

Township Newsletter

WINTER 2018



Development in Grand Blanc Township will be getting some significant help from the recent formation of a new organization known as the Grand Blanc Township Downtown Development Authority. The name of this organization may create some confusion, since Grand Blanc Township does not *have* a downtown area. The name of the organization (DDA or Downtown Development Authority) comes from a State Statute that dictates the types of activities that can be performed, and assistance provided to promote development.

The Grand Blanc DDA will allow several efforts to take place once it is fully implemented and operational. The area designated as our DDA District can be viewed on a map at our Township offices; it is in the vicinity of Baldwin and Holly Roads. The first of several hurdles has been cleared that will allow the newly formed DDA to capture any increase in taxes due to new development. Those taxes that would normally go to a variety of taxing agencies will instead go to the DDA Board. The DDA will then use those funds to improve the area and provide incentive for development in the designated district. The DDA Board was recently nominated by me, as Township Supervisor, and approved by the Township Board. The following individuals will serve on the DDA Board: Bob Brundle, CEO, Brightway Insurance; Winfield Cooper, CEO, Cooper Commercial; Joy Finkenbinder, COO, Ascension Genesys Health System; Jeff Gary, General Manager, Magna Electronics; Nick George, CEO, George Properties; Doug King, CEO, King Steel Corporation; Dave Steiner, Owner, Steiner Tractor Inc.; Jim Tubbs, Developer/ Property Development; and myself, Grand Blanc Township Supervisor.

Streets and roads are a top concern for everyone in Michigan. **Please remember that the Genesee County Road Commission has FULL responsibility for the funding, patching, maintaining and rebuilding of all public streets, bridges and roads in our Township.** Several major State-funded road projects are in the planning stages and will begin in the Spring of 2019. These include the rebuilding of Hill Road between Fenton Road and Dort Highway, and the Dort Highway extension between Grand Blanc Road and Baldwin Road. Apart from these two State-funded road projects, the Genesee County Road Commission is substantially increasing the allocation for Grand Blanc Township from \$65,000 to \$185,000 for 2019. However, **the Road Commission has made it a requirement that in order to accept these funds, Grand Blanc Township must match—dollar for dollar—the amount being designated.** We are therefore reallocating \$185,000 in funds from other departments to meet these matching criteria. This will provide a total of \$370,000 in road funds for the year 2019. Keep in mind that a *new* road costs approximately \$1 million per single lane mile to build. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Genesee County Road Commission at 810-767-4920.

Taxes are not something most people enjoy paying. However, it is important for you to know that Grand Blanc Township operates on just 17% of the overall property taxes that residents and businesses pay annually. These funds pay for your Township government, local police, fire, elections, property tax assessing, contributions to the Genesee County Road Commission, building department, code enforcement, Parks & Recreation, snow plowing, etc.

Please feel free to contact me anytime I can be of assistance.

Scott Bennett, Supervisor

bennett@twp.grand-blanc.mi.us

Ph: 810-424-2664

Police Department: Chief Ron Wiles

The Police Department would like to thank the residents of our community for their continued support and diligence in preventing crime by securing your homes and vehicles. Many crimes of opportunity can be avoided when simple measures are taken to protect your belongings. Residents need to remember, "Lock It Or Lose It" and always lock your vehicle and home when unattended.

Our 2nd annual Citizens' Police Academy is in full swing and the participants are having a blast! The 11-week Academy offers an inside look of the Police Department and explains the "how" and "why" the men and women of your Police Department provide the superior level of service you deserve. Recently, the participants experienced how traffic stops are conducted, de-escalation techniques, a police K-9 demonstration, handcuffing, TASER demonstration, inside a homicide investigation, an introduction to CPR/First Aid/AED, and there is still much more to come! If you are interested in participating in next year's academy, please keep an eye on the department's Facebook page and the NextDoor app around the summer of 2019 for announcements and how you can apply.

The "NextDoor app" continues to be a huge success, its being used by over 5,500 residents of Grand Blanc Township. Using the app, the members of your specific neighborhood can communicate with each other about strange vehicles in the area, lost dogs, or even hosting a cookout. Becoming a member of this FREE service, allows each resident to receive alerts and messages from the Police Department directly to your smart phone. This also allows you to ask questions and report non-emergency activity directly to us!

Winter driving is almost upon us! Always be alert to weather conditions and road reports from news outlets. Be cautious, pay attention and watch your speed. Here are some safety tips recommended by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- SLOW DOWN! The roads may look safe, but ice and blowing snow can be extremely hazardous without notice. Always follow at a safe distance and increase that distance in poor driving conditions. Leaving earlier will also help avoid the need to rush.
- Wear your seatbelts! Always secure your seatbelt and ensure those in your car are buckled as well. Use booster seats and child restraints when required.
- Get your car serviced! Check the battery and get that routine maintenance you know you have been avoiding.
- Know your car! Practice driving on snow/ice in a controlled area to know how your vehicle will handle.
- Clean off snow & ice! Clear off all snow and ice around headlights, taillights and on ALL of your windows.
- Stock your vehicle! Keep blankets, ice scrapers, a charged cell phone, jumper cables, flash light and traffic warning devices (flares, etc) handy at all times. It's also wise to keep your gas tank close to full.
- Don't go if you don't have to! If the weather conditions are poor and you are planning to travel, if possible, wait for the conditions to improve.
- Avoid risky behaviors! Texting, driving under the influence of drug or alcohol can severely affect your ability to drive safely. Always drive sober and undistracted.

It is our belief that a strong community will seek out opportunities to keep their area free of crime and build partnerships with their neighbors. We strongly urge all residents to communicate with each other and report any suspicious activity to the Police by calling 911 or, our 24-hour Police Dispatch Center at (810) 424-2611.

DPW – Water & Sewer: Jeff Sears, Director

UTILITY BILLS

We have received numerous complaints regarding water bills being delivered to the Township much later than mailed or not arriving at all. Please know that the Township has no control over mail delivery and failure to receive your bill or your check getting lost, does not waive penalties.

Signing up for ACH payments will allow you to avoid writing that check every quarter and risk it getting lost in the mail. You will still receive a paper bill each cycle so you will know the amount. Your payment will be automatically

deducted from your checking account on the due date. ACH puts the burden on the Township! Enrollment forms are available on our website or at the township hall.

ACH is not the same as using electronic bill pay through your financial institution. We also receive continual complaints when utility accounts are assessed late fees because there is a lag between financial institutions processing payments and the payment actually being received by our office. Once again, penalties cannot be waived in these situations, as we cannot post your payment until we physically receive the check.

SNOW REMOVAL

It's that four-letter word that many are not excited to hear, SNOW! Please remember these facts about Township Snow Removal:

- The Township will not plow unless there is 4" of accumulation during one event.
- The Township may not plow on weekends unless a large accumulation is expected.
- PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE ROAD WHEN SNOW IS EXPECTED!
- It always seems to snow on garbage day. Do not put your cans in the road. Leave them in your driveway. Emterra will still pick up your refuse.
- Our goal is to clear the roadway. Please have a plan in place to have the end of your driveway cleared of any snow after the plow trucks come through. We cannot clear driveways.
- Salt does not work in frigid temperatures so roads may stay icy if temps remain under 15 degrees for any period of time.
- Plow trucks do not hit mailboxes. Heavy snow coming off the blades is what generally does damage. Check your mailbox post before winter to make sure it can withstand the plowing season.
- If you live in a neighborhood and your mailbox suffers damage from our plows, please report it to the DPW and we will make the repairs. If you live on a main road, your street is plowed by the Genesee County Road Commission and you will need to report any damage to them at (810) 767-4920.
- Our staff works very hard in dangerous conditions. Please be courteous to our technicians and office staff, they are here to help keep our neighborhoods safe and clear of snow and ice.

Treasurer's Office: Earl Guzak, Treasurer

- Enclosed you will find your **2018 Winter Tax Bill**. The due date is **February 14, 2019**. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Deputy Treasurer, Nancy Stilson by phone or email, Guzak@twp.grand-blanc.mi.us or Stilson@twp.grand-blanc.mi.us **Phone: 810-424-2600**
- Our Township has a website where you can obtain forms, tax information, water / sewer information, departmental contacts, etc. (www.twp.grand-blanc.mi.us)
- We have a drop box for your payments located right next to the post office box in our parking lot.
- We also have a drive-up window for your convenience.
- If you are paying by check for tax or water / sewer, we request you write separate checks for each billing.
- Returned check or ACH fee is \$30.00 per return.
- If the enclosed bill has reached you in error, PLEASE DO NOT DESTROY; please return the bill to the Township or forward it to the correct owner.
- We have listed a copy of the tax codes on the back of the tax bill for your convenience.
- Did you know you could have your tax bill taken directly out of your bank account? Sign up today at the front counter in the Treasurer's department for ACH payment (Automatic Withdraw). You will still receive a bill in the mail with a message that will tell you when your payment will be deducted. Forms are also available on our website.

Planning/ Zoning/ Building: Mark Lloyd, Director

Township Master Plan

On October 11, 2018, the newly created Planning & Building Department issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) to solicit bids from professional planning firms to update and rewrite the Township Master Plan. The Master Plan is reviewed annually by the Planning Commission and a determination is made every five years as to whether or not the plan needs to be updated. The last update occurred in 2013 at which time the Technology Village concept was incorporated into the plan. This provided necessary direction and support for development of that future project area.

The upcoming Master Plan effort will address numerous land use and infrastructure matters including; overall land use, the recently approved Downtown Development Area (DDA), the Dort Highway Extension, the Saginaw, Hill, Holly/Baldwin/Saginaw commercial corridors, Redevelopment Ready and future land use plans. The project will kick-off shortly after the new year and will take approximately one year to complete. During this time many opportunities will be made available for residents to participate in shaping their community. More information is available on the Township web page under "Master Plan". Additional information, meeting dates and other information will be added to this site as this project progresses.

Grand Blanc Parks & Recreation: Kae Eidson, Director

Residents, please watch for the Grand Blanc Parks & Recreation Winter / Spring program insert in the Grand Blanc View in early December. The insert will feature information on swimming, youth basketball, Red Cross Lifeguard Training, girls volleyball, boys & girls lacrosse, Aqua Aerobics, Zumba, Yoga, Kids Karate and more!

The 38th Annual Hard Times Party is scheduled for Saturday, March 9, 2019 at the Grand Blanc Senior Center. Tickets will go on sale Tuesday, January 22, 2019 at the Grand Blanc Parks & Recreation offices. Tickets in advance are \$25 and \$30 at the door (if available).

Dog Park passes for the 2019 season will be available December 15, 2018. Season Pass codes from 2018 will be good through January 6, 2019.

Those wishing to rent pavilions at Creasey Bicentennial Park for the 2019 season may begin making reservations on Wednesday, January 2, 2019. Reservations are taken on a first come, first serve basis.

Clerk's Office: Cathy Lane, Clerk

1. Township maintains two cemeteries – Maple-Gibson on the south side of Hill Road has a chapel and Perry-McFarlen at the corner of Perry and Genesee Roads. Lots are \$400.00 each for City and Township residents.
2. Last day Emterra will pick up compost – Wednesday, November 21, 2018. After the holidays, they will pick up real Christmas trees.
3. Emterra provides FREE passes for Township residents only – not contractors – to dispose of 1,000 lbs. per month of household trash. Stop in the Township Hall and ask for a pass for Brent Run Landfill, 8335 W. Vienna Road, Montrose, MI. 810-639-3077
4. Recyclables – Plastic bottles and jugs with a "1" or "2" – Remove small caps and tops. Rinse, wash off, and remove any food or sticky substance before putting in the bin. Flatten cardboard and cut into pieces. Put lightweight items on the bottom of the bin with heavier items on top.
5. Garbage pickup – Wednesday, November 21, before Thanksgiving. Christmas pickup will be on Thursday, December 27.

GRAND BLANC TOWNSHIP BOARD

Scott Bennett, Supervisor

Cathy Lane, Clerk Earl Guzak, Treasurer

Trustees: Lonnie Adkins, Al Mansour, Joe Massey, Ken Thomas