

Volume 12 Issue 2

October, 2012

Superior Scenes

3040 N. Prospect Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

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William McFarlane Supervisor
David Phillips Clerk
Brenda McKinney Treasurer
Nancy Caviston Trustee
Lisa Lewis Trustee
Alex Williams Trustee
Rodrick Green Trustee

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 734-480-5500
Office hours 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM
24/7 Emergency Service
For Water & Sewer Emergencies
Superior Township Fire Department
 7999 Ford Road
 Ford and Prospect Roads
 Ypsilanti, MI 48198
 734-484-1996
In Emergency dial 911
Fire Station #2
Corner of Harris and MacArthur
Dial 911 for Emergencies
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From our Superior Supervisor . . .

The 2010 Census had positive results for Superior Township. The population increased from 10,740 Superior People to 13,058 very Superior People. This increase translates into an annual increase of approximately \$80,000 from Michigan's State Shared Revenue program.

Because the Township is in good financial shape, this additional money should go toward improving the quality of life for our residents in a significant way. For example, even though the Washtenaw County Road Commission is 100% responsible for all public roads in the Township, the Township has historically used some of our General Fund money for local road maintenance. In 2012 it will be approximately \$200,000. In 2013, we will be able to increase the amount to

\$300,000. Furthermore, Superior Township is eligible for Community Development Block Grants of roughly \$30,000 for road improvements in certain areas of the Township. And, the Washtenaw County Road Commission also offers matching funds for road improvements of approximately \$40,000. The result of the commitments of funds is that in 2013, Superior Township will have approximately \$370,000 budgeted for road improvements that will be equitably distributed over the entire Township.

Superior Township is also expected to



William McFarlane
Supervisor

Continued on page 4

News from our Superior Parks

Keith Lockie

Our long-time Park Maintenance Supervisor, Greg Secord, will be stepping down at the end of this year. Greg has done an excellent job overseeing our parks, making improvements, and streamlining operations. His efforts have made our parks shine, and we will miss him. We hope that he enjoys his retirement!

Our new Park Maintenance Supervisor is Dave Buterbaugh, who has been number two in command with us for many years. We are sure Dave is up to the challenge of carrying on Greg's good work!

Pat Pigott, who with Ray Franquist makes up the rest of our maintenance team, has also accepted the responsibility of running our special programs for kids and families that many of you have enjoyed over the years.

We are also happy to announce the purchase of 12 acres at the corner of Harris and Geddes Roads. This new property will hopefully house a Parks Building in coming years, with enough space for outdoor activities.

We look forward to seeing you at our parks!

News from our Superior Clerk

Your Vote Is Important!

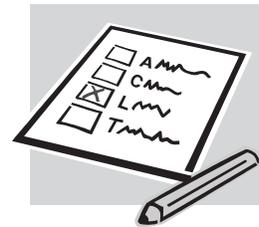
The Presidential Election will be held on Tuesday, November 6, 2012. The ballot will include the office of the U.S. President, federal, state, county and local offices, several important local proposals and six statewide proposals. Sample ballots for all precincts are posted on the Township website, www.superior-twp.org. All five precincts will be open for voters at their usual location. Please remember that Precinct 1 votes at the Dixboro United Methodist Church located at 5221 Church Street in the Dixboro community. The August primary was the first election using the Dixboro UMC as a voting location. Voters overwhelmingly expressed positive comments about the new polling location. We thank the church for allowing us to use their building as a voting precinct. For those of you who need to vote absentee, I have placed information and forms on the Township website, www.superior-twp.org.

If you are expecting to be out of the community on Election Day, are 60 years of age or older, disabled, are an active member of the U.S. military or their dependent, or are a U.S. citizen residing overseas, you may apply for an Absent Voter Ballot. You may use a pre-printed form or send a letter re-

questing the AV Ballot. The law states you must: (1) give the reason for needing the Absent Voter Ballot, (2) state where you want the ballot sent, (3) sign the request (must be an original signature), and (4) date the request. Forward the request to David Phillips, Superior Township Clerk, 3040 North Prospect Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48198. You may also come into the Township Hall prior to the election, fill out the application and pick up an AV Ballot at the same time. The Clerk's Office will be open for Absent Voter Ballot requests from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm the Saturday preceding each election. If you have any questions, please contact, David Phillips, telephone: 734-482-6099 extension #14, or e-mail: davidphillips@superior-twp.com.



David Phillips
Clerk



Neighborhood Watch

John Hudson

This is John Hudson, Township coordinator for Neighborhood Watch. If you have concerns or questions about crime in the Township and would like to receive Neighborhood Watch information by email, including monthly crime reports and alerts, contact Jhudson300606MI@comcast.net. Our alerts include copies of monthly crime reports and up-to-the-minute alerts received from the Sheriff's department and information received from citizens. Neighborhood Watch is an effective means of community enforcement and relies on community awareness, involvement and communication.

Neighborhood Watch meets bimonthly with representatives from the Washtenaw County Sheriff. A Sheriff's Department

official is usually in attendance and available to answer your questions. Recent guest speakers include Sheriff Clayton and Fire Chief Roberts.

Meetings are open to all and are held at 7:00 on the fourth Tuesday every other month depending on the calendar. The next meeting will be on November 27th at the Old Town Hall, 3040 N. Prospect, across the parking lot from the Township Hall.



News from our Superior Treasurer



**Brenda L. McKinney
Treasurer**

The Ypsilanti District Library (YDL) Board made a presentation to the Township Board regarding their plans to build a new library to replace the small branch located in the Fire Department's substation. The meeting left us with the impression that the YDL planned to begin construction in the very near future. Recently, it has come to our attention that they do not have the funds for any construction. In fact, they are using funds from their reserves to operate. By 2016, there will be no reserves left. As your Treasurer, I find this very disturbing. Since 2006, Superior Township has sent the YDL the funds from the Library millage levied on our residents. See Below.

Tax Year	Amount
2006	\$ 535,422
2007	\$ 566,097
2008	\$ 528,055
2009	\$ 520,782
2010	\$ 488,626
2011	\$ 578,402
2012	<u>\$ 598,523 (estimate)</u>
	\$ 3,815,907

What You Should Know About Your Taxes

In an effort to ensure processing your ONLINE TAX PAYMENTS in a timely manner, we have implemented a new procedure. The use of an Account Number has been replaced with the use of a Property Number. If your account information did not include a property number, all account information has been deleted and you must create a new account using the property number on your tax bill. Your property number is the ten digit number beginning with J-10.

Winter Tax Bills will be mailed on December 1, 2012 and will be due by February 14, 2013.

Please DO NOT mail your tax payments to the P.O. Box number. Mail all tax payments to 3040 North Prospect, Ypsilanti, MI 48198.

Taxpayers who use their bank service to make tax payments please update the mailing address to 3040 North Prospect, Ypsilanti, MI 48198.

Failure to receive a tax bill DOES NOT waive interest.

If you do not receive a tax bill by the first week in December, please give our office a call.

Deferment notices will be mailed June 1, 2013. You are eligible for a deferment if you are 62 years of age or older (including the unmarried surviving spouse of a person who was 62 years of age or older at the time of death), a paraplegic or quadriplegic, an eligible serviceperson, eligible veteran, eligible widow or widower, blind or totally permanently disabled. Having a deferment allows homeowners to delay paying the taxes due in February until April 30 without penalties.

Supervisor (Continued from page 1)

receive two additional weather warning sirens. One is expected to be located in the area of Curtis and Plymouth roads and the other in the area of Geddes and Prospect roads. The locations were recommended by the Washtenaw County Office of Emergency Management.

In August, the Superior Township Board of Trustees appointed a committee to review and make a recommendation on updating the Township's Outdoor Burning Ordinance (Ordinance #105). The Committee's chair is Mr. John Rintamaki. Before the Township Board holds a public hearing on any proposed changes to the ordinance, we will mail out a News You Can Use newsletter explaining what is proposed. The public hearing will probably be in January of 2013.

The New South Pointe Scholars National Heritage Academies will pay for an intersection improvement at Geddes Road and Ridge Roads. A proposed roundabout will be installed next year to help improve traffic on Geddes Road. Also, the bridge on Ridge Road just south of Geddes Road is scheduled to be replaced by the Washtenaw County Road Commission as part of the project. This should help move traffic in a safer and efficient manner.

For the past year, the Township has been meeting with the Ypsilanti District Library (YDL) on a plan to build a combined Parks Community Center/Library Satellite Branch. As anyone knows who has visited the existing library branch at MacArthur and Harris, it is well-used but very small. The Township already has our share of the proposed building cost in the bank because of our plan for a parks community center, so

working with the YDL on a building with a combined use seemed like a wise course of action. The meetings included the Township's administrative staff, Superior Parks and representatives from the YDL Board, staff and the YDL's district's architect. During these meetings, the YDL indicated that construction on a new building could even begin next summer. To this end, Superior Township purchased 12 acres on Harris Rd. (between Geddes Road and MacArthur Blvd.) from the Willow Run Community Schools as the site for the building.

However, the project has now stalled because the YDL recently indicated that they lack the funds for the project. This is troublesome because the Township sends approximately \$ 578,402 annually to the district library via the YDL millage. It appears their fund balance reserve is budgeted to be used for operations until it is extinguished. Using reserves for operations is also troublesome as what happens when all the reserves are gone? Consequently, no funds will be available for new construction for a Superior Township building.

The Superior Township Board of Trustees and the Superior Township Parks Commission have requested a meeting with the entire Ypsilanti District Library Board to discuss this issue. One option may be to have the Superior Township Board of Trustees consider a ballot initiative to opt out of the district. Another option may be for YDL to provide assurances of a Superior Township branch in the near future. We will keep you posted. (See Treasurer McKinney's article on page 3 for more information.)

Thank you to the voters for passing the Law Millage, Fire Millage and Legal Defense Millage

The numbers are as follows:
 Law, 1244/ 78.63% yes—338/21.37% no
 Fire, 1253/ 78.66% yes—340/ 21.34 % no
 Planning and Zoning Legal Defense, 926/ 59.47 % yes—631/ 40.53 % no

Our Superior Utilities

Diana Ravis

SAVING ON OUTSIDE WATERING COSTS

Due to the extreme heat and drought conditions this past summer, many of our residents did a tremendous amount of outside watering which resulted in extremely high water bills. If we experience similar conditions in the future or if you believe you will be doing a lot of outside watering for any reason, we highly recommend that you consider purchasing a sprinkler meter in order to help reduce your water/sewer bills by up to as much as one third. Contact us at 734-480-5500 for additional information on sprinkler meters.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the department's hours, phone number and location?

- We're located at 575 East Clark Road (at the north east corner of Prospect & Clark Roads).
- We can be reached by telephone at 734-480-5500.
- Our office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, for scheduling appointments and making account information inquiries by phone.
- We can accept payments and inquiries through our drive-through window from 8:15 a.m. through 4:15 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- We have a payment drop box (located on the east side of the building) that is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week, for water bill payments being made by check or money order.

2. What are my payment options?

- Payments made either through our drop box or by mail can be by check or money order.
- Payments made in person at our drive through can be by check, money order or cash.
- Credit card (MasterCard and Discover Card only) and bank account payments (checking and savings accounts) can be made online by going to the Township's website (www.superior-twp.org), then:

Click on: **Departments**, then

Click on: **Utilities**, then

Click on: **Online Bill Payments** and just follow the instructions

3. What do I need to do if I plan to move?

If you are moving, please contact the Utility Department at least 24 hours prior to your move date to arrange for a final meter reading, so you won't be charged for water used after you are gone.

4. What do I need to do if I'm new to the Township?

If you have recently moved to the Township, contact us at 734-480-5500 so we have all the necessary information to set up a new account for you.

5. What do I do if have water coming up through the floor drain in my basement?

If you have water coming up through your basement floor drain, it may be an indication that there is a sewer back-up in front of your house. Call us anytime, day or night, seven days a week, at 734-480-5500 and we'll check our sewer line for blockages. We'll then let you know if the problem is in our line, which we will take care of; or if it is a blockage within your house line, which you'll need to contact a plumber or repair service to address.



Superior Inquiry

It's a Wetland

There has been a lot of curiosity about the development taking place on the northwest side of Prospect and Vreeland roads. Is it a new housing project? Is it a shopping center? No, it's a new wetland.

The 111-acre parcel is owned by Wayne Disposal. They were required by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) to create new wetlands to make up for the wetlands they filled in somewhere else. The new wetlands will include a forested wetland, a scrub wetland, an emergent wetland and open water. The project was approved by the MDEQ and complies with Superior Township's Wetlands and Watercourse Protection and Restoration Ordinance, Ordinance No. 135.

The project is considered to be 99% complete. The berms and upland areas have been seeded and the seeding of



native wetland plants will take place this fall. (It will take approximately two years to establish the native perennials.) Trees will be planted in the wetland areas next spring and it is expected that a wetland habitat will be established by this time next year. The gravel drive entrance from Prospect Road will be stabilized and a gate placed at the entrance.

Please note that this is not a public park or preserve. It is private property and is not open to the public. It is however, considered a valuable addition to the "Superior Greenway."

One Superior Place

Committee to Promote Superior Township

Summer Activity at Oakbrook Park

This summer the Committee to Promote Superior Township undertook a cooperative activity with the Township Parks Commission. On May 19, 2012, the Committee and the Commission sponsored a children's flower planting day at Oakbrook Park for the benefit of area residents.

Parks Department personnel first prepared the flowerbed areas by removing the sod and Rototilling the soil. They also brought a supply of trowels for participants' use and mulch for the flowerbeds, and provided a water supply for watering the newly planted flowers. The Committee to Promote Superior Township supplied the flats of flowers, including marigolds and impatiens; the Parks Commission provided a hot dog lunch for participants.

Supervised by members of the Committee and the Parks Commission, children planted flowers in the beds near the front of Oakbrook Park, visible to park visitors as well as passing traffic on Berkshire Drive. Participants were then given a small potted flower to take with them to plant at their



homes. The day was a pleasant interactive activity for neighborhood children that provided an attractive addition to the park.

Committee Update

As with any volunteer group, engaging and retaining active participants on the Committee to Promote Superior Township requires ongoing effort. Publicizing our Committee through contact with homeowners associations and Parks activities, as well as at fairs, in newsletters, and on websites all helps, but we're always looking for more ways to get the word out.

We meet on the third Wednesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. (no later) at Township Hall, keeping our schedule as consistent as practical so it's easier to participate (meeting schedule varies in November and December). Any suggestions from Township Board members or residents at large on additional strategies to *foster pride, unity, and a sense of place among Superior Township residents* are welcome and appreciated.

Superior Burning Ordinance Review



This last July the Township Board appointed an 18-member advisory committee to review the Township’s outdoor burning ordinance. Committee members were chosen to provide a wide range of representation. The committee includes firefighters, residents of subdivisions, residents with agricultural interests, two Township officials and other knowledgeable people. The committee is to make its recommendations to the Township Board for its consideration later in the year.

The Committee has met twice (August 21 and September 4) thus far and has scheduled 6 more meetings on September 27, October 10 and 30, November 13 and 27, and December 11. Our meetings are noted on the Township calendar, start

at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Hall and are open to the public. We have received public comments at both of our meetings thus far and individuals may submit written comments as well. Written comments should be addressed to Deborah Kuehn at the Township Hall.

Our plan is to work from a model outdoor burning ordinance drafted by the Michigan DEQ and the Michigan Townships Association, with adjustments to accommodate the specific characteristics of Superior Township.

We also are looking at a number of outdoor burning ordinances of other townships, and have a broad range of experience and expertise with our committee members.

Our goal is to recommend outdoor burning ordinance language that is modern; broad in scope; promotes the welfare, health, and safety of all Township residents; and satisfies the varying needs of the residents of the Township.

John Rintamaki
Committee Chair

Our Superior Wetlands Board

Superior Township is divided by two of the area’s major watersheds, draining significant areas of both the Huron and Rouge rivers. Understanding the importance of protecting these valuable waterways is critical to the preservation of these resources for future generations. The Township’s wetlands provide a stable habitat for numerous species of flora and fauna, as well as providing rainwater runoff control, groundwater protection, and numerous passive recreational activities for Township residents.

Many of the Township’s properties and residential areas are adjacent to wetland areas and are impacted by policies and regulations relating to wetlands management. Township Ordinance 178 provides a detailed overview of the importance of wetlands preservation in the area, and works in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), and the Michigan Department of Natural resources (MDNR) to provide a clear set of policies and proce-

dures aimed at preserving our wetland areas.

The Superior Township Wetlands Board meets twice annually to review and to provide oversight on issues relating to the Township’s growing wetland areas. The Board exists to ensure that the Township’s policy of no net loss of wetlands and its ultimate goal of a net gain of wetlands is met. The Board advises on current issues and provides counsel for issues relating to the continued growth of our wetland areas. Wetlands Board meetings are open to the public, and interested residents are encouraged to attend with concerns or questions.



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**PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
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YPSILANTI, MI
PERMIT NO 489**

Our Township is Superior!



*This is printed
on recycled
paper.*

Our Superior Fire Department

Chief James Roberts



WASHTENAW COUNTY OUTDOOR WARNING SIREN SYSTEM

The Emergency Management Division of Washtenaw County currently has thirty-nine designated outdoor warning sirens distributed throughout Washtenaw County. The sirens will be activated when significant weather conditions have been detected, hazardous materials accidents occur that require immediate protection to the public, or in the event of other critical events involving homeland security emergencies.

Superior Township, which currently has two sirens installed, has applied for two additional sirens and will have them installed later this fall. We have one in the village of Dixboro and the other on MacArthur Boulevard. The two new installations will be on Prospect Road just north of Geddes and on Plymouth Road in the vicinity of Curtis Road.

The sirens are installed in areas where the greatest concentration of homes and businesses is located. When activated, they rotate 360 degrees and are very effective (loud) one

mile upwind and one and one half miles or so downwind. They cost in the neighborhood of \$20,000 per installation, depending on the location of electrical lines and transformers.

Siren activation is an indication that members of the public should go indoors and listen to Emergency Alert System radio stations for official information. Washtenaw County's emergency stations are:

WEMU 89.1 FM

WWW 102.9 FM

WQKL 107.1 FM

WTKA 1050 AM

WLBY 1290 AM

Lastly, all Washtenaw County operated sirens will be tested at 12:00 noon on the first Saturday of every month from March through September. If severe weather is possible on the afternoon of a test it may be delayed until the following month.