

May 2011



WILLIAMSTOWN

Township Annual Report

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

April 1st, 2010 through March 31st, 2011

Police Services

NEW non-emergency number is 517-332-6526

Please make the change on your magnets

In 2007, Supervisor Martin, along with Supervisors from the surrounding Townships, began attending County Commissioner meetings to stress the importance of continued Sheriff's Patrol of the out county Townships. During this time, the Townships began working together to develop an alternative plan to continue police service for the residents. A ballot proposal was created in case the County did vote to discontinue service to the out county Townships. In September of 2010 the county made the decision to discontinue service January 1st, 2011. Of the 13 Townships, Williamstown residents were the only ones that passed a Special Assessment to contract police services for continued service.

The Township Board requested bids from surrounding police departments to provide police service. Those responding included the Ingham County Sheriff, City of Mason, Meridian Township and two individuals proposing to create a Township Department. The Board voted to award a 2 year contract to Meridian Township.

Meridian Police began servicing the Township January 1st, 2011 with a minimum of 80 hours of patrol plus 24 hours 911 emergency response.

The first Special Assessment was in the amount of \$150 per residential unit and \$250 per commercial unit. The assessment for 2012 will be \$135 per residential unit and \$225 per commercial unit.

Fine Art Sale & Studio Tour

The first year of the Art Tour was a success despite the weather with over 300 tickets sold. Over \$1600 was raised to purchase playground equipment for the Township Hall recreation area. Portions of the equipment will be purchased and installed in the near future. This year's tour is May 6th and 7th. Details are available on the website!

Roads

The Township is formulating a 5-7 year road maintenance plan, expected to be completed by this fall. The Ingham County Road Commission is responsible for all roads within the Township except Grand River (M-43). By state law, the county must obtain matching funds for most of our roads. The Township has committed \$30,000 a year to match the county funds for road surfacing.

Township Hours

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Wednesday

EECBG Grant

In 2009, the Township, in conjunction with Locke, LeRoy and Wheatfield Township, applied for an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant from the State of Michigan. The grant in the amount of \$75,384 was awarded in February 2010 of which \$60,150 came to the Township with the balance split between the other participants.

The funds received were used for the following:

Energy Audit: An energy analysis was completed on the four Township Halls, with recommendations for cost saving measures that can be implemented by the Township. Some of the items were completed as part of the grant while others, such as insulating around windows, can and will be done in the future.

Lighting Retrofits: The interior lights were retrofitted to Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFL) fixtures, while the exterior lighting was retrofitted with LED lighting. With these changes alone the Township is anticipating a savings of \$2500 in one year.

Geo-thermal Heating: The 15 year old heating and air-conditioning system was replaced with a Geo-Thermal heating and cooling system in early January along with a back-up generator. The savings due to the change will save the Township approximately \$2000 a year or 47% of our original heating cost. With the addition of the generator, the Township is now considered an emergency shelter, the first in any of Ingham County's Townships.

Bus Stop: The Planning Commission has been interested in increasing the option of Public Transportation within the Township and has invited CATA several times to review the services available within the Township. By placing a bus stop at the Township Park, residents will be able to pick up the express bus to downtown Lansing. This will also provide greater access to the park.

Incinerator Toilet: The Township will be replacing the temporary toilet at the Cemetery with a permanent structure being built as an Eagle Scout project under the leadership of Drew Payton. The incinerator toilet functions without the use of water, the need of pumping or a drain field. This will save the Township approximately \$1200 a year.

Conservation Workshops: Last fall the Township hosted three workshops promoting conservation measures that can be taken by residents. Drain Commissioner Pat Lindemann discussed the benefits of rain gardens and where they are being utilized in the County, Gary Heilig, MSU Extension Horticulturist, presented a lively and interesting program on the benefits of composting yard and kitchen waste, Thomas Reinke from Self Reliant Energy Company gave an information packed program on the benefits of wind and solar to increase renewable energy use. Residents walked away with a better understanding of what each of us can do to conserve and preserve our natural resources.

Light Bulb Exchange: CFL's (Compact Florescent Light bulbs) were available to residents to promote their use as a way to reduce energy use on an individual basis. Over 1000 light bulbs were distributed during recycling and elections.

Planning Consultant Fees: As part of the award, the Planning Commission was able to prepare an amendment to the Master Plan with a Trails and Greenways Plan. The Planning Commission also developed language for a Grand River Green Zone to meet some of the goals of our master plan and prepared a competition to field ideas for the Green Zone. Seven MSU teams submitted designs for the competition and three teams were honored with cash awards for their submissions.

MDOT Grant

In 2008 the Township began the application process for a non motorized pathway along Grand River. After numerous meetings, MDOT approved expanding the shoulders to include designated bike lanes. On February 9th, 2010 the Township Board approved the matching funds necessary to complete the project. MDOT spent the summer working on the shoulders as well as resurfacing Grand River between Meridian and Zimmer Rd. The work was completed in August prior to the start of school and was the first of this type in the region. It provides a safer means of transportation for residents and those using non-motorized transportation to connect to the City of Williamston and Meridian Township. Use of the lanes is expected to rise as awareness of them increases. Continued maintenance of the lanes will be provided by MDOT.

Planning Commission

Commissioners: Michael Fielek (chair), Rex LaMore (vice chair), Gerald Eidt (secretary), Joscelyn Brown-Timm, Ronald Cook, Dali Giese, Rod Imhoff, Ger Schultink, Martin Wright (board representative).

Staff members Planning Assistant: Wanda Bloomquist, Planning Consultants: Christopher Doozan of McKenna Associates, Inc.

Site Plan Review, Special Use & Rezoning

Dan Wallace-Wallace Storage. 1099 E. Grand River. Request for revisions to approved site plan. Pending

Steve and Melinda Roznowski– 45 E. Grand River Conditional rezoning from RE to R-1-S. Planning Commission recommended denial. Applicant did not continue on to the board for consideration.

Gregory Shannon– Shoesmith Rd. AG-C to AG-SF Recommendation: Denial Board Action: Denied.

Ordinance Review

The planning commission began review of the entire ordinance in 2009. To date, the Planning Commission has completed their review through Article 17. The Board has approved recommendations through Article 7. The Planning Commission will be holding a public hearing in the near future to garner public comment on the changes being recommended through Article 25 before making a recommendation to the Board. Citizen input is always appreciated and encouraged.

Medical Marihuana

A major topic being addressed by Planning Commissions across the state is how to regulate within the zoning ordinance along with adhering to the requirements of the Medical Marihuana Act. A Public Hearing was held on July 20th, 2010, to allow caregivers as a home occupation. The Planning Commission is currently looking at allowing caregivers only in Business Districts. Another Public Hearing will be scheduled to review both options to garner citizen input. This is an important issue for consideration within the Township and your attendance at the Public Hearings is encouraged. Please check with the Township or the website for the date of the next Public Hearing.

Trails and Greenways Plan

As part of the EECBG grant awarded to the Township from the State of Michigan, the Planning Commission was able to create a Trails and Greenway Plan that will become part of the Township Master Plan. As the needs of residents shift and the modes of transportation used changes, the Plan will be used in long range planning of our roads and possible trails. The proposed plan is available for review at the Township Office.

Grand River Green Zone

Also made possible by the EECBG grant, the Planning Commission saw an opportunity to create a zone that protects our rural character while expanding the development opportunities to land owners along Grand River. The Planning Commission will be holding a public forum of the proposed zone on May 24th at 7:30 to answer questions and gather feedback on the proposed zone.

Historical, Parks & Cemetery

The Historical Committee hosted an open house of the completed Branch School on October 2nd, 2010 welcoming past students, teachers and residents. After more than two years of volunteer efforts, led by Chair Tom Johnson, the school has become the gem of the Township. The committee has also been compiling data on the historical homes and other structures in the Township.

The Parks Committee has established reservation fees for the fields due to the diverse and increased use at the park and Township Hall fields. Funds will be used to continue updates and improvements as field use increases. The Township was also awarded a grant from ITC for planting of landscape material which will be used at the Park. Plans are in place to hold a Softball Tournament, Ultimate Frisbee Tournament and Geocaching at the park during this year's jubilee.

The Cemetery Committee is developing a master plan for the Summit Cemetery. This plan will guide the Township in developing the entire site and give us guidance as to the need for burial sites and columbarium niches. They anticipate completing the master plan this year to present to the Board.

Williamstown Township

4990 N. Zimmer Rd

Williamston MI 48895

Upcoming Events



Local Artists have come together to open their studios and raise money for playground equipment at the Township Hall. Tickets are \$5.00 and can be purchased during the tour at participating studios, Branch School, Township Hall & Burgdorf's Winery.

Follow the tour signs, enjoy fine art and support local artist!

Garage Sale & Spring Clean Up during Recycling May 14th 9-3

Time to clean up! The Township is providing a place to bring your metal, oversized items and sensitive documents this May on a first come basis until dumpsters are full! **This service is for residents of the Township only– you will need proof of residency!**

All metals, including appliances, will be accepted **except:** those containing Freon, unless they have a state issued tag stating the Freon has been properly removed, and LP tanks. **Other prohibited items are:** Household latex paint (unless it is solidified), hazardous waste or containers, explosives, ammunition and firearms, radioactive and hazardous waste, batteries, liquid waste, sewage waste, tires, concrete, yard waste and construction material.

There will be a Township “Yard Sale” the second Saturday of the month from May through October, 9am-3pm during recycle at the Williamstown Township Hall.

All residents are welcome to bring items for sale, or just come and SHOP.

Picnic tables under the pavilion are available for use on a first come, first serve basis, or you can bring and set up your own tables.

For more information, please contact the Township volunteer at 655-9828