

Scio Township

Spring 2011

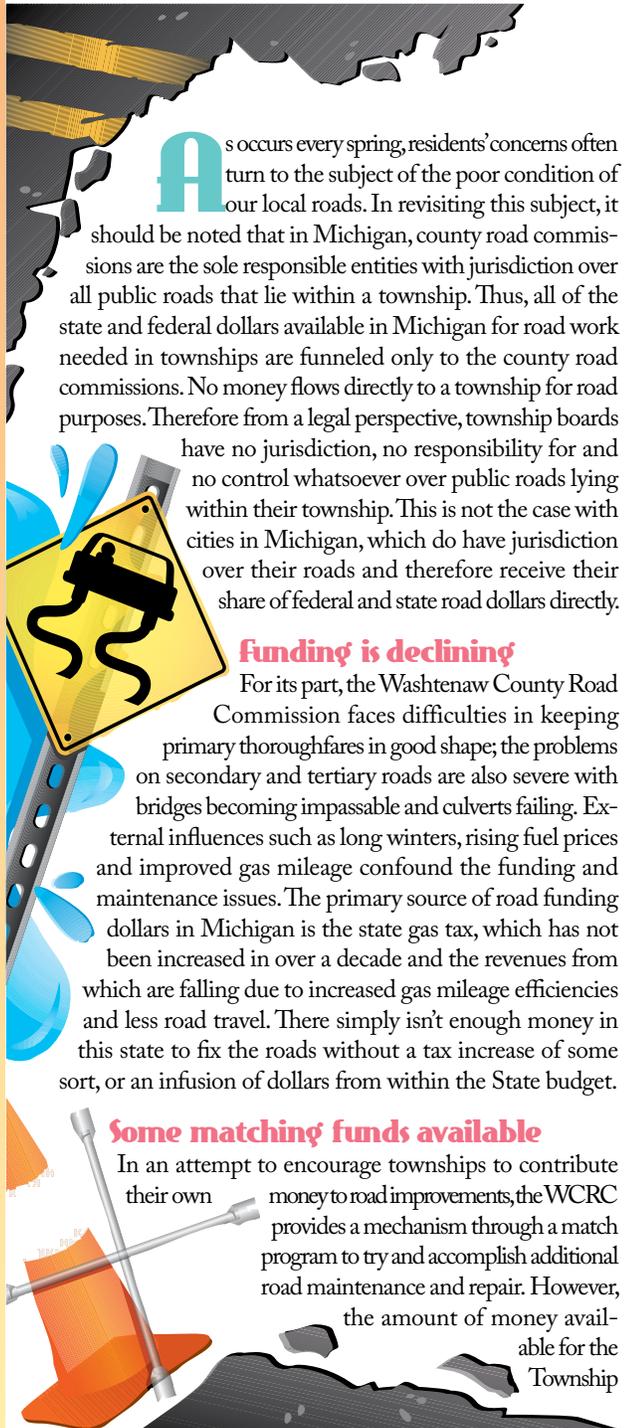
COMMUNITY REPORT

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

Township Updates

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As occurs every spring, residents' concerns often turn to the subject of the poor condition of our local roads. In revisiting this subject, it should be noted that in Michigan, county road commissions are the sole responsible entities with jurisdiction over all public roads that lie within a township. Thus, all of the state and federal dollars available in Michigan for road work needed in townships are funneled only to the county road commissions. No money flows directly to a township for road purposes. Therefore from a legal perspective, township boards have no jurisdiction, no responsibility for and no control whatsoever over public roads lying within their township. This is not the case with cities in Michigan, which do have jurisdiction over their roads and therefore receive their share of federal and state road dollars directly.

Funding is declining

For its part, the Washtenaw County Road Commission faces difficulties in keeping primary thoroughfares in good shape; the problems on secondary and tertiary roads are also severe with bridges becoming impassable and culverts failing. External influences such as long winters, rising fuel prices and improved gas mileage confound the funding and maintenance issues. The primary source of road funding dollars in Michigan is the state gas tax, which has not been increased in over a decade and the revenues from which are falling due to increased gas mileage efficiencies and less road travel. There simply isn't enough money in this state to fix the roads without a tax increase of some sort, or an infusion of dollars from within the State budget.

Some matching funds available

In an attempt to encourage townships to contribute their own money to road improvements, the WCRC provides a mechanism through a match program to try and accomplish additional road maintenance and repair. However, the amount of money available for the Township

to match through this program is not significant when compared with the overall road needs within the Township. And, a significant portion of that match money has always been allocated to summer dust control on our many gravel roads. Unfortunately, there are far more repairs needed than there are road funds available and given that there are many township activities that are required to be funded, townships are typically able to provide only modest dollars toward road improvements,

Local Roads Committee

Because of these issues, several years ago Scio Township established a Local Roads Committee to review our local road needs. This Committee has worked in conjunction with the WCRC to review road needs over our entire Township, and has established priorities for projects to which the Township might allocate modest dollars to local road improvements from the Township's annual budget. In this process the Committee has evaluated all of the roads in the Township as to their current condition, to aid in determining priorities for modest financial assistance.

Townships don't have jurisdiction over roads

Unfortunately, when residents are concerned and want their roads improved, they have been advised in the past to "go to the Township" and get the Township to pay for the needed road improvements. And while the Township has been experimenting with using its own matching dollars to help assist and encourage residents to improve their own roads, the funds available and expended are miniscule relative to the overall needs. It bears repeating that townships don't have the authority or the legal responsibility for road upkeep and repair, nor do we receive any state money for roads, nor do we have a significant surplus of money that can pay for all of the needed road repairs.

New funding mechanism is needed

Finally, as you may have read, the Governor is aware of transportation infrastructure needs in Michigan and has promised to address it later this year once the budget is complete. Various state legislators have also proposed new funding mechanisms such as allowing counties to spend surplus funds on roads or dedicating the sales taxes from automobiles and gasoline to transportation. While it remains to be seen what changes Lansing will make, you may wish to contact your State Representative or State Senator and pass along your concerns to them.



Curb-box cleanout

The Scio Township Utility Staff will be performing some preventative maintenance on the water shut off valve in the curb-box in about 300 front yards this summer. This is the valve that is used to shut off your water in case of an emergency. However, we have inventoried and evaluated almost every curb box in the Township and found many full of dirt and debris. In order to test the valve with

our on/off key, we will first have to remove the dirt and debris from the curb-box. Utility Staff will be using a large compressor to blow the dirt out of the curb box, re-evaluate the condition and then make a recommendation if repairs are needed. We will try very hard not to disturb your lawn area and keep the area as clean as possible. We would like to thank all of you for your cooperation with this project.

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK BY DONNA PALMER



Pay by credit card starting June 1

The 2010 Tax Year has closed. Many thanks to all that helped us keep our records accurate. I still encourage everyone who may be out of town at the time the bills are mailed to give us alternate mailing instructions. A "forwarding of mail" order only sends them back to us adding additional time and cost to the process. All in all, it was a good year!

Credit cards soon to be accepted

Good news! For those who have inquired about paying utility or tax bills by credit card, the option to do so will be available starting June 1, 2011. Information will be included with the billings, on our website and in future newsletters.

Enjoy your spring.

CLERK'S CORNER BY NANCY HEDBERG, CLERK

School Election is May 3

We're looking forward to seeing a good turnout in May when the Dexter Community Schools' Board will have candidates on the ballot. We will also have the opportunity to vote on WISD's request for a 10-year renewal of the special education millage. The ballot language for the renewal reads:

"Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Washtenaw Intermediate School District, Michigan, be increased by .9850 mill (\$.9850 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 10 years, 2011 to 2020, inclusive, to provide funds for the education of students with a disability (above is a renewal of millage which expired with the 2010 tax levy); the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2011 is approximately \$14,000,000?"

Precincts will be consolidated

Since this will essentially be a "Schools Election", clerks are allowed to consolidate precincts to save on costs. This has been done for the May election, so please check the Township's website or give the Clerk's office a call to be sure you get to the right polling place on May 3rd. Precinct 1 will be voting at the regular polling place, Dexter Senior Center. Precincts 2, 3, & 5 will be consolidated and voting at the Scio Township Hall, 827 N. Zeeb Road. Precincts

4, 6, & 8 are also consolidated and will be voting at the Scio Fire Hall, 1055 N. Zeeb Road. Precincts 7 & 9 have been consolidated, and will be voting at WISD, 1819 S. Wagner Rd.

Remember to register

Last day to register before the May 3 School Election was Monday, April 4, 2011. We will have a November election this year for the Ann Arbor Public Schools since they moved their Board election date to coincide with November General Election dates. Currently there is nothing being proposed for an August election. The last date to register before any election is 30 days prior to an election date, so for the August election, the last day to register is July 5, 2011. Close of registration prior to the November election is October 4, 2011.

Check the Township's website to be sure you get to the right polling place on May 3.

Promoting Commerce and Community on the Boulevards



www.wwba.biz 734-668-1482



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

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

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

Is published quarterly by the Scio Township Board of Trustees for the residents of Scio Township.

Editor
David Read
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Julie Tanguay
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David Read

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 will be forwarded to all members of the township board.

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Washtenaw County Information:

Water Resources Commissioner:
(734) 222-6860

County Road Commission
(734) 761-1500; wrcr@wcroads.org

County Commissioners:
District 1 – Rob Turner
(734) 341-6612; turnerr@washtenaw.org

District 2 – Dan Smith
(734) 449-2985; smithd@washtenaw.org

District 3 – Alicia Ping
(734) 548-5160; pingad@washtenaw.org

District 9 – Leah Gunn
(734) 663-7307; gunnl@ewashtenaw.org

District 10 – Conan Smith
(734) 662-0268; smithco@ewashtenaw.org

State Information:

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

State Senator:
District 18 – Rebekah Warren
(517) 373-2409; <http://www.senate.mi.gov/dem/warren/>

Governor:
Rick Snyder
(517) 373-3400; e-mail via www.michigan.gov/gov

Federal Information:

U.S. Representatives:
District 7 – Tim Walberg
(202) 225-6276; <http://walberg.house.gov/>

District 15 – John Dingell
(202) 225-4071; 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

President of the United States:
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(202) 456-1111; president@whitehouse.gov

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A permit is still required for open burning

BY DAVID READ, TRUSTEE

Revised Open Burning Ordinance

NOTE: We have had several questions about open burning in the Township so we are re-printing this article from 2009 to help to answer your questions.

In the spring of 2009, the Board of Trustees enacted a new Open Burning Ordinance. A copy can be found online at: <http://www.twp.scio.mi.us/ordinances/>. A permit is still required for open burning and may be granted by the Fire Department by calling the Fire Station at (734) 665-6001 in advance of the burn. Open burning can only be conducted between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. No permits shall be issued for parcels of land with addresses located east of M-14, in the Village of Dexter, or for any parcels of land of less than one acre in size. "Prescribed Burning", as defined in the ordinance, is allowable under a permit. Structures and other materials may be burned for fire suppression training only in accordance with separate regulations as stated in Ordinance 2009-02. Note: Cooking fires are exempted from permit requirements.

Materials that can be burned under the new ordinance include clean wood, natural materials, and dried vegetation including leaves and grass clippings. "Clean wood" means natural wood which has not been painted, varnished or coated with a similar material; has not been pressure treated with preservatives; and does not contain resins or glues as in plywood or other composite wood products. Fires shall not contain rubbish, plastic, leather, or petroleum based material or any flammable or combustible liquids.

Please review the complete ordinance, which can be found at: <http://www.twp.scio.mi.us/ordinances/>, and remember to call for a burn permit in advance of any burning activity.

