

OCTOBER 2023, “in the loop” – sent on Oct 21, 2023

Fall has arrived, and with that comes the annual **Dexter Township Clean Up Day** event. It was a rainy wet day, but we are happy to report collecting our largest amount of donations to date and handling over 200 vehicles in the 3-hour event. **THANK YOU** to the 24 volunteers, who worked through the rain and helped to create a successful morning, never allowing us to become overwhelmed. And thank you for all our residents who participated in clearing their environments of electric waste, documents for shredding, styrofoam, old tires, and scrap metal. We filled trailers and are happy to keep these items out of the landfills. We will report numbers/volume of materials collected as they become available over the next couple weeks. Thanks again everyone!





Highlights from the Board of Trustee (BOT) October 17th Meeting: (full video recordings are available at dextertownship.org website – below is a brief summary of major activities/topics)

- Approval was given to the **Farmland and Open Space Board** to expend up to \$31K for the purchase of development rights. This property features idle fields, wetlands and mature woods and is part of a block of contiguous natural land near 200 acres in our Township. The FOSP Board continues to review properties and submit for financial consideration. A request for ½ of this amount will be made to Washtenaw County Natural Preservation Program. If accepted, Dexter Twp would only have an expenditure of \$15.5K, will within budgeted funds. Questions on FOSP can be directed to Trustee Sanders or Trustee Driskell, who currently sit on this board.

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- The Board approved a revised and updated **Board of Trustees board rules**. These define and outline: guidance of schedules, attendance, agendas, conduct, recordkeeping, standing committees, motions & resolutions, nepotism, voting and parliamentary authority. This will also allow future participation of residents via Zoom. Work is in process in our main meeting room to make this option available hopefully by the end of the year. Board members will only be allowed to vote in person not via Zoom.
- Additionally, Trustee Scott and our township attorneys have reviewed our **Personnel Policy** – The policy had not been updated in years and required revisions. The Board approved the new document (available in the Board Packet). Work continues on health care plan selection and will be discussed in the 2025 budget workshops, starting in December.
- Our Clerk gained approval by the Board to participate in shared staffing for **early voting**. Proposition 2, approved by voters in Nov. 2022, provides that voters have the option to vote in person for nine days in advance of each election, and that the voter will be able to vote and tabulate their own ballot immediately. The provision requires local governments to staff a precinct with a vote tallying machine for nine days. Washtenaw County is coordinating in person voting to reduce the administrative burden and cost of Prop 2. Dexter Township would provide financial support for the shared in person voting, which will be located proximal to Dexter Township (most likely Sylvan Township). This shared staffing arrangement will significantly reduce our Township’s financial and operational burden for early in person voting. Another **Elections, Elections, Elections informative coffee hour will be held on November 18th at 11:00am at Dexter Townhall**. Interested in working as an election worker or becoming more aware of the election process, come to this event and learn.
- Discussion and approval for the Supervisor to **engage Proven Design Studio** to address the updating of the first floor of our Townhall. Redesign of the space is being explored to make for more functionality and storage, especially locked storage for election materials. Paint, new carpet are all being discussed. We anticipated this project when developing our 2023-24 budget and have the funds within this year’s budget to cover costs.
- Discussion was had on the Township’s maintenance for buildings we own. To correctly develop a **capital expense budget**, it would be helpful to have an inventory of our facilities: including age of A/C units, furnaces, generators, roofs, parking lot maintenance, etc. and develop a yearly maintenance schedule. This work will continue to assist us in developing the 2024-25 capital expense budget. It would also be helpful to find a “handy man” to assist with smaller projects. We would like to find a local person who maybe able to assist.

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- The final topic of the evening gathering data set to provide information on our Fire and Police Funds. The current police and fire milage expire at the end of 2023. General law townships are permitted, but not required, to provide funding for public safety. Fire protection is a top priority permissive function: if we do not fund fire services, no other entity is mandated to provide fire protection to our residents. If no funding for police services is provided, the Michigan State Police will provide law enforcement to the township, but the type and level of service would be much different. The Board of Trustees will have policy decisions to make as follows:
 - Should we continue to maintain separate funds for fire and police services, or combine these into a single public safety fund?
 - Should we use a Special Assessment District or a millage?
 - What time period should we establish for the funding mechanism?
 - What should the revenue target be?

Additional information is included in the October 17th BOT packet (available on the township website) for your review, pages 90-101.

Dexter Township Supervisor (Karen Sikkenga) Report October 17, 2023

- Homework Assignment for Board Members I will be reaching out to each member of the Board of Trustees prior to our November 2023 BOT meeting to schedule a 1:1 discussion. Topics will be: (1) any FY25 budget requests for any projects or committee/board on which you serve; (2) your preferences for committee/board appointments next year; and (3) anything else you wish to share.
- Michigan Township Association Annual Conference Save the date! The MTA annual conference will take place April 22-24, 2024. I hope that every member of the board will be able to attend, as well as staff members. Funding for this is included in our current year budget. Please place a hold on your calendar for these dates.

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- **FY24 Budget Status Revenues Overall, Dexter Township is on track.** September 30 marks the end of the sixth month, with 50 % of the year elapsed. I have added a new column to the Revenues and Expenditures report: “Year-End Forecast.” The year-end forecast would typically be double our year-to-date this month. I updated the forecast to reflect revenue and expenditure patterns such as the fact that property taxes come in only once a year. I have also added lines at the end of the General Fund report: Beginning Fund Balance, Base Operating Costs, Capital Expenses, Base Operating Surplus, and End Fund Balance. The base operating surplus of \$198K is the amount we have available to deploy for highest and best purpose on an ongoing basis in the township. It can be used either to add base costs (such as a township manager), or to fund capital expenses (such as establishing an annual budget for road repairs). Next month, I will add beginning and ending fund balances to the other funds (fire, police, open space, ARPA).
- **FY25 Budget** We will hold our first FY25 budget workshop in December 2024. At the November meeting, we will have a discussion item for the FY25 budget. I will be proposing to simplify the budget structure in compliance with GFOA best practices. I will also be proposing that we create a Capital Improvement Fund, with any capital improvement costs budgeted within that fund.
- **Committees and Boards** Several committees and boards have terms expiring in December of this year. Members of the Board of Trustees have shared preferences to join or be removed from various committees. Please review this list and come to our 1:1 meeting prepared to discuss your priorities and preferences for board/committee service. I would also like to see regular committee reports from board member every month. We will be discussing the topic of committee reports at our November meeting.
- **Staffing: Planning, Zoning, and Clerical** The planning consultant and Zoning Officer started on October 2, 2023. Ashley Cepeda, our zoning officer, will be staffing the Zoning Board of Appeals. Our planning consultant Megan Mintock will be staffing our Planning Commission and Farmland & Open Space Board (as needed), and will attend Board of Trustees meetings whenever a planning issue is presented. Note that the issue of the blighted house that was brought forward by members of the public at the last board meeting has been resolved. The house was demolished and construction waste removed from the site. In general, we receive zoning complaints routinely.

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We will be working with our planning & zoning team to develop relevant reporting to the Board of Trustees on these topics. Our regular walk-in hours for zoning permits will be Tuesdays and Thursdays 10-3. When Ashley is absent, Carlisle Wortman will provide a back-up planner. Our new clerical assistant, Michelle Feazel, began yesterday, October 16. Michelle brings extensive experience as a receptionist in a busy medical practice, where she was also responsible for accurate transaction processing. Michelle will be answering our phones and serving walk-in residents. She will process property tax payments, voter registrations, and other transactions. During down times, she will continue our file digitization project. Our goal with file digitization is to be able to provide on-line access to property records, while also freeing up office space.

- VC3 - I met with a representative of VC3 to discuss our concerns with their service levels. Their representative is requesting permission to host a one-day (8 hour) help session on site, to be kicked off with an overview of their services. They will also be providing a simple PDF overview of what to do when a user has a tech problem. Our Office Manager is initiating a competitive bid process to identify the best IT contractor to meet Dexter Township’s needs. She has identified four potential contractors in addition to VC3 from whom to invite bids.
- Upcoming Board of Trustees Meetings Reminder that the focus of our upcoming meetings are:
 - November: Public safety including Police and Fire millages decisions; approval of construction contractor for Town Hall improvements; preliminary discussion about FY25 budget.
 - December: First budget workshop; Master Plan final approval (tentative)
 - January: Second budget workshop; first budget hearing
 - February: Second budget hearing; budget approval

Planning/Zoning Duties and Responsibilities		
OHM- Rachel Jackson rachel.jackson@ohm-advisors.com 734.522.6711	Carlisle/Wortman- Megan Masson-Minock mmasson-minock@cwaplan.com 734.662.2200	Dexter Township Zoning Officer- Ashley Cepeda zoningofficer@dextertownship.org 734.726.4663
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater reviews • Ensuring compliance of site plans • Engineering review of site plans • Support development agreements • Questions regarding lot line adjustments and lot splits • Support on driveways and private roads • Support Township Attorney in development agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commission attendance and packets • Oversee Zoning Ordinance changes and text amendments • Site plan approval for major developments • Support Township Attorney in development agreements • Back up permit processing • Back up ZBA packets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZBA attendance and packets • Zoning enforcement • Intake and processing of major and minor zoning permits • Intake and initial zoning review on lot line adjustments and lot splits • Advise and assist on Zoning Ordinance changes • Coordinate with DAFD and OHM for shared driveways and private roads • Back up Planning Commission packets

This is a reference tool for residents to utilize to reach the proper person to have your Planning and Zoning questions answered.

BROADBAND UPDATE: recently a short update on Spectrum starting work in our Township was posted. We realize the website cited in that update will NOT function for parcels denoted under bid by Mercury. We are working with the companies to develop more efficient methods to update installation timelines, how to connect once a cable is laid on your road. Stay tuned, this is a large project and has hurdles - our first notification was to mention Spectrum has begun work in our township. No short feat after chasing this for the last few years. We will release information as it continues to evolve. Thank you for your patience.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR – mark your calendars to join

- November 18, 2023 11am at Dexter Twp Townhall – coffee chat: **Elections, Elections, Elections** is the topic – please join to learn more
- November 28, 2023 6pm at Dexter Twp Townhall – **Master Plan public hearing** – we would like to have your feedback on the final draft of the Master Plan prior to the regular Planning Commission Meeting – Please join
- December TBD (Date to be determined) – **Staff and Volunteer Appreciation** Event – date/time will be announced very soon
- January 9, 2024 5pm – **Coffee with the Trustees** – purpose is to hear and respond to the community with questions and concerns, Trustee Scott will be leading this event
- April 21, 2024 4pm – **Coffee with the Trustees** – purpose is to hear and respond to the community with questions and concerns, Trustee Scott will be leading this event
- May 27, 2024 - **Memorial Day Parade in Dexter** – Trustee Scott will lead
- June 16, 2024 - **Coffee with the Trustees** – purpose is to hear and respond to the community with questions and concerns
- August 24, 2024 – **Community Movie Night** at Dexter Town Hall
- October, 2024 – **Annual Clean Up Day** – exact date to be determined

Additionally possible events: Dexter Bicentennial and Spring Clean Up

- We would like to build a list of HOA's in our Township – if your neighborhood has a HOA or Lake Association and you would be open to sharing the primary contact information, please email info@dextertownship.org. This information will be kept for township use only, and used when we have information to share, specific to your neighborhood or important timely issues for all Township residents.

The cemetery project continues, in the first picture we have the headstone



reattached (via epoxy) and standing six feet tall— however, note the lean – little more work to level build that base – learning as we proceed.

(Thank you, Treasurer Metz for stopping by and documenting our work – we forget when we are working and then lament on not having before and after pictures and thanks to Dave Clark, Brenda Donaldson and Jim & Judy Quinlan for working with us on this day)



Here we found three pieces, after cleaning off all the mold, we discovered they fit together!

We cleaned and reset the base, then we were able to set the middle section. Regretfully, we did not have enough manpower that day to lift and epoxy the third section into place – it awaits.



We are seeking strength! We can work 1 to 2 hours at a time, and we have approximately 10 heavy stones to place.

If you have a bit of time where you can assist – we would love to hear from you. Please drop a message to info@dextertownship.org

Also, if you like solving puzzles, we could also use someone to cross match names and try to figure out where some headstones need to be placed. We have uncovered many stones, either found in the woods or unburied from years of lying in the dirt. These need to be identified, if possible, matched to the main list we have and determined a location where they can be placed.

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Above is a partial summary of activities and happenings in our Township. Future topics include:

- ❖ Single/preferred hauler discussions for trash service in our township
- ❖ 2024-25 budget development
- ❖ Update on the hill cut down on North Territorial near Dexter
Townhall
- ❖ MLWSA – what’s happening at our sewer authority
- ❖ What’s the road committee up to?

Stay tuned and “in the loop” – as always if you wish to volunteer, or interested in joining as a board member, or have concerns, drop an email to an individual Trustee or back to this email address (info@dextertownship.org). We love to hear from you.