

Torch Lake Township News - December 2006

TORCH LAKE TOWNSHIP,

FACILITY PLANNING UPDATE

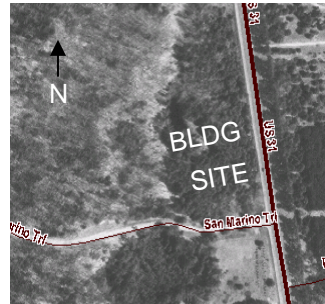
Bob Spencer, Supervisor

Do you wonder what's been happening with plans for the new public safety building? Here's an update: Back in September, Board members approved building the new facility at a 5.18-acre site at the corner of US 31 N and San Marino Trail. It is about 2.7 miles south of the current Eastport setting.

The San Marino Trail site has some advantages over Eastport: (1) it is more centrally located; and (2) it is larger than the 1.44 acre Eastport site. The Board feels this location will better serve residents in the future, as the township's population center continues moving south. Based on the facility study committee's recommendation, Board members unani-

mously approved hiring a "design-build" team composed of Clark-Walter-Sirrine, A/E and Comstock Construction, both of Traverse City.

Since then, a facility design team was created. It includes employees Vala Shipman (EMS) and Stan Dawson (Fire); residents Dale Thiel, Jim Mottern and Jim Walworth; architect Ray Kendra (Clark-Walter-Sirrine, A/E); Mike Comstock (Comstock Construction); and, me. Team members have been reviewing design options and will develop recommendations for consideration by Board members. Design Team members will continue to develop these plans with the goal of finalizing them in the near future.



US 31 N and San Marino Trail

You can visit <http://cws-arch.com> to view current plans.

Once Board members agree on a plan, bid documents will be finalized, subcontractors will be solicited and, pending Board approval, contracts will be awarded. Construction will then begin as soon as weather conditions allow.

The target date for completion of the new facility is November 2007.



Spruce trees in winter coats

Reminders:

- Pay winter taxes by February 14th
- Buy dog licenses by March 1st
- Get your trash coupons: 10 for \$20
- The Assessor is in on Fridays
- Zoning Admin. is in Tues. & Thurs

Inside this issue:

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	2
EMS PERSONNEL	2
SALARY COMMITTEE	2
TREASURER'S CORNER	3
PLANNING COMMISSION NEWS	3
AUDIT COMMITTEE	3
PIPELINE	4

TOWNSHIP ROAD REPAIR PLANNING

George Parker, Trustee

Alan Martel and I recently completed an assessment of township road conditions. Results were shared with Board members in October. Supervisor Spencer next requested repair cost estimates from

Burt Thompson, Antrim County Road Commission. Thompson's estimates totaled \$332,756, and were discussed at the Board's November meeting. Of the total amount, the Commission would pay \$53,784, leaving the township with an expense of \$278,972.

It is clear that the Township cannot pay for all of this repair work next year.

At its Dec. 19, 2006 meeting, the Board will decide which roads are to be repaired during 2007, as the Road Commission must be notified by January 2007.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE FOR USE BY RESIDENTS

EMS has "LOAN-OUT" closet

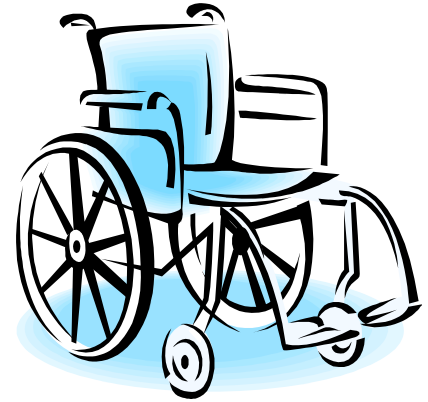
Have you ever twisted an ankle and wished you had some crutches handy?

Have you or a family member ever had surgery or injured a leg and wished there was easy access to a wheelchair?

Have you ever had an elderly visitor or family member who temporarily needed a wheelchair? A walker? A shower seat?

If so, please be aware that the Township's EMS service has some medical equipment available for your use, such as crutches, walkers, shower seats and wheelchairs. These are loaned to Torch Lake Township residents at no charge.

So, all you have to do is contact the Township's EMS Office at 599-2174 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM, Monday - Friday to make arrangements for obtaining what you may need.



Need to borrow a wheelchair?

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL SOUGHT

Mike Watson, EMS Director since March 2002, recently submitted his resignation. EMS Billing Clerk, Shelly Dorland, has also recently resigned. Candidates for both a new EMS Director and EMS Billing Clerk are currently being sought by the

Board. Applications from interested candidates will be received in early December. Interviews will be conducted shortly thereafter. It is hoped that new personnel will be hired prior to Christmas 2006. We wish Mike and Shelly well in all of their future endeavors.



SALARY COMPENSATION COMMITTEE TO ADVISE BOARD

The Township Board has established a Salary Compensation Committee to help research and recommend compensation levels of the Township's employees. This committee will be advisory in nature and the Board will retain final say over all matters affecting wages and benefits of Township employees.

Please call Bob Spencer at 599-2036

before January 2007, if you are interested in serving on this committee.

Keep in mind that this committee will not change the manner in which compensation of elected officials is established. These decisions are made at the Township's Annual Meeting. In accordance with State law, salaries of elected officials are set by a vote of Township residents in attendance at

the annual meeting. The next Annual Meeting is scheduled at 9:00 AM on Saturday, March 24, 2007.



TREASURER'S CORNER from Sharon Schultz

WINTER 2006 TAX BILLS:

By now, you should have received your Winter 2006 property tax bills. Payments can be made anytime between now and February 14, 2007 without penalty.

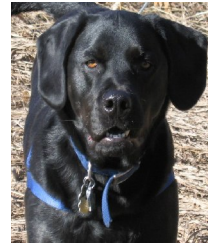
Also, please remember that Antrim County taxes are being "shifted" to the summer tax bill. By the time Summer 2007 tax bills are mailed out, 100% of the County allocated tax will be collected. It will no longer be split between the winter and summer tax bills.

Please call me at 599-2036 if you have any questions about your property taxes! I'll be glad to provide you with information and will answer all your questions.

TIME TO GET DOG LICENSES:

I'll be selling Dog Licenses through February 28, 2007. So, please stop in to purchase a license for each of your dogs. You will need to show a current rabies certificate in order to purchase a license. One (1) and three (3) year licenses are available depending upon the expiration date on your dog's current rabies certifi-

cate. You should be aware that, during the next several months, Antrim County Sheriff Department employees will visit households throughout the county to conduct a dog census.



Joey

I urge you to obtain needed dog licenses by March 1, 2007 because the fee doubles after that date. I'm available evenings and weekends and I'm just a phone call away!

PLANNING COMMISSION NEWS

Planning Commission members are recommending that the Township Board place a 6-month (or shorter) moratorium on commercial development in the Township. PC members feel they need to clear their agenda, using the extra time to finalize the Township's new Land Use Plan (a task that has been ongoing for several years). To help complete

this task, the PC has also scheduled extra meetings during the next several months, planning to meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month.

The Board will likely consider the PC's recommendation at its Dec. 19th meeting. If approved by the Board, the moratorium will end no later than 6-months after its effective date.



Echinacea with winter hats

AUDIT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS MADE

In October, the Board established an Audit Committee and related guidelines. This action was taken in response to a recommendation from the Township's auditor. This committee will be composed of the two Board Trustees (Alan Martel and George Parker) and two township residents. Its purpose will be to ensure that proper checks and balances exist in fiscal operations and

procedures used by the Township. At its November meeting, the Board appointed township residents Bob McLeod and Wally Juall to 3-year terms on the newly-formed Audit Committee. Bob and Wally will work with the Township's auditor and Board Trustees to help assure fiscal integrity in Township operations.



Board acts to ensure Fiscal Integrity



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



WHAT'S WITH THE PIPELINE?



Natural gas pipeline project

Township residents have been calling recently requesting information about the pipeline installation project currently taking place all along US 31.

Several questions have been asked, such as: When can I get natural gas at my house? Whose pipeline is it? And, why did the Township decide to put in a pipeline?

Actually, the pipeline installation is a Jordan Development project and is being installed by Wilcox Construction of Cadillac, MI, among others. Michigan's Public Service Commission is the authorizing agency for such projects.

The pipeline will be used to collect "raw" natural gases from several

wells that have been drilled in Torch Lake and surrounding townships.

These raw gas products from area wells will be collected, processed at a facility being built in northern Milton Township, then piped north to Bennett Hill Road, then east. Eventually, the "raw" gases will arrive at a petroleum processing plant located south of Kalkaska.

At that facility, they will be prepared for various commercial uses including natural gas for home heating.

