



# Williamstown Township News

A publication of the Williamstown Township Board  
Serving Williamstown Township residents in the  
Williamston, Okemos, Haslett and Perry School Districts  
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## From the desk of SUPERVISOR Mickey Martin

**TORNADO:** Many residents in our Township were impacted by physical damage to their property due to the recent tornado. The storm damaged many homes and a large amount of trees. Repairs and reconstruction for many are underway and thankfully in some cases have already been completed. The amount of support that has been and is being given by so many from the community and from outside of our community is more than I can express. We have also received assistance from many agencies in the area. The Ingham County Sheriff's office of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) headed by Sgt Perez stepped in the night of the tornado with emergency assistance for all. The City of Williamston has been in constant contact with me providing assistance to the residents for tree removal and wood chipping. The Granger Container service acted quickly to provide (free of charge to the Township) dumpsters to be placed on the street for debris collection. Crossroads Methodist Church helped in many ways especially with coordinating volunteers. Volunteer Organization Assisting Disasters (VOAD) has been invaluable in their assistance to remove and chip damaged trees. The Ingham County Road Commission went above and beyond removing large and sometimes whole trees in many areas. NEISA mobilized all units and responded to the disaster immediately rescuing residents from their damaged homes. In addition we received help from all of the surrounding area fire departments and police forces. A meeting was called by the EOC to review what went well and what we can improve upon in the future. There are some areas of concern that have been addressed and will be adjusted. I am very proud as I am sure everyone else is to be a part of this community and to know we all work together in times of need. If you have any concerns, questions or needs regarding the tornado please do not hesitate to contact me or my assistant Michelle Morse.

**BROADBAND INTERNET:** We are still moving forward on this project although it has not gone as quickly as anticipated or desired. At this point we are still waiting for FCC approval. It has taken longer than we expected because they requested more information regarding historical buildings in the area. All of the requested information has been submitted at this time and as soon as approval is received Freedom Net is ready to move forward and provide the service to the Township. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call either my assistant, Michelle Morse or myself at the Township office at 655-3193.

**INGHAM COUNTY ROAD PATROL:** The Ingham County Commissioners have a resolution introduced announcing a change in policy regarding rural police services. The resolution is drafted to reduce or eliminate totally all of the funds for road patrol by the Ingham County Sheriffs office and requests that local units provide their own road patrol through contracts with Ingham County or local police operations. This cost will be bore by the local units. If the local unit cannot (and most cannot) designate funds from their current budget a millage request would be necessary to provide the funds for police service. Trustee Bob Hayes and I along with other Supervisors and representatives from rural communities attended a County Commissioners meeting and protested this resolution. We feel we do not demand from the Sheriffs office the assistance that the cities and villages do. We have asked for more information as to what services we are getting now and statistics on calls the road patrol in the rural areas has responded to. We pay a millage now for this coverage and we should continue to receive road patrol for our area. The Commissioners have already eliminated the entire paramedic program and the DARE program. Please contact our County Commissioner Randy Schafer for more information on how to stop further cuts to these services. Commissioner Schafer is working hard to keep the funding for road patrol. I will keep attending the County meetings and work to keep our rural road patrol from being eliminated.

### Assessment Information for 2008

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) mandated from the state this year is 2.3%. Taxable Values on properties will increase by that amount for taxing purposes next year. **Taxable Value** is the basis for your property taxes. This will be calculated using the inflation rate of 1.023 for the 2007 capped value. Properties that have been uncapped as a result of a sale may see a higher increase in taxable value as well as properties for which there is new construction. The **assessed value**, however, is **not** the value that is multiplied by the millage rate to establish taxes. Assessed value in many cases will decrease due to the decline in the residential home sales **but taxable values may increase 2.3% if it is still lower than the assessed value**. Vacant land sales in the Township have increased in value. Your change notice will be sent out in February 2008. Please review your change notice when you receive it and if you have questions or concerns please contact me at the Township office. Remember, it is taxable value that is used to compute tax bills.

**Homestead Exemption** is also indicated on the change notice. You should check your notice at the center bottom for the number that can range from 0 to 100%. To receive 100% property exemption you must own and occupy your residence. All homeowners for newly constructed homes must file an exemption form with their local government and occupy the home by May 1st to receive the exemption. **The forms are available at the Township office. If you believe yours is incorrect, please contact the office immediately.**

## Notes from Treasurer Janet Eyster

Please be aware that Winter 2007 property taxes are due by 5:00 PM on Thursday, February 14<sup>th</sup> 2008. On that day, the Treasury Department will have extended hours from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Regular office hours are 10:00am to 4:00pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and 1:00pm to 7:00pm on Wednesdays. The office is closed on Mondays. There will also be extended hours on Friday, December 28<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00am to 5:00pm so that interested taxpayers may get their payments in during 2007.

Tax payments may be sent by mail or left in the bronze drop box beneath the bulletin board near the front entry of the township hall, however, they need to actually arrive in the office in order to be processed – **postmarks cannot be accepted as a payment date.** Payments left in the drop box should be made by check and include the stub from the bottom of the tax bill. Residents should not leave cash in the drop box.

Payments that are in the drop box by the start of business (10:00am) on Friday, February 15<sup>th</sup> will be considered to have arrived on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Likewise, payments in the drop box by the start of business (1:00pm) on January 2<sup>nd</sup> will be considered to have arrived by December 31<sup>st</sup>. All taxpayers who pay by mail or in the drop box will receive an official property tax receipt by return mail.

Taxes that are not paid by February 14<sup>th</sup> will be charged a 3% penalty. Late payments will be accepted at the township until 4:00pm on Friday, February 29<sup>th</sup>. Any summer or winter taxes that are still unpaid on March 1, 2008 must be turned over to the Ingham County Treasurer for collection, which involves additional fees for the taxpayer.

Taxpayers who have mortgage escrow accounts will receive a receipt by mail as soon as the mortgage company pays the tax bill. Those who have not received a receipt by February 13<sup>th</sup> should call the Williamstown township office at (517) 655-3193 and request payment status.

## News from Clerk Howard Dahlstrom

Due to a recent court ruling, every Michigan voter who offers to vote in the polls must comply with the new Voter Identification Requirement by showing picture identification or signing an affidavit attesting that he or she is not in possession of picture identification. A Michigan drivers license or a Michigan personal identification card are accepted types of documents. Other forms of acceptable picture ID are: driver's license or personal identification issued by another state, federal or state government issued photo identification, U.S. passport, military identification with photo, student ID with photo from a high school or an institution of higher education or tribal identification card with photo. If you do not show acceptable picture ID, or sign the attestation affidavit, the poll workers will be unable to issue a ballot.

2008 will be a busy year for township voters with elections scheduled for January (Presidential Primary), May (Schools), August (Primary) and November (General). All township offices: Supervisor, Treasurer, Clerk and four Trustee seats, are slated to be on the ballot for the 2008 primary and general elections. Please feel free to contact the Clerk's Office with any questions regarding elections or election related issues.

## Williamstown Township Historical Committee

At this time the Williamstown Township Historical Committee has two on-going projects. One is the restoration of the Branch School and the second is the compilation and photographing of the pre-1900 houses in the Township. Within the next few weeks, Township residents living in these historical houses, will receive a letter and questionnaire regarding their homes and the assurance that their property will not be put on public display. It is the committee's hope that all residents will complete the questionnaire and help us preserve the history of these lovely dwellings.

The restoration of the Branch School continues. The Shagbark Questers of Williamston has taken an interest in this project and members spent several hours cleaning the building. Although the building looks unchanged as one drives by, a new roof has been added, windows replaced, interior doors repaired, the false ceiling removed and the original ceiling repaired. Plans have been drawn up for a bell tower and replacement of the structure in the rear of the building, which was added in 1950. Work will continue this fall with completion scheduled for next year.

Under the direction of Clay Braden, school desks, slates, blackboard, stoves and other memorabilia have been obtained and catalogued. The Committee continues to seek interviews and information from teachers and students of Branch School. Anyone with information on the history of the school, students or teachers, or anyone with one-room school related items you wish to donate, please contact Tom Johnson at 655-1030 or Clay Braden at 349-0163.

## FOR SALE

The Township has the following items available: Please call 655-3193 for more information

*John Deere 525 front end mowing tractor  
With a 48" cutting deck. \$500*

*Sharp AR405 digital imager (copier, printer) \$200.*

## PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission recently held two workshops to help educate themselves and community members on issues that have seen a lot of interest in the past year. One is the growth of LEED certified buildings within the state. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards have existed for Commercial Buildings since 2000 and have just been set for Residential Buildings. LEED standards for New Development are currently in the pilot stage. Grand Rapids has been recognized as one of the top cities in the Nation for LEED Certified Buildings and Lansing is looking at ways to encourage more LEED Certified buildings. To learn more about the LEED Certification process you may visit the USGBC (United States Green Building Council) website at [USGBC.org](http://USGBC.org) The second workshop focused on the development of Trails and Greenways within Michigan and specifically the Greater Lansing Area and the desire to promote alternative means of transportation. Trails are the No. 1 amenity potential homeowners cite when asked what they would like to see in a new community, according to the National Association of Home Builders. The Township will be working on applying for a grant through MDOT to construct a path along the Grand River Corridor.

The Planning Commission welcomes your input and holds their meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:30.

## Cemetery News

Plans are underway for construction of a columbarium at Summit Cemetery. (A columbarium is a memorial wall with niches to receive cremains of the dead.) With the increasing demand for cremations it is felt that there is a need in the community for such a memorial. Many cemeteries now have columbariums.

The board determined that the best site for the columbarium is at the crest of the hill at Summit. This location required demolition of the old storage building which was done in October. Construction of the columbarium is scheduled for the spring of '08.

An artist's concept of the columbarium is on display at the township office as well as niches, urns and memorial plaques that will be part of the columbarium. Additional details regarding availability and cost of niches will be forthcoming as plans for construction are finalized. The board is also considering solicitation of donations for memorials on the grounds of the columbarium, i.e. trees, benches, etc.

Greg Lemmer, Cemetery Board



## BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Effective May 2007, the township building department amended the building permit policy to include a time limit on permits. Building permits will be valid for 180 days from issue date. Upon request, the permit can be extended for an additional 180 days provided an inspection has been done by the township building inspector. An extension is not guaranteed. An inspection must be done within the 180 day extension or the permit will be cancelled. If the permit is not extended, it is considered expired and work cannot continue until a new permit application is submitted and issued. The new permit fee will be adjusted to reflect the value of the work remaining to complete the original project.

Questions may be directed to Building Inspector Mark Miller at 655-3193 x 311

**Note:** Many Homeowner Insurance companies require proper inspections to insure your home and to process claims. It is the resident's benefit to have appropriate inspections completed.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December	January	February
4— Township Board Meeting 7:00PM	1— New Years Day Closed	5 — Township Board Meeting 7:00 PM
8— Recycling 9AM-3PM	9—Parks & Recreation Meeting 7:00 PM	9 — Recycling 9AM-3PM
14—Parks & Recreation Meeting 7:00 PM	12—Recycling 9AM-3PM	13— Parks & Recreation Mtg. 7:00 PM
18—Township Board Mtg. (tent) 7:00 PM	15—Planning Commission Meeting 7:30 PM (may change due to Primary)	14— Property Tax payments due
18—Planning Commission Meeting 7:30 PM	15—Tentative Primary Elections	19— Township Board Mtg. (tent) 5:30 PM
24—Christmas Eve Closed	16—Township Board Meeting 7:00 PM	19— Planning Commission Mtg. 7:30 PM
25—Christmas Closed	22—Planning Comm. Workshop (tent) 7:30 PM	20—Historical Committee Meeting 4:00 PM
31—New Years Eve Closed		25— Planning Comm. Workshop (tent.) 7:30 PM

### Parks and Recreation

If you haven't had a chance to enjoy the fall colors at the Township Park lately, hopefully you have noticed all the activity going on with fall soccer and the upgrades made to the two ball diamonds. Dan Demitroff headed up the volunteers who worked on putting up the back fences and two dugout boxes. We have amazing residents who have dedicated much time and effort in creating a park for all to enjoy. With all the activity that has been taking place of late, the Park Committee has been looking at adding a pavilion near the sledding hill adjacent to the north parking lot. Suggestions for the pavilion ranged from a metal roof to environmentally friendly composting toilets to adding a fireplace for the winter. Through the design and presentation process brought before the Township Board and Planning Commission, the Planning Commission recommended the Parks Master Plan be updated. With an updated plan the Township would be eligible to apply for DNR grants for park improvements. Please feel free to contact the Township with any suggestions/concerns you may have to be forwarded to the Parks Committee.

## WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

### TOWNSHIP BOARD (ELECTED)

Supervisor - Mickey Martin  
 Clerk - Howard Dahlstrom  
 Treasurer - Janet Eyster  
 Trustee - Martin Wright  
 Trustee - Frans Wilbrink  
 Trustee - Rick Williams  
 Trustee - Robert Hayes  
 Code enforcement - Mark Miller?

### HIRED STAFF

Building Inspector - Mark Miller  
 Supervisor Asst - Michelle Morse  
 Caretaker- Benjamin Moline  
 Sexton/Maintenance- Mark Tabor

### APPOINTED POSITIONS

Deputy Clerk - Bob Cwiertniewicz  
 Deputy Treasurer- Lori Hurst

### PLANNING COMMISSION

Michael Fielek- Chair  
 Rex LaMore- Vice Chair  
 Gerald Eidt- Secy  
 Wanda Bloomquist- Planning Asst  
 Ronald Cook  
 Ger Schultink  
 Rutger 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  
 Stephen Patoprsky  
 Mark Stevens

### CABLE COMMISSION

Marv Thompson, 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  
 Bob Hanna- Williamston City Rep

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Jerry Fulcher - Chair  
 Betty Challis  
 Christine Nilsson  
 Jan Morris  
 Tom Trepky  
 Frans Wilbrink, Twp. Board Rep.

### TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATION COMM.

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

### HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Tom Johnson- Chair  
 Rutger Hoag  
 Steve Eyke  
 Clay Braden  
 Conrad Bappert  
 Ann Campbell  
 Frans Wilbrink, Twp. Board Rep.

### COMPENSATION COMMISSION

Wilbur McNinch- Chair  
 Dave Robinson- Secy  
 Ethel Andersen  
 Andy Sheets  
 Sally Martin Stewart

### REPRESENTING OUR TOWNSHIP

United States Senator	Debbie Stabenow (D)	web: <a href="http://stabenow.senate.gov">stabenow.senate.gov</a>	203-1760
United States Representative (Dist 8)	Mike Rogers (R)	web: <a href="http://www.mikerogers.house.gov">www.mikerogers.house.gov</a>	702-8000
Michigan State Senator (Dist 23)	Gretchen Whitmer(D)	web: <a href="mailto:sengwhitmer@senate.michigan.gov">sengwhitmer@senate.michigan.gov</a>	373-5397
Michigan State Rep. (Dist 67)	Barb Byrum (D)	e-mail: <a href="mailto:barbbyrum@house.mi.gov">barbbyrum@house.mi.gov</a>	373-0587
Michigan State Rep. (Dist 69)	Mark Meadows (D)	e-mail: <a href="mailto:markmeadows@house.mi.gov">markmeadows@house.mi.gov</a>	373-1786