

SUPERVISOR

Supervisor: Tim Shaw

supervisor@somersettownship.org

Phone: 517-688-9223

The year 2023 has been a very busy year here at the township and has had some minor bumps. We have been trying to add an addition of 4 bays to fire station and while working on the project we found that our real property line was actually only 3 feet from our south east corner which set us back a few weeks. We have since acquired the property from Decker's insurance (formally Dr Foder) which will give us enough room to put up the building. With this addition we will be able to house all the fire engines the added space is necessary for the new ambulance and also put the dive rescue trailer inside. It will also give us enough room to have all voters under roof when waiting in line (should help with a February election).

We have been able to complete some additional road work this year Tralee Drive, Blarney Circle, and Sauk Trail. There is a possibility that we need some work on the dam off Brookhust Lane and this will require some road work upon completion and that will be a shared cost. We would like to plan some work for some of the worst dirt roads and hope to get additional lime stone to make it a longer lasting fix.

The Park and Rec had a very challenging summer with the storms that hit the worst being in July when we feel the park was at its best and then it hit. I would like to thank the committee and Meckleys Flavor Fruit farms (Steve and crew) for the quick response and all the hard work they did to get the park back in order. We have put a considerable amount of money into the Berm House (Rathskeller) and it will be a great place to hold your event. The ball fields are taking shape and should be ready to used spring of 2024.

Again, I feel we should thank the Fire and Police Departments for the exception job the do the take care of our residents. They strive to keep the departments up to date and do what they can with the limited help they each have.

If there is anything that you feel you would like us to do, please do not hesitate to let us know and would be happy

to look into it. We strive to maintain the great township we live in and are responsible for.

I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and we will all look forward to another fantastic new year.

Thank you for your continued support.

Tim Shaw Supervisor

Township of Somerset

CLERK'S CORNER

Clerk: Mike Bohnet

Deputy Clerk: Sharon Uyttenhove

Hours: Monday's 9AM – 4PM

Wednesday's 12PM – 4PM

Thursday's 9AM -12PM

Major changes have been implemented regarding future elections. 2024 is a Presidential election year and the first time Somerset Township will experience these changes will be February 27, 2024 for the Presidential Primary.

The major election change is that the Township Community Room will be open to voters nine (9) days prior to election date of February 27, 2024 for In Person voting.

The schedule for In Person voting is as follows:

Saturday, February 17th – 8 AM – 4 PM

Sunday, February 18th – 12 PM – 8 PM

Monday, February 19th – 9 AM – 5 PM

Tuesday, February 20th – 9 AM – 5 PM

Wednesday, February 21st – 9 AM – 5 PM

Thursday, February 22nd – 11 AM – 7 PM

Friday, February 23rd – 9 AM – 5 PM

Saturday, February 24th – 8 AM – 4 PM

Sunday, February 25th – 12 PM – 8 PM

Registered voters will receive a notification from me confirming the above schedule.

Anyone interested in becoming an Election Inspector, should contact the clerk to get an application. The new wage rate for inspectors is \$15/hour.

Additionally, registered voters on the permanent AV list will be given the opportunity to check the box on the application and they will receive a ballot for all future elections without completing and AV application.

**Registered voters should advise the Clerk's office their location during February 2024. We will need to know where to send your AV application and ballot. The US Postal system will not forward any election mail.

Dave Gould, Sexton has retired and Doug Burke is the new Sexton for the five (5) Somerset Cemeteries.

The 2022-2023 Financial Audit will be completed in November 2023.

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

Tax Bills

Payment for the Winter Tax Bills are due by Wednesday, February 14, 2024. The last day for Somerset Township to collect 2023 property taxes, before they are turned over to Hillsdale County as delinquent, is February 28, 2024. After February 28, 2024, Delinquent Tax bills must be paid to the Hillsdale County Treasurer. The Treasurer's Office will be open on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm for last day of tax collection. A drop slot is available during regular Township office hours and is located inside the Township building under the Treasurer's window. If you would like a receipt for your mailed tax payment, you must include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Taxpayers must keep the Township updated on Name/Address changes and/or corrections. Failure to receive a tax bill does not negate the responsibility for payment. Taxes may also be paid by credit card at [www.somersettownship.org/Board/Treasury Department/BS&A Software](http://www.somersettownship.org/Board/TreasuryDepartment/BS&A Software)

Dog Licenses

Dog Licenses will be available at the Somerset Township Treasurer Office December 1, 2023 through February 28, 2024. You must reside within Somerset Township and provide current rabies vaccination

certificate. Dog Licenses must be purchased separate from your tax bill.

Drain Assessments

Drain Assessments are special fees landowners and municipalities in a drainage district are legally obligated to pay to cover the cost of maintaining, improving or establishing a designated county drainage system. Properties located in a Drainage District, are noted on your tax bill as one of the following: Brown # 217, Fisk # 140, Lake Somerset, Lake LeAnn.

For additional Treasury information, please visit www.somersettownship.org.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Chairperson: Dan Monahan

Secretary: Jan O'Shaughnessey

Board Liaison: Sharon Grech

McCourtie Park had many positive changes over the year, but not without a few challenges. McCourtie Park was hit with 2 major storms this year which caused significant damage to many trees inside the park. Thank you to all the volunteers who assisted with the cleanup. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Somerset Township. Helping hands are greatly appreciated.

If you have visited McCourtie Park this year, you may have noticed construction work at the Rathskeller, also known as the Berm House. The Township received funds through the Michigan Rescue Plan, and a portion of those funds were put towards the renovation of the Rathskeller. The Rathskeller will be available for rental in 2024. Rental Information will be available in January and at that time, reservations will be accepted at Somerset Township.

Are you interested in a tour of the park grounds and hearing the history of McCourtie Park? If so, contact Somerset Township to schedule a tour with Terry Reister. A golf cart is available for the tour if needed.

In the McCourtie Park Sports Complex, an additional baseball field was installed, along with a concession stand. Parks and Rec is looking for a volunteer(s) experienced in putting on baseball tournaments in the Spring of 2024. We are also looking for experienced volunteer(s) to run Disc Golf Tournaments. If interested, please contact Somerset Township at

(517) 688-9223.

Sand Volleyball, Tennis, Pickle ball and Basket Ball are also available in the Sports Complex.

Yoga classes are available at the Somerset Township Community Room on Tuesday's at 5:30pm. To register for the class, please contact Yogi Rhonda at 517-610-9559. Walk Ins are also welcomed.

The 2024 McCourtie Park Calendar of Events will be posted on the Somerset Township Website in January.
(<http://www.somerset township.org/Somerset township.org>) We look forward to serving our Community with their recreational and entertainment needs.

Parks and Recreation meetings are held at the Township Hall the first Monday of each month at 4pm. If you are interested in volunteering or becoming a committee member, please contact Somerset Township at 517-688-9223 or attend a Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting. We would love to hear from you!

ASSESSING OFFICE

Assessor: Anthony Stockdale/MAAO
Deputy Assessor: Cathy Burke
Hours: Monday's and Thursday's
9AM – 12PM & 1PM – 3PM

Fall 2023 has been a busy and productive few months for the assessing department. The building department has kept us very busy with new permits. As the end of the year approaches, the assessing department would like to remind all residents that have had building permit (s) pulled that the assessing department will be conducting inspections to determine the project's completion as of December 31st (Tax Day for Michigan Assessors). 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 Anthony Stockdale in the assessing department via phone 517-688-9223 or via email at

assessor@somerset township.org

LIBRARY

Librarian: Kimberly Bedard
Hours: Mon. – Thurs. 9AM – 4PM
Friday's 9AM – 12PM

2023 Has been a busy year here in the Library. We have been getting new books in on a regular basis, all the good reads that our Township Patrons Enjoy.

I am asked on a daily basis if our library accepts book donations. I will gladly take any book donations that have a copyright date of at least 2020 and newer, as long as it isn't a book that is already here in our library.

Starting January 1, 2024, I will be charging .10 a day for every book that is late. This is to help keep the flow of books moving. New books can be checked out for 2 weeks. I will not be renewing the due date on new books. So, please only check out what you can read over a 2-week period. However, the older books can be checked out longer than 2 weeks.

We have an awesome Library here at the Township Hall. I would love to see some **NEW** faces. I will be hosting a basket raffle right here in our library. Participants will need to check out a library book for a chance to win. Please come in and check out a book or two and drop your name and phone number in our raffle box. You don't need to be present to win. I will be starting the raffle on Monday, December 11, 2023. The winner will be announced and called on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 @ 2:00 pm. So, as you come in to pay your taxes, please stop in and check out our library, check out a book and drop your name and phone number in the box for a chance to win.

We have quite a few audio books and I would like to get rid of them. If anyone is interested, please feel free to stop in and look through them. You don't have to bring them back, they will be yours to keep. 😊

Books for Sale! I have gone through all the older books and anything that hadn't been checked out in 10 years or more has been placed on our sale cart. Hard cover books are \$1.00, soft covers .75 and paperbacks .50.

I am looking forward to another great year! Happy Holiday's and Happy New Year!

JEROME COMMUNITY BUILDING

Chairperson: Delores Smith-Post

We have had a lot of updates since our last newsletter. We have added additional parking spaces and two handicap spaces were added as well. The basement floor has been refinished; a new basement door added, a new coat of paint on the walls, both downstairs bathrooms have been remodeled, new blinds have been installed upstairs. We have installed internet as well.

New rental rates for the Jerome Community Building went into effect on November 9, 2023. New Rates are as follows: Resident Rental Rate - \$100.00 + Security Deposit - \$50.00 – Total Resident Rate - \$200.00. Non-Resident Rental Rate - \$200.00 + Security Deposit - \$50.00 – Total Non-Resident Rate - \$250.00.

Our Craft Show fundraiser is going into the third year. Events will be held on March 23, 2024 and September 7, 2024. We have added a Farmer's Flea Market to the craft show events. We have many talented Crafters at these events.

Jerome Community Building Committee
Delores Smith-Post
Greg Sheffer
Maggi McElroy
Melissa Machnee
Audean Sheffer

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief of Police: John Gessner
Officers: Chris McCann

Happy Holidays! As we move into the Holiday/Winter Season along with that comes two very important things;

1st: **DEER**. As a reminder this time of year we see a lot more activity with deer on the move and interacting with the population specifically in our roads. Be reminded to be vigilant in looking for deer as they are moving around more, so **PLEASE SLOW DOWN WHEN YOU SEE THEM.**

2nd: **SNOW/ICE**. Again, as we move into the Holiday/winter season with this comes our friend's SNOW & ICE. As we have seen in the past, the first snow fall on the roadways tends to cause more vehicle crashes as drivers, both young and old, are not use to driving in those conditions. So, when the first snow fall comes be very cautious and if necessary leave earlier for your destinations allowing for you to drive slower and prevent a vehicle crash. Also, be mindful of the road conditions throughout the winter season for those snowy/icy roads.

Also, if you are leaving for a vacation either short term or long term, you can request the police department conduct property checks on your residence while you are away. Just come into the township hall and see the administrative assistant, Ms. Bedard and fill out a form. She will make sure we get it and you will be added to our property check list.

Last thing is contacting the police department. Please remember that in order to contact the Somerset Twp.

Police Department if it is an emergency call **911**. If it is a non-emergency do not contact the department office as it is normally not manned, as the on-duty officer is normally on patrol and may not get your message for several hours. So, for non-emergency calls, please contact the **HILLSDALE COUNTY CENTRAL DISPATCH NON-EMERGENCY**

NUMBER 517-439-9913. The dispatcher will take your information and contact the on-duty officer and have the officer contact you to handle your complaint. If you only have information to give to the department, you can contact the department office at **517-688-9223 ext. -312** and leave the information.

Have a Safe and Wonderful Holiday Season.

Chief John Gessner

