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Otisco Township
9663 W. Button Rd.
Belding, Michigan 48809



❄ In Memory of the Beloved Whites Bridge ❄

OTISCO TOWNSHIP

9663 W. Button Road
Belding, MI 48809

❄ WINTER ❄

NEWS LETTER
2013/14

THE PLANNING COMMISSION: Ben Oatley

The Planning Commission is currently working on updating the Township Ordinance book. Over the past few years there have been changes, additions and deletions from the Ordinances and the book needs to be updated and consolidated. Anytime a change is made to an Ordinance, a public hearing has been held as required by law. Our new Zoning Administrator is working very hard on this.

We are also beginning to look at a Township Recreation Plan. The members have had a number of ideas as to what this may be. For example, we could build a township park or a township canoe launch. There are Grants available for Recreation Plans but they require a lot of preparation. If you have ideas as to what you would like to see please contact our Zoning Administrator at the township hall via mail, e-mail, phone or in person. If you are opposed to using township funds for this , please let us know your thoughts on this also.

Below is a questionnaire you can check off your opinion on this matter. Kindly cut this part of the Newsletter off and mail to the township hall or drop it in the drop box at the hall. Your thoughts and ideas are important to us going forward with the Recreation Plan.



Would like to develop a Township Recreation Plan even if Township funds are used.

Would **NOT** like to develop a Township Recreation Plan if Township funds are used.

What would you like to see as a Township Recreation Plan ?

from the desks of



ASSESSOR: Judy Lindberg
Happy Holiday Season.

TREASURER: Janet Breimayer

Greetings From the Treasurer:

Wishing everyone a Happy and Safe 2014 !!

Please take a minute to make sure your 2013 summer taxes have been paid. The winter taxes are **due Feb. 14, 2014** Anything in the drop box **after** that date will not be processed until **after** the 14th, nor will the **mailing date** of Feb. 14th be processed until after the 14th.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS: Laura Staats

The Zoning Board of Appeals is a local government board. Its purpose is to regulate use of land and structures. All ordinances have been enacted to protect and promote public health, safety and welfare. There are numerous points that are taken into consideration when approving a variance. Some of these support State wide ordinances such as the Naturals River Act of 1970.

If you are planning a project around your property, please stop by the Otisco Township offices and talk to Eric Griffin, the Zoning Administrator, chances are your project already falls within the zoning guidelines and there will be no need to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals. In 2013 every variance brought before the board was granted.

The Zoning Board of Appeals meets a minimum of four times a year, the second Monday of the month at 7:00 P.M. in the Otisco Township Hall. Other meetings are scheduled on an as needed basis. All meetings are open to the public.

BOARD OFFICERS:

Frank Mason - Chairman
Dan Zeigler - Vice Chair
Laura Staats - Secretary
Alternates : Glenn Geiger and John Newland

ATTENTION RESIDENTS !!

Eric Griffin is our new Zoning Administrator. Eric grew up in the Lake Odessa area before entering the military. He has returned to that area along with his 2 1/2 year old son. Eric has a solid administrative background and has embraced the job. Call Eric with any of your zoning issues or just stop in and meet him. Welcome Eric !

Laura Staats accepted the task of redoing the map of the Otisco Cemetery. She has double checked available lots and also made sure all the lots previously purchased are correct. She corrected mistakes she found in the map and researched facts to make sure they are now correct. This was a huge undertaking and Laura has made an awesome new physical map as well as a digital one. Thank-You Laura !

Our apologies to the residents for not having our new web site up and running. We have had numerous problems relating to our domain host and our internet server. Almost everything pertaining to our web site was obsolete or out dated. Addorio Technologies has been diligently working toward a very updated and user friendly web-site.

A group called “Supporters For Whites Bridge” are trying to raise enough money to rebuild Whites Bridge. Along with asking for donations they have a variety of items for sale such as T-Shirts, Glass wear, a Candle Holder, all with etchings of Whites Bridge and coming soon a Whites Bridge History Booklet. Some items are on display and can be purchased at the township hall. Those interested in more information or attending the meetings...

CALL... 616.446.9100

TOWNSHIP HALL OFFICE HOURS

SupervisorMon-Tu-Wed 9-12 & 1-4
Clerk.....Mon-Th 9:30 –1:30
Treasurer.....Tu-Wed-Fri 10-4
Assessor.....Wed 9-12
Zoning.....Mon-Wed 9-5 Fri-9-1
PHONE 616.794.3506 —FAX 616.794.7083

from the desks of



SUPERVISOR: Paul Reeves

I would like to mention a few things we did this year.

Jan Breimayer our Township treasurer was wrapping up 2012 tax collection when we had a power surge taking out our surge protection. That wiped out some of the computers. She was able to restore the data after some repair and a lot of work and sleepless nights.

We added a server and automatic back up. Three weeks later the bigger surge protector was hit again, this time no damage but we found a wiring problem, after getting this fixed all is well.

We had an audit; Larry Tiejema CPA is our new auditor. He reviewed our books and made some corrections and suggestions for next year. He and BS&A software helped Jan with some distribution problems. Larry is willing to help clerk, Lynda Sower and BS&A with our General Ledger records.

Laura Staats has been helping with Cemetery Records.

The township paid for spreading 6000 yards of gravel on township roads and brined twice this year. We signed a safety grant with Ionia Road Commission to widen and remove trees on Button Rd. from Montcalm Rd. to Flat River Tr. And Whites Bridge Rd. from Belding Rd. to Five Mile. This was at no cost to Otisco Twp. Otisco Twp. Paid for grinding and black topping Whites Bridge from Button Rd. to Five Mile at a cost of (\$209,000.) Two Hundred and Nine Thousand.

We held an election in November and I would like to thank-you for approving the Road and Fire millage.

I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: Eric Griffin

I would first like to thank Otisco Township for allowing me the privilege and opportunity to perform duties as the Zoning Administrator. I would also like to thank the Otisco Township residents. Zoning isn't always the most popular thing; however I have found the residents of this township will always greet you with a smile and a handshake, making this position much more rewarding, and more enjoyable to perform.

In the later part of the year 2000, Otisco Township adopted two blight ordinances. Since then, enforcement has been done on a complaint only basis. This is not a consistent way of enforcing the integrity of these ordinances and so township wide enforcement will begin in Spring 2014. If you have any questions or concerns regarding blight enforcement I encourage you to contact me as I will do my very best to address your needs. (continued)

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: Eric Griffin

My office hours are Mon. & Wed. 9AM to 5PM and Friday 9AM to 1PM . I look forward to continuing to serve the residents of Otisco Township. Thank-You again for your cooperation and support.

CLERK: Lynda Sower

My deputy and I made it through the first year of my 4 year term...what a learning experience and a challenge. Many unexpected things have come up this year that required extra work, and attention. We are finally making progress.

Soon after taking office a transformer burned at the Double R Ranch which caused a power surge wiping out my computer. This was a very serious problem because my computer was used as the server and held all the data for all other departments. My hard drive had to be sent to Kentucky to a dry room to try to retrieve the data. Luckily they were able to retrieve all the data and Addorio Technologies was hired to put all the data back on various township computers. I did not have a computer for 6 weeks while my data and hard drive were gone. The other departments had working computers just no data. A central server has been installed as well as a high tech power surge protector. A back-up system (external hard drives) were put in place which I exchange every week.

Another major problem has been our web site. All of a sudden it was gone from the computers into cyber space. I contacted Addorio and they traced the problem to the company that was hosting our web domain. They just closed their doors and went out of business unexpectedly leaving us with no domain host and no web site. Everything on our web site was lost forever (no getting it back this time). We have a new domain host a local provider so now we should be ok. Along with that we had to have a new web site built and our internet service had to be changed and updated. Hopefully by the first of the year you will see a new and improved Otisco Township web site. I know it has been a major inconvenience for the residents but I am very hopeful it will be worth the wait. Thank-You for your patience.

Thank-You to all of the people who have been attending the Township Board's monthly meetings. The input from the residents is very important. Many decisions made by the board directly affect the lives of the residents. Township Board meetings are the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM . Dates are posted on the bulletin board on the outside of the hall. Hope to see you there in 2014.

Wishing You A Happy Holiday Season.