

November, 2015

ADMINISTRATION

Twp Hall - 668-0270
Cemetery
Clerk
Information
Manager
Supervisor

Assessing - 669-6494

Building - 668-0278

DARA – 482-5117

Fire - 669-0071
Administration

Planning/Zoning
669-6576

Police - 669-6578
Administration

Treasurer - 668-1411

CLINTON COUNTY

1-888-224-2450
Toll Free

POLICE & FIRE ASSISTANCE

Fire - 9-1-1
EMT/Ambulance
Police - 9-1-1
State Police – 322-1911

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Supervisor
Rick Galardi
Clerk
Diane Mosier
Treasurer
Phyllis Daggy
Trustees
Johanna Balzer
Steve Musselman
Brian Ross
David Seeger

Manager
Rodney H. Taylor

www.dewitttownship.org

In October, the Township Board approved the 2016 budget.



Since the downturn in the economy in 2008, the Township has lost over \$1.3 million in taxable value alone. The good news is that after many years of challenging budgets, things are starting to improve. For 2016, taxable value is estimated to increase its largest amount since the downturn at almost 4%. In addition, other revenues such as building permits and state revenue sharing are seeing small increases as well. For example, in 2009, the Township only had 4 new homes built. In 2012, this number was up to 26; and in 2016, we expect over 60 new homes will be built.

These overall incremental increases in revenue are allowing the Township to invest in projects that have been delayed for several years. These include the hiring of an additional police officer, expansion of parking at the Community Center, a number of capital purchases for police and fire such as in-car cameras, tasers, self-contained breathing apparatus and radios.

Overall, the Township is in great financial shape. The Township has little debt (2.1% of legal limit), no retiree health care liability, a millage rate that is .499 mills under legal limit, has lower than average unfunded liabilities (\$917,935), and has healthy reserves. One of the biggest measures of health is fund balance. The Township is meeting its goal of having a fund balance of at least 19%.

MILLAGE RATES

Have you ever wondered how our total millage rate compares to other jurisdictions in the area? Below is a list of some of the larger urbanized cities and townships in the Greater Lansing area and their total millage rate (schools, county, library, transit, etc).

Living in Clinton County has its advantages. DeWitt Township and Bath Township have the lowest total tax rate in the area.

- DeWitt Twp** - Lansing SD = 31.3462
- Bath Twp - Bath SD = 35.2907
- DeWitt Twp** – Bath SD = 35.5421
- DeWitt Twp** - DeWitt SD = 36.5421
- Delta Twp - Waverly SD = 43.4432
- DeWitt City - DeWitt SD = 43.5685
- Meridian Twp - Okemos SD = 46.8903
- Delhi Twp - Holt SD = 48.868
- Lansing Twp - Waverly SD = 52.1951
- Lansing City - Lansing SD = 53.3661
- City of East Lansing - E.L. SD = 58.9417



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DARA RECREATION NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The DeWitt Area Recreation Authority (DARA) is located at the DeWitt Township Community Center, 16101 Brook Road, Lansing, MI 48906. Information regarding any event or program can be obtained by calling the DARA office at 517-482-5117. You may register for programs in person at the DARA office, the DeWitt Township Hall (1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt) or DeWitt City Hall (414 E. Main Street, DeWitt).

Program	Dates	Time	Registration Dates	Age or Grade	Cost (Res/Non-Res)
Preschool Play	Thurs. thru 12/17 No session 11/26	10:00 am-12:00 pm	Pay Each Day	1-5yr.	\$2
November Drop Your Kids Off (Evening)	11/14	6:00-11:30 pm	One Week Prior to Date	4-12yr.	\$15/One Child \$10 Each Additional
December Drop Your Kids Off (Evening)	12/18	6:00-11:00 pm	One Week Prior to Date	4-12yr.	\$15/One Child \$10 Each Additional
Dinner with Santa	12/14	5:30-6:30 pm or 6:30-7:30 pm	11/2-Full	0-14yr.	\$6/\$10 (Child Fee) \$3/\$7 (Adult Fee)
Holiday Fun Club	12/21, 12/22, 12/23, 12/28, 12/29, 12/30	7:30 am-5:30 pm	10/19-Full	5-12yr.	\$105/\$120 (All Days) or \$25 per Day
Mini Movers	1/7-1/28	9:30-10:15 am	11/23-12/18	2-5 yr.	\$25/\$40
Preschool Play	Beginning 1/7	10:00 am-12:00 pm	Pay Each Day	1-5 yr.	\$2
Lacrosse Camp	1/9-1/30	12:00-1:00 pm	11/30-12/18	Gr. K-4	\$25/\$40
Rec Ball	1/9-3/5 No session 2/13	9:00 am-1:00 pm	11/30-12/18	Gr. 9-12	\$60/\$75
Youth Volleyball Leagues	1/9-2/20 no session 2/13	9:00 am-1:00 pm	11/30-12/18	Gr. 3-6	\$34/\$49
Little Hoopers Basketball Camp	1/6-1/27	5:30-7:30 pm (45 min session)	12/2-12/18	4-6 yr.	\$34/\$49
January Drop Your Kids Off (Evening)	1/22	6:00-11:00 pm	One Week Prior to Date	4-12 yr.	\$15/One Child \$10 Each Additional
Mini Matisses: PreK Art	2/4-3/3 No session 2/18	9:15-10:00 am	12/28-1/23	2-5 yr.	\$25/\$40
All Day Drop Your Kids Off	2/15	7:30 am-5:30 pm	One Week Prior to Date	5-12 yr.	\$25/One Child \$15 Each Additional
Sports Starter	2/15-3/21	10:00-10:45 am OR 5:30-7:15 pm (45min session)	1/11-2/1	3-5 yr.	\$34/\$49
Floor Hockey	2/20-3/26	9:00 am-3:00 pm	1/11-1/30	Gr. K-5	\$34/\$49
All Day Drop Your Kids Off	3/11	7:30 am-5:30 pm	One Week Prior to Date	5-12 yr.	\$25/One Child \$15 Each Additional
Teddy Bear Tea Party	3/12	12:30-1:15 pm	2/8-2/27	3+ yr.	\$10/Pair \$2/Each Additional Child
Father/Son Bowling Night	3/15	6:00-7:30 pm	2/8-2/27	Gr. K-6	\$25/Pair \$10/Each Additional Child
Egg Hunt	3/19	3:00 p.m. Sharp at the DeWitt Sports Park	No Registration	1-10 yr.	Free
Teen Flashlight Egg Hunt	3/19	7:45-9:00 pm at the DeWitt Sports Park	2/15-3/5	Gr. 6-8	Free

DARA Mission: DARA promotes community and quality of life through leisure services provided for the residents of the DeWitt Area.

You can register for most DARA programs online by visiting their website at www.dewittrecreation.org. DARA accepts Visa and MasterCard payments for online registrations. You may also print a registration form by clicking on the newsletter link from the home page and then mail it with payment to 1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820. Registration forms can be dropped off at the DeWitt Township Hall (1401 W. Herbison Rd.) and DeWitt City Hall (414 E. Main Street) as well. Call the DARA office at 517-482-5117 if you have any questions. Follow DARA on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/dararecreation> to receive the most up to date information.

A FEW SIMPLE REMINDERS TO GET YOU THROUGH THE FALL AND WINTER

Winter Heating

Faulty heating equipment is responsible for over 40% of winter home fires and is the 2nd leading cause of year-round fires. Heating and cooling equipment should be cleaned and inspected by qualified technicians. Flues and chimneys for wood burning fireplaces and wood burning stoves should be inspected and cleaned as well before the first log is lit. Creosote build-up or lack of maintenance is a common cause of heating fires.

Space heaters are another concern. Space heaters should be at least three feet away from anything that can burn. Fueled heating must be ventilated to prevent carbon monoxide from building up in your home. Whatever your heating source, make sure you use the correct fuel. Approximately 3,000 fires are caused by space heaters each year.

When You Changed Your Clock, Did You Change Your Batteries?

The International Association of Fire Chiefs and Energizer Battery have promoted for several years that when you change your clock for the time change you also change the batteries in your smoke alarms. It is important that you have fresh batteries in your smoke alarms. It is also recommended that you test and vacuum your smoke alarm monthly. Dust and insects can gather in your smoke alarms and delay or give false alarm activations. It is everyone's responsibility to be fire safe. Fresh batteries in your smoke alarm is one way to be fire safe.



Fire Extinguishers

Along with working smoke alarms, residents should have one or more fire extinguishers in their home. There are several sizes of fire extinguishers available; choose the one that is best for your needs. A good all-purpose Class A, B, C fire extinguisher can be a good choice. Read the instructions and know how to operate the extinguisher should it be needed. The DeWitt Township Fire Department can help you if you need assistance on how to operate a fire extinguisher.

Leaf Buildup in Roof Valleys & Gutters

After the leaves fall, don't forget to clean out the excessive build-up of leaves in roof valleys and gutters. Failure to do so is a factor in the formation of ice dams as snow melts and later re-freezes. After an ice dam is formed, water can be forced back up under the shingles and result in leaks into the house. It is important, therefore, to remove these leaves after they have fallen for the season and before the onset of snow and freezing temperatures. Besides preventing water problems, the life of your shingles will also be prolonged. It will also help if you keep excess snow from building up in valleys and along eaves by removing it with a snow rake that is designed to remove the snow without damaging the shingles.

Exterior Holiday Decorations

One last caution as the cooler seasons approach....exterior holiday decorations. Decorations become more elaborate each year and although companies manufacture lighting safe for outdoor usage, they still are only intended for temporary use. Exposure to rain, snow, sunlight, freezing and thawing temperatures or other environmental conditions can take a toll on them and affect their condition. Make very sure that what you are using is approved for exterior use. It is probably safest to think of holiday lighting as temporary lighting which should not be exposed to the elements any longer than necessary.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHTS

Joe Lorenc III, Assistant Assessor, began his career with DeWitt Township in the Treasurer's office in 1986. Twelve years later, in 1998, he transferred to the Assessing Department. By 2000, he had completed the educational and work requirements to be Level 2 certified in Assessing. Today, besides having obtained his Level 3, Michigan Advanced Certification Officer designation, he is also a certified Personal Property Examiner.



When you ask Joe what changes since 1998 stand out the most in Assessing, he notes the computerization of the assessing database and records as well as the use of the internet for communication between government agencies and for the public's ability to access record information. Joe has witnessed considerable growth in the Township. Since moving into the Assessing Department, he has seen the developments of Springbrook and Saffron Hills, Heritage Glen, Heritage Meadows, Heritage Woods, Shadybrook and Crowner Farms Subdivisions. He has also seen major commercial development expand along the Old 27 business corridor that includes the Northway Center and Astera Credit Union.

Joe was born and raised in St. Johns where he still resides with his wife of 19 years, LeAnn, and their 15 year old son. Joe's hobbies include attending Detroit Tiger baseball games as well as college football.

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Michelle Norton has been hired to work part time in the Clerk's Office. Michelle is currently training on voter registration, election administration, and cemetery management and she is often the pleasant first voice on the Township's main telephone line. She is a Township resident, a wife, a mother and a grandmother. Michelle continues to be a great addition to our team!



NEW DEVELOPMENT

Below is a highlight of just some of the new development in the Township:

- Stardust Floral Shop is open in the Valley Farms Commercial Corridor at 15557 Old US-27. They are a full-service wedding floral specialist and have fresh flowers for your next arrangement.
- A new branch for Huntington Bank in Meijer has been completed and is scheduled to open December 7th.
- A special use permit has been approved for B-Strong Fitness (sports performance) for a new location on Airport Road in the Ridge Rock office park.
- Capital Area Tactical is now located in Clark Corners. They focus on sales to Police, Fire and EMS, but also full firearm sales to the public.

- Addie's Acres is now open. This 9,000 sq. feet facility provides assisted senior living in a serene and peaceful location at 11633 Wood Road. They offer up to 19 beds that are either private, semiprivate, or configured in suites.



Discounts are available for veterans, farmers or those that contribute to animal rescue efforts.

TOWNSHIP UPDATES BURNING PERMIT ACTIVATION FOR RECREATIONAL FIRES

As of October 1, 2015, residents will no longer be required to call the Fire Department to activate or obtain a burning permit to have a recreational fire.

A recreational fire is an area of 3 feet or less in diameter, and 2 feet or less in height, for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purpose until 2:00 A.M.



Recreational fires shall not be within 25 feet of a structure or combustible materials. The fire shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. Fire extinguishing equipment (garden hose, fire extinguisher) shall be available for immediate utilization.

A fire outside of these parameters is considered open burning and still requires a permit. Permits may be obtained at the DeWitt Charter Township Clerk's office or the Fire Department. Should the Fire Department be called regarding a burning complaint and you do not comply with the recreational fire regulations, you could be fined for a civil infraction. Questions can be directed to the Fire Department at 517-669-0071.

REPORT A STREETLIGHT PROBLEM

Do you have a streetlight that is out, broken, or vandalized? If so, here is the contact information:

Consumers Energy Customers: Call 800-477-5050 or click on this link <https://www.consumersenergy.com/content.aspx?id=6400> to complete an on-line form.

Board of Water & Light Customers: Call 1-877-295-5001 or email the information to custservice@lbwl.com. Be sure to supply the exact location of the light along with your contact information.

HOW TO REQUEST A STREETLIGHT ON YOUR STREET

Do you live in a neighborhood with no streetlights? Have you wondered what it takes to get them on your street? Lighting up your residential street increases home, pedestrian, and automobile safety. Additionally, it enhances the aesthetic value of the area.

All it takes to inquire about streetlights is an informal petition to the Township signed by at least 50% of the lot/parcel owners on your street. The Township will then work with the local utility (BWL or Consumers) to determine potential costs. This information is then provided back to residents; and, if over 50% of residents want to proceed, a special assessment district is established. This district pays for the installation of the lights as well as the yearly electrical utilization. The final cost to residents is determined by the total number of streetlights and the number of lots/parcels in the district.

CITIZEN SPOTLIGHT

For 27 years, Bob Reese has served his community as a member of the Board of Appeals. Most residents know Bob as the owner/operator of the Reese Sweet Corn stand on Wood Road; however, Bob is also an active crop farmer that includes wheat, soy beans, field corn and sweet corn. He notes that without their active crop operation, there would be no sweet corn stand which has been a family tradition here since the 1950s.



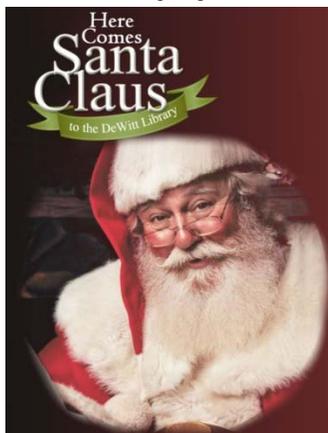
Bob says that his service on the Board of Appeals was a learning experience when he was younger and learning about the appeal process from some really seasoned Board members.

The Board of Appeals has the responsibility of interpreting the zoning ordinance, addressing boundary questions relating to zoning districts, and hearing appeals of administrative determinations. Their primary role is making final decisions on variance requests to the zoning ordinance which establishes minimum standards for size and placement of structures, but the Board of Appeals can also grant special permission, or a "variance" to build on land that does not meet those minimum standards. Bob says that the Board of Appeals tries hard to meet the needs of citizens and remain within the rules, so that both the applicant and the Township can come together and move forward.

Bob explains that his service has been just a small piece of helping our local community grow, but that it's important for residents to serve because citizens bring different perspectives to the local government processes. He attributes working with so many different people over the years as the number one reason he has enjoyed his Board of Appeals appointment. Those people who are currently appointed to the Board of Appeals have clearly benefited from Bob's years of experience, and we all benefit from his service. Thanks Bob!

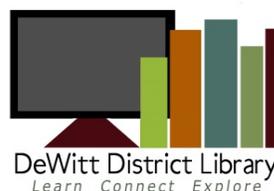
DEWITT DISTRICT LIBRARY UPCOMING EVENT

Each year the DeWitt District Library invites Santa to come visit our library community and wouldn't you know, that jolly old elf never disappoints. It's a magical evening for both families with children and those who are young at heart. The festivities begin with little ones filling the Children's library to make holiday crafts and play simple games. Then all are invited to sit back and enjoy some cookies and milk while listening to tales of the season. This, of course, is in anticipation of Santa's arrival and just when it feels as though you can't wait any longer, and not a moment sooner, he jingles through our doors in a flash of red and a ho, ho, ho. Widened eyes and excited gasps give way to the sounds of song and laughter. Children big and small are invited up, one-by-one, to sit on Santa's knee and whisper in his listening ear their most hoped for holiday wishes. After the quick snap of a camera, and the selection of a few library books for home, the remainder of the evening is spent in amazement and wonder of meeting the REAL Santa Claus.



Santa Arrives
Tuesday, December 8th
6 pm

For more information or to register online visit
www.dewittlibrary.org



Millage Rates, continued from Page 1

What does this mean to you? If you have a home in DeWitt Township/Lansing School with a taxable value of \$100,000 (market value of \$200,000) versus the same value of home in the City of East Lansing, you would pay over \$2,700 more in taxes a year living in East Lansing.

Below is a table showing how much you would have to pay annually in taxes in the different jurisdictions based on a taxable value of \$100,000. Keep in mind that your true cash or market value would be double this number or \$200,000.

DeWitt Twp - Lansing SD = \$3,135
Bath Twp - Bath SD = \$3,529
DeWitt Twp – Bath SD = \$3,554
DeWitt Twp - DeWitt SD = \$3,654
Delta Twp - Waverly SD = \$4,344
DeWitt City - DeWitt SD = \$4,357
Meridian Twp - Okemos SD = \$4,689
Delhi Twp - Holt SD = \$4,887
Lansing Twp - Waverly SD = \$5,220
Lansing City - Lansing SD = \$5,337
City of East Lansing - EL SD = \$5,894

NEWS BITES

ELECTIONS - There are no elections currently scheduled for the remainder of the year for DeWitt Charter Township.

PURSE SNATCHERS - Tis the season-Holidays are approaching fast and a word about watching your purses is in order. Every year we have women targeted at local retail establishments who leave their purses unattended in shopping carts. So keep an eye on your purse.

WINTER WEATHER - Winter is heading this way. Drivers are reminded to take extra time in adverse weather conditions, no texting, wear your seatbelts, slow down, lights on for safety, make sure your tires are ready for the snowy-icy road conditions, and make sure your routine maintenance is done. Check lights, brakes, oil, safety checks-make sure all your equipment is working right.

DOGS IN PARKS - Per Chapter 30-22, Section (V) of the Township's Codified Ordinances - Dogs and other household pets cannot be brought onto park property, unless it's posted otherwise. The only areas posted to allow dogs are Padgett Park and in the non-paved section of Granger Meadows Park (located on the south side of Granger Meadows Lane). Dogs must be on a leash of not more than six feet, be under control, and all feces must be immediately removed.

PROTECT OUR WATERSHED - There are many ways to ensure that the Looking Glass and Grand River watersheds are free of pollutants. One of the easiest is to use phosphorus free fertilizer. For more tips and information visit http://www.mywatersheds.org/public_education.html.

TOWNSHIP E-NEWSLETTER – You can sign up to receive the Township's E-Newsletter which provides monthly Township and community news. Register your e-mail address at www.dewitttownship.org.

LEGAL PUBLICATIONS - DeWitt Township utilizes the DeWitt-Bath Review for legal publications. Also, the Township's website, www.dewitttownship.org, is a good source for information about public hearings, zoning issues, and general information.

FOLLOW US - www.dewitttownship.org, www.facebook.com/dewitttownship, <http://twitter.com/DeWittTownship>, <http://flickr.com/DeWittTownship>. Find Township agendas, minutes, community events, job openings, event photos, election information, ordinances, planning notices and much more.



TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

SENIOR HOUSING COMMITTEE OPENINGS

Diversity in housing stock is critical to having a healthy community. One area that the Township recognizes a need is for more senior housing options. These could be townhomes, condos, small cottages, assisted living or a whole assortment of options other than the traditional single family home.



The Township is forming a committee that will look into amending Township ordinances that promote more diversity in our housing stock. If you have an interest in sitting on an ad hoc committee that will be tasked with brainstorming ideas of the wants and needs for types of senior housing, or for more information on this topic, please contact Tory Niewiadomski, Planner for DeWitt Charter Township at (517) 669-6576 or by email at tniewiadomski@dewittwp.org.



When you see members of our Police or Fire Department, please remember to thank them for their service. Their dedication and sacrifice helps make our community a great place to live, work, and play!