



NEWSLETTER

*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)*

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Supervisor

Libby Heiny-Cogswell
libbyhc@oshtemo.org

Clerk

Dusty Farmer
dfarmer@oshtemo.org

Treasurer

Clare Buszka
cbuszka@oshtemo.org

Trustees

Cheri Bell
cbell@oshtemo.org

Kizzy Bradford

kbradford@oshtemo.org

Kristin Cole

kcole@oshtemo.org

Zak Ford

zford@oshtemo.org

Questions regarding
road maintenance can
be addressed by:

Road Commission of
Kalamazoo
County (RCKC)

Phone: (269) 381-3171

Fax: (269) 381-1760

info@kalamazoocountyroads.com

[https://](https://www.kalamazoocountyroads.com/contact.php)

www.kalamazoocountyroads.com/contact.php

News You Can Use...

2023 Dump/Trash Day Schedule

Dump/Trash Days are very popular in the Township. Residents enter from the western-most driveway to join the line waiting to pull up to the dump trucks and Township worker who will assist with disposal of household junk. No yard waste, kitchen garbage, hazardous materials, or large quantity building materials will be accepted. Twice per year we have a leaf drop off available. Hours are from 9 am-3 pm, proof of residency required. Two paper shred days are also offered, and each resident can bring 6 paper boxes or bags. Those hours are from 10 am-Noon.

March 18, 2023

April 15, 2023

April 22, 2023

May 13, 2023 SHRED DAY

May 27, 2023

June 24, 2023

July 29, 2023

August 26, 2023

September 16, 2023 SHRED DAY

September 30, 2023

October 28, 2023

November 4, 2023 LEAVES ONLY

November 18, 2023 Trash and Leaves

Township Department Information

Assessor Kristine Biddle
216-5225 assessor@oshtemo.org

Fire Chief Greg McComb
375-0487 gmccomb@oshtemo.org

Ordinance Officer Rick Suwarsky
216-5227 rswarsky@oshtemo.org

Parks Director Karen High
216-5233 khigh@oshtemo.org (Rentals: 375-4260)

Planning Director Iris Lubbert
216-5223 ilubbert@oshtemo.org

Public Works Director Anna Horner
216-5236 ahorner@oshtemo.org



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From Supervisor Heiny-Cogswell—

The Township Board met Tuesday, November 15th, and officially adopted the 2023 annual budget. The 2023 Budget was developed through discussion with Staff and the Township Board at public meetings starting in June and continuing through October. The general millage increased from .96 mils to 1.5 mils and the working budget was provided for public review in October and earlier in November. Some 2023 Budget & Capital highlights follow:

ARPA Federal Funding (\$640K)

- Township Planning: Master Plan (Long Range Transportation, Parks, Master Plan Re- organization, Market Study, Zoning Updates)
- Public Works: Non-motorized Asset Management, Non-motorized Projects (KL Ave, etc.),
- GIS, Records Digitization
- General Township: Communications

Roads & Non-motorized Projects

Local Road Preventive Maintenance (\$500K) plus KCRC PAR Program Match (\$240K)

Police Protection

Kalamazoo County/KCSO Contract – 2 Sergeants; 9 Deputies (\$1.4M)

Fire & EMS Services

- Personal Protection Equipment & Other Firefighting Equipment (\$198K)
- Fire Stations Maintenance: Alarm Systems Stations 1 & 2, HVAC Upgrade, Wall/Window Repairs, and Water Softeners Station 2, Roof Replacement Station 1 (\$146K)

Information Technology

- Capital Items: Meeting Room AV Upgrade, Computer Replacements, Firewall Upgrade, Website, etc. (\$84K)
- Computer Operations: Software & Support, Cloud Services, Fiber Optic, Phone Services, Ordinance Hosting, etc. (\$162K)

Public Works

Non-motorized Projects & Maintenance: KL Ave, South Drake Road, S 9th Street, Parkview Ave, Western Wood, Local Street Repairs, Major Street Repairs (Engineering, Surveying, Construction, Retaining Wall Repair, etc.) (\$1.4M)

- PW Records Digitization (\$30K)
- Street Lighting: Power, Improvements, LED Conversions (\$170K)
- HARC Revolving Fund Sewer Connection Assistance (\$50K)
- Public Water Extension: W Main, 7th to 8th (\$245K)
- Additional staffing for Geographic Information Systems (GIS; Full Time) and Engineering (Part Time)
- Public Sewer expansion (refer Public Works update)

Clerk's Office

Additional Staffing for Records Management (Full Time)

SMBA (Southwest Michigan Building Authority)

Building Inspection Authority (Joint with Cooper Township) (\$558K)

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Planning

- Master Planning (Long Range Transportation, Zoning Updates, 5 Year Park Plan, Market Study, Master Plan Update & Re-organization) (\$140K)
- Additional staffing for Development Inspections (Full Time)
- Oshtemo housing study continues, working with WE UpJohn Institute, and meetings with stakeholders (residents, developers, elected officials, etc) occurring to get vital input on housing needs in our community. Report and other discussion will continue in 2023.
- Planning Department Walk-in office hours will continue in 2023, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 11 am to 1 pm.

Cemeteries, Buildings & Grounds

- Cemetery Trust Fund and Maintenance (\$25K)
- Township Meeting Room Roof Replacement (\$140K)
- Maintenance Facility (\$350K)
- Additional Staffing for Park Ranger (Weekend Rentals; Part Time)

Township Operations

- Dump Day Trash Services (\$56K)

Parks

- Drake Farmstead Park (Additional Parking Construction, Entry Landscape, Carriage Barn Kitchenette) (\$63K)
- Township Park (Wiffle Ball Field Fence, Pickleball Benches/Signs) (\$12K)
- Fruitbelt Trail (Ecological Restoration) (\$60K)
- Flesher Field Park (Low Mow Areas Expansion, Picnic Tables) (\$7K)
- Grange Hall (Paint Lower Level, Picnic Table, Siding Repair, Sign Replacement) (\$7200)
- Parks Maintenance: Parking Lot, Playground Safety Surface Renewal, Tree Trimming, Trail Signs, Prairie, Rain Garden, etc. (\$87K)

Tax Increment Financing Districts

Downtown Development Authority

Traffic Consultant, Road Design Engineering (\$50K)

Façade Improvement Grant Program (\$10K)

South Drake Corridor Improvement Authority (SoDA)

Annual Reimbursement to Township for Drake Path (\$30K)

Safety Improvements (TBD) (\$35K)

Fire Department

- Finalized and approved a three-year union collective bargaining agreement, for the years 2023-2025.
- Installation of a new washing machine for fire turnout gear to remove carcinogens at Fire Station 1 (will be completed late 2022).

In closing, with the culmination of the calendar year, the Township continues to work diligently to address the community's growth and provide quality services for our residents. Sincere thanks to all our residents who have volunteered their time for various boards and committees. This provides valuable feedback on the many township service arenas.

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns: libbyhc@oshtemo.org or (269) 216-5220. Or drop in during **Supervisor Open Office hours, scheduled for Monday January 9th, from noon to 2 pm.**



From Clerk Dusty Farmer—

What a year! We had three elections in 2022 and all were administered successfully. Special thank you to the 90+ election inspectors, staff, and volunteers whose commitment to this process ensures integrity in our election systems. We do not currently have any elections scheduled in 2023, but we also know that a taxing authority has the ability to hold a special election. Looking forward to other statutory duties in the Clerk’s Office, 2023 is expected to be a busy year with a focus on Cemeteries and Records Management.

I have been collecting resources and formulating a plan of action to bring the Township’s record management systems up-to-date with current technology. This will bring increased efficiency and accuracy to our record-keeping process and also ensure that records are more easily accessible for future staff and officials. An internal Records Committee has been formed, and the group will develop a strategy of best practices to move forward. The Clerk’s Office will also be hiring and additional full-time employee who will be both an Elections Specialist and manager of records.

The Township owns three cemeteries, and each present specific challenges to staff for maintenance. We have already begun the process of removing trees, bushes, and shrubs that impede lawn care and pose a threat to the integrity of headstones and foundations. The next step is to get the individual graves cleaned up, including those items that are not permitted in the cemeteries. This will include anything on the grave other than the headstone, foundation, and permitted decorations. No plantings of any kind are allowed, and flowers must be placed within on foot of the front of the headstone. Summer decorations must be removed by October 15, and winter decorations are allowed from November 1 through April 1. No other structures or permanent decorations are allowed. We want to be mindful that some violations have occurred without being removed in the past, while also being understanding of the sensitive nature of cemetery burials. We do have an obligation to maintain the cemeteries, however, and wish to work with families to bring these cemetery plots into compliance. We will be attempting to contact families at the beginning of 2023 to begin clean-up efforts. (General Ordinance 234-Cemetery Regulations)

Are you planning to improve your property?

With Winter around the corner you may be starting to think about outdoor projects to tackle in the Spring. To assist you in planning your project Oshtemo offers a number of informational handouts that can be found at <https://oshtemo.org/frequently-asked-zoning-questions-2/> or Township Hall. Handouts currently available provide information on accessory buildings, fences, pools, and setbacks; with more to come in the future! Please do not hesitate to contact Oshtemo’s Planning Department at 269-216-5223 or Colten Hutson at chutson@oshtemo.org if you have any questions on the viability of your project idea for your property.

Please note that most improvements require a permit.

Contact the Southwest Michigan Building Authority (SMBA)

at 269-585-4150 for details.

Is Your Streetlight Out?



Streetlight issues, including outages or repairs, can be reported directly to Consumers Energy by visiting: www.consumersenergy.com/outages/street-light

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

Greetings from the Oshtemo Fire Department!



Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together.... But that also means a greater risk for fire.

Heating, holiday decorations, winter storms and candles all contribute to an increased risk of fire during the winter months. NFPA, the U.S. Fire Administration and your local fire department are teaming up to help reduce your risk to winter fires and other hazards, including carbon monoxide and electrical fires.

By following a few simple tips, you can ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.

Holiday decorating:

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn. Better yet, battery operated, decorative candles should be used (and they make an excellent, fire safe gift for family and friends).
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep decorations away from windows and doors.
- Do not place or block an exit door of your home with the Christmas tree.
- Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

Holiday Safety:

- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers and wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet where children can't reach them.
- More than one-third of home decoration fires are started by candles and more than two of every five decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

From all of us at the Oshtemo Fire Department we would like to wish everyone a safe holiday!



Oshtemo Township has created a Fire Department Strategic Planning Committee to help lay out a map for the department's path over the next 5 years. This committee includes Fire Department staff, Township staff and Board members, residents, and business owners. Meetings started in mid- August and have been meeting every few weeks.

The committee covers a wide range of topics regarding the OFD: how the department is managed and funded, how firefighters are staffed, what it requires to effectively respond to calls, developmental needs, and responding to changes within the Township. These meetings have been informative for the members, providing a clearer view into the departmental operations. For a majority of the community that we serve, most aspects of a fire department are never really considered by parties outside of the department. With this committee, we are able to share necessary details to help our Township and Fire Department make informed choices to design a 5 year plan for successful growth.

Sewer Update

The Township Clerk recently prevailed at the Appeals Court on the determination of insufficient petitions for Neighborhood Sanitary Sewer Expansion funding. The Township will be requesting public bids on Phase 1 in January 2023. Once a contract is awarded and the bonds are issued, the Public Works Staff will work to set up meetings with specific neighborhood to discuss construction schedule, impacts and contact information.

The proposed costs to residents for connection fees were targeted to be \$5,000 by the Board after resident feedback and concern. The Board and staff worked closely with municipal finance advisors and design professionals to use available funding sources to achieve this reduced cost to the residents. Since the delay from the lawsuit, the team is working hard to reevaluate changes in project cost, which are high. The public connection fee will be higher than the target due to the delay and increased costs, and is estimated to be \$7,500 for single family residences. The Board's highest priorities remain keeping costs low for residents and preventing this situation in the future by making sewer available in areas where residential development is expected so developers can install and connect to the public sewer immediately.

The most common question from residents, and reason behind recent lawsuit, is "Why does there have to be a time limit on connecting and why can't I just connect when my septic system fails?". There are many reasons for this, however the two most dominant are as follows.

Most importantly, managing waste, is a public health concern. Over 50% of the septic systems in the expansion areas are not compliant with current County sanitary code and at or near the expected life of a septic (40 years). Even with proper care and maintenance, these systems (just like cars, roofs, siding etc.) become inefficient and old. A community service, whether it be police or public sewer, is for everyone's health and safety, even beyond Oshtemo's borders, and for generations to come.

Secondly, to complete a project this size, Oshtemo or any community, needs to use financing like loans to complete. This has been recommended by financial advisors and engineering professionals. To secure a loan, just like a mortgage, the repayment must be proven. If there is no defined timeline, no loans would ever be approved. Again, to work together as a community, to be proactive, prepared, and resilient, these are the types of projects we must commit to implement properly.

Water and Sewer Rate Changes

In September 2021, after a decade of negotiations and collaborative work, the Townships in the County and the City of Kalamazoo signed a new water contract for service after 40 years! One of the biggest improvements for Oshtemo residents of this new agreement was that users, both inside and outside the City limits, would be charged the same rates. For the last few years, the outside City users have had to have their rates increased at a larger rate to reach outsider City, the Townships, rates. As of 2022, any user of the public water system in Kalamazoo County is billed the same usage rates. Oshtemo is also lowering the surcharge rate for water starting in 2023 because the new service contract and less administrative cost to Township staff.

The Township and the City now work together as the "Utility Policy Committee", so all agencies are represented and approving financial and policy decisions about the water system. This is just one way the Township Staff has advocated for representation and equity for the residents to protect them and provide best value. Similarly, negotiations for a new wastewater contract are underway and will continue throughout the year.

Residents that use public water and sanitary sewer will experience rate increases on their quarterly bills in 2023. The City of Kalamazoo is the operator of both utilities for the Township. The increases are for inflation impacts to costs for operating the system and materials. The City continues to apply for low interest loans and grants and applies long range planning to keep costs manageable. The increases are 20%, which equates to \$3.10 per month for water and \$3.68 per month for sewer, on average for a residential user. The utility bills in the area are about 50% that of other communities of similar size systems. These operations and services are matter of public health and maintaining the pipes and level of service, is critical for protecting residents' quality of life.

Storm Drain Best Management Practices



Storm water, rain or melting snow, is collected as part of the roadway design to prevent flooding, keep pavement dry, and direct it to a specified location like a pond, stream, or ditch, and ultimately into the ground. Keeping storm water and the drains clean helps maintain the pipes as well as prevent pollution of the ground. Clearing away grass, dirt, and weeds around the inlet grates along the street near your home, helps protect build up in the system to keep it clean and functioning at maximum capacity. Avoid dumping chemicals in street drains and do not use them for leaves and grass clippings. Protecting these inlets to the storm system, will extend the life of our roads and protect the waterways that are so special to Michigan.

USDA Home Repair Program - Loans and Grants!

Did you know? The United State Department of Agriculture Rural Development offers “Single Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants” for repairs, upgrades or improvements to homes to remove health and safety hazards.

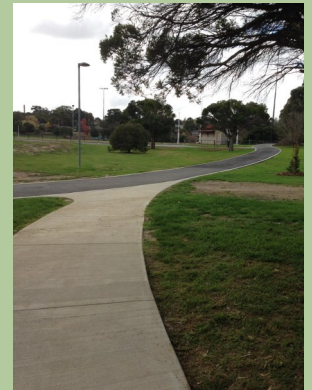
If you live on the west side of US-131 you are eligible by geography and can view the other requirements at www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-programs/single-family-housing-repair-loans-grants.

These applications are accepted year round. To talk to a local representative about the program, you can call the Paw Paw Office Monday, Wednesday or Friday at (269) 657-7055 Ext 4.



KL Ave Phase 1 Construction and Grants

A 10-foot-wide asphalt shared use path will start construction in late summer of 2023 on KL Ave from Drake Road to Concord Place entrance. The Township was fortunate to receive part of the Kalamazoo County American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, (federal stimulus) dollars to help design and construct this portion of the project. The Township had already received another grant from the Transportation Alternatives Program so grant funds will cover about 90% of this project. MDOT is replacing the US-131 bridge over KL Ave in 2024-2025 and will include the path under the new bridge as well. Once MDOT’s project is completed, the Township will continue the path to the east to The Paddock Apartments in 2025.

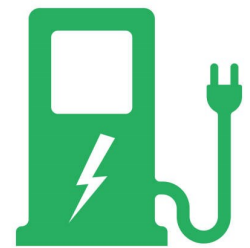


Senior Activities Proposed at Oshtemo Community Center

Attention seniors! Are you interested in playing cards, doing yoga, or similar activities this winter at the Oshtemo Community Center, 6407 Parkview Avenue? Sue Commissaris and other residents are organizing the activities with support from Oshtemo Friends of the Parks. Card games under consideration are Pinochle and Hand & Foot, which is a type of Canasta. Lessons will be available for new players.

If all goes as planned, a schedule of activities will be posted on the Township website in December. The schedule will be posted on the door of the Community Center as well. If you’d like to help or have ideas for activities, please contact Sue at skcommissaris@charter.net or (269) 350-5953. Sue would especially like to find an instructor to lead Senior Yoga and Chair Yoga. If you know of someone that might be interested, please have them contact her.

Car Charging Station at Flesher Field!



The Oshtemo Downtown Development Authority has donated an electric vehicle charging station with two charging ports to Flesher Field. The model installed is a Juicebox Enel X. Come charge your hybrid or electric car and enjoy all that Flesher Field and the surrounding businesses have to offer!

Thank you volunteers!

Oshtemo Township is very fortunate to have many active, involved residents that are willing to help make our community a wonderful place to live, work, and play. These energetic folks serve on Boards and Committees, attend public meetings, host community events, plant trees, remove invasive vegetation, and more. They share their precious free time with us and do it with a smile!

We'd like to extend a big THANK YOU to the following people and organizations for their support in 2022. If you see the name of a friend or neighbor below, please give them a pat on the back!

Alistair Smith

Amy Atwater

Amy Erving

Anita Smith

Anna Versalle

Arianna King

Barb Adams

Bill Cekola

Bill Fretz

Bobbe Luce

Brad Sullivan

Bruce Dannenhauer

Bruce Vanderweele

Carl Benson

Carol Gray

Carol Harris

Cheri Bell

Chetan Vyas

Clare Buszka

Corey Ashley

Cornelia Graham

Dale Shugars

Dan Befus

David Walch

Deb Everett

Denny Patzer

Dick Skalski

Dusty Farmer

Elaine Branch

Fred Gould

Grant Taylor

Greg Fountain

Harry Bird

Harry Jachym

Heather Lewis

Helen Coleman

Irene Livingston

Jan Gibes

Jane Macomber

Jennie Ko

Jennifer Hauschild

Joe Gesmundo

Karen Halsted

Kathy Fretz

Katy Steadman

Kay Oppliger

Kelly Bringman

Kenn Livingston

Kerria Randolph

Kim Bourner

Kitty Gelling

Kizzy Bradford

Larry LaBond

Liam Drake

Libby Heiny-Cogswell

Lori Pierce

Lorri Harris

Lou Coleman

Louis Williams

Maria Lohrmann

Mark Jackson

Mary Anne Britvec

Matt Hybels

Micki Maxwell

Mike Carlson

Mike Drake

Neil Sikora

Pam Drake

Pam Jackson

Pat Cronin

Paul Graham

Paul Sotherland

Rich MacDonald

Ryan Wieber

Ryan Winfield

Sandy Bliesener

Starr Waldron

Stephan Dallas

Themis Corakis

Theresa Spurr

Tim Mallett

Bernie Mein

Toni Fountain

Wendy Horton-Bierema

Organizations

Boy Scout Troops 161 & 292

Country Dancing Kalamazoo

Heritage Christian Academy

JCI (Jaycees)

K'Aces Disc Golf League

Kalamazoo Pickleball Outreach

Kalamazoo Wiffle League

Oshtemo 4-H Club

Oshtemo Historical Society

Oshtemo Rotary Club

West Oshtemo Grange

Interested in volunteering? To be contacted about volunteer opportunities as they arise, please send an e-mail to volunteer@oshtemo.org and ask to be added to our **Volunteer E-mail List**. You can also follow Oshtemo Township and Oshtemo Friends of the Parks on Facebook to find out about volunteer projects.



Oshtemo's Parks and Recreation Endowment Fund is 'insurance' for the future

Established at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KZCF) with \$150,000 in 2009, Oshtemo's Parks and Recreation Endowment Fund is intended to help develop and maintain our prized parks now and in the future. As an endowment fund, the earnings of the fund, and not the principal, are available for spending. This ensures the longevity of the fund. If you'd like to make a lasting gift to our parks, consider helping us grow our Endowment Fund! It's easy to donate! Here's how:

1. Visit the KZCF website at <http://www.kalfound.org>
2. Select the **Give Now** button in the upper right corner of the screen
3. Enter 'Oshtemo' in the search bar under 'Search for a Specific Fund'. 'Oshtemo Township Parks & Recreation Endowment Fund' will appear as an option.
4. Click on 'Oshtemo Township Parks and Recreation Fund'
5. Enter the amount you'd like to give and indicate if the gift is anonymous or in memory or honor of a loved one.
6. Enter donation amount and payment information.
7. Pat yourself on the back for helping care for our parks, today and in the future!



Did you know? Country dancing opportunities abound at our very own Grange Hall!

Country Dancing in Kalamazoo is a non-profit organization passionate about preserving the joy and excitement of the contra, square and English dance traditions. They provide instruction, live or recorded music, and **welcome everyone**. For more information, including the names of musicians and callers for specific dances, visit their website at www.countrydancinginkalamazoo.com

The following dances will be held at the Oshtemo Grange Hall, 3234 North 3rd Street (corner of 3rd Street and H Avenue). Come a half hour early if you'd like to take part in a lesson to learn basic skill and dance moves. Suggested donation is \$1 -\$15, pay what you choose.

Contra and Squares: Saturdays, Dec 10, Jan 14 & 28, Feb 11 & 25, 7-10:30 pm.

Just for Fun Dances: Sundays, Dec 4 & Feb 5, 2-5 pm.

English Country Dances: Sat Dec 10, 3-5 pm.

English Country Dances: Weds Dec 21, Jan 18, and Feb 15, 7:30-9:30 pm.

Covid Protocols: For the safety of all, vaccination and booster is required. Masks required at all times. If you haven't danced with us since May, you will need to show your vaccine card with 2 vaccines and 1 booster and Identification.



TACKLING HOUSING IN OSHTEMO

Mark your calendars for these upcoming public meetings. Two timeslots are available for each. All meetings will be held in person at Township Hall (7275 W Main St.) unless noted otherwise on the Township Website.

Oshtemo's Housing Study Project Kick Off

Wed. 12/7/22 @ 6PM or Sat. 12/10/22 @ 10AM

Oshtemo's Housing Study Mid-Point Check-in

Wed. 3/1/23 @ 6PM or Sat. 3/4/23 @ 10AM

We are looking for your input!

Thank you to all residents that participated in the County's Housing Survey! Results were incorporated into the County's Housing Plan which can be found at: <https://www.kalcounty.com/housing/>.

The next step is using the data collected from the County's survey and further community input to create a housing study specific to Oshtemo Township. This study will allow our community leaders to understand our specific community housing needs and translate them into appropriate programs, ordinance updates, and policies. **Community input is key to the success of the Oshtemo Housing Study!** Please take 5 – 7 minutes to take the supplemental survey below, which can be accessed by link or QR code. Paper copies will also be available at Township Hall (7275 W. Main St). Please note that none of your personal information will be collected, stored, or reported through this survey. We thank you for your time and participation!

Housing Supplemental Survey (open until 3/5)

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OshtemoHousing>

Oshtemo Charter Township
7275 W. Main Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009



For more information and further engagement, please attend the upcoming public meetings noted on the other side of this postcard.



Welcome to the new staff members who joined Oshtemo Township in 2022!

Zach Pearson

Start Date: 04/11/22

Position: Public Work Project Manager

Bio: I came to the Public Works department from the insurance restoration industry, and this has been an amazing change of pace. I grew up in Niles, MI and moved to Kalamazoo to go to Western Michigan University (Go Broncos!!). I live with my wife, Kelsey, and our dogs Mack, Ringo, and our cat Lenny. I enjoy playing basketball and collecting comic books.

Sally Higgins

Start Date: 04/18/22

Position: Assistant to the Treasurer

Bio: I'm very excited to start this new chapter with Oshtemo Township! This is my first experience working in this business sector and I'm looking forward to learning more about the township. I've been a resident of Oshtemo for almost 30 years. Time outside work includes traveling, playing golf, skiing, gardening, and spending time with family and friends. My husband and I have two girls, Lauren who lives in Atlanta and Kelly who is currently in Washington DC. We also have two Bernese Mountain Dogs, Hamilton and Kennedy. My love of dogs inspired me to get involved with Animal Rescue Project where I spend time volunteering and sit on the board as treasurer. I have also fostered dogs for the Heart of Michigan Bernese Mountain Dog Rescue and ended up with our boy Kennedy as our foster fail!

Kyle Mead

Start Date: 02/18/22

Position: Out of District Paid on Call Firefighter

Bio: I'm Kyle Mead and I am working through the trainee book to become an Out of District Paid on Call Firefighter with Oshtemo Fire Department. I have 15 years of experience in the Fire Service and recently completed a Fire Instructor class and my EMT. I'm really enjoying the monthly trainings and the Firefighters at OFD.

Cody Roberts

Start Date: 06/13/22 (original date of hire 10/04/11)

Position: Full Time Firefighter

Bio: I've just been recently hired full time with Oshtemo Fire Dept. I've previously worked for the Fire Department from 2011-2019 as a Paid on Call Firefighter. I am a second-generation Firefighter after my grandpa who retired from Portage Fire Department. Outside of the fire department, I enjoy spending time with my daughter, snowboarding, and camping. I'm excited to be back and can't wait to see what the future holds for me at Oshtemo!

Michael McGrail

Start Date: 02/28/22

Position: Out of District Paid on Call Firefighter

Bio: I was born and raised on the east side of the state. I moved to Kalamazoo to attend WMU. I met my wife and we moved to Otsego where we have lived since 2012. I joined the fire service in 2017. I joined Oshtemo FD in February 2022. I am excited for the professional development and training Oshtemo has to offer. Outside of the fire department I enjoy spending time with my wife Amber and our 2 children Stephen and Adelyn, boating, golf, and hockey.

Terry Holroyd

Start Date: 06/27/22

Position: Full Time Firefighter

Bio: I started my firefighter career with Quincy Fire department in May 2008, then hired as a POC at the Coldwater Fire Department in September 2014. I currently reside in Coldwater but plan to move to Oshtemo or closer to Oshtemo in the near future. I am the first in my family to become a fireman. Outside of work I enjoy spending time with my wife and two girls. We enjoy spending time on the water, fishing, hunting and golf. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Oshtemo family.



7275 West Main Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Ph 375.4260 Fax 375.7180
www.oshtemo.org

Contact Us: email oshtemohs@gmail.com Check out our FACEBOOK page!

Irene Livingston, OHS Board Secretary, at 269-271-2842 or mamareany@aol.com

OHS is in need of a new webmaster. If you have computer and organizational skills, please consider this important and needed volunteer position. Most people rely on the internet for information and it is vital we keep our supporters and interested history buffs informed of our past and future. If you are interested, please contact:

April 20 at 7pm Gary Swain will present Preservation and Maintenance of Civil War Gravesites

March 16, 2023 at 7 pm Amy Jo Morseau , Cultural Events Coordinator of the Pokagon Band at the Potawatomi Center of History and Culture will be presenting Sugarbush Season.

The Oshtemo Historical Society will resume programming in March 2023.

Visit our website for more information.
www.oshtemohistoricalociety.org



OSHTEMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS