

## SOMERSET TOWNSHIP

HILLSDALE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

December 2013

### Bits and Pieces

By Township Supervisor Don Figiel

We presently have positions open on our Board of Review and Planning Commission. The Board of Review serves an important role in the system of checks and balances between the assessor and the taxpayers. There are three statutory functions that they are involved in: 1) Meet to receive and examine the current assessment role, 2) Serve as an appeal board, 3) Meet in July and December to accept and approve corrections of clerical errors or mutual mistakes. Township Planning Commission members are charged with the mission of building the townships future. Few other volunteer, community service positions are asked to assume a task as important to the well-being of the township and its residents. If you are interested please contact the township offices 517-688-9223.

Engine #6 has been replaced. Purchased in 1993 the 1000 gallon tanker had served our fire department well. The reason for replacement was the cost of repairing the drafting pump which would have been 50 to 60 thousand dollars. It has been replaced by a new 2000 gallon tanker. Our new ambulance should be here in November or early December. We should be set in fire and ambulance vehicles for quite a while.

All road projects with the county are completed for 2013. Royal Shores subdivision seal coated and fog sprayed and the corner of US-12 and Somerset Road paver patched.

If there is an emergency or if you need our police department call 911 IMMEDIATELY. It is important to call when the incident is occurring or first noticed. Don't wait until the next day.

Currently the Planning Commission is working on updating the Sign Ordinance and a Medical Marijuana Ordinance. Public hearings are tentatively scheduled for the second week of January. Watch the Marquee on US-12 and our website for exact dates and times or call the office.

A tip of the hat goes to Joann Sneary who has worked at the township in various capacities since the 1970s, she has retired. Most recently Joann was our librarian. Her accomplishments in both the public and private sector are many while she worked here. When you see her in the township, give her a thank you for working many years here.

The old gas station east of the township hall is being raised. Since the early nineties, we have been trying to remediate contamination from leaking underground storage tanks. We have met the MDOT requirements and are working with MDEQ to obtain closure of the site. We will be sorry to see it go but the cost of rehabbing was just too great. Look for this to happen in late November to early December.

Keep the Jerome Community Building in mind for family gatherings, weddings and graduations. Dolores and her committee have been spending time sprucing up the building. This is an economical rental. Thank you to every volunteer, board member, commission member and employee, Somerset Township is grateful for your service.

Township Board Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the community room. All are welcome. We have a public comment time at the beginning and end of each meeting to speak to items not on the agenda. All public hearings are posted and advertised.

I can be reached at the township offices daily 517-688-9223. Have a great Holiday Season, see you around the township.

### Assessing Office

**James Bradley, Somerset Township Assessor**

**Hours: Monday 9 to 12 and 1 to 5**

**Tuesday & Wednesday 9 to 12 noon**

If you are a new resident to Somerset Township and your home is your primary residence, make sure you file a Homeowners Principal Residence Exemption Affidavit with the assessor's office. This can save you a significant amount of money on your property taxes.

There are several helpful links on the Assessing Department web page to assist you with many questions you may have. Among those is a video that helps explain Michigan Property Tax. Another great link is the Property Tax Estimator. The links are easily available at your convenience, give them a try.

For information on Land Divisions, Lot Merging and Homeowners Principal Residence Exemptions, contact the Assessing Office at (517) 688-9223 ext. 216.

Additional information online @  
[www.somersettownship.org](http://www.somersettownship.org)

### **Clerk's Corner:**

Deborah Spicer, Clerk  
Janet Binder, Deputy Clerk

Another year is almost behind us and 2014 will be a busy election year with the US Legislature & Senate seats along with State Governor and Legislature seats on the ballot. As always, we are looking for interested persons who would like to be Election Inspectors. There will be training this July to certify all Election Inspectors. So if you are interested, please contact my office for an application.

My office is still in the process of computerizing all paper documents. This has been a long process and at this point, it seems never ending. Thanks to Pat Penn for all her hard work. I would also like to thank my Deputy, Janet Binder for always being there when I need her, especially this year. If you see any of these 2 wonderful women, be sure to show them your appreciation for all their hard work.

### **Treasury Department**

Pamela Esterline Beck, Treasurer  
Cathy Lloyd-Langley, Deputy Treasurer  
Hours: Monday *and* Thursday  
9am-5pm

### **Jerome Community Building News**

Ed Fish, Scott Baker, Dolores Smith, Maggie McElroy  
Greg Sheffer

Our plans for a new front porch and entry door were finished this summer. Our future project is to add new playground equipment. Projects are funded by our fund raisers. We will not have a December fundraiser but the next one will be January 11<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see you there.

### **Library**

Barb Nemeth

Hello! My name is Barb Nemeth and I am the Township's new librarian. It was bittersweet to see Joann resign. She was not just a Librarian, she was an ally. Joann assisted Township employees with their services and was involved in numerous Community activities, including the Lion's club. I have talked to her since her retirement on August 30<sup>th</sup> and can confirm she misses all of you, as you do her. If she is available, she will sub for me when the need arises. I will miss her and thank her for all she has done for the Community throughout the past 40 years.

As of September 1<sup>st</sup> the Library hours were changed. Our new hours are 9:00 – 12:00 and 1:00 – 5:00, Monday through Thursday, and 9:00 – 12:00

on Friday. We are still accepting new and used (2000 +) book donations in good/clean condition. They may be dropped off at the library during normal business hours.

The first week of November new carpeting was installed. Many patrons like our new look, commenting how nice it looks and makes the room look a little larger.

I am still in need of your help with updating our Patron information. Please continue to update your address and phone number when checking out your library books.

Stop in soon and remember... never judge a book by its movie.

### **Police Department**

**Chief**

**Eric Stolberg**

The Somerset Township Police Dept. has had a busy summer and anticipates a busy winter since this fall is starting out with many car/deer accidents. Our service to the people of Somerset Township continued with one full time Police Chief and three (3) part time Police Officers. Unfortunately the police dept. does not operate 24 hr. a day and that is why you may see the Michigan State Police or the Hillsdale County Sheriff Depts. Respond to an emergency complaint if it cannot wait until a Township Officer is in service. I would like to remind all that 911 is the number to call for non-emergency and emergency police assistance.

For our non-year round residences I would like to remind you to come in, call, or email information for property checks such as dates away, personal contact information, and local contact information.

The Police Dept. has a Facebook page for current events, officer contacts, questions, concerns, or any crime tips. Also an email can always be sent to [stpd@somerset township.org](mailto:stpd@somerset township.org). We hear about to many crimes that go unreported after the fact. We encourage you to report all crimes. If it is brought to our attention, it can be addressed. If you have any traffic concerns, please let us know the time and location of the violations so patrols can be added.

I would like to give a few reminders to lock your homes and keep garage doors closed when not being attended to. Lock your cars even in your driveway. Keep an eye on your neighbors if they are out of town. Give yourself plenty of time to travel in bad weather and remember to wear your safety belt and restrain your child in the appropriate child restraint.