



WATERTOWN

CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Volume 30 Issue 2

Summer 2016

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www.WatertownTownship.com

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday
9am - 5pm

**Township Offices
Closed:**

Monday, September 5
Friday, November 11
Thursday, November 24
Friday, November 25

PROPERTY TAXES DUE

5pm, September 14

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Newsletter Committee

George Weitzel, Chair
Deborah Adams
Janice Thelen
Christy Sochay, Coordinator

STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP

JOHN MAAHS, TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR | JENNIFER TUBBS, TOWNSHIP MANAGER
DONNA CASE, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Over the years, Watertown Township has taken the necessary steps to assure that programs and services continue at their current levels despite fluctuating revenues. The 2016 budgeted revenues are still less than they were ten years ago, but they are slightly more than they were last year, which means property values have stabilized.

The annual independent audit of the township confirmed the township's financial health. It is because of the township board's fiscal philosophy that the township has been able to maintain its AA+ credit rating, while others in the area have reduced. Watertown Township operates on 4.5272 mills, which continues to decrease due to the Headlee Amendment. At the same time, costs for the services the township provides are continually increasing. Watertown Township has no special millages and operates all services out of the general fund. The township has been able to adjust to the lower tax revenues by reducing spending, staff, and by being fiscally conservative throughout the last decade.

Residents often question how much of their tax dollars stay within the township. Consider this example: A home worth approximately \$150,000 with a taxable value of approximately \$75,000 has a total tax bill of approximately \$2,445. Of this amount, only \$340 of those tax dollars are paid to the township for township services and operations.

The tax revenues received by the township are used to fund programs and services such as the recycling center maintenance; road graveling, resurfacing and chloriding of roads; election administration; cemetery; fire service; planning and zoning; community events; parks; economic development; administration; facility maintenance; grant writing and many other general services. Residents are often surprised to find out that road improvements on all local roads are paid for by the township.

The township is able to continue services without interruption because the township board has made a conscious effort over the last decade to save funds for unforeseen events and future projects in advance. As a result, Watertown Township is able to maintain services while having the lowest tax rate among the cities and the charter townships in Clinton County.

TOWNSHIP CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

DEB ADAMS, TOWNSHIP CLERK | CHRISTY SOCHAY, DEPUTY CLERK

The state primary will be held on August 2, 2016. Polls will be open from 7am - 8pm. In the August primary, you will be able to cast votes for only one party. You cannot vote for candidates of different parties in the primary. The tabulator will reject a ballot that has votes for more than one party.

In the general election, to be held on November 8, 2016, you may vote for candidates of different parties, if you choose. Because there is no longer an option of straight party voting in Michigan, you will need to individually vote for each candidate that you select.

To assist our election inspectors in getting voters processed as efficiently as possible, we request that you have your photo identification out of your wallet and ready to be scanned when you get in line. By scanning your Michigan driver's license or state issued ID, we can pull your individual information up onto our screen in seconds, which is much faster and more accurate than typing in a name. Voters who do not have a photo identification in their possession can still vote, by completing the affidavit on the back of the Application to Vote.

Absentee Voting Information:

Absentee voter ballots are available for all elections. They provide a convenient method for casting a ballot if you are unable to attend the polls on Election Day, or if you meet other criteria for an absentee ballot, such as being over age 60, etc. If you would like to request an absentee ballot application, or to request to be placed on the permanent absentee voter list (which allows us to send you an absent voter application for each election), please contact the township clerk's office at (517) 626-6593.

TOWNSHIP TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT

JANICE THELEN, TOWNSHIP TREASURER | AMY KINNEY, DEPUTY TREASURER

Summer 2016 property tax statements were mailed at the end of June. If you have not received yours, please contact the Treasurer's Department. You will be asked to confirm your mailing address.

In observance of Independence Day and Labor Day, the township offices will be closed on Monday, July 4 and Monday, September 5.

Property taxes are due no later than 5pm on September 14, 2016, to avoid interest fees. Postmarks are not accepted as an indicator of timely payment. Please allow extra time for mail delivery.

Please see the back of your tax statement and inserts for additional payment information.

New Credit Card Processor! The township is now working with *Point&Pay* to process all online credit/debit card payments. By switching to *Point&Pay*, we are now able to take credit card payments at the office. *Point&Pay* works with the following credit cards: American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa. To access the *Point&Pay* screen online, visit the township website at www.watertowntownship.com, scroll to "Quick Links" on the lower right of the home page, click on "Tax and Utility Payments." You will be directed to accessmygov.com for Watertown Township, Clinton Co, MI. On the left side of this home page, under "Online Services," you will find an option for "Online Payments" for current tax payments or utility bill payments. Once you click on your payment choice, follow directions to complete your credit/debit/e-check payment. To make a payment by phone, contact *Point&Pay* at 1-888-891-6064, option 1.

2016 WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP CITIZENS OF THE YEAR



Pictured, left to right: Clerk Deb Adams, Trustee Todd Hufnagel, Trustee Maridean DeLong, Supervisor John Maahs, Citizens of the Year Mick and Carmen Jones, Trustee Ron Overton, and Trustee George Weitzel

At their June 20, 2016 meeting, the Watertown Charter Township Board of Trustees presented Mick and Carmen Jones with the 2016 Citizens of the Year Award. This award honors residents who has displayed exemplary commitment, support, leadership, or service to the Watertown Township community. The following tribute was presented:

Special Tribute to Mick and Carmen Jones 2016 Citizens of the Year Award

LET IT BE KNOWN that it is a privilege to extend our sincerest praise and commendation to Mick and Carmen Jones in acknowledgement of them attaining the distinct honor of being named "2016 CITIZENS OF THE YEAR" for the Charter Township of Watertown.

Ability, commitment and integrity have been reflected in all of Mick and Carmen's work volunteering in the community and they have shown consistent dedication to excellence throughout their years of community service. They have made many sacrifices on behalf of the community, willingly and unselfishly, and are always ready to shoulder extra responsibility and lend a helping hand in any circumstance.

Mick and Carmen have been effective members of the community through their organizational skills for community improvement. Mick serves local senior citizens in the capacity of a trainer/instructor, showing concern and care to those who live alone and have a difficult time getting to classes. He organizes bar-b-q's for area seniors with his own finances, as well as organizes birthday parties for them. Unselfish with his time, Mick has served the community as a caseworker for the Lansing Rescue Mission, encouraging and working alongside homeless men, assisting them in obtaining health insurance, housing, and ensuring they are doing what is required of them. Carmen served for 8 years in LAVA, a nonprofit volleyball club as assistant director to help promote the sport of volleyball for area youth. Carmen and Mick were often instrumental in making it possible for the seniors of Watertown to attend the volleyball games at Michigan State University, a first for many. Carmen is currently a Care Counselling Coordinator and works at CMH as relief staff in crisis services.

IN SPECIAL TRIBUTE, therefore, this document is signed and dedicated to commend and congratulate MICK AND CARMEN JONES as Watertown Charter Township's "2016 CITIZENS OF THE YEAR."

BURN REGULATIONS AND BURN PERMITS

Burn permits are required for all outdoor burning. The permits are good for one calendar year, from January 1 - December 31. Burn permits are free, but the fine for not having a permit is \$500. For additional information or to obtain a burn permit, contact the Looking Glass Regional Fire Department (517-627-9831) or visit the station at 7720 W. Grand River, Grand Ledge, MI 48837.

Please note: The following items may NOT be burned at any time:

- Garbage
- Hazardous waste or explosives
- Animal carcasses
- Animal waste
- Petroleum based products
- Plastics
- Shingles
- Demolition or construction materials
- Buildings
- Tires
- Automobiles or parts thereof
- Refuse from multiple dwellings
- Any material giving off foul odors

There is no burning after dark.

To view the Watertown Township burning ordinance in its entirety, visit the township website at www.WatertownTownship.com.



WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP ROADS UPDATE

You may have noticed all the cones and barrels around the township marking the road construction season. The township takes a very active role in the maintenance and improvement of local roads and is in the process of developing a detailed maintenance plan for all township roads.

For a complete list of the 2016 road projects, please refer to the April 2016 road presentation available on the township website at: <http://www.watertowntownship.com/Departments/TownshipManager/TownshipRoads.aspx>

FRIENDS OF THE WACOUSTA PLAYGROUND PROJECT

CINDY ZERBE, WACOUSTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Twenty-six years ago, the Wacousta community came together to build the Dream Depot, a magnificent playground at Wacousta Elementary for our children. Due to state codes, the playground had to be demolished last summer. A grass-roots organization called Friends of Wacousta Playground Project was formed and efforts began to replace the original structure. We're proud to announce that the Dream Depot 2.0 will be built this fall between Sept. 28 and October 2.

As of this date, more than \$170,000 has been raised toward the \$200,000 goal. The funds for this project are primarily for materials and supplies. This will be a "community build," just like the original project, which means it will be done with volunteer labor. There are plenty of opportunities for you to help make this dream come true. We will need people to help with the build, to provide childcare for the workers, provide and serve meals for the workers, and loan tools. If you are interested in helping out with this worthwhile endeavor, please check out our website at savethedreamdepot.webs.com or follow us on Facebook at Rebuilding the Dream Depot.

Think it...Dream it....Do it!

UPCOMING WASTE COLLECTION EVENTS

KATE NEESE, CLINTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

For more information or to learn about other disposal and recycling options that may be available, call (989) 224-5186, send an email to recycle@clinton-county.org, or visit online at www.clinton-county.org and look for the link to the Department of Waste Management.

Medication Disposal Programs

The Sparrow Clinton Memorial Pharmacy in St. Johns (989) 224-8155 and Central Pharmacy in Laingsburg (517) 651-1777 can accept all non-controlled pills, tablets, and liquids year round, free of charge. *Be sure to black out personal information but leave the drug name visible!* Please call them for additional information and hours. Controlled medications (narcotics and behavioral medications) can be safely and securely dropped off at the Clinton County Sheriff's Office lobby Monday through Friday from 8am - 5pm. More drop off locations can be found online at www.capitalcountiescommit.org and www.takebackmeds.org.

Saturday, September 17 from 8am - 1pm at the Free for Fall Event at the Granger Facility located at 16980 Wood Road in Lansing.

Saturday, September 24 from 9am - 12pm at the Clinton Community Health Fair at Agro-Culture Liquid Fertilizer at 3055 M-21 in St. Johns. Please do NOT bring needles, Epi pens, inhalers, aerosols, or patches; these items can only be handled at the annual spring Clean Community Event and the Free For Fall Event.

Friday, December 9 from 2pm - 5pm at the Sparrow Clinton Hospital Pharmacy at 901 South Oakland Street in St. Johns. *Be sure to black out personal information but leave the drug name visible!* Please do NOT bring needles, Epi pens, inhalers, aerosols, or patches; these items can only be handled at the annual spring Clean Community Event and the Free For Fall Event.

Free for Fall Event

Saturday, September 17 from 8am - 1pm at Granger's Facility located at 16980 Wood Road in Lansing. Clinton County residents are encouraged to take part in this great recycling and reuse event! Acceptable items include household hazardous waste, unwanted medications, farm and landscaping chemicals, motor oil and antifreeze, electronics (there is a fee for all TVs and computer monitors), clothing, reusable household items, books, and reusable building materials. Most items are accepted free of charge, but nominal fees do apply to TVs and monitors (cash or check only).

POLLINATOR AND BUTTERFLY FRIENDLY MOSQUITO CONTROL

RONALD V. OVERTON, ADVANCED MASTER GARDENER

Mosquito season this year may be particularly dangerous for pollinators and butterflies due to the Zika virus. This disease is spread by the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*, which is a tropical mosquito not found this far north. The *Aedes albopictus* mosquito is less likely to spread diseases, and its range is also south of Michigan. The Zika virus is associated with birth defects (microcephaly) in infants born to infected mothers. The Centers for Disease Control now suspects there may be other long-range problems for people infected with the Zika virus. Because of this danger, when our friends and neighbors hear that first buzzing this season, the first instinct may likely be alarm. I fear in many cases people's initial response will be to use insecticides and other chemicals to kill or repel the mosquitoes. I'd like to share some ideas on controlling mosquitoes without also harming the birds and the bees.

Drain all standing water where you can. Mosquitoes can breed in most any kind of standing or still water. If you can't drain the water, you can treat it with mosquito dunks or donuts. These contain Bti, or *Bacillus thuringiensis israeliensis*. This is a biological control which will produce toxins targeting mosquitoes, black flies, and fungus gnats, but very little else. The donuts come six to a card for about \$10 at lawn and garden stores. They are also available in 'bits' for larger ponds. I've been using them for years in my little pond without a problem. I still have hundreds of frogs and lots and lots of duckweed (sigh).

Bats and many birds, including the purple martin, are insectivores, or animals that consume insects. Bats and purple martins are easily attracted to your yard by installing houses. Purple martins interact very well with humans and have for centuries. Bats can consume up to one third of their body weight in insects each night. Indeed, they can consume several hundred insects in a few hours.

Personal protection means long pants and long sleeve shirts and perhaps even netting. They even have netting for hats to cover your face.

Insect repellents come in all types, but the best I can find contain DEET, Picaridin, or Lemon Eucalyptus. Repellents containing any of these ingredients were found to be effective by Consumer Reports.

There are lots of ways to protect ourselves this summer from mosquitoes, while still creating an environment to support bees and butterflies.

CLINTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

DEPUTY TRACY BARBER

TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

Texting while driving defined by the Michigan motor vehicle code is:

(257.602b) Reading, typing, or sending text message on wireless 2-way communication device prohibited; use of hand-held mobile telephone prohibited; exceptions; "use a hand-held mobile telephone" defined; violation as civil infraction; fine; local ordinances superseded.

The entire law is available at the following link:

<http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-257-602b>.

Remember, not only is texting and driving illegal, it could be deadly! Please pull over to use your phone.



GRAND LEDGE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY INFORMATION

New Online Resources – go to grandledge.lib.mi.us, Online Content

SCOLA SCOLA brings international broadcasting and culture to you with access to over 200 languages from around the world! Watch TV, take an instant class, increase your vocabulary; this is all at your fingertips. SCOLA can be accessed in the library from any of our computers or your own device. For access outside of the library, please call us for the username and password.

Cities, States, Countries

- **Global Road Warrior** includes topics on culture and society, travel, education, history, holidays and festivals, language, media outlets, music, maps, money, national symbols, and religion.
- **AtoZ World Travel** contains 202 world city travel guides.
- **AtoZ the USA** is a large-scale encyclopedia of US state and country information.



hoopla brings digital content to life through streaming and downloading. Instantly borrow movies, music, ebooks, and more with your library card. Get started with hoopla by visiting GLADL's website and setting up an account. Download the hoopla app from the Apple App Store, Google Play, or Amazon Appstore.

Visit us in person in Wacousta or Grand Ledge – Pick up a movie to beat the summer heat

Bestseller books or movies – Deadpool, Pride & Prejudice & Zombies, Goosebumps, Hotel Transylvania 2, Wabbit, Sisters, Eddie the Eagle, 10 Cloverfield Lane – we've stocked up our Wacousta branch just for you! Don't forget you request items from Main or MeLCat and it will be delivered to the branch for easy pick up. The same is true for returns; use the library drop box, and skip the trip to town. The Wacousta Branch also offers open wifi, public workstations, printing, fax, and copy service.

GLADL Summer Reading – Something to keep everyone reading all summer long

We offer reading programs for 0-K, 1st-6th grade, 7th-12th grade, and adults, thanks to a grant from the MCACA and the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, Friends of GLADL, and wonderful supportive local businesses! Turn in your reading logs by July 31 and collect some great prizes! Join us for these fun programs:

Animal Adventures on Monday, July 18th at 2pm at Wallace F. Watt Community Center (behind Watertown Charter Township Hall) The Animal Adventures program combines storytelling and live animals. Following each story, the animal featured in the story will be introduced to the children.

Ming the Magnificent on Monday, July 25th, 2pm at Grand Ledge City Hall

Create a toy race car that runs! Ming will show youngsters, grades 3 and up, how to make a custom-made foam rubber race car. Registration required.

Underwater Tech ROV Workshop on Monday, August 1 at Grand Ledge Country Club, 5811 W. St. Joseph, Grand Ledge
Two workshops: 9am - 12pm for 1st - 3rd grade students and 1pm - 4pm for 4th grade students and up
STEM-based education program using PVC to build an Underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), with a focus on fun, exciting, challenging hands on engineering and design experience. Registration required.

Builder's Club on Saturday, August 13 from 4pm - 6pm at The Fledge, 325 S. Clinton St., Grand Ledge
Architecture with Frank Lloyd Wright and MC Escher. Come have fun with Legos and other building materials. Additional information on programs and services can be found online at grandledge.lib.mi.us.

TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

John Maahs - Home (517) 669-5698
johnny@tir.com

TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES

Maridean DeLong - Office (517) 626-6593
mdelong@yahoo.com
Todd Hufnagel - Work (517) 626-2200
hufnagelauto@gmail.com
Ronald Overton - Home (517) 626-6447
overtonron@wowway.com
George Weitzel - Home (517) 626-2305
gweit10422@aol.com

TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Ext #207

Jennifer Tubbs, Township Manager
jtubbs@watertowntownship.com
Donna Case, Administrative Assistant
dcase@watertowntownship.com
Questions concerning special assessments, sewers, roads, non-zoning ordinance enforcement, sewer and water permits, park/pavilion rental

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

Ext #206

Janice Thelen, Township Treasurer
jthelen@watertowntownship.com
Amy Kinney, Deputy Treasurer
akinney@watertowntownship.com
Questions concerning tax bills, special assessments

PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE

Ext #205

Andrea Polverento, Planning Director
apolverento@watertowntownship.com
Amy Kinney, Planning and Zoning Assistant
akinney@watertowntownship.com
Questions concerning building/zoning/trade permits, zoning requirements, zoning & subdivision ordinances, Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Commission

OFFICE CONTACTS (517) 626-6593

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Ext #201

Deb Adams, Township Clerk
dadams@watertowntownship.com
Christy Sochay, Deputy Clerk
csochay@watertowntownship.com
Angela Baum, Bookkeeper
Questions concerning the cemetery, Freedom of Information Act, elections, meeting dates, voter registration, township records, accounts payable

CEMETERY

Weekdays (517) 626-6593 or (517) 626-6066
Andy Case, Maintenance Supervisor/Sexton (517) 490-1383

ASSESSOR

Ext #210

Jeff MacKenzie, Assessor
jmackenzie@watertowntownship.com
Jill Schliep, Assistant
Office hours: 9:00am - 5:00pm on Monday, Thursday, and Friday
Questions concerning assessing, SEV's, property listings, property splits

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Jeff Cranson, Building Inspector
Phone (517) 622-8822 Fax (517) 622-8833

LOOKING GLASS REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

(517) 627-9831 or (517) 627-9833
Fax (517) 627-9846
Questions concerning fire coverage districts, burn permits