the St. Clair County Park Millage. We truly believe that the Bakers Field Park will be a great asset to the community.

Finally!! It looks like the construction of the overpass over the train tracks at Michigan Road is scheduled to begin this fall with an anticipated completion next fall. Once this is complete, Michigan Road south of the overpass to Dove Road will be reconstructed. Both projects are long overdue.

The MDOT corridor project is coming along. The contractor thanks everyone in the area for being extremely patient with all the issues a project like this causes; especially the folks on Westland and in the West Water area. Dan's Excavating has been using the Township's Park #1 (by the Lions Hall) as a staging area for equipment during the work. In exchange, they have offered to complete the ADA upgrades to the park.

I believe the project will be a win for the Township, providing full access to Lapeer Road from the expressway and a safer entrance plan for the Water Street to I-94 eastbound ramp. In conjunction with that, please note that Water Street from West Water to I-94 is scheduled to be rebuilt when the I-94 corridor is finished. This should happen in 2013.

As always, I am proud to serve as your Port Huron Township Supervisor. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding these or any other issues facing the Township.

FIND YOUR NAME!



The name of a Township resident, selected randomly from computer records, is "hidden" out of context somewhere in this newsletter. Look carefully to see if it's you! Find your name and you will receive a gift certificate for Nick's Four Roses Café. If it is your name that is hidden in this newsletter, claim the gift certificate by calling the Township office by November 18th at 987-6600.

TREASURER'S OFFICE

2ND ANNUAL FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL

The 2nd annual Family Fun Festival was held at Memorial Park on Saturday, July 23, 2011 and was a great success. We had yard sales, crafters and kid's games and activities. The Fire Department gave a Jaws of Life demonstration and showed how a sprinkling system can slow the spread of fire. The sale of spaces in the yard sale and craft area helps us provide food at Thanksgiving for families in need. The 2012 Family Fun Festival is scheduled for Saturday, August 18, 2012. If you have a group or an organization that would like to participate or have an idea for our festival please contact us at 810-987-6600.

THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE RAFFLE

We are holding a raffle to raise money to provide food for Thanksgiving dinners for families in need. The prize is a 32" flat screen TV and includes an Xbox 360 with Kinect. Tickets are \$1.00 each and can be purchased at the Township office at 3800 Lapeer Rd. The drawing will be held on Friday, November 18, 2011 at 3:00. You do not need to be present to win. This would make a great Christmas gift!!

SIGN UP FOR A THANKSGIVING DINNER

Sign up now for a Thanksgiving dinner. Based on income, we will be providing groceries for a complete Thanksgiving dinner to families in need. The dinner includes a turkey, stuffing, potatoes, gravy, cranberries, vegetables, Jello, dinner rolls and dessert. Proof of income is required. For more information please call Nancy or Jennifer at 810-987-6600 ext 22 or 23.

ONLINE PAYMENTS

When you pay a bill online, and your bank sends us a check, please make sure the account number on the check is correct. You have separate account numbers for your water/sewer bill, tax bill, cost recovery payments and permits. Failure to provide the correct account number could result in your payment being applied to the wrong account. If we receive your tax payment with your water/sewer account on it, we apply that payment to your water/sewer account; if your water payment is received with your tax number on it, it will be applied to your tax bill, etc. It is very important that you use the correct account number when paying online.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Terry Sargent, Assessor for Port Huron Township for over 20 years, realized his retirement dreams in June of this year. While we were all sad to see him go, we know that he had been looking forward to it for quite some time. We wish Terry nothing but the best and thank him for his years of service to our community.

Kim Riedel is Port Huron Township's new acting Assessor. Kim comes to us via St. Clair County Equalization, and we're very pleased to have her with us. Kim can be reached on Monday and Thursday from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at 810-987-6600, ext. 16.

Assessment change notices will be mailed out in February, 2012. If you disagree with the 2012 proposed value of your property, please contact the Assessor's Office to schedule an appointment to appear before the Board of Review. We will begin taking appointments on the day of mailing.

As always, if you have questions regarding your property values, the Principal Residence Exemption (homestead) or any other related issues, please feel free to contact us.

IMPORTANT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD ON **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2011 AT 7:00 P.M.** AT THE PORT HURON TOWNSHIP OFFICE AT 3800 LAPEER ROAD, PORT HURON, MI 48060

FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSIDERING THE 2012 PROPOSED BUDGET AND TO SET THE MILLAGE RATES TO BE ASSESSED ON THE TOWNSHIP AT LARGE FOR: STREET LIGHTS = .3190 MILLS AND POLICE PROTECTION = 2.3600 MILLS

THESE PROPOSED RATES AFFECT ALL REAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF PORT HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP.

ANY PROTESTS TO THIS ASSESSMENT MUST BE MADE IN PERSON AT THE PUBLIC HEARING OR FILED IN WRITING WITH THE TOWNSHIP CLERK PRIOR TO THE CLOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING.

THE BOARD MAY NOT ADOPT ITS PROPOSED 2012 BUDGET UNTIL AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING. COPIES OF THE PROPOSED 2012 BUDGET, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE RATES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS IN THE OFFICE OF THE TOWNSHIP CLERK.

CODE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Hunting season will soon be in full swing. Please be considerate of your neighbor's property; trespass laws exist to protect both the hunter and the property owner. Hunters must be at least 450 ft. (that's the length of 1½ football fields) away from buildings to discharge a firearm. In addition to the Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources, local ordinances also regulate firearms and hunting within the Township. Please contact Terry Baker to ensure that you are in compliance.

Motor homes, campers, boats and trailers must be parked in the back yard or alongside your home. Keep in mind that storing these items in the front yard or driveway is an ordinance violation.

Foreclosures and vacant homes for sale present a prime target for thieves. If you notice suspicious or irregular activity, call the Township Office between 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Mon – Wed or the Sheriff's Office at either 985-8115 or **emergency only**, at 911.

PHOSPHORUS FERTILIZER RESTRICTION ON LAWNS

In December 2010 the Michigan Fertilizer Law Public Act 299, a statewide phosphorus application restriction, went into law. It prohibits the use of phosphorus fertilizers on residential and commercial lawns. Starting **January 1, 2012, a person shall not apply any fertilizer with phosphorus to lawns.**

Phosphorus is a nutrient found in fertilizer and is labeled as "P" in the equation N-P-K on the bag. After January 2012, only bags with the "P" as "0" will be sold (e.g. 21-0-4). Exceptions to using a fertilizer containing phosphorus include a soil test indicating that phosphorus is needed, or the establishment of a new lawn. Soil testing kits are available at the St. Clair County MSU Extension office for \$15.00 by calling 810-989-6935.

Proper fertilization is important for a healthy lawn which is an easy step to protecting our rivers and streams. When fertilizer is put down at the right time and in the right way, it strengthens lawns by holding back soil and pollutants and minimizing the need for pesticides. Improper fertilization (leaving fertilizer on paved surfaces, using improper type, applying to frozen ground) harms our water because it washes into ditches, streams and storm drains. Phosphorus in our waterways causes algae to grow which looks unsightly, smells offensive, restricts recreational uses, and uses up all the oxygen in the water that fish need.

Want a vibrant spring lawn? Fertilize in the fall. Fall is the best time for lawns to absorb nutrients and develop a strong root system. And always make fertilizer-free zones by keeping a distance between fertilizer and rivers, lakes, ponds, storm drains Donald A. Yeitter or streams. This will protect these areas from excessive algae growth. For a complete look at the Michigan Fertilizer Law, please visit www.michigan.gov/mda-fertilizer, or for more questions, contact the St. Clair County Storm Water Program at the Health Department at 810-987-5306.

PORT HURON CHARTER TOWNSHIP HERITAGE MUSEUM

There will be a Halloween Party on Saturday, October 22, 2011 from 1-3 p.m. at the Malane Schoolhouse. All activities are free, so come join us for some fun and games!! The engraved bricks have been installed, and they look wonderful! Stop in to see the paved walk-way in front of the caboose. There's still time to purchase a brick for the walk-way – they make great birthday, anniversary or Christmas presents. The cost is \$30 and order forms are available at the Township Administrative Offices.

We will be holding a fundraising auction in the Spring of 2012 and are accepting donations. All proceeds from the auction go to benefit the Heritage Museum. Items can be dropped off at the Administrative Office, or contact Jim Robinson at 810-300-3750 to schedule a pick up.

Do you remember the cemetery on the Flats? The Beach School? What about dairy farms in the Township? Or maybe you attended The Malane School? If so, we'd love to hear from you. The Museum Board meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Port Huron Township Heritage Museum, which is located behind the Administrative Offices, 3800 Lapeer Road. If you have questions about what we do, if you'd like more information about becoming a member, or you just want to share a memory, come see us or contact Jim Robinson at 810-300-3750.

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Randy's Rental, 795 24th Street, is located in the former Riverside Printing building. We certainly are happy to have them as a part of our community. Stop in and say hello! We'd also like to extend our congratulations and warmest welcome to Mike Morris. Mike, a former employee of Jet's Pizza, recently purchased the franchise located at 1345 24th Street. Mike has strong ties to our community and we wish him great success. After you visit Randy's Rental, stop in and say hello to Mike and his crew as well! We also are happy to report that the DDA is busy with business developments and recruitment of new businesses for the Township as well as our support of existing businesses. Our vision has long been – and continues to be: Building new relationships and looking for other opportunities for growth and job creation within our community. The new I-94/I-69 expansion and Lapeer Road connector have opened up new areas for growth. We will keep you informed as to new developments within our Township. Thanks for your continued support and encouragement of our growing community.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

With the cooler weather pushing aside the warm starry nights, could it be that fall is in the air? Sure enough... so with that we would like to remind everybody about a few tips to keep your family and home safe!



- Be sure to have your furnace, fireplace, or wood burner maintained by a certified HVAC repair technician before starting to use them with the cold weather.
- Remember to test your smoke detectors. October is a good time to have a drill with the family to remind them how to escape and stay out during a fire!
- Be sure to sleep soundly with a Carbon Monoxide detector keeping you safe from the #1 form of poisoning deaths in the U.S.
- With fall comes darkness earlier in the evening. Wear bright clothes, reflective striping, and use flashlights to make sure you are seen by cars if you are out playing, walking, or running.
- On Halloween, keep costumes simple and safe. Use makeup instead of masks so kids can see. Don't use long capes or complicated costumes that will cause a child to trip. Wear light colored clothing or reflective materials and be sure to have a light when trick or treating!
- For Thanksgiving, be cautious with your turkey deep fryer....never cook with it on a wooden deck, in the house, or in the garage. Keep kids away and NEVER put a frozen turkey into hot oil. The results could turn a holiday into a disaster.
- Be sure to keep doors and walks clear of snow in the winter months. Emergency exits can easily be blocked by snow and ice.
- Use an artificial tree that is fireproof with UL listed lights. If you choose to have a real tree in your home, keep it watered at least daily and be careful with holiday candles.

These tips and others are available for you at NFPA.org, USFA.org, and Ready.gov. You can also call the Fire Station with questions at 982-3543.

TRUSTEE NEWS

It was with regret that the Township Board received Frank Colby, Jr.'s resignation from the Township Board of Trustees on August 15th. Frank served the residents of Port Huron Township as a Trustee for 19 years. His experience and knowledge of local government as well as his down to earth & fiscally responsible nature were valuable attributes in his service to the residents of our community. We extend our best wishes and thankfulness to Frank and his family.

On September 6th the Township Board appointed William E. Livingston to serve the remaining term for the Trustee vacancy. William ran for a Trustee position in November 2008, and because he still had an interest in the position, the Township Board felt that he would make a good candidate. William is very involved in our community and we believe his opinions and experiences will benefit the Township and that he will prove to be a very productive and valuable member of the Township Board.

GOLF CARTS ON PUBLIC STREETS

If you own a golf cart, it cannot be driven on any road or street with a speed limit of 35 miles an hour or higher. You must also be a licensed driver to drive a golf cart. We are seeing kids driving golf carts, some with several other kids onboard. Parents, please be aware that you are responsible for any accidents or injuries caused by an under-aged, unlicensed person driving your golf cart.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTEST



Nominate yourself or your neighbors. Call the Township or stop in for your nomination form. Judging will be held on Monday, December 12, 2011. Lights need to be turned on by 6:00 p.m

MASTER PLAN UPDATES

This fall and winter, the St Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission will be assisting the Township Planning Commission with updates to Port Huron Township's Master Plan. We value your input and want to hear from you. Public Hearings will be held at a later date regarding the changes, and as always, you are welcome to attend Planning Commission meetings. Regular meetings are held the first Thursday of every month, 7:00 p.m. at the Township Administrative Offices. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Kirk Lavigne at 810-987-6600, ext. 15.

Family Restaurant

24th Street by Krogers

966.3900 • Fax 966.3999

Monday-Saturday 6am to 9pm

Sunday 6am to 8pm

FREE DELIVERY

WITH ORDERS OVER \$20



CLERK'S CORNER

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

February 28, 2012 Presidential Primary
May 8, 2012 Possible School
August 7, 2012 Primary
November 6, 2012 General Election



BUSINESS LICENSE NEWS

All businesses must renew their license for 2012 by January 3, 2012. If you do not receive your renewal in the mail by 11/30/11, please contact us.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We currently have openings on the following boards:

- Recreation**
- Museum**
- Election Workers**
- Cemetery Historian Society**

Please contact the Township Office at 987-6600 for more information.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT - SIGNAGE

Typically within the Township, political, historical, governmental, decorative and religious signs are subject to very few regulations. Commercial signage, however, is generally regulated to reflect a standard that has been developed over time within a community.

If you are a business owner, we encourage you to contact the Township's Building Department prior to purchasing any signs to advertise your business. We'd be happy to assist you with determining the type and size sign that both complies with our community standards and maximizes your advertising potential.

WATER OFFICE

It's hard to believe that summer has come and gone already and winter is once again knocking at our door. Here are just a few reminders as the days grow shorter and the nights get colder:

- Protect your water meter! Take a few extra minutes to be sure your crawl space is air tight and your meter insulated to help prevent freezing. A few extra minutes now could save you a \$200 frozen/broken meter fee later.
- If you are a snowbird, don't forget to apply for your refuse suspension. If you will be absent from your home for a period of 3 consecutive months between November 1, 2011 and May 1, 2012, you may qualify for the suspension of one quarterly refuse charge (\$33.79). Forms may be obtained on the utilities page of our website: www.porthurontownship.org or by stopping in at the Township administration office.
- Assist your elderly, homebound or disabled neighbors by clearing snow and ice from their sidewalks, driveways and fire hydrants. Freezing weather and immobility pose special problems for many of the Township residents during the winter months. Residents are encouraged to check on the welfare of their homebound and elderly neighbors.

DPW

DPW staff will be flushing the fire hydrants in the coming weeks. You may notice a temporary change in your water pressure during this time. Pressure will be restored once they have finished flushing the hydrants in your area.

Don't forget to clear the snow from around hydrants in your yard. In the event of an emergency, precious time can be saved if the DPW and fire department have clear access.

Just a reminder to residents and business owners that it is illegal under Michigan law (Michigan Vehicle Code §257.677a) to shovel, plow or deposit snow, ice or slush onto or across any roadway or shoulder of the roadway in a manner which obstructs the safety vision of the driver of a motor vehicle. Doing so is punishable by a fine of up to \$100 and/or a jail sentence of up to 90 days.