



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
Cheri Bell

cbell@oshtemo.org

Clerk

Dusty Farmer
dfarmer@oshtemo.org

Treasurer

Clare Buszka
cbuszka@oshtemo.org

Trustees

Kizzy Bradford
kbradford@oshtemo.org

Kristin Cole
kcole@oshtemo.org

Zak Ford
zford@oshtemo.org

By the time this 'goes to press' my long tenure serving my community as Oshtemo Supervisor will be ended. The handoff to the next Supervisor Cheri Bell is going very well. Her commitment to the community and hard work already on the Parks Committee, HR Board Work Group, ZBA, PC, speaks volumes to her commitment.

I 'plugged in' to service to my community starting with planting trees with young children in Oshtemo Township Park. This continued with years of service on the Planning Commission starting in 1997. Thank you for your support for me to serve as Supervisor since 2008. I likely will continue to volunteer in some capacity. There has been much hard work through all these years. I have confidence in continuing positive municipal services given the great professional staff at the Township.

Closing story to share! Helios Solar installed the system, and from contractor Connor Fields, "This system is tied into the loads at the station. All power it produces will be used first in the station and then any excess flows back to Consumers' grid. In this case, Consumers acts to virtually "store" the energy you export for future consumption. If you add batteries in the future, you would store your own energy in lieu of exporting and have that energy available if the grid fails." The reduction in power usage at Station Two is funding the installation cost. Thanks to the Board for requesting a solar project in 2022. And thanks to another volunteer Oshtemo resident, a mechanical systems efficiency specialist with solar installation oversight experience. Gary Heckman identified Fire Station Two roof as an appropriate, "low hanging fruit" solar project location. The roof is South facing and large, resulting in a significant solar array.

Supervisor Bell will sign on the next newsletter. She can be reached at cbell@oshtemo.org. Again, I thank you, the staff, the MANY community volunteers, for your support, and I wish nothing but the BEST for our Oshtemo Community.

-(former) Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell

2023 Trash Days

9 AM-3 PM

May 27

June 24

July 29

August 26

September 30

October 28

November 4 LEAVES ONLY

November 18 Trash and
Leaves

2023 Shred Days

10 AM-12 PM

September 16

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 rsuwarsky@oshtemo.org

Parks Director Vanessa Street
216-5233 vstreet@oshtemo.org

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

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



Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/oshtemochartertownship/> or sign up at www.oshtemo.org to join the email list

Planning - Development in Oshtemo

Curious as to what development has been going on in your community? Look no further! The 2022 Planning Department Annual Report is here!

Every year the Planning Department produces a report that documents planning activities within the Township. This report includes projects worked on by the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2022 and gives a sneak peek into what is anticipated for 2023. The report provides an overview of what site plans, variances, ordinance amendments, and more have been approved or are ongoing within Oshtemo Township. The full 2022 Planning Department Annual Report can be found on our website: <https://www.oshtemo.org/files/assets/public/planning/documents/2022-annual-report.pdf>

Some highlights include:

Tournesol, a 49-unit, 60.5-acre, Open Space Community Site Condominium development of single-family homes at 7214 W N Avenue.
Faraday Defense, construction of a 60,785 sqft two-story office and manufacturing/ distributions facility within the Western Michigan University Business Technology Research Park 2.

Taplin, complete redevelopment of 5070 W Michigan. This involves the demolition of three existing buildings onsite and the construction of a new 32,875 sqft maintenance and storage building.

The Village Childcare Center, establish a childcare center within three different suites in the exciting multi-tenant commercial center at 5320 Holiday Terrace.

Heritage Christian Reformed Church Preschool, establish a preschool within a church at 2857 S 11th.

KABAS, establishment of a private school for the Kalamazoo Academy for Behavioral and Academic Success (KABAS) within a portion of a church at 2345 N 10th Street.

We thank our community volunteers on our Boards and Commissions for their time and effort in making Oshtemo what it is today and continually working toward expressing the community's vision for the future. We also would like to thank the members of the public that have and continue to contribute to these discussions. To stay up to date on ongoing activities and find ways that you can contribute to shaping your community, we encourage you to watch for events and meetings on our website and Facebook page.

If you have any questions about a development in Oshtemo or would like more information about Oshtemo's Boards and Commissions, please don't hesitate to contact the Oshtemo Planning Department at 269-216-5223 or ilubbert@oshtemo.org.



From Treasurer Clare Buszka—

Non-Escrow Accounts - Those of you without escrow accounts can expect your summer tax bill in your mailbox the 1st week of July.

Escrow Accounts-For those with Escrow accounts, the bills will be sent directly to your mortgage company. If you would like a copy of your tax bill, please contact the Treasurers Office via email or phone and we can mail a copy to you, or they can be picked up at the Township Hall.

Summer tax payments can be made at the Township office starting July 1st and are due by September 14th. (Payments can be made at the Township office through February 28, 2024 but will be subject to additional penalties and interest starting September 15)

Payment Options:

Cash – Cash is accepted inside the Township Hall during normal business hours (please do NOT put cash in the drop-box outside).

Check or Money Order – Checks or Money Orders can be mailed, placed in the secure drop-box outside, or brought into the Township Hall during normal business hours.

Debit/Credit Cards- Processing fees for debit/credit cards is 2.75% of the total amount due and is paid to the company that processes our credit card payments. Cards cannot be processed over the phone, and must be processed in-person or online by the customer.

Online- I highly recommend the online option for everyone and is easily accessible on our website www.oshtemo.org under the “Tax Payments and Information” link. We accept VISA, MASTERCARD, AMERICAN EXPRESS, or APPLE PAY. The additional 2.75% credit card processing fee also applies to online payment. EFT/Online E-check using your routing and account number is another option and the fee for this is only \$1.95. Again, all fees charged here go to the processing company, not the Township. As always, if you need assistance or have questions about your taxes please feel free to contact the Treasurers Office.

Have a Happy and Relaxing Summer!

Clare Buszka, Treasurer
cbuszka@oshtemo.org
269-216-5221

Opportunities for summer fun in Oshtemo Township Parks



Yoga in the Park: KP (Fit)ness will again offer one hour vinyasa practices on the lawn in front of the gazebo at Flesher Field Park, 3664 South 9th Street, at 10am on Sundays in **May, June, July and August**. Note: no classes on holiday weekends of **May 28 and July 2nd**. All ages & levels of experience are welcome! Please bring your own yoga mat or blanket. Drop-in fee is \$10 per class. A portion of the proceeds go to support the park!

Questions? Email: kaitlyn@kpeacefitness.com. Yoga in the Park is a program of Oshtemo Friends of the Parks.

Wiffleball League: Kalamazoo Wiffle League plays at Flesher Field and Oshtemo Township Park on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Fee required. Their summer session is filled but the fall session is right around the corner. For more information, visit www.kzoowiffleball.com, follow them on all social media platforms @kzoowiffleball, or email kalamazoowiffleleague@gmail.com

Soccer Shots: Soccer experience for children ages 2-8, held at Flesher Field on Tuesday evenings and Saturdays. Fee required. Visit <https://www.soccershots.com/kalamazoo/> for more information.

MacDudley's Mid-Summer Fest: A family-friendly renaissance faire to bring awareness to differences and disabilities, with live entertainment and shopping. **June 17 and 18** from 10 am-6 pm. Fee required. For more information, contact Bridget Ackley at bridget_ackley@rocketmail.com Hosted by MacDudley Dragon Entertainment.

Sometimes Summer Solstice Disc Golf Tournament at Oshtemo Township Park, **June 17 and 18**. Fee required. For more information, contact Shea Abby at greatlakesdisc@gmail.com

Country Dancing: All are welcome to join in the fun of contra, square and English dancing at the Grange Hall, 3234 N 3rd Street. Visit <https://www.countrydancinginkalamazoo.com/> for dance dates, details, and fee.

'Senior Activities' at the Oshtemo Community Center will pause for the summer from June 1– September 1.

Spotlight on Oshtemo Park Volunteers

Please join us in thanking the fantastic volunteers that help keep Oshtemo's parks clean, green and welcoming!

Andy Jean, Oshtemo resident and owner of West Side Sawmill, for donating his time, expertise, and equipment to make boards from the trunks of two dead trees removed from the Oshtemo Community Center. The boards will be made into benches for the Fruit Belt Rail Trail.

Employees from **WSI Recruitment and Staffing** for celebrating Earth Day by cleaning up the garden beds around the gazebo at Flesher Field Park.

Paul Sotherland for serving on Oshtemo's Parks Committee for over seven years and sharing great ideas, editing skills, and endless energy for removing invasive trees and shrubs, especially when a chain saw is required.

Cub Scout Pack 247, led by **Jim O'Donnell**, for picking up litter at Flesher Field Park.

Our devoted group of **Environmental Stewardship volunteers** that contributed over 80 hours of their time since January to remove invasive trees and shrubs from the **Fruit Belt Rail Corridor**.



For more details, visit oshtemo.org/events or look for us on Facebook

2023 Oshtemo Music in the Park

Concert Series presented by Friends of the Parks

FREE! WIN PRIZES! Oshtemo restaurant gift cards will be raffled at each concert. Funds raised will support Oshtemo parks!

Sunday, July 9
Bronk Bros.
Classic country, new country, and classic rock combine for a rockin' hillbilly extravaganza.

Sunday, June 11
Zion Lion REGGAE BAND
The "hottest band" to hit the Kalamazoo music scene. You can't help but get up and dance!

Sunday, August 6
Kalamazoo Avenue Band
Classic rock, through the decades.

6 - 7:30 p.m.
Flesher Field
3664 S. 9th St.
Kalamazoo

Concerts will be rescheduled in the event of rain.
Alcohol is prohibited. Bring a chair or blanket for lawn seating.

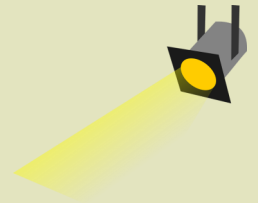


Harding's Friendly Markets
Naylor Landscapes
Siegfried Crandall



If you need a safe space for an exchange, the Township parking lot is lighted and under video surveillance 24 hours/day.

Spotlight on our new employees—



Gavin Stephenson

POSITION: Park Ranger-Rentals

HIRE DATE: 12/10/22

BIO: Gavin Stephenson was born in Kalamazoo but spent his early years in Georgia. He moved back to the area and attended Portage Northern High School. Gavin loves spending time outdoors, and after spending his childhood down south he actually enjoys shoveling snow as an adult! In addition to enjoying the outdoors, Gavin is an avid guitar player, and he even builds and refurbishes guitars.

Sierra Lucas

POSITION: Paralegal/Legal Assistant

HIRE DATE: 01/16/23

BIO: I moved back to Kalamazoo area after three years of living in Phoenix, AZ. I am excited about all of the growth and opportunities I have been experiencing, since being employed with Oshtemo Township. I graduated with my Criminal Justice degree and have several certifications from Western Michigan University from seminars I have attended after graduation. I have previously worked at the 8th District Court in Kalamazoo and have several years of experience as a Paralegal, working in Personal Injury, and Family Law. I have been learning a lot in my new position and have a great example of leadership, working with my Department Head/Township Attorney, James Porter. Outside of my position here, I love traveling with my daughter Nova, who is six years old. We have traveled cross country together, twice, and have plans to check off every state before her 18th birthday. In addition to traveling, I enjoy spending my time outdoors wakeboarding, surfing, riding dirt bikes, and hiking!

Nathan Bruce

POSITION: Full Time Firefighter

HIRE DATE: 03/22/23

BIO: Hello, my name is Nathan Bruce, and I am one of the new full-time firefighters recently hired in March. I was born and raised in Plainwell, MI where I still currently live. I joined Gun Plain Township Fire Department in 2016 right out of high school and still currently serve there in my home township. In my free time I enjoy being outdoors hunting, fishing, and camping, and also enjoy spending time with friends and family. I look forward to my time working with everyone at Oshtemo Township!

Tim Waterson

POSITION: Full Time Firefighter

HIRE DATE: 03/21/23

BIO: I am a third-generation firefighter working on my 20th year working in the fire service, it has been my dream to serve a community in a full-time career position. My wife of 13 years and I have two beautiful little girls and currently reside in Battle Creek. Outside of work, I enjoy mountain biking, vacationing in the Upper peninsula, and spending time with my family. I look forward to many, many years serving the residents of Oshtemo.

Vanessa Street

POSITION: Parks Director

HIRE DATE: 04/21/23

BIO: I am excited to be a part of Oshtemo Township and serve the community through parks and recreation. I am a graduate of Western Michigan University and spent over 10 years as the Parks Director for Comstock Township. The best part of working in Parks is connecting with the community and creating spaces where people can gather, have fun, and learn about the outdoors. My husband and I have two young children. We spend our free time hanging out as a family, exploring new adventures, and working hard on our backyard vegetable garden. I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to serving Oshtemo Township.

Public Works—

Sewer

Construction Contracts for Phase 1 of the USDA Neighborhood Sanitary Sewer Expansion Project were awarded to Lounsbury Excavating on April 25th for \$10.2M. The USDA Bond closing is anticipated by the end of May. At this time, we will have a preconstruction meeting with Lounsbury and be able to discuss their proposed schedule. Then neighborhood meetings can be set up accordingly to discuss construction impacts and logistics and ask questions directly to the contractor.

Once sewer and road construction are completed and required testing is approved, residents will be legally notified and have two (2) years to complete their private connection. Septic tanks can be removed or properly abandoned in-place which includes pumping, crushing, and backfilling.

Final Design, easements and permits are underway for Phase 2. Staff expects to bid this portion of the project in Fall of 2023 with construction occurring in 2024 and/or 2025, based on contractor availability.

Non-motorized

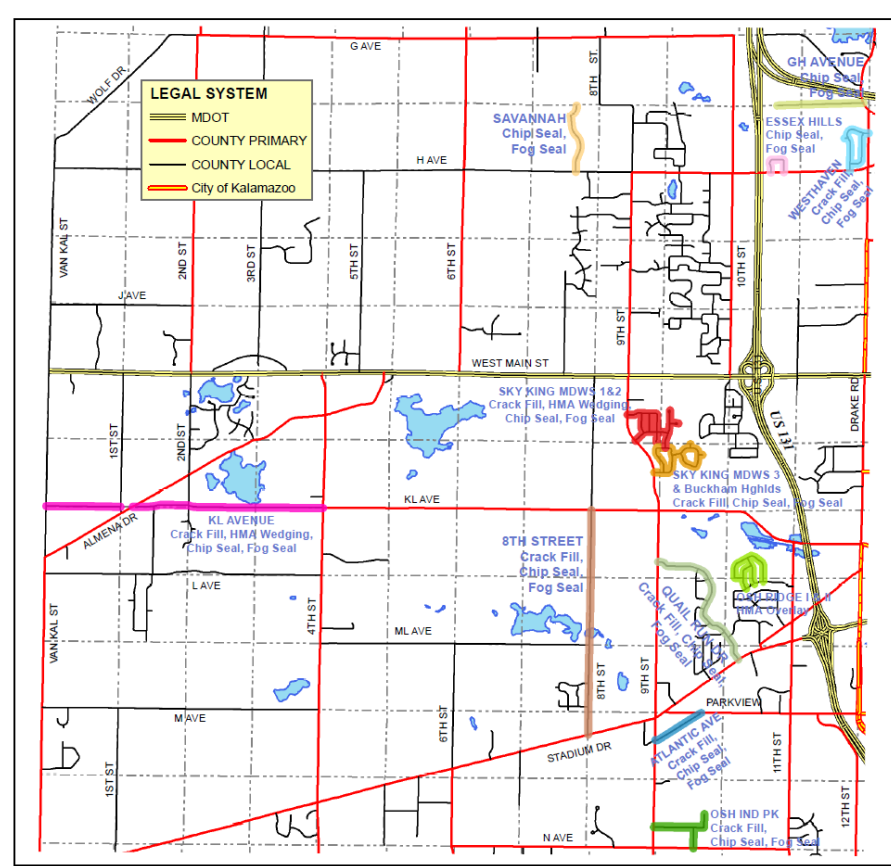
Design work is underway for three (3) non-motorized projects this year, 9th Street on the West side from Stadium Drive to Quail Run Drive, Drake Rd on the West side from Stadium Drive to KL Ave, 11th Street on the West side from 350' south of Michigan Ave to Michigan Ave, Michigan Ave on the North side from Whitegate Ln to 11th Street and Whitegate Lane from Michigan Ave to Powderhorn Drive (side TBD).

Construction is anticipated on three (3) non-motorized projects this year, Western Woods and KL Ave on the North side from Drake Rd to Concord Place Apartments.

Roads

The Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) frequently posts updates on their webpage at <https://www.kalamazoocountyroads.com/news.php> for projects on County Primary system.

2023 Local Preventative Maintenance Projects are shown on the map below:



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.kalamazoocountyroads.com

2023 "PAR" Projects Partnered with RCKC

Oshtemo Local Road Millage = \$507,434 (64%)
RCKC (MI Act 51) "PAR" = \$286,088 (36%)
2023 Road Maintenance = \$793,088 (total)

This map is for reference purposes only. While it is intended to be an accurate graphic representation, its accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Any conclusions or information derived from this map are at the users sole risk.

OSHTEMO LOCAL ROAD MAINTENANCE

Oshtemo Ridge (\$246,847)	KL Ave (\$133,731)
Westhaven (\$28,488)	8th St (\$62,984)
Atlantic Ave (\$27,286)	Savannah (\$31,034)
Osh Ind Pk (\$46,637)	GH Ave (\$26,311)
Sky King Mdw 1&2 (\$97,542)	Essex Hills (\$17,521)
Sky King Meadows 3 & Buckham Highlids (\$63,975)	Quail Run Dr (\$57,495)

Charter Township of Oshtemo
Kalamazoo Co., Michigan
Date: 3/13/2023

Is Your Streetlight Out?

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



7275 West Main Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Housing Survey and Plan Update

Thank you for your help in shaping the future of housing in Oshtemo Township! We heard from over 500 residents in the Oshtemo Township Housing Survey. This is a significant response and we are very excited by the interest and participation! The survey was open from November 18th 2022 to March 3rd 2023. Preliminary survey results can be found on the Township website: <https://www.oshtemo.org/About-Oshtemo/Surveys>.

The survey results will inform the Oshtemo Township Housing Plan. This plan will investigate existing housing, as well as suggest strategies to improve current conditions and address future housing needs. The housing plan will include housing assessment data, market demand data, and community feedback. Using the information and feedback collected, the Planning Commission is in the process of identifying goals, objectives, and strategies. Preliminary data for this plan can be found along with the survey results through the link above. Please check our website for updates and/or join us at Planning Commission meetings. The plan is scheduled to be completed in July 2023. We look forward to continued conversations.

OSHTEMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS



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

May 18—The Griffon: La Salle's Lost Ship on the Great Lakes by Valerie Van Heest.

June 15—The Most Dangerous Man Alice: A Killing in Capone's Playground by Chriss Lyon.

July 20—The Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago Railway: "The Fruit Belt Line" by Keith Howard, Kalamazoo Public Library Digital Preservation Specialist.

August 17—Antique Bottle Digging and Collecting by Scot Hendrichsen, a local resident who had been privy digging and antique collecting for many years.

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