

Dexter Township
August, 2023
“in the loop”

August 2023 – how quick the year passes, and summer flies by Below is the quick update on August activities. Drop a message to us at info@dextertownship.org and let us know what you would like to have an update on or learn more about.

From the Board of Trustee meeting on August 15, 2023 – (full support documents are available on the dextertownship.org website) – below is a simple summary of the highlights:

- **MASTER PLAN draft:** Many residents question how decisions and courses of action are set in place for the Township. Our Master Plan helps guide that direction and decisions for the next 10 years. If you want a say in how the township grows and set priorities, we encourage you to review and supply your thoughts and comments prior to the Board finalizing. NOW IS YOUR TIME TO COMMENT! There is a direct link to review on the dextertownship.org website front page– click on **EXCITING NEWS FOR DEXTER TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS REGARDING PROPOSED MASTER PLAN!** OR COPY AND PASTE [HTTPS://WWW.DEXTERTOWNSHIP.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/DEXTER-TOWNSHIP-MASTER-PLAN-REPORT-DRAFT_2023-07-24.PDF](https://www.dextertownship.org/wp-content/uploads/dexter-township-master-plan-report-draft_2023-07-24.pdf)

Residents can email feedback any time to Supervisor Karen Sikkenga (supervisor@dextertownship.org), Planning Commission Chair Marty Straub (mstraub@dextertownship.org), or the lead planning consultant Rowan Brady (rbrady@bria2.com). **Comments are welcome through September 15th.**

During the August Board of Trustee Mtg (BOT) - A resolution was passed giving the Board of Trustees authority for final Master Plan approval after resident’s comments and the Planning Committee review. PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES AND READ THIS DOCUMENT AND SHARE YOUR COMMENTS – it would be appreciated! And THANK YOU to everyone who has diligently worked through the process of developing our future Master Plan.

- **STRATEGIC PLANNING SCHEDULING** A session to update our strategic plan is scheduled for **Monday, August 26th from 6pm – 8pm**. The public is welcome to join us at Townhall that evening.

2) August 2023 ITL

- **LOCAL ROAD COMMITTEE** – Washtenaw County Road Commission has assigned a staff liaison to our Local Road Committee. To assist the WCRC in attending meetings, meetings will now be held on the **second Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM at Dexter Townhall**. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

- **TAXES** – As a township, there are 3 mandated functions we must perform: running elections, controlling finances and tax collection. The Treasurer’s office presented at our August meeting – how to properly understand your tax bill and where do our tax dollars go. The pie chart displays that approximately 2% of tax dollars collected go to the township for actual operating expenses. Approximately 66% of tax dollars were distributed to various educational institutions: schools (Dexter, Chelsea & Pinckney), Washtenaw Community College and Washtenaw Intermediate Schools. 5% goes to Chelsea & Dexter Libraries and 9% to Police and Fire. The final 13% is to Washtenaw County taxes. (this pie chart was included in the last Township newsletter) Should you have questions about the millages on your tax invoice, call the Treasurers office and they will be glad to assist. Also, as a bit of information, should you pay your tax bill with a credit card – an additional 3% processing fee will be added. Summer taxes are due by September 14th and Winter taxes by Feb 14th.

- **Assessment Administration Overview:** the second presentation of the evening BOT meeting was from Chris Renius, MAAO, MCPPE the Assessor for Dexter Township. The township is mandated to have an assessor, who works under State guidelines and reports to the State and our BOT. Chris has been in our township for approximately 15 years and works one day per week in our offices. He walked through the process of assessing township properties and explained he does mass scale appraisals, not individual properties. Which is the major difference to if you hire an independent appraiser to value your property. Attached is a two page document on Understanding Proposal A in Today’s Market and on the township website you can review his presentation in the August 2023 Board Packet. Chris explained due to the assessing process that assessed property values are usually 2 years behind market value. See the attached document Uncapping Residential Property Taxes Overview for a greater understanding.

- **Dexter Township Personnel Guidelines and Compensation Policy** – Our Supervisor has launched a project to update to our Township Personnel Guidelines and Compensation policies. It has been found these policies have not been updated in over 5 years. Trustee Scott will be taking the first pass on updating personnel guidelines and an HR Consultant, Pat Casady has volunteered to review the documents and compensation policies. We are working on establishing a short-term committee of HR experts and legal to build benchmarks for our policies and compensation. Recommendations will be presented to the Board in upcoming months. Copies of the old personnel guidelines are in the August 2023 Board Packet on the township website.

3) August 2023 ITL

- **MOVIE NIGHT** - Heartfelt thanks to Office Manager Sam Edwards and Trustee Karen Nolte for assisting Trustee Lonnie Scott in planning and executing Dexter Township's first community movie night, held on August 19th. The Master Plan charette was available to review prior to the start of the movie night, with the first 50 attendees receiving a free swag bag. In fact, the poster boards outlining the draft Master Plan are available to review in the townhall lobby. The Local Roads Committee had a table inside to collect feedback on local roads. The food truck, Hillbilly on the Go, was in the parking lot for people to purchase dinner and then enjoy the live music provided by Rich and Kandy, (thank you for entertaining us). Popcorn and sno-cones were available as people watched the outdoor movie, Super Mario Brothers. The evening was beautiful as all enjoyed the festivities. Thank you, Trustee Scott for the great idea and implementing. Looking forward to the next time.

- **COFFEE CHAT HOUR** - mark your calendar – Elections, Elections, Elections will be the topic– please come on **Saturday, September 23rd, 11:00am – noon** – our Clerk will host the event for the public to learn about our upcoming elections. Please join us, also - interested in working the 2024 elections? drop a message to clerk@dextertownship.org.

- **CLEAN UP DAY** – mark your calendars – **Saturday, October 14th from 9am to noon** – we will host our 3rd Clean-Up day in the townhall parking lot. We will be collecting **electronic waste, scrap metal, document shredding, Styrofoam, and old tires**. Collection of the tires is sponsored by Egle (thank you) – suggested donation will be \$5 per car. Questions, please email info@dextertownship.org or knolte@dextertownship.org with your questions or if you wish to join the volunteer group.

4) August 2023 ITL

- **Cemetery Restoration Project** – the work continues and most likely will for the next year or so. If you wish to join our volunteers, we would love to have you. Simply email your contact information to info@dextertownship.org and we will add you to the volunteer email list. This week we hope to start rebuilding some of the fallen/broken headstones at Hudson Mills Cemetery.



Sorry for the picture quality - this is a quick example of improving a headstone after only one washing – (Meet Perry Smith) ... over the next few weeks, this should clear up even more as we scrub a little more and the biological solution takes effect. Hope you can join us on this project and help restore our cemeteries and care for our history.

- **Dexter Township Facebook Page** – our Office Manager, Samantha (Sam) Edwards has reactivated our Township FB page – please follow and learn additional information through out the month. Recently, she just make a post regarding rain gardens. Another way to stay in the know on what is happening in our community. Thank you Sam!
- **Volunteers** – we sure could use your talents. Looking for ways to become involved? We have openings on Boards and Committees, or if you are interested in keeping the recycling film project afloat with CHS, we can always use another pair of hands, even as an occasional backup person. As mentioned above the Cemetery Project can use additional hands. If you wish to get involved, let us know. (Thank you to Alecia Abbott for becoming the backup person to record BOT meetings.) It really takes a village to run a township and move it forward. 😊 Please join in our efforts!
- **MASKS** – if you need KN95 face masks – stop by Townhall and pick up 10 or so, free of charge.

DEXTER TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR REPORT HIGHLIGHTS from Karen Sikkenga

PLANNING AND ZONING PERSONNEL The Township received three proposals for Planning Services: Carlisle Wortman, McKenna and Quantify. The selection committee of Planning Commission Chair Marty Straub, Planning Commission Trustee representative Maris Metz, and Supervisor Karen Sikkenga is scheduled to interview the three firms between August 8 and August 23 2023, and will have a recommendation for the preferred vendor at the September 2023 meeting. In the meantime, planning and zoning Dexter Township Supervisor Report 2 | Page services have been provided by a combination of OHM Advisors and Adriana Jordan. The Township is fully caught up on all planning and zoning matters, and OHM and Ms. Jordan are retaining a list of changes to the Zoning

Ordinance for our consideration based on their work. The Township received six applications for the Zoning Enforcement Officer position. The hiring committee consists of Office Manager Sam Edwards, Clerk Stamboullelis and Supervisor Sikkenga. We have also invited a representative of the Sheriff's Department to participate on the hiring committee. We plan to interview the three most qualified candidates and check references. The Executive Committee has the authority to make a hiring decision and will report back to the Board of Trustees on status of the hiring in September.

OFFICE REDESIGN We received a formal bid from Dexter-based interior design company Proven for the office remodel. The remodel includes minor reconfiguration of the office spaces to create locked election storage, as well as repainting, new lighting, durable hardwood-look floors, and kitchen reconfiguration. The bid is within the \$50K budget allocation excluding new floors in the public meeting room. New floors in the public meeting room would add \$18K and require a budget amendment. We are seeking another bid at this time and will have a recommendation at the September meeting.

BUDGET Overall, Dexter Township is on track to collect the forecasted revenue and for overall expenditures not to exceed approved amounts in FY24. July 31 marks the end of the fourth month, with 33% of the year elapsed. As expected, General Fund revenue will be less than 33% at this point. We collect State Share revenue early in the year, and property tax revenue after December, so most of our revenues come in closer to year-end (note that the Telecom Act error distorts the revenue picture in the attached report).

Overall, General Fund expenditures are at 20%; I expect us to be slightly underspent at year-end unless we approve supplemental appropriations. This is mostly due to overbudgeting (i.e., budgeting more than we expect to spend), a standard practice in the township dating back many years, especially in variable cost items such as per diems. A single large unpaid expense (\$145K for roads) is still to come. (See the annotated budget variance report for detailed notes.)

6) August 2023 ITL

Elections (Dept 216) The BOT allocated \$6K for election expenses this year, against which \$0 has been expended because no elections have yet occurred. The first expense against this department will occur prior to the next BOT meeting, for an informational postcard to Dexter Township voters. I anticipate we will request a supplemental appropriation in the fall to support added costs for elections in FY24, because:

- The Michigan primary may move to February 2024, within the current fiscal year. Under the prior schedule, the primary would occur in August FY 24.
- Proposition 2, approved by the Michigan electorate in 2022, will have added costs:
 - o Prop 2 provided that Michigan voters are entitled to nine days of early in-person voting. Washtenaw County has identified five locations for this early in-person voting. Dexter Township voters will vote in the City of Chelsea. Dexter Township will contribute to the cost of this effort, which will also drive costs.
 - o All election workers will need additional training to understand changes resulting from Proposition 2.

The extent to which State of Michigan funds will be available to offset these costs is not yet known.

UPCOMING BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETINGS Reminder that the focus of our upcoming meetings are:

- Between August and September regular meetings: special meeting on strategic planning
- September: operational policies & procedures; Board of Trustees by-laws
- October (tentative): public safety including Police and Fire millages; formal compensation policy
- November: Master Plan final approval (tentative)
- December: first budget hearing

That's this month's summary – as always if you have questions or comments, drop us a line – we would love to hear from you. Have a great month!