

# Scio Township

Fall 2011

COMMUNITY REPORT



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FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK – BY SPAULDING CLARK, SUPERVISOR

## Township Updates

**A**s I look out the window and see the rain and fall colors again, I realize that summer is realistically, if not officially, over.

### Update on Roads

In the arena of old news items relating to road issues, we look to finally resolve the problems involving the landscape contractor on the third phase of the Jackson Boulevard. Unfortunately, the finishing touches that would have made the medians look good for the summer did not occur, but are finally being rectified. Further, the Scio Downtown Development Authority continues its study of future traffic issues on Zeeb Road, north of Jackson, with a view to understanding and identifying potential

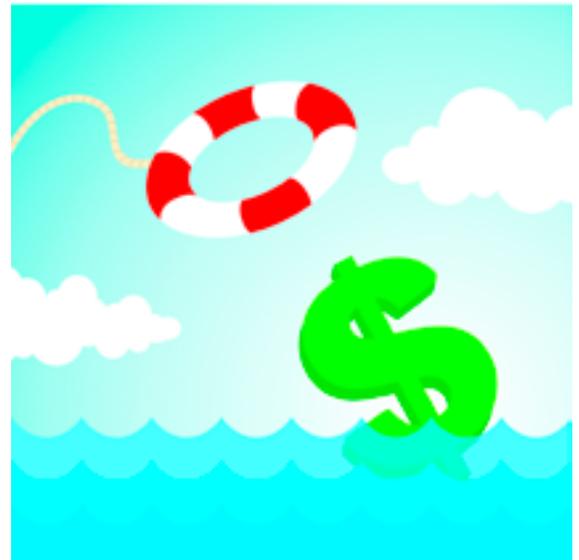
problems as this subarea area develops in the future. The study will take into account potential development and will identify solutions for traffic that is projected over the next thirty years. Plans for road improvements to North Maple Road continue to be refined. The Township has been willing to participate in the project, and to use part of its matching funds from the Road Commission, given the willingness of the residents in the area to contribute to the cost of the roadwork. The WCRC continues to interact with the residents to accomplish needed repairs in the least intrusive way possible. Three other townships are participating in the North Maple project as well.

*From The Supervisor's Desk continued on page 2*

SCIO TOWNSHIP UTILITIES DEPARTMENT BY SCOTT MARTIN, UTILITIES DIRECTOR

## Attention Scio Township Water Customers

**O**nce again this quarter, several residents experienced serious difficulties with their water driven back-up sump pump units. We have previously drawn your attention to the fact that these units will occasionally malfunction which may result in large water bills for the homeowner. We are now finding that the units in some homes are aging and valves are sticking in the open position or the float is remaining open after the unit should shut down. PLEASE check to determine if you have one of these units and, if so, its age and condition. Inspect your water driven sump pump and test it every month just to make sure that it is functioning as expected. During this past quarter we had four more residents who received large water bills due to malfunctioning units. We have no way of knowing who is experiencing these problems until we read the water meters. The meters are read only quarterly so it could be anywhere from a few days to three months before anyone is aware of this problem. It is imperative that the homeowner knows and understands how these water driven sump pumps operate. We are always here to answer any questions that you might have.



Scio Township Fire Department's  
**Annual Halloween Party**  
**Sunday October 30**  
**2 - 4 p.m.**

Kids, come in costume and bring your parents! Sit in the fire trucks!



**Refreshments**  
**Games**  
**Prizes**

Perhaps the only issue that has not been resolved is the name of the new entity, as all are agreed that this new beginning needs a new name. We would be happy to receive any suggestions our readers might have.

*From The Supervisor's Desk continued*

### Fire Department news

On the fire-fighting front, Scio continues to work with the Village of Dexter, Dexter and Webster Townships on a potential consolidation of fire services into one new entity. While the discussions have been going on for an extended period, the parties continue to grow closer in accomplishing the consolidation. It is expected that, by the end of this year or early in January, an agreement will be ready for the four communities to adopt. Thereafter, the more nitty-gritty details of the consolidation will be addressed. As noted in previous editions of this newsletter, the consolidation is expected to produce improved service for all of the communities, and in the longer term, cost savings. Perhaps the only issue that has not

been resolved is the name of the new entity, as all are agreed that this new beginning needs a new name. We would be happy to receive any suggestions our readers might have.



### New website in the works

And as noted earlier, in an effort to improve communications and to provide a more attractive and more easily accessible information about the Township, we have engaged two local professionals, Annie Wolock and Dan Romanchik to undertake the process of revising the Township's website. The website would then no longer be hosted by Washtenaw

County, and the program currently used for internal website changes will be replaced by one more easily used by all of the Township's departments, with the goal of providing a more easily updated, attractive and user friendly website.

### Thank-you Karl

The Township would like to publically thank Karl Couyoumjian of Tel Systems/Thalner Electric for the contribution to the Township of two projection screens, one for our main meeting room, and a smaller one for our conference room. Mr. Couyoumjian noticed the difficulties that we were having in projecting clear computer images onto our walls, so thanks to his thoughtfulness, with these new screens we now have a much improved ability to view images.

### Bits and Pieces

And finally, some short news items in the general activities category since the last newsletter. First, the Township has extended for another year the contract with WAVE to provide bus service along the Jackson Road corridor. The Township also is participating in the development of the Countywide Transit Master Plan. Although much has been written about the Plan, it has yet to be finally defined, nor has the Township's role or participation been defined. In the financial arena, Plante Moran, the Township's auditors, recently completed their annual audit of the Township's finances and the Township once again passed with flying colors. Associated with the audit and with the assistance of our auditors, the Township has now developed and adopted a five-year rolling budget in an effort to try and anticipate budgetary costs and expenses over a longer period of time. This should smooth out any future bumps in the financial road that the economy may throw at us. In another financial update, the Township's fire millage has again been renewed at the same rate of 0.9 mills.

## Sign-up for Electronic Delivery!

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and click on *Newsletter Electronic Delivery*.  
Remember to use your Mail Code (Example: SMIT1234MAINST),  
which can be found on this newsletter's label.

## A Note from The Treasurer's Desk

**W**inter tax bills will be mailed on December 1st. If you haven't received yours by December 15th, please contact my office. We will mail another after making sure our records are correct.

### Credit card/electronic check options for payment

Taxes or utility bills can now be paid by either credit card or electronic check. If you pay by credit card, the convenience fee for utility bills is \$3.00 per \$100 or part thereof. For tax bills the credit card convenience fee is 3% of the total bill. If you pay by electronic check, there is a flat fee of \$3.00 for either type of bill. You may pay on-line or in person.



Taxes or utility bills can now be paid by either credit card or electronic check.

## Ann Arbor Public Schools Residents, November 8, 2011

The last election in 2011 will be held on November 8, and only Ann Arbor Public Schools residents will be voting. Since Township Clerks are allowed to consolidate precincts for school elections, and since turnout has been historically low for school elections, we will again consolidate precincts for the November School Election. Precincts 2, 3, 4, & 5 will be voting at the Scio Township Hall. Precincts 6 & 8 will be voting at the Scio Township Fire Hall. Precincts 7 & 9 will be voting at WISD. Please check your voter ID card or check the Secretary of State's website if you are unsure of your precinct. The State's website address is: <https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/>

### Non-Profit Mailing Permit

Other news for voters (particularly if you are on the Absent Voter list) is that the US Postal Service allows for election mail to be sent under a 'non-profit' bulk permit. We have applied for this status, received approval, and have sent out our very first Absent Voter mailings under this new permit! The good news is that we will save 65-75% on our application and ballot mailings. I am excited that we have this in place, since I anticipate that next year's 2012 elections will have a high turnout. In 2010, for the Gubernatorial Election, we mailed 1800+/- Absent Voter ballots.

### Did you know?

This November's election is November 8 instead of the 1<sup>st</sup> because Michigan law states that Election Day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday of the month (except for the February election, which is specified to be the fourth Tuesday). Please mark your calendar to vote in the Presidential Primary election on February 28, 2012.

### Don't forget to register

January 30, 2012 will be the last day to register to vote in the Presidential Primary. If you have a change of address please be sure to update your information with the Secretary of State's office, or here at the Township offices as soon as possible. You only have to register once (unless you move) and you can check your registration status by going to: <https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/>



Don't forget to **VOTE** November 8

## New LPC Commissioner Named

Welcome  
Jim Crowfoot

In September the Scio Board of Trustees appointed Jim Crowfoot to the Land Preservation Commission. Jim served two terms on the board of the Washtenaw Land Trust (now Legacy Land Conservancy). He teaches at The University of Michigan on the topic of sustainability as a Professor Emeritus of Natural Resources and Urban and Regional Planning and Dean Emeritus of the School of Natural Resources and the Environment. He is an active faculty member in the Program in the Environment, an undergraduate major and minor of the School of Natural

Resources and Environment and the Colleges of Literature, Arts and Sciences and the Michigan Community Scholars Program, an undergraduate living-learning program focused on community and community service. We are excited to have Jim us on the LPC and look forward to his many contributions.

Correction: In the previous article, the Secretary and Board liaison were listed incorrectly. The Secretary of the LPC is Leslie Desmond and the Board liaison is Dick DeLong, replacing Nancy Hedberg.

## Setting Priorities for Preservation

The LPC intends to retain that track record as it proceeds with future acquisitions so that our limited funds are used for the greatest positive impact on the community.

Scio Township's Land Preservation Program has protected 569 acres to date. The Land Preservation Commission (LPC) was aware of the outstanding leveraging of township millage funds in those acquisitions but also wondered if township funds have been used on the best properties. That question resulted in a year-long process to evaluate all undeveloped township properties.

### Candidate properties reviewed and prioritized

The LPC commissioned a review of properties based on criteria in the township ordinance and some other factors. Properties that are primarily agricultural were evaluated for proximity to protected land, scenic value, soil productivity, parcel size, whether a property is or could be part of a block of protected farmland, and if the property is part of a viable farm business. Open space lands were evaluated for their contribution to water quality protection, scenic value, parcel size, development potential, whether a property is or could be part of a corridor or block of protected land, whether public access could be provided to other protected lands, and whether the property is in a "bioserve" area as designated by the Huron River Watershed Council. Each property was then classified as high, medium or low priority. Now, when the LPC scores a nominated property, it consults the priority listing and may award more discretionary points based on property's ranking. Township planning consultants Carlisle/Wortman Associates produced several internal maps for the LPC to assist in visualizing larger-scale protection in Scio Township.

### Completed projects ranked well

As a test, the ten completed projects were run through this process. The LPC found that seven of them would be classified high priority, with the other three medium priority.



The LPC intends to retain that track record as it proceeds with future acquisitions so that our limited funds are used for the greatest positive impact on the community.

## Protecting farmland with federal grants

The Scio Township Land Preservation Commission has the directive from the voters who supported the funding millage in 2004, as well as from the Board of Trustees, to protect natural areas as well as farmland.

Scio Township's Land Preservation Program has benefitted from a variety of matching fund sources. To date the township millage has been leveraged at a ratio of over two and half outside dollars to one from Scio. One of the most prominent sources is the federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP), which has contributed to three completed projects with two more projects set to close before the end of the year.

### FRPP is used to protect farmland

FRPP is funded by Congress through the Farm Bill, the omnibus legislation adopted every five years that addresses an enormous variety of programs from conservation to nutrition to crop price support payments. FRPP dollars are allocated annually to all states, each of which establishes a system for evaluating nominated properties with an overall goal of protecting the nation's best agricultural soils from conversion to residential and commercial development. Michigan's allocation is usually on the order of \$2.5 million. The three completed projects that have used FRPP

funds, totaling \$1,484,970 are:

- Davenport farm, 173 acres located at the northeast corner of Parker Rd. and Marshall Rd. (FRPP grant \$851,300)
- Scherdt farm, 100 acres located on the south side Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd. between Zeeb Rd. and the Village of Dexter (FRPP grant \$500,000)
- Schneider farm, 50 acres located at the northeast corner of Parker Rd. and Scio Church Rd. (FRPP grant \$133,670)

Note that all of these properties remain in private ownership and public access is not permitted.

### Natural features preserved

The Scio Township Land Preservation Commission has the directive from the voters who supported the funding millage in 2004, as well as from the Board of Trustees, to protect natural areas as well as farmland. Each of the three properties cited above have significant natural features in addition to high quality agricultural soils. The Davenport farm has mature woods, wetlands and Mill Creek frontage (a State of Michigan natural river in Scio Township), totalling 17% of the property; the Scherdt farm features wetlands and mature woods (33%); and the Schneider farm includes part of the noted wetlands at the road intersection and elsewhere (30%).

### Funding is up for renewal

Congress has begun discussions on renewal of the Farm Bill. With the deficit issues facing the country, all programs are being reviewed with funding likely to be decreased or even eliminated. Michigan's Senator Debbie Stabenow is chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee and would appreciate hearing from citizens on the importance of FRPP to our community. She can be reached at [senator@stabenow.senate.gov](mailto:senator@stabenow.senate.gov) or (202) 224-4822.



## Zeeb Road Shared-Use Pathway Update

Progress continues in the planning for a shared-use pathway along Zeeb Road

Progress continues in the planning for a shared-use pathway along Zeeb Road, connecting the Township center to the Huron River corridor and the Washtenaw County Border to Border Trail. It was last reported in this newsletter that the Township submitted an application to the 2011 Connecting Communities (CC) program for a grant to help construct Phase 1 of a Zeeb Road pathway project. The project didn't score high enough and we didn't make the cut. However, at the urging and encouragement of the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission, the Township will reapply in the 2012 CC grant application cycle. In order to prepare a more complete application, the Paths Technical Advisory Committee developed a request for a proposal for finalizing the route design of the pathway. In October, the Board of Trustees approved monies to fund a proposal by Carlisle Wortman & Associates to test the route options and with committee feedback finalize the actual route for all three phases of the Zeeb Road Pathway. More to come.



COUNTYWIDE TRANSIT UPDATE BY SARAH PRESSPRICH

## Help shape Transit in Dexter Village, Webster and Scio Townships!

Mark Your Calendar  
November 10  
5:30 pm  
Dexter Senior Center

The time has come to talk about what transportation services would best serve growing needs in our community. If you are a commuter, a senior, or interested in shaping future transportation options please attend!

**Nov. 10** at 5:30pm, Dexter Senior Center (7720 Ann Arbor St., Dexter)

This meeting will act as an "Advisory Committee" to a new countywide transit board that has recently been formed to explore near term transit improvements in Washtenaw County. There will be an opportunity to talk with your new regional transit board representative, David Read. Come tell him what you think!





# Get involved in your community

## Scio Township Information

Scio Township Hall  
827 North Zeeb Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
(734) 369-9400; info@twp.scio.mi.us  
visit us at: [www.twp.scio.mi.us](http://www.twp.scio.mi.us)

### Township Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### Utility Department Hours:

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Utilities emergency: . . . . . (734) 651-4770  
Utilities Administration: . . . . . (734) 369-9350

### Township Board of Trustees

Spaulding Clark, Supervisor  
Nancy Hedberg, Clerk  
Donna Palmer, Treasurer  
Richard DeLong, Trustee  
Christine Green, Trustee  
Jack Knowles, Trustee  
David Read, Trustee

Board meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Hall. E-mail sent to [townshipboard@twp.scio.mi.us](mailto:townshipboard@twp.scio.mi.us) will be forwarded to all members of the township board.

### Scio Township Department Heads

Carl Ferch, Fire Chief  
Scott Martin – Utilities Director  
James Merte – Assessing

### Other Phone Numbers

Emergencies . . . . . 911  
Fire Department Administration . . . . . (734) 665-6001  
Sheriff's Department,  
Zeeb Road Sub-Station . . . . . (734) 994-8105  
County Building Inspection Services . . . (734) 222-3900

## The Scio Township Community Report

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## Washtenaw County Information:

[www.ewashtenaw.org](http://www.ewashtenaw.org)

### Water Resources Commissioner:

(734) 222-6860; drains@ewashtenaw.org

### County Road Commission

(734) 761-1500; wcrcc@wccroads.org

### County Commissioners:

District 1 – Rob Turner  
(734) 341-6612; turnerr@ewashtenaw.org  
District 2 – Dan Smith  
(734) 449-2985; smithd@ewashtenaw.org  
District 3 – Alicia Ping  
(734) 548-5160; pingad@ewashtenaw.org  
District 9 – Leah Gunn  
(734) 663-7307; gunnl@ewashtenaw.org  
District 10 – Conan Smith  
(734) 662-0268; smithco@ewashtenaw.org

### State Information:

[www.michigan.org](http://www.michigan.org)

### State Representative

District 52 – Mark Ouimet  
(517) 373-0828; markouimet@house.mi.gov

### State Senator:

District 18 – Rebekah Warren  
(517) 373-2406; senrwarren@senate.michigan.gov

### Governor:

Rick Snyder  
(517) 373-3400; rick.snyder@michigan.gov

### Federal Information:

[www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov)

### U.S. Representatives:

District 7 – Tim Walberg  
(202) 225-6276; e-mail via [www.walberg.house.gov](http://www.walberg.house.gov)  
District 15 – John Dingell  
(202) 225-4071; [www.house.gov/dingell](http://www.house.gov/dingell)

### U.S. Senators:

Debbie Stabenow  
(202) 224-4822; senator@stabenow.senate.gov  
Carl Levin  
(202) 224-6221; e-mail via [www.levin.senate.gov](http://www.levin.senate.gov)

### President of the United States:

Barack H. Obama  
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## House Calls for your ailing computer

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