



# *Williamstown Township News*

*A publication of the Williamstown Township Board  
Serving Williamstown Township residents in the  
Williamston, Okemos, Haslett and Perry School Districts  
February 2009*

*Williamstown Township, 4990 North Zimmer Road, Williamston MI 48895  
Phone: (517) 655-3193 Fax: (517) 655-3971 www.williamstowntownship.*

## **From the desk of Supervisor Mickey Martin**

A new year has started and I look forward to serving the Township in this challenging time of budget cuts and new emerging plans to keep us moving forward. As Supervisor I am dedicated to researching and proposing new and better ways to serve the residents. I am fortunate to work with a wonderful staff and Board who contribute many diverse ideas and set fresh goals for our collective effort to attain. Everyone here puts forth 100% when it comes to work, commitment and cooperation. It is a pleasure to be a part of this team. Thank you to all of the residents that put their confidence in us to lead this Township into the future. We will continue to work to maintain and improve all Township residents' quality of living.

Please do not hesitate to call, come in or drop us a note to discuss any area good or bad you have with your Township Government.

We will be focusing on energy efficiency for the Township Hall and all of our areas of work. Hopefully we will be able to provide examples of alternative energy savings for all of the Township residents.

### **Clean Commute:**

CATA bus system is promoting Clean Commute options. On their website ([www.cata.org](http://www.cata.org)) click onto clean commute for eco driving tips and carpools in the area.

### **Road Construction:**

Williamston Road from the City limits north to Haslett Road will receive a complete reconstruction. The Ingham County Road Commission projects a start date of late spring with an end date late summer or early fall. Full sets of construction plans are available for view at the Township Hall. This will be a major undertaking and will reroute traffic at different intervals during the construction process. The Ingham County Road Commission will work as efficiently as possible to minimize any inconveniences for travel but expect delays and alternate routes designated during the process. At the end of the project we will all enjoy a better surface to travel and wider shoulders for non-motorized traffic.

### **Road Patrol:**

The Township will once again be very vigilant in following the funding of the Ingham County Sheriff's office in continuing to provide service to the Township. I will continue to meet with Randy Schaefer, our County Commissioner, and surrounding municipalities in an effort to create options in the event all road service is pulled by the Sheriff's office. Ernie Gaffner, Township Clerk has volunteered to attend County Commissioner Meetings in order to keep us informed

## **HOMEOWNER'S PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE INFORMATION**

Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) is available to homeowners in Michigan with certain conditions. You must own and occupy your home to receive a PRE. Everyone should check his or her assessment notice at the center bottom for the number that can range from 0 to 100%. Agricultural land may receive the exception without occupancy if the land is used for agricultural purposes.

There is also a newly enacted exemption Conditional Principal Residence Exemption for homes that are listed for sale. You may qualify for this exemption for three years but the Township office must receive the form by December 31<sup>st</sup> for every year requested. If you have any questions regarding the conditional exemption please do not hesitate to contact Supervisor Martin or her assistant, Michelle.

## Notes from Treasurer Janet Eyster

At the end of each tax year, all unpaid taxes on real property (as opposed to personal property) are turned over to the Ingham County Treasurer for collection. The last day to pay taxes at the Township Hall is normally the last day of February. Since that day falls on a Saturday this year, we will continue to collect taxes at the Township through Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Treasury Department will hold special office hours from 9:00am-5:00pm on Monday March 2<sup>nd</sup> for the collection of property taxes ONLY – any taxes not in the possession of the Treasurer by 5:00pm on that day will be turned over to the County which means additional fees and penalties. Taxpayers may use one of our drop boxes, pay in person, or mail their payments to the Township Hall. **Postmarks are not accepted as payment date. All taxpayers who pay by mail or in the drop slot will receive an official property tax receipt by return mail, ONLY if they have requested one by checking the box on their tax stub.**

Reminder: Property tax statements are mailed out twice a year. Summer is mailed on July 1<sup>st</sup> and due on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Winter is mailed on December 1<sup>st</sup> and is due on February 14<sup>th</sup>. If you do not receive your statement shortly after those mailing dates, please call to let us know. **Failure to receive a statement does not forgive responsibility of payment.**

## News from Clerk Ernie Gaffner

Since the last newsletter a few of you have stopped by the Township Office and I've talked with some of you on the phone. I hope you are finding the clerk's office always willing to help you. Daily I am learning how to serve the Township residents better and more efficiently. As I learn I am coming up with new and, I feel, improved ways to operate in this position. Information compiling, storing and disseminating information is a function of the Clerk's office that I will be focusing on. I will work to improve the filing and storage of old information to enable more efficient retrieval.

### Budget

The Township Board is finalizing the budget for April 1, 2009-March 31, 2010. If approved, a copy of the adopted budget will be available at the Township after the March 3, 2008 Board meeting. It will also be placed on the Township website. If you have any questions please contact Supervisor Martin at 655-3193.

### Recycling

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the Month  
9 am – 3 pm  
Township Hall

Please remember that there are **no early or late drop-offs** and all material must be put in its appropriate bin. If items are not sorted properly, ALL materials end up in the landfill and the Township is charged double for the recycle container rental. For a list of accepted materials, visit our website: [www.williamstowntownship.com](http://www.williamstowntownship.com)

### Burning

A Master Burning Permit is required before burning within the Township and is available at the Township office – activation is required **each time** you burn. Leaf burning is **only** allowed in the RE, AG-SF, and AG-C zones. For our complete burn ordinance and regulations, visit our website: [www.williamstowntownship.com](http://www.williamstowntownship.com)

### Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Committee continues to work on making the Township Park user friendly. A good portion of the labor provided at the park for improvements is done by volunteers. The committee is always looking for people willing to serve as committee members or, if available, when project days are scheduled.

Consider joining the many residents who have taken advantage of the sledding hill and skiing the trails. Park hours are dawn to dusk.

For more information please contact Jerry Fulcher at 655-5914.

## Planning Commission

The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing February 17th at 7:30 to gather input on proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance. Proposed changes are needed due to the Enabling Act. Changes are also being recommended to Kennels and to definitions.

A Joint Planning Commission meeting was held with the City of Williamston to share the work that is being done in our perspective communities. Highlights of the respective Master Plans, the overlay district, S. Williamston Rd., grant awards and a Vision of Sustainability were part of the discussion. Both Commissions were grateful for the opportunity to meet.

A brief synopsis of recommendations recently made to the board include:

- Revisions to the Wetland Protection Ordinance

- Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance regarding Wetland Buffer Regulations

Other items currently being explored and/or discussed include:

- Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance regarding Home Occupations and Home-Based Businesses

- The Grand River Corridor

Please take a moment and visit the Township website to participate in a Survey regarding Trails and Greenways.

The Planning Commission meets on a regular basis on the third Tuesday of the Month. Workshops are held on the fourth Tuesday as needed. Agendas can be found on line at the website: [www.williamstowntownship.com](http://www.williamstowntownship.com)

## Historical Committee

The Historic Committee has two major projects underway at the present time. The first, restoration of the Branch School located on the northwest corner of Branch and Sherwood Roads continues. The replacement addition in the rear has been roughed in and will soon be wired along with the original building. During the winter work continues on the bell tower, doors, windows, and restoration of artifacts. We look forward to painting the school, both interior and exterior, next summer. A donation of any artifacts from a country school of this era (mid to late 1800s) such as books, rulers, pens, lunch pails, pictures, room size flagpole, etc. would be appreciated. The school was built in 1863 and was originally known as the "Little Africa School", because of the number of abolitionist in the area. It closed as a school in 1963.

The second major project is to find, photograph and catalogue all the homes in the township built before 1900. We had a very successful "Old House Owners" meeting in the fall. David Votta, archivist for the Capital Area District Library, gave an informative presentation on researching the history of old houses. The group attending decided to form an old house interest group. We will have another meeting in the spring to further define the purpose of the group. Following the meeting we will tour three restored homes in the township.

The Committee is looking for members and volunteers. If you have interest or would like to join the old house interest group, please contact Tom Johnson at 655-1030.

## Cemetery Committee

As we said in the previous newsletter, with the exception of a few remaining items, construction of the columbarium has been completed and niches have been installed in one of the three walls. Since then several niches have been sold and the first interment was made.

The cost of niches for Township and Williamston city residents is \$1000. Each niche will accommodate two standard urns with cremated remains. For more information, or to purchase a niche, please contact the township office. The office has a display which includes a niche, an urn and examples of engraved granite faceplates.

Greg Lammers, Cemetery Committee

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2009	April 2009	May 2009
2-Ext. Hours for tax payments. 9:AM-5:00 PM	7—Township Board Meeting 7:00 PM	1— P.R.E Affidavit due for 2009 tax year
3— Township Board Meeting 7:00 PM	10-Good Friday-Closed	5-Township Board Meeting 7:00PM
9— Board of Review Starting at 9:00AM call for appointment	11— Recycling 9:00AM-3:00PM	9 — Recycling 9:00AM-3:00PM
10— Board of Review 6:00-9:00 PM	15-Historical Committee 6:00 PM	19-Township Board Meeting (tent) 5:30PM
14— Recycling 9:00AM-3:00PM	21-Township Board Mtg. (tent) 5:30 PM	19-Planning Commission Meeting 7:30 PM
17—Township Board Mtg. (tent) 5:30 PM	21— Planning Commission Meeting 7:30PM	20-Parks and Recreation Meeting 7:00 PM
17—Planning Commission Meeting 7:30 PM	22—Parks and Recreation Meeting 7:00 PM	24—Planning Comm. Workshop (tent.) 7:30 PM
18—Parks and Recreation Meeting 7:00 PM	28-Planning Comm. Workshop(tent) 7:30 PM	
24-Planning Comm.(Workshop tent) 7:30 PM		

### WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

#### TOWNSHIP BOARD (ELECTED)

Supervisor - Mickey Martin  
 Clerk - Ernie Gaffner  
 Treasurer - Janet Eyster  
 Trustee - Martin Wright  
 Trustee - Rick Williams  
 Trustee - Frans Wilbrink  
 Trustee - Robert Hayes

#### HIRED STAFF

Building Inspector - Mark Miller  
 Supervisor Asst - Michelle Morse  
 Caretaker— Mac Donnelly  
 Advisor—Benjamin Moline  
 Sexton/Maintenance- Mark Tabor  
 Code enforcement - Mark Miller  
 Webmaster: Wendell Proudfoot

#### APPOINTED POSITIONS

Deputy Clerk - Shirley Mitchell  
 Deputy Treasurer- Lori Hurst

#### PLANNING COMMISSION

Michael Fielek- Chair  
 Rex LaMore- Vice Chair  
 Gerald Eidt- Secy  
 Wanda Bloomquist- Planning Asst  
 Ronald Cook  
 Ger Schultink  
 Rutgar Hoag  
 Rod Imhoff  
 Martin Wright, Twp. Board Rep.

#### BOARD OF REVIEW

Gerald Eidt  
 Kurt Guter  
 Edward Timm

#### BOARD OF APPEALS

Michael Fielek- Chair  
 Dali Giese  
 Dan Kraft  
 Kurt Guter  
 Mickey Martin, Supervisor

#### CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF APPEALS

Aage Jensen  
 Stephan Patoprsty  
 Mark Stevens

#### COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

Marv Thomson, Chair  
 Norma Johnston  
 Ivonne Key  
 Kurt Guter  
 Nancy Williams  
 Rick Williams, Twp. Board Rep

#### NIESA REPRESENTATIVES

Ronald Wiegandt, Alternate Twp. Rep.  
 Frans Wilbrink, Twp. Board Rep.

#### CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Greg Lammers— Chair  
 Andy Andersen- Member at Large  
 Scott VanAllsburg—Williamston City Rep.  
 Mickey Martin, Twp Board Rep.

#### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Jerry Fulcher - Chair  
 Betty Challis  
 Bill Bailey  
 Jan Morris  
 Tom Trepky  
 Wanda Bloomquist, Twp. Board Rep.

#### TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

John McLaughlin- Chair  
 Richard Kill  
 Terry Monahan  
 Mickey Martin, Twp. Board Rep.

#### HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Tom Johnson— Chair  
 Rutgar Hoag  
 Steve Eyke  
 Gloria VanDusen  
 Ann Campbell  
 Dan Goodnoe  
 Jo Ann Goodnoe  
 Frans Wilbrink, Twp. Board Rep.

#### COMPENSATION COMMISSION

Wilbur McNinch- Chair  
 Dave Robinson- Secy  
 Bob Lombardini  
 Andy Sheets  
 Sally Martin Stewart

#### ALSO REPRESENTING OUR TOWNSHIP:

United States Senator	Carl Levin (D)	web: levin.senate.gov	377-1508
United States Senator	Debbie Stabenow (D)	web: stabenow.senate.gov	203-1760
United States Representative (Dist 8)	Mike Rogers (R)	web: www.mikerogers.house.gov	702-8000
Michigan State Senator (Dist 23)	Gretchen Whitmer(D)	web: sengwhitmer@senate.michigan.gov	373-5397
Michigan State Rep. (Dist 67)	Barb Byrum (D)	e-mail: barbbyrum@house.mi.gov	373-0587
Michigan State Rep. (Dist 69)	Mark Meadows (D)	e-mail: markmeadows@house.mi.gov	373-1786
Ingham County Comm. (Dist 13)	Randy Schafer (R)	web: www.ingham.org	655-1325