

Highlights of this month's "in the loop" include – read below:



- **Meet your new Township Supervisor**
- **Trustee position open – apply by June 7th**
- should you have any questions, feel free to drop an email to info@dextertownship.org or contact any member of the Board of Trustees

(Picture is Clerk Stambourellis swearing in Karen Sikkenga as the new township Supervisor on May 17, 2023)

➔ **Meet your new Supervisor of Dexter Township – Karen Sikkenga**

Karen Sikkenga was voted into her new role as Dexter Township Supervisor at the May 16th Board of Trustee meeting. Karen was first elected as a Trustee to the Dexter Township Board in November 2020 and has served as a leading board member. Her experience brings a Master Degree in Public Administration, over 20 years' experience as a management consultants and policy / fiscal planner for local nonprofit and government entities. She served as a budget analyst for the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and served as the CFO/Budget Manager for UMich's College of Literature, Science & the Arts with its \$500M budget. Additionally, she is certified in public engagement through the International Association of Public Participation and uses these skills to run focus groups, write press releases, conduct public surveys and more. Her ability to clearly define policies, roles, direct communication, and problem solve have been used and tested over the last 30 months serving on the Township Board. Trustee Sikkenga started the focus on improving our roads, developing a process to quantify and prioritize road improvements. She started the local Township road committee, which has gathered the attention of surrounding municipalities to emulate. We welcome Karen as our new Supervisor to fulfill the role until the November 2024 election and look forward to all working together.

A few words from Karen: I'd like the community to know that Dexter Township is served by an outstanding Board of Trustees, which has accomplished a tremendous amount in just 2.5 years in office. We've invested substantially in local road improvements, initiated farmland and open space preservation, improved our investment practices and return on investment, initiated a professional master plan, increased our community engagement through clean-up days, coffee hours, a new web site, and newsletters (virtual and paper), and much more.

We've been able to accomplish all this because every member of our board is community-minded, actively engaged, and eager to put time and effort into improving lives in Dexter Township. I have been serving elected officials throughout most of my career, and I'm proud to be a member of one of the most active and community-minded boards I've seen. My own expertise is exactly suited to the responsibilities of the supervisor: I have deep expertise and education in budget and policy, and also in day-to-day operations for local government. Dexter Township is fortunate in having robust fund balances and an ongoing operational surplus (excluding capital expenses). I am excited by the opportunity to serve our community and use my skills and experience to further our board's great work on behalf of township residents. I would like to encourage township residents to contact me at supervisor@dextertownship.org if they have any thoughts or suggestions, and also to enroll in our eNewsletter by emailing info@dextertownship.org. Thank you! Call if you have questions.

- ➔ **Township Board Trustee position open** – with the appointment of Karen Sikkenga as the new Supervisor an opening on the Board of Trustees is opened. If you live, vote in the Township and want to become involved, please submit apply. Trustee duties include attending monthly Board of Trustee meetings, voting on issues and working to protect and secure the township's fiduciary stability and health. You may also have an opportunity to serve on additional Boards or committees. **All interested and wanting to apply, send your letter of interest and resume' via email to Supervisor@dextertownship.org by June 7, 2023 at 4:30pm.** The full job posting may be reviewed on the township website at dextertownship.org – have additional questions?

Contact townhall at 734-426-3767.



→ New equipment to be purchased for our Fire Department -

At the April 18th Board meeting – the Board of Trustees approved purchasing an UTV vehicle along with a trailer for transporting for our Fire Department. This new vehicle gives the fire department the ability to transport patients and carry fire suppression equipment. The vehicle can respond onto the local trail system and

quickly load on and off the trailer for rapid response time to our residents.

The Board committed a total of \$60,903 of our American Rescue Plan fund (ARPA) to the Fire Department to purchase this vehicle, the trailer, and a detoxifying sauna to be installed at the fire station. According to the CDC, cancer is a leading cause of death among firefighters. Use of this sauna following a fire, can help to release and remove hazardous absorbed substances, decreasing the amount of damage caused. Benefits of the infrared sauna therapy are well studied and a few of the benefits include detoxification, ease joint pain and stiffness, stress and fatigue reduction, improved sleep, increased metabolism. Protection of our fire fighters and residents' safety continues to be a community focus and a good usage of our ARPA funds.

→ Dexter Senior Center (DSC) continues to face challenges to secure a location and funding to grow and maintain the senior center. At the April Board meeting dollars were committed to the Dexter Senior Center– making Dexter Townships 2023-24 contribution \$9,000 in total – \$4,000 was from the General Fund and \$5,000 from the ARPA funds. DSC membership has increase to 309 members and they continue to work to identified new properties to house the senior center and are actively pursuing funding sources for long term sustainability. This year is set to be transformative as membership grows, meals on wheels grows, and programs offered to seniors increase.

- ➔ The Washtenaw County Road Commission and Dexter Township have agreed to \$697,000 to repair and improve roads this year. Dexter Township will commit \$643,688 and the Road Commission provides matching funds of \$53,312. Our commitment to improve our infrastructure continues within this budget year. Areas of concentrate work include:
- ✓ Brand Road – Quigley Rd to North Territorial Rd
 - ✓ Forestry Operations on various roads
 - ✓ Stinchfield Woods Rd – Toma Rd to Dexter Townhall Rd
 - ✓ Toma Road – North Territorial to County Line
 - ✓ Waterloo Rd – Island Lake Rd to Township Line
- ➔ Treasurer Metz requested and received Board authorization to engage Matt Horning from the Woodhill Group to assist with an updated cash flow analysis and investment plan for a flat \$5,000 fee. Efforts over the last year put forth by Treasurer Metz to alter the Townships investment strategies have increased Township earnings and provided a 1-2 year ROI. Learning new investment strategies, modernizing our policies, banking and diversifying helps secure our township financial status. In the April 1st report – Treasurer Metz settled the 2022 tax roll with Washtenaw County Treasurer as of 3/24/23. Dexter Twp. collected approximately \$19M for the 2022 tax cycle with slightly over \$641,000 sent delinquent to the Washtenaw County for collection. 97.3% of taxes were collected at the Township in 2021 compared to 96.7% in 2022 for a total increase of 0.6% in delinquencies.
- ➔ As many know, Supervisor Ratkovich submitted her resignation effective May 12, 2023. The Board of Trustees entered a public search for candidates to fulfill this position. Four candidates emerged and submitted letters of interest and references. All candidates were interviewed at a special meeting, Sunday evening May 7th. Candidates included: Regina Hamlett, Jeffrey Marine, Janis Miller and Karen Sikkenga. We thank each person for stepping forward, displaying their talents and submitting their name to help serve our community – it is greatly appreciated.
- ➔ **Recycling film / orange bin in the Dexter Township Townhall** parking lot - what would an “in the loop” be without asking for assistance in continuing this program. Due to illness’s we are down a couple volunteers that help empty the orange bin and transport it to Chelsea High School, (door #4). To volunteer simply drop a note to info@dextertownship.org – we ask that

you commit to one day per week to empty the bin and transport the film over to Chelsea High School – it takes approximately 1.5 hours to complete. We hope you can assist the Township and Chelsea High as they compete in the Trek contest. We do need volunteers to keep this community activity in action.

Are you or your neighbor taking the winter shrink wrap off your boat? Please recycle that ball of plastic - simply drop it off at door #4 at Chelsea High School – help reduce your trash, recycle the plastic and help CHS compete for the win! Please help - spread the word to all the boat owners and storage facilities. Thanks!

→ **Quick update from the Farmland and Open Space Board (FOSP)**– Barry Lonik gave a short presentation at the May 16th meeting to update the activities of the FOSP. The FOSP submitted a draft of their purposed bylaws for its operation. The Twp Board is due to consider at the next Board of Trustee meeting. Additionally, regarding the Monier conservation easement that is currently in process. All due diligence has been completed, the review package was submitted to Washtenaw County Parks on March 21 and an expected approval is due anytime. FOSP is targeting a July 2023 closing date on this property. Additionally, the FOSP board identified 85 landowners as having important farmland and open space properties in February. Four new applications have been received, all for intriguing properties and consideration is being made on two applications. Finally, the federal Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). From which we receive a grant award for the Monier property, recently announced a special application round, due May 26th. FOSP is planning to submit at least three properties and possibly five. Questions? Feel free to contact FOSP chair, Mark Teicher or Trustee Sanders for assistance.

Thank you – have a great month. Should you have any questions, as always please feel free to reach out to any Trustee.