



To advance the quality of life of all residents through a commitment to responsible growth, and value-driven municipal services that promote the relationships among economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity. (Adopted 2/14/2017)

# oshtemo NEWSLETTER

est. 1839

May 2018

**Oshtemo Township Board of Trustees**

**Supervisor**  
 Libby Heiny-Cogswell 216-5220  
 libbyhc@oshtemo.org

**Clerk**  
 Dusty Farmer 216-5224  
 dfarmer@oshtemo.org

**Treasurer**  
 Nancy Culp 216-5221  
 ncoshwtp@oshtemo.org

**Trustees**  
 Dave Bushouse 370-4307  
 dboshwtp@oshtemo.org  
 Deb Everett 375-4260  
 deverett@oshtemo.org  
 Zak Ford 271-5513  
 zak.r.ford@gmail.com  
 Ken Hudok 359-0787  
 khudok@oshtemo.org

**Township Department Information**

**Assessor:**  
 Kristine Biddle 216-5225 [assessor@oshtemo.org](mailto:assessor@oshtemo.org)

**Fire Chief:**  
 Mark Barnes 375-0487 [mbarnes@oshtemo.org](mailto:mbarnes@oshtemo.org)

**Ordinance Enf:**  
 Rick Suwarsky 216-5227 [rsuwarsky@oshtemo.org](mailto:rsuwarsky@oshtemo.org)

**Parks Director:**  
 Karen High 216-5233 [khigh@oshtemo.org](mailto:khigh@oshtemo.org)  
 Rental Info 216-5224 [oshtemo@oshtemo.org](mailto:oshtemo@oshtemo.org)

**Planning Director:**  
 Julie Johnston 216-5223 [jjohnston@oshtemo.org](mailto:jjohnston@oshtemo.org)

**Public Works:**  
 Marc Elliott 216-5236 [melliott@oshtemo.org](mailto:melliott@oshtemo.org)


**Township Customer Service Hours**

Monday thru Thursday  
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
 Friday  
 8am to 1pm  
 (1st Thurs of each month at 9 a.m.)  
**(269) 375-4260**

**We will be CLOSED**

May 28—Memorial Day  
 July 4—Independence Day

**PROOF OF RESIDENCY REQUIRED FOR SERVICES**




**2018 Dump Day Schedule**

Township Hall Parking Lot  
 7275 W. Main St. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.



Yard waste, kitchen garbage, dead animals, hazardous materials, or large quantities of building materials cannot be accepted.

May 12	May 26
June 30	July 28
August 25	Sept. 29
Oct. 27	Nov. 17

**Shred Day**  
 September 22 - 10 a.m.-Noon  
 Township Hall Parking Lot  
 Max - 10 banker size boxes

**Fall Leaf Drop Off Days**  
 Nov. 3rd & 17th 

**Deputy Announces Retirement**

Deputy Pete VandeWeerd announced his retirement from the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office after nearly 42 years of service to the citizens of Kalamazoo County. Deputy VandeWeerd started at the Sheriff's Office in 1976 as a Cadet. Pete worked in the Jail Division for several years before transferring to the Road Division as a Patrolman. Pete has been assigned to Oshtemo Township for the last 16 years as one of the Oshtemo Contracted Deputies. We thank Pete for his years of service and wish him and his family the best of luck in his retirement.

**Planning Ahead for Oshtemo Parks**

Does your neighborhood need a playground? Or a place to play basketball or tennis? Concerned about how our parks will meet the needs of a growing and aging population? Please share your ideas, thoughts and concerns as we update Oshtemo's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

**Parks and Recreation Open House**  
 Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> from 4 - 7 pm  
 Skyridge Church of the Brethren,  
 394 South Drake Road, Kalamazoo 49009.  
*Please arrive any time during the open house. Stay for just a few minutes or as long as your schedule allows!*

If you can't attend the meeting but would like to provide input, please contact Karen High, Parks Director, at (269) 216-5233 or [khigh@oshtemo.org](mailto:khigh@oshtemo.org)

**BLOOD DRIVE NEWS**




**June 27, 2018**  
**11 a.m.—5 p.m.**

Appointments can be made with Michigan Blood by phone 1-866-MIBLOOD or e-mail [info@miblood.org](mailto:info@miblood.org)

**Are you or a hired contractor making improvements on your property?**

Decks, pools, sheds and roofs need permits and might be subject to setback rules. Contact the Southwest Michigan Building Authority to find out which permit you need.  
 (269) 585-4150





### Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell:

Want to make a difference in your community? There are many ways to do that in Oshtemo! Volunteers are needed to plant trees, remove invasive vegetation, clear trails, help restore the historic Drake House, lend a hand at community events, serve on a variety of committees and boards, and more. All ages, interests and skill levels are welcome! Many of our volunteer opportunities are appropriate for kids and would make great family activities.



If you are interested in being contacted about volunteer opportunities as they arise, please send an e-mail to [volunteer@oshtemo.org](mailto:volunteer@oshtemo.org) and ask to be added to our new **Volunteer E-mail List**. When volunteers are needed, an e-mail will be sent to you with details on what is involved, when, where, special skills or tools needed, etc. You can choose whether to participate or not, depending on your interests and time constraints.

If you'd rather not receive e-mails, we've created a new Volunteer page on our website at [www.oshtemo.org/volunteer/](http://www.oshtemo.org/volunteer/). Volunteer opportunities will be posted here as they arise.

Facebook users can "follow" Oshtemo Township on Facebook to find out about volunteer projects. Follow the Oshtemo Friends of the Parks and Historical Society Facebook pages for volunteer opportunities as well.



Oshtemo has a strong history of volunteerism. We appreciate the many volunteers that make our community a wonderful place to live, work and visit. If you are interested in meeting new people, getting to know your neighbors, learning new skills, or taking on a challenge, please volunteer! Questions? Please feel free to contact Township Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell at (269) 216-5220 or by e-mail at [libbyhc@oshtemo.org](mailto:libbyhc@oshtemo.org).



### From Clerk Dusty Farmer:

It's that time of year again! Nice weather is often used as an opportunity to connect with people in neighborhoods by going door-to-door. With few exceptions, anyone conducting door-to-door business is required to register with the Township Office. Our Hawkers, Peddlers & Solicitors Ordinance also requires that "No Trespassing" signs be obeyed or be subject to an ordinance violation ticket. Ask the solicitor if they have registered with the Township, and they should have a license in their possession. Registration helps prevent scams. Exceptions for door-to-door activity include, but are not limited to, political and religious communication.

To report soliciting without a license, please contact Clerk Dusty Farmer at 216-5224 or Ordinance Enforcement Officer Rick Suwarsky at 216-5227. If you have concerns of suspicious activity, contact the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Dept. at 383-8821, ext 3

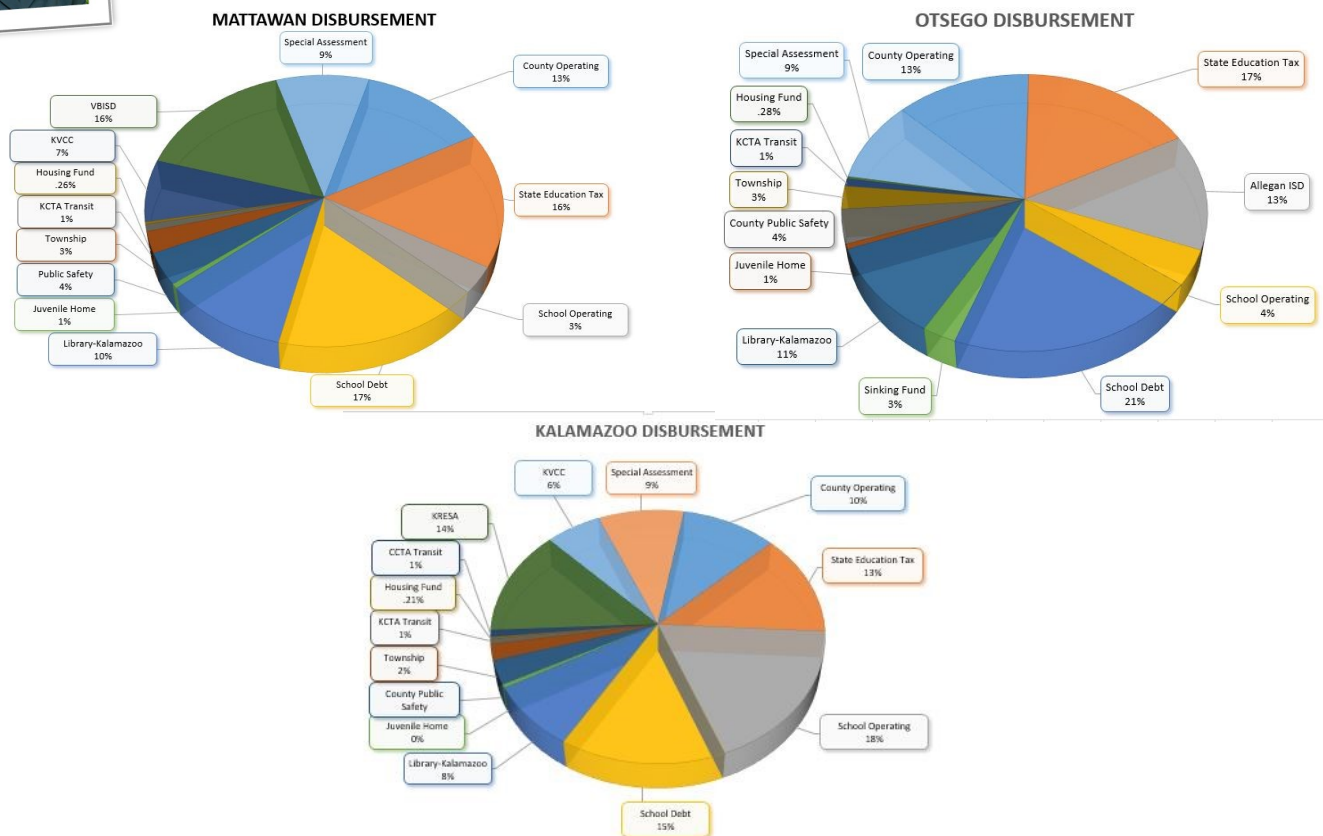
### Election Inspectors Needed

If you have a passion for democracy and would like to actively participate in ensuring that our elections run smoothly, please fill out an application to become an election inspector. Applicants must be 16 years of age or older. For more information, please call 216-5224 or email [dfarmer@oshtemo.org](mailto:dfarmer@oshtemo.org). Training is included, and pay is competitive.



## From Treasurer Nancy Culp:

Residents and business owners often want to know where their tax dollars are spent. The Treasurer's Office has broken down tax disbursements by the school districts within the Township. Oshtemo Township General Fund retains about 3% of the entire Winter tax bill.



## Planning Department—

### Agritourism in Oshtemo Township



Recently, Oshtemo completed an update to the Township's Master Plan, which included a set of strategies for the preservation of rural character. The Rural Character Preservation Strategy chapter states the following:

*"The natural and social value of rural areas is being increasingly recognized, including the key contributions that rural areas provide to food production and the local economy, as well as the environmentally significant lands that are preserved within rural areas. Given the importance and attraction of rural areas, communities are recognizing the critical need to identify and preserve cherished rural characteristics so that they can be enjoyed for future generations."*

During the public outreach for the rural preservation strategies, many residents indicated a desire to have more economic opportunities associated with agriculture and agricultural related activities. This led to a set of policies and strategies for the development of agricultural enterprises, specifically addressing the lack of regulatory permission within the Township's Zoning Ordinance for agritourism uses.

Agritourism is typically defined as an agriculturally based operation or activity that brings the public to a working farm for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the farm operation. These activities can range from small roadside farm stands where seasonal fruits and vegetables are sold to large centers that operate year-round and provide a multitude of agriculture experiences.

The Township Planning Commission is currently reviewing possible changes to the *AG: Agricultural* and *RR: Rural Residential Districts* to permit agritourism if certain conditions can be met. These zoning districts are generally found west of 8<sup>th</sup> Street, where a more rural development pattern is found and is expected to continue.

The possible changes to the Zoning Ordinance would provide more economic options to property owners within this area of the Township. However, these opportunities also have to be tempered with the desired character of the area and the peace and enjoyment of other private property owners. Possible changes to the Ordinance will be discussed over the next few months. Watch for postings on the Township's website of the draft language and additional public input opportunities. If you would like to receive notice, please email Julie Johnston at [jjohnston@oshtemo.org](mailto:jjohnston@oshtemo.org)

## Oshtemo Fire and Rescue—

Oshtemo Township Fire and Rescue (OFD) has been awarded a 100% grant from the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation to purchase some replacement firefighting personal protective equipment (PPE). The grant totals \$28,151.

Firefighting PPE is routinely subjected to various hazardous chemicals which degrade its protective capacity over time. Knowing this, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has produced a standard that requires the gear to be automatically taken out of service when it reaches 10 years. More often than not, the gear does not last a full 10 years due to unrepairable tears, extensive exposure to heat or becoming contaminated with a chemical that is not removable.

This grant application was a collaborative effort between OFD and our local Firehouse Subs restaurant (1750 South Drake Road, Kalamazoo) owners Ms. Susan Cornish and Mr. Bobby Kusmack. It was through their indulgence and guidance that our application was deemed worthy of funding by the Foundation.

Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation was founded in 2005 and has since granted over \$31 million in 46 states benefiting 3,175 organizations. It is their desire to provide equipment, training, and support to their hometown heroes.

Oshtemo has received the funding necessary to replace:

Nine (9) sets of structural firefighting turnout gear (coats and pants) totaling \$20,496.

Three (3) fire helmets totaling \$1,065.

Twenty-two (22) pairs of firefighting boots totaling \$6,590.

**THANK YOU, FIREHOUSE SUBS!**



### KALAMAZOO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Kalamazoo County residents have been reporting numerous thefts from parked cars in recent weeks. There are several guidelines to follow which will reduce the chances of having your property stolen from inside your vehicle.

#### What can you do to prevent a larceny from your vehicle?

1. Lock your vehicle. Many reported vehicle break-ins occur when owners neglect to lock vehicle doors.
2. Hide valuables from sight or take them with you. If a person sees valuable property in a vehicle in plain sight, there is strong chance they will either break a window or try other means to gain access. If you do have property in your vehicle, place the property in the trunk or place it where it cannot be seen from the windows.
3. Park in areas that are not secluded. Park in well-lit areas which make it visible to the general public.
4. Never leave electronics in vehicles where they can be seen when the vehicle is un-attended. After market car stereos; consider models with removable faceplates. Take the faceplate with you when you leave your vehicle.
5. Always record serial numbers of purchased goods. If stolen, it makes the item easier to find when recovered by law enforcement.

# Public Works Update

## **Sewer Connection Notices**

The Public Works Department continues to send out sewer connection notices where service is available. About one-half of the 320+ properties with access to public sanitary sewer service have had a mailing sent to the owners that remain on private septic systems. Homes and businesses with groundwater leaching systems beyond a presumed 15-year service life will be required to connect to the public sewer within two years of receipt of the letter. The Township has a 20-year payment plan to help finance the sewer connection fees at an interest rate equal to Prime Rate + 1%. Another option is the USDA Guaranteed Loan program for homeowners which is 20 years at 1% interest rate; however, income limitations apply.

## **Sewer Extension Project**

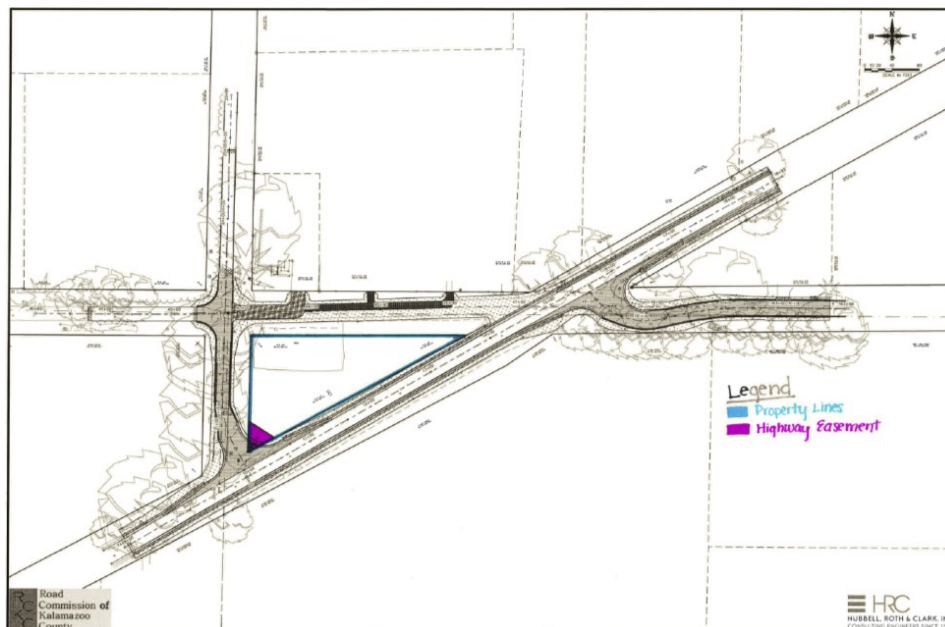
The Public Works Department has completed topographic surveys of the neighborhoods in Phase I of the sewer extension project (Beech Ave, Skyridge, Whitegate Farms, Fairlane, Meridian/Sunset, and West Main between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Township Hall). Sewer design will proceed through the summer. While the USDA has not yet provided a formal funding letter, we have been told informally that the letter is coming. The delay is for a good reason: The Michigan office of the USDA received about three times more funding than anticipated so they are trying to figure out how to distribute the extra funds. We are using this opportunity to seek additional funding to do the Phase II & III neighborhoods sooner.

## **Sidewalks with Sewer**

The Township Board recognized that building sidewalks with the sewer extension project is an opportunity to reduce the cost of the sidewalks. This opportunity warrants further consideration and community dialogue. Conceptual designs are being developed for core sidewalk connections within and adjacent to the Phase I sewer extensions. Meetings with residents in those neighborhoods are scheduled for early May to get their input on the sidewalks. The USDA loan cannot pay for the sidewalks. The Township Board has not decided how the addition of sidewalks will be funded. In late May or early June, the Public Works Department will present a sidewalk plan tailored for each neighborhood work area with estimated costs. This is to support the Township Board's further discussions on proceeding with the project and possible funding sources.

## **Intersection Redesigns, Almena Drive**

This summer the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County will realign the intersections at Almena & KL Ave and Almena & 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The purpose of the realignment is to improve visibility and safety for drivers turning onto Almena. Additionally, the section of KL Ave between Almena and 1<sup>st</sup> Street will be abandoned and the road right-of-way returned to the adjacent property owners. A graphic showing the realignment is below.





**Oshtemo**  
Friends of the Parks

# 2018 EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

## MUSIC IN THE PARK

Flesher Field, 3664 South 9th Street

June 10 - Corn Fed Girls

July 8 - Zion Lion Reggae Band

August 12 - Lake Effect Jazz Big Band

6:00 - 7:30 pm

## MOVIES IN THE PARK

Oshtemo Township Park  
7275 West Main Street

June 21 - Moana

July 19 - Roman Holiday

August 16 - Wonder Woman

All movies start at dusk

## FITNESS PROGRAMS

Yoga in the Park at  
Flesher Field gazebo  
Wednesdays at 7 pm

Boot Camp at Flesher Field gazebo  
Saturdays at 9 am

Tennis Lessons at Township Park  
Small Fee required for  
fitness programs.

## FREE PROGRAMS

in partnership with Kalamazoo  
Public Library, held at Township Park

Children's Music & Move Storytime -  
June 16 at 11:00 am

Stroller Walks at 11:00 am

June 8 - July 13 - August 10

Teen 'Amazing Race' - June 15 at 11:00 am

Teen Kick[big]ball - July 27 at 11:00 am

Teen Basketball All Stars Challenge -  
August 17 at 11:00 am

Yoga in the Park -

June 11, July 9, August 13  
at 6:30 pm

For more details, visit  
[oshtemofriends.org](http://oshtemofriends.org)  
or look for us  
on Facebook.

## VOLUNTEER AT DRAKE FARMSTEAD PARK

927 North Drake Road  
July 18 from 6 - 9 pm  
August 14  
from 9 to 12 pm



U-INSURED



# MAY 24-28



## Oshtemo Rotary



## Family Festival

### Maple Hill Mall Kalamazoo

### BUY ONLINE BEFORE MAY 24

### SAVE \$10 ON ARMBANDS!



### skerbeck.com

## Ordinance

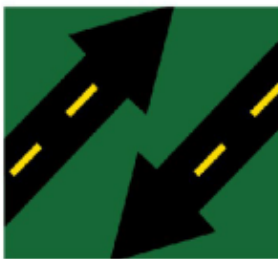
### Enforcement Department

The Township would like to thank everyone for cleaning up their properties after the snow melted away this spring. A lot of litter can accumulate throughout the winter, and we have to work together to make sure our community stays clean. We have seen many communities out and picking up litter in an effort to make their space look better. Great job so far!

With the nicer weather comes more traffic and travel. You will notice the traffic speed trailer rotating through communities. We put this out not only as a reminder to drivers that everyone must share the road safely, but also to gather important data that informs directed traffic patrols. We strive to keep our community safe!

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please call Ordinance Enforcement at (269) 216-5227.

CONNECT TO ROAD COMMISSION  
OF KALAMAZOO COUNTY ALERTS



Have You Signed Up?

Receive Message Alerts  
for:

- ◆ Road Construction
- ◆ Road Closures/Detours
- ◆ General Public News

RCKC CONNECT  
RCKC ALERTS SIGN UP NOW

Visit : [www.kalamazooountyroads.com](http://www.kalamazooountyroads.com)



## Election Dates

May 8    Aug 7    Nov 6

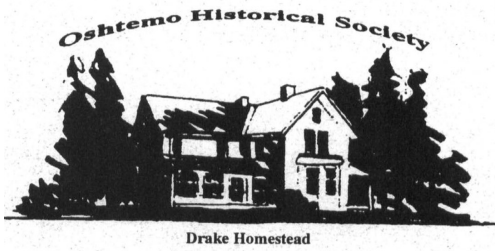
The Clerk's office remains committed to honest and fair elections, with highly trained election staff to assist voters effectively and efficiently. We look forward to assisting all Oshtemo Township voters in 2018.

**If you would like to be added to the permanent Absentee Voter application list, please contact Clerk Dusty Farmer at 216-5224 or email [oshtemo@oshtemo.org](mailto:oshtemo@oshtemo.org)**

**Anyone can be on the list to receive an application for absentee voting.**

**Sign up today!**





## *OSHTEMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS*

Let's think ahead to spring and put winter behind us. We have scheduled two interesting speakers for the coming months. Please mark your calendars and join us. Meetings are always free to the public. We meet at the Oshtemo Township Hall, 7275 West Main Street, at 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup>** - **E. Binnery Girdler**, Director of the Biology Department at Kalamazoo College, will tell us about the "**Lillian Anderson Arboretum**," which is located on West Main Street just west of the Township Hall.

**Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup>** - **Beth Timmerman**, Local History Specialist with the Kalamazoo Public Library, will provide us with information about the "**Resources available at the KPL**."

**NO MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST**

For more information about the Oshtemo Historical Society, please visit our website at [www.oshtemohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.oshtemohistoricalsociety.org)

www.oshtemo.org  
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