**SOMERSET TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER**

**HILLSDALE COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**SUPERVISOR**

Supervisor: Tim Shaw

 supervisor@somersettownship.org

Phone: 517-688-9223

Over the last year we were able to complete some of the projects I wrote on last year. A lot of the road repairs were done and have scheduled additional work for this year. In addition to the road work we have provided a new drive for the park and additional parking. The park and rec committee continue to work to improve the park and we are currently searching ways to restore the Berm House. We have also added a new security system and cameras to monitor the parks area.

We have also completed a lot of maintenance on the township building itself repaired the roof around the hose tower, replaced broken concrete sidewalks repair and replace the gutters and down spouts and added a door to enter the fire bays. The Jerome Community Building has seen improvements with new lighting, new windows painting of the interior and we did add a generator for a backup shelter to the township hall. If you see Deloris Post Smith give her thanks for the time she and all the volunteers she has helping her.

As the townships wants and need are growing so are the demands on the board members. With the new election laws that are overwhelming most (all) clerks’ offices, we have opened discussion on the possibility of a township manager and would like to have feedback whether it is constructive criticism or positive support, we need to hear from you.

The Fire and EMS along with the Police Department are doing a fantastic job in the trying times and continue to put the best interest of the residents first and are striving to take care of the needs as best they can with the budgets provided. A big Thank you for their efforts!

I would like wish you all a very Merry Christmas and we will all look forward to a fantastic New Year!

Thank you for your continued support and we will keep working to help Somerset Township be the best it can be and it is a great place to live.

Respectfully, Tim Shaw, Supervisor

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**CLERK’S CORNER**

Clerk: Mike Bohnet

Deputy Clerk: Sharon Uyttenhove

Hours: Monday’s 9AM – 4PM

Wednesday’s 12PM – 4PM

Thursday’s 9AM -12PM

Residents of Somerset Township approved a reset of the Millages at the May Election for General Fund (.9731 mills), Fire Department (.75 mills), Police (.50 mills), Roads (.25 mills), Park & Rec (.25 mills) and Capital Improvements (.25) for a total of 2.9731 mills for the next 10 years.

A new BS&A program for Payroll, Payables and General Ledger was implemented.

The Independent Audit for FY 2021-22 was approved by the Township Board on November 10, 2022. Fund Balances increased $215,209 to $2,180,428. Somerset

Township is in a good position to deal with inflationary pressures. Audit is on the website.

Two new initiatives were put in place this year, The American Recovery Act (ARPA) ($476,052) and The Crystal Lake/Perch Lake Special Assessment District (SAD).

Somerset Cemetery was expanded to provide additional grave sites.

**TREASURY DEPARTMENT**

Treasurer: Sharon Grech (ext.304)

Deputy Treasurer: Jan O’Shaughnessey (ext.305)

Hours: Monday’s – 9AM – 12pm & 1PM – 4PM

Thursday’s – 9AM – 12PM & 1PM – 4PM

The 2022 Winter Tax Bills will be mailed on December 1, 2022. Payment for the Winter Tax Bills are due by Tuesday, February 14, 2023. The last day for Somerset Township to collect 2022 property taxes, before they are turned over to Hillsdale County as delinquent, is February 28, 2023.

The Treasurer’s Office will be open on Tuesday, February 28, 2023 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm for last day of tax collection. A drop slot is available during regular Township office hours and is located inside the Township building

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under the Treasurer’s window. Taxes may also be paid by credit card at [www.somersettownship.org/Board/Treasury](http://www.somersettownship.org/Board/Treasury) Department/BS&A Software

Receipts mailed only when a self-addressed stamped envelope is provided. Taxpayers must keep the Township updated on Name/Address changes and/or corrections. Failure to receive a notice does not negate the responsibility for payment.

Dog Licenses will be available at the Somerset Township Treasurer Office December 1, 2022 through February 28, 2023. You must reside within Somerset Township and provide current rabies vaccination certificate. Dog Licenses must be purchased separate from your tax bill.

For additional Treasury information, please visit [www.somersettownship.org](http://www.somersettownship.org).

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

Chairperson: Dan Monahan

Secretary: Jan O'Shaughnessey

Board Liaison: Sharon Grech

Member: Tyler LaBo

Member: Deanna Redding

Member: Heather Griewahn

McCourtie Park had many positive changes over the year, but not without a few hiccups. Unfortunately, the park was vandalized in May, causing concerns for the safety of the community and the parks historical monuments. With the help of our great community, we pulled together and were able to clean up all damages. The Parks and Recreation Committee would like to thank everyone who donated their time, services and materials to clean up the vandalism.

This year many improvements have been made at McCourtie Park. Asphalt was laid from

S. Jackson road all the way up to the pavilion, parking was added near the gates and additional parking

added near the pavilion area.

Restoration to the bridges were completed this year.

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Erosion occurred near some bridges and river banks. We hired a local company to restore around bridges and river banks. Thank you to GY-Tech Landscaping and Design for providing a very natural design that complements the parks natural beauty. Dan Monahan has spent many hours at the park to clean overgrowth and debris buildup. He has had help from volunteers and community service workers provided by Undersheriff Lambright of Hillsdale County MI. We are happy to announce we are in the process of installing security cameras/equipment at the park to deter future vandalism.

McCourtie Market ran from May through October on Saturday’s from 10am to 3pm. We are working on plans to enhance the Market for next year. In addition, three major events were held during the holiday weekends that included bands, pet adoptions through the Hillsdale Humane Society, flower exchanges, petting zoo, food trucks and more.

We received a donation from the Inter Lakes Lions Club for the purchase of a concession stand which was placed at the Sports Complex. A donation was also received from Bundy Hill Recreation for a golf cart to provide transportation to the community who may not be able to get around the park.

A bench was made and placed near the entrance of McCourtie Park in memory of Jim Souders, who passed away in 2021. Jim Souder was a long-time dedicated member of the Parks and Recreation Committee. In addition, a memorial rock honoring the late Charles Griner was moved from Barnett Field to McCourtie Park. With the loss of Barnett Field, a second ball diamond is being added to the Sports Complex. The Parks and Recreation Committee is looking for volunteers to conduct sports tournaments; volleyball, baseball, basketball, disc golf, and tennis.

Special thanks go out to all our volunteers, especially Terry Reister, Scott Williams, Joyce Krueger, Rhonella Brelinski, and Annamarie Asher.

Parks and Recreation meetings are held at the Township Hall the first Monday of each month at 5pm. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Somerset Township at 517-688-9223 or through FB messenger [www.facebook.com/McCourtiePark](http://www.facebook.com/McCourtiePark) or attend a Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting.

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**ASSESSING OFFICE**

Assessor: Max Griffin/MMAO-PPE

Deputy Assessor: Anthony Stockdale

Hours: Monday’s and Thursday’s

9AM – 12PM & 1PM – 3PM

As the end of the year approaches, the assessing department would like to remind all residents that have had a building permit(s) pulled, the assessing department will be conducting inspections. This is to determine percentage of completion of the project as of December 31, 2022. All assessing staff will be in marked cars and identify themselves before doing any field inspections. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to either Max or Anthony in the assessing department, via phone 517-688-9223 or email at assessor@somersettownship.org.

**LIBRARY**

Librarian: Kimberly Bedard

Hours: Mon. – Thurs. 9AM – 4PM

Friday’s 9AM – 12PM

2022 Has brought yet another new Librarian/Receptionist to the Township.

My name is Kim Bedard and I am originally from this area. I was a military spouse for thirty-two years and was able to travel the states and a few countries. I lived in the beautiful state of Alaska for ten years (2000-2010). I moved back to this area two years ago and I am blessed to be back in the Lake LeAnn area. This is such an awesome Township to be living in.

I was the Administrative Assistant for Presque Isle Township for seven years, prior to moving here. I am so happy to be back in a familiar setting with this position and working for Somerset Township. I plan on being here for many years to come. It is always a plus when you only have a two-minute drive to work. 😊

The Township experienced a ransomware attack on the computers, shortly after I started here and it destroyed all the library files on the desk top of the computer. I lost the library patron list as well as the book inventory list. I have been working diligently to restore the patron list and

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it’s always exciting for me when I come across another patron number to add to the list. It is also allowing me to meet a lot of wonderful people in this Township. I have also been working on the book inventory. I am getting there!!

The Township Library had the honor of working with Kahlen Wheaton, a local high school resident and girl scout. Kahlen was working towards The Girl Scout Gold Award (highest achieved award) and it required 80 hours of volunteer community service and she chose our library to work with. Kahlen worked diligently organizing the books and making posters for our children’s section. She also hosted a fundraiser by collecting cans and was able to raise $412.00. She purchased an area rug and 2 bean bag chairs to spruce up the children’s section and donated the remaining $166.00 to the library. There was an awesome article on the front page of the Hillsdale Daily News; Friday, November 4, 2022 regarding the volunteer work she has done to work toward her goal of achieving the Girl Scout Gold Award. Best of luck to Kahlen for a job well done!! Thank you!

I look forward to a wonderful 2023 and meeting even more great people in our Township!

**JEROME COMMUNITY BUILDING**

Chairperson: Delores Smith-Post

It’s been a busy year with rentals. Our March Craft show was a success and our Fall Craft show will be in November. New ceilings have been installed upstairs and down; along with LED lighting throughout the building and pavilion. A Generator was ordered. The handicap ramp has been stained. There were new parking spaces and handicap parking added. It’s a great building to rent for all your events.

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**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Chief of Police: Keith Bancroft

Officers: John Gessner, Chris McCann &

 Logan Edmonson

There are several ways that you can stay informed about what is going on in Somerset Township and Hillsdale County. There are several Facebook pages including the Somerset Township Police Department page, the Hillsdale County Central Dispatch- 911 page and the Hillsdale County Sheriff’s Office page.

Under the Public Safety tab on the Hillsdale County website (<https://www.co.hillsdale.mi.us/>) links to the Sheriff’s Office and 911 Central Dispatch can be found.

In the Sheriff’s Department’s section, information about their app. can be located. The app. can be downloaded on any smart phone by searching the app. store for “Hillsdale County Sheriff’s Office”. This app. provides local public safety news, road closures and missing persons alerts. The app. can also be used to provide law enforcement with crime and other tips.

In the 911 Central Dispatch section, there is material about the Smart911 app. (<https://www.smart911.com/>). Smart911 can assist in staying informed on weather, traffic and other emergencies in your community

The second app. on the 911 Central Dispatch site is the Rave Alert System. This system provides Hillsdale County officials the ability to quickly deliver messages to targeted areas or the entire County of Hillsdale.

Should you have any questions about these apps or anything to do with the police department, please get a hold of me.

Stay safe!

Keith Bancroft

Chief of Police

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