



September 2024 – “In the Loop” Township Update

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**DEXTER TOWNSHIP
CLEAN UP DAY**

Saturday, October 26, 2024
9am to Noon

Accepted:

Scrap Metal

- Refrigerators
- Stoves/Ovens
- Car Batteries
- A/C Units
- Lawn Equipment
- Washers/Dryers

Electronic Waste

- Computers
- Cell Phones
- Printers
- Televisions

Tires

- Maximum of 6 tires per car (must be off wheel rims)
Tire disposal partly funded by the EGLE Scrap Tire Cleanup Grant

Styrofoam

Suggested donation of \$5 per vehicle

For additional information, or to volunteer, email info@dextertownship.org

Not Accepted:

- Household Trash
- Toxic Materials
- Construction Waste
- Glass
- Cardboard
- Plastic

Document shredding also available!

Dexter Townhall Parking Lot

HURON RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

FALL RIVER ROUNDUP

Saturday October 12th

Join a small team of your friends, family, and other volunteers to collect bugs from streams across the watershed! Children are welcome to attend with an adult.

Ready to sign up? Sign up for the 9am-1pm or the 10:30- 2:30pm shift - Click on the attached file to see the link to join.

Dexter Township Supervisor Report

September 17, 2024

ITC Transmission Line Upgrade

ITC Michigan plans to “reconductor” 32 miles of transmission lines in Wayne County and Washtenaw County. “Reconductor” refers to replacing existing lines with upgraded lines. For this project, ITC intends to perform all reconductoring by helicopter. Approximately 8 miles of this project are in Dexter Township, where the project area includes the large power lines to the east of the Majestic Substation located on Madden Road.

This work should not result in any service outages, road closures, or trail closures. However, Dexter Township recognizes that helicopter noise is undesirable and can be disruptive. In an effort to complete this work as quickly as possible while respecting the need for regular pauses, the working hours are restricted to 7 am – 7 pm, Monday – Saturday, with no work on Sunday or holidays. ITC plans to begin work in Dexter Township on December 13th, 2024 and conclude on January 31, 2025. An overview of the project can be found on ITC’s website here:

<https://www.mifuturegrid.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Majestic-Wayne-project-profile-FINAL080823.pdf>

Fall Clean-Up Date

Dexter Township’s annual fall cleanup day will be on Saturday, October 26th from 9:00am to noon at Dexter Town Hall, 6880 Dexter-Pinckney Road. Vendors are on deck for scrap metal, shredding, electronic waste, and tires. No bulk items (such as mattresses), however, large metal items like refrigerators and washers/dryers are welcome as scrap metal. If you are interested in volunteering at clean-up day, please contact info@dextertownship.org.

Annual Financial Audit

Rana Emmons, CPA, of PSLZ LLC, conducted our financial audit in July 2024. Rana will be attending our October 2024 meeting to present the audit results.

Short-Term Rentals

A Dexter Township property owner has submitted a request to have the Planning Commission consider a change to the Zoning Ordinance pursuant to short-term rentals. Currently, short-term rentals (such as AirBnb) are prohibited in the Township except for bed & breakfasts (where the property owner resides under the same roof as the guests). The resident requests that Dexter Township adopt an ordinance similar to Hamburg Township’s. This request will be considered by the Planning Commission at its October 22 meeting (the week following the regular BOT meeting).

Planning and Zoning Permit Fee Review

I will be reviewing our Planning and Zoning Permit Fee Schedule and reporting on my findings at the October meeting. The Board approves the fee schedule annually as part of the budget approval process. A common sense review of the fees is in order as we are cleaning up our Zoning Ordinance

Clerk Stambouellis Elections Report

August 6, 2024 Primary Election:

The Dexter Township August 6, 2024 Primary Election was successfully certified by Washtenaw County and the Board of Canvassers August 26, 2024.

Below is a step-by-step preparation process required to run a successful election:

- 1. Ballots:** The Election Commission Committee (Clerk, Supervisor, Treasurer) is tasked with proof reading the Election Ballot for clarity. After the Clerk has confirmed accuracy, the Clerk is then responsible for mass ordering of all Absentee Voter Ballots and Election Day Voter Ballots needed to perform the election.
- 2. AVCB Plans:** It is the Clerk's responsibility to inform the County where the Absentee Voter Counting Board will perform the task of processing / tabulating the Absentee Voter Ballots. The Dexter Township Counting Board is always located at the Township Hall and we begin the process on Election Day.
- 3. Training for Clerks and Election Inspectors:** The County hosts mandatory training for all workers involved in the Election Process. The training is offered through an interactive online training, and upon completion of your training the workers receive a Certification of Completion. The training must be completed by all who serve in the Election Process.
- 4. Military Ballots / Overseas Ballots:** All uniformed services or overseas civilians who applied for an absentee voter ballot are sent their ballots either by email or mail 45 days prior to the election.
- 5. Non-Military Ballots / Absentee Voter Ballots:** Absentee Voter Ballots must be available to all voters whom prefer to vote absentee 40 days prior to the election either by mail or in person.
- 6. Publication Notices:** The Clerk is required to Publish Notice of Voter Registration and Notice of Election for any upcoming election (in a local printed paper).
- 7. Public Accuracy Testing:** Public and Accuracy Testing is conducted to give the community the opportunity to see how the Tabulation Process works for both the Absentee Counting Board along with Election Day. The Clerk's office must publish (in a printed local paper) 48 hours in advance with the date and time the Public Logic and Accuracy Testing will be performed.
- 8. Early 9-Day Voting / Voting Day:** 9-day early voting runs the Saturday – Sunday before election day (hosted at Sylvan Township), with Election Day the following Tuesday

Election Workers and Chairs:

Dexter Township is fortunate to have many wonderful individuals who serve as Election Chairs, Workers and Volunteers. Their service is imperative for the elections to be a success. Washtenaw County along with Dexter Township provide our workers with the skills and training they need to be confident while serving our Democratic Process. If anyone would like to sign up to be an Election Worker, we are always accepting applications.

Voting Statistics:

There are 5,887 registered voters in Dexter Township.

9-Day-Early Voting Turnout – Dexter Township had 27 residents who participated with 9-day early voting at the Sylvan Township location.

Military / Overseas Turnout – Dexter Township has a total of 13 residents who are Military or out of country.

Absentee Voter Ballots – Dexter Township sent out a total of 1,769 ballots and received a total of 1,328 ballots were received back and tabulated.

In Person Election Day Totals – Precinct #1 there were 280 walk in voters, Precinct #2 there were 172 walk in voters and Precinct #3 there were 120 walk in voters which equaled a total of 572 in person voters

Voting Turnout Totals The number of voters who voted in Dexter Township was 33.65%.

Don't forget to check out the Planning and Zoning Department Report

Page 60-66 of the Board of Trustees Packet – online under the Boards and Committees, Township Board

Farmland and Open Space Preservation Board (FOSPB) Update – submitted by Trustee Laura Sanders with contribution by Barry Lonik

The Dexter Township land preservation program is actively working on conserving four properties for which grant awards from federal and/or State sources have been made. Five other properties have been submitted for matching funds. These properties range from 40-100 acres and feature prime agricultural soils, high quality natural areas (woods, wetlands and streams) and magnificent scenic views from public roads among other attributes.

One of the key lessons for FOSPB members is how long it takes to complete a conservation easement purchase. Dexter Township is very fortunate to have one of only 12 dedicated millages for land preservation in Michigan. The township millage generates about \$220,000 a year but with development rights valued at over \$6,000/acre, it is essential for our funds to be matched with others. The federal and State awards received collectively total over \$1.4 million but cover less than half of the purchase price for each easement. Our task is to attract the other half plus, with as little of our millage spent as possible so we have funds for the next set of projects.

Every funding agency also has to review a number of documents (boundary survey, Phase I environmental site assessment, development rights appraisal, conservation easement and many more) which is not a quick process. It is not unusual for projects to take two years from time of application to closing. For the projects which have grant awards, we anticipate closing at least a couple in 2025.

A Few Highlights from the Board of Trustee September 17, 2024 Meeting (Full packet is online at dextertownship.org or live stream is available to view)

- The Board approved the Supervisor to enter into a second agreement with the Road Commission this year to authorize work on the forestry on Wylie Road, Dexter Pinckney Rd to Island Lake Road and work on Quigley Rd, Dexter Townhall Rd to Brand Rd, to include drainage improvements, heavy brushing, shaping the existing surface and application of approximately 2,800 tons of gravel. Estimated cost is \$100,000 dollars. Previous work under this year's budget came in approximately \$70,000 under budget, the additional \$30,000 was budgeted but not allocated, allowing for this work to be accomplished. Additionally, have the WCRC complete the forestry work in the fall is healthier and safer for the trees in the work zone. This continues the commitment to bring local connector roads up to "good" condition by completion of our 2025 budget calendar.
- **Renewable Energy Focus Continues** – On June 17, 2024, the Township hosted a Renewable Energy Open House, with 36 participants. The majority of those who voted on choices for big renewable energy systems (i.e., those that fall under P.A. 233) wanted the Township to retain local control and go beyond what is specified in P.A. 233. The top priorities of those who voted were decommissioning, screening/landscaping, and location/setbacks.

At their July and August meetings, the Planning Commission has reviewed the report from the Renewable Energy Open House, the MPSC draft application, example or model ordinances for each of the renewable energy facility types, and resources from the Michigan Townships Association (MTA), Michigan State Extension (MSUE) and the University of Michigan Graham Sustainability Institute. They asked for CWA to draft zoning ordinance amendments based on the model language from the MTA and Graham Institute, identifying when the model language does not meet the priorities of the Township. The schedule for review and adoption of zoning ordinance language to comply with P.A. 233 is:

- September 16th – Special Planning meeting for discussion of draft language
 - September 24th, Tuesday – Regular Planning Commission meeting – to finalize draft language for public hearing
 - October 22th, - Regular Planning Commission meeting – will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Township Board
 - November 19th, Township Board review and possible approval of zoning ordinance amendments
 - November 29th, effective date of PA 233 or 2023
- The Planning and Zoning departments continue their review and update of zoning ordinances – this month the Board of Trustees passed two updates based on their recommendation:
 - Amended relevant portions of Article 16, Section 16.11 to delete specific provision for accessory buildings 200 sq ft or less on (1) one acre lots and
 - Amended relevant portions of Article 16, Section 16.17 to cross reference the access restriction on hot tubs and pools slowed under the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code
- *** (full details are in the Board Packet of September 17, 2024 for full review)

Budget & Finance Status Report Overview Overall – submitted by Supervisor Sikkenga

Overall, we are on track, with 42% of the year elapsed and 19% of revenue collected and 22.5% expended in the General Fund. The capital fund transfer has occurred. General Fund operating expenses will likely continue to run low because we will not fully use the Project Coordinator or Deputy Treasurer budget line until mid-year at the earliest. Property tax revenues are collected beginning in CY2025 and so revenues run short of plan until tax collection begins.

Comments on budget variances – expected burn rate at four months = 42%:

- \$9,395 was paid to AmeriScan under General Government – Contractual Services. The file digitization project (total cost ~\$30K) was budgeted in FY24 but \$14K will be expended in FY25, including the additional \$5K authorized by the Board of Trustees at the August 2024 meeting. The unexpended FY24 budget allocation was not carried forward. However, I did not request a budget amendment because I am forecasting that we will be underexpended in General Government due to unfilled staff positions. Our overall burn rate for General Government is 29% with 42% of the year elapsed, including this one-time expense of \$9,395 in Contractual Services
- Election expenses have been fully booked except for Election Workers, which the Clerk forecasts will cost less than \$7K (50% of budget). The Clerk will be requesting reimbursement for a portion of these costs and the BOT should see an unbudgeted revenue line for Elections in the next couple months. There are planned to be two elections during FY25
- Under Building & Grounds, our budget for Maintenance is \$25K and \$19K has been spent to date (79%). Expenses in this line item have been well below \$25K over the last five years, but pent-up demand for maintenance work is driving higher costs this year. This month, we expended \$4,240 to replace the water heater at Fire Station 2. This year, we also remediated mold at Dexter Town Hall (\$5,865) and repaired Fire Station 2's generator (\$2,190). The Building & Grounds budget may need to be increased depending on maintenance needs for the rest of the year
- Under Planning & Zoning, our overall burn rate is 52%. We have been using our Planning Consultant to perform the Zoning Administration functions, which costs more than using staff for this purpose. The Planning Consultant contract is at 61%. We have hired a term-limited Zoning Administrator to perform this function and I hope the budget will normalize before year-end
- Postage rates have increased and we expect to spend more than planned for postage this year. The FY26 budget should increase the allocation for postage to reflect this increase in real costs
- Printing and Publishing costs are higher than budgeted in every department (General Government, Elections, and Planning & Zoning). Dexter Township is unusual in printing the entire agenda for our meetings, which exceeds the OMA requirements and is expensive

Enjoy the Fall Season and Thank you for reading our “in the loop” monthly email updates –

As always should you have questions or comments, please reach out to any of the 7 Board of Trustee members or email info@dextertownship.org and we will direct your question to the proper person for answering.