

SOMERSET TOWNSHIP

HILLSDALE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

July 2013

Bits and Pieces

By Township Supervisor Don Figiel

Thank you!! To the many that serve on various boards and commissions your involvement is appreciated. Some of these positions are compensated others are volunteers with no compensation. Somerset Township is grateful for your service.

We are still moving on with the closure of the site where the old gas station was located. The gas tanks were removed in 1992. We have been monitoring the site since then. Contaminate has been self-purging and with deed restrictions we will control what can be built there. We have been working on this issue with DEQ and MDOT, but we are getting closer to having a resolution.

Time period for filling out the Parks and Recreation survey has been extended, reason being we did not have enough input. Surveys can be picked up at the township office or they can be also filled out on the township website. We need your comments. The Parks and Rec Committee has filled all of its committee openings but we are still looking for more volunteers

Our oldest ambulance is being replaced by a new vehicle, it should be in-service by august. Our number of runs keeps increasing every year.

The Jerome Community Building is receiving enhancements with the addition of more cupboard space in the kitchen area. The building is an economical rental, come down and views it for your family gatherings, weddings, graduations and funerals.

The Royal Shores subdivision will have road work done, mainly chip and seal with a fog spray. The repair of local roads is becoming difficult do to funding. Cost sharing for local roads with the Hillsdale County Road Commission is changing; the township amount is always increasing. We will be evaluating the purchase of lime stone for our gravel roads to patch them.

The reason we have public hearings is for public input. All public hearings are advertised, newspaper, postings at entrance of township hall, Marquee visible from US-12, Township website, lake associations. When there is an important issue, a public hearing is an excellent venue. It is important to attend and comment on the issue. Thank you to all who attended the noise ordinance public hearing.

If there is an emergency or you need our police department please call 911 immediately. It is important to call at the time the issue is happening.

Township Board meetings are held on the 3rd 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. I can be reached at the Township Offices 517-688-9223 ext. 219 daily or by email supervisor@somersettownship.org. If you have comments or concerns please contact me.

Have a great and safe summer.

Assessing Office

James Bradley, Somerset Township Assessor

Hours: Monday 9 to 12 and 1 to 5

Tuesday & Wednesday 9 to 12 noon

The deadline for Homeowners Principal Residence Exemption Affidavits has changed. Deadline for filing Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) Affidavits (form 2368), for exemption from the 18-mill school operating tax to qualify for a PRE for the summer tax levy is June 1st. The Deadline for filing a PRE to qualify for the winter tax levy is November 1st.

On the Assessors web page there is a great tool that will give you an estimate of how much your property taxes will be. Just click on the Property Tax Estimator link at the very bottom of the Assessing Department web page and follow the steps. PRE Affidavits and Property Transfer Affidavits are also available through links on the bottom of that page.

The Assessing Department will be updating property record cards around Lake LeAnn and nearby areas during the 2013 summer and fall season as part of the standard Assessing Administration process mandated by the State of Michigan. These visits will not necessarily increase your tax bill unless new structures/additions are discovered; usually caused by not obtaining proper permits. Some structures/additions may not require permits, but may still add value to your property, therefore requiring this update process for the township to remain in compliance with State Tax Commission guidelines.

If you are in need of dividing or combining properties, contact Assessor Jim Bradley at (517) 688-9223 ext. 216.

Clerk's Corner:

Deborah Spicer, Clerk

Janet Binder, Deputy Clerk

There will be a one question ballot for the August 6th election for a renewal of Hillsdale County 911 Millage and as of the printing of this newsletter, there is the possibility of a one question ballot for the November 5th Election. The State has not determined whether there will be a ballot proposal regarding the state sales tax. So watch you newspapers for notices. 2014 will be a busy election year. As always we are always looking for election inspectors, so if you are interested, please contact the clerk's office for more information.

Library

Joann Sneary

Starting the first of July, everyone will be asked to re – register. It is time to update my files as I find that a lot of people have moved or no longer have a land line; they only have a cell phone which we do not have a record of. I would also appreciate it if you would look around the house for any overdue Library books. I have a number of books that have not been returned and cannot locate because of incorrect registration information or I cannot read your signature. Please help me out!!

There is nothing better than holding and reading an actual book! If you are going on vacation, you need to stop into the library and take a look at our books that are for sale. Just think...if you buy a book for .50 cents; you won't have to worry about losing it or leaving it wherever you are. This is cheaper than any Kendall book you can get.

Park & Recreation Committee

The Parks and Rec Committee continue to work through a list of projects in the Parks that we established last year. A “hand-i-cap accessible” port-a-potty was installed near the pavilion on the upper level of the park this spring. The electric service in the Berm House at McCourtie Park, is being upgraded with new circuits and lighting. The intent is to make the main rooms functional, being able to hold small wedding receptions or groups needing meeting space. The “leaded windows” in the Berm house were repaired in May by an artisan from Hillsdale. The cleanup of brush in McCourtie Park and the improvement along the stream is ongoing. A bid package is being readied for the repair or replacement of the tennis courts.

Safety was enhanced around the Baseball diamonds, at Barnett Field and McCourtie Park with the installation of “yellow fence topper” to protect ball players. Both the ball diamonds were used this spring and the managers of those teams did a remarkable job of maintaining the fields.

The Parks and Rec Survey that was available on-line through the Township’s web site was a failure this Spring. Only six surveys were returned. We are now in the process of going to group meetings, i.e. Civic Clubs, Lake Associations and other groups asking for surveys to be filled out and submitted. The on-line process was difficult to follow and submit electronically.

The “**Longest Yard Sale In America**” is on U.S. 12 from Chicago to Detroit. It is held the first weekend of August (8-2/3-2013). Home owners and communities all along U.S. Rt.12 will set up to hold yard sales this weekend. We are going to open the triangle between Rt.12 and S. Jackson Rd. in McCourtie Park allowing residents of Somerset Township to set up a 10 or 20 foot spot to take advantage of the event. If you have yard sale items and don’t live right on U.S 12 here will be an opportunity to participate, sell some “stuff” and probably have fun doing it. Spots will be available for \$10 and \$20 each.

The Park and Recs Committee meet at 7:00 PM on the first Wednesday of the month in the community room at the Township Hall. The public is invited and welcomed.

Treasury Department

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

The 2013 Summer Tax Due Date of September 14th falls on a Saturday this year; therefore the law provides for extension to the next business day. Payments must reach my office by 5:00 pm by Monday, September 16, 2013 to avoid applied interest. Postmarks are not accepted as payment date. Receipts mailed only with written request.

Tax Notices will be mailed to the last known address on record. 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.

Please read the ‘MESSAGE TO TAXPAYER’ in the upper left corner of tax notice! For additional Treasury information, visit www.somerset township.org

Police Department

Chief

Eric Stolberg

Welcome summer 2013, The Somerset Township Police Department would like to inform on a subject that we get a lot of questions about, GOLF CARTS or SIDE by SIDES (atvs). Yes golf carts and side by sides can become ROAD LEGAL, modifications need to be done and safety features need to be added, to be able to pass an inspection by a police officer. The Michigan Secretary of State has a form to follow to turn a golf cart or side by side into a road legal vehicle. That means that once it is road legal it will have a license plate, will need insurance, and can only be driven by a person with a valid DRIVERS LICENSE and must obey the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code. A slow moving vehicle sign on the back of the vehicle to PLAY around the neighborhood is NOT LEGAL. Also Hillsdale County does not allow the operation of ATVs on the roads.

I would also like to address another hot topic as of recent, noise issues. In an area such as ours we have many great opportunities to enjoy activities and outings. We must all be aware of our area and others. Please take time to think about your neighbors who may not have the same sleep habits or taste in music, when gathering or having bonfires.

In closing I would like to remind everyone to keep an eye out for anything suspicious in your neighborhood, to be sure to lock your vehicles and close your garage doors. Hope you have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Jerome Community Building News

Ed Fish, Scott Baker, Dolores Smith, Maggie McElroy Greg Sheffer
All donations for raffles and bake sales are appreciated we also have a 50-50 drawing and Kathy Fish makes beautiful quilts for the raffle. Come and enjoy the fun and companionship of friends and family.

Remember to book dates for your special events at J.C.B. The kitchen has just received new electrical outlets and a deeper sink also cabinets and counter top space has been added. Dolores spent many volunteer hours on the new kitchen.

This will make your special occasion at J.C.B. more convenient. The window project was finished last summer adding beauty to the building and also saving money on heating and cooling costs.

Then next project is a new porch that should be completed this summer. It will be an energy saving project and will add beauty to the entrance.

Thanks to the community for its continuing support of our fund raising events. Everyone has a great time dancing and listening to the music by Ed Fish and The Last Call band. We hope you will come and join us this winter for fellowship, food and fun.

We are not having an event in December because holiday time with family is important to all. The band plays from 7 pm to 11 pm, Out dates are the 2nd Saturday of the month starting Oct. 12th, Nov. 9th, Jan. 11th, Feb. 8th, Mar 8th, and April 12th.