



Kimball Township News

Issue 58

Kimball Township - WEBSITE: kimballtownship.org

October 2014

FROM THE DESK OF CLERK HAND

It is that time of year again when we need to remove our older items from the gravesites and get ready for another season. As you enter the west driveway of Caswell Cemetery, the sign says the clean-up is scheduled for October 15. I have talked to the DPW workers and we have agreed to extend that date to November 1st. So please remove anything you wish to keep by that date.

It has been brought to my attention from the Cemetery Board that we still have some violations to the rules of Caswell Cemetery. The space you are using around the grave marker is too large and interferes with the lawn maintenance. The rule is that you are allowed twelve (12) inches on the North, South and East sides. Please do not place anything on the West side because that is the gravesite of another person.

The second violation brought to my attention is decorative stones placed on the gravesites. Stones can be picked up by lawn mowers and may become dangerous projectiles. Please remove these stones before the cold weather sets in.



FROM THE DPW

Our Auditors have recommended that the only people to handle money should be our collection personnel at the window at our township office. It has been decided that our DPW workers will not be allowed to take cash or checks for your water bills if you are on the shut off list. Their responsibility is to turn the water off or turn it back on.

We thank you for understanding this policy.



When witches go riding, and black cats are seen,
the moon laughs and whispers, 'tis near
Halloween.
(Author Unknown)

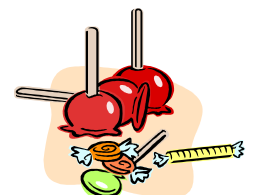
That's right, Halloween is right around the corner and we want everyone to be safe this year. As always, we have a few tips for a safe Halloween.

- Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups
- Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes.
to avoid blocked vision, trips and falls.
- Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags.
- Look both ways before crossing the street.
- Never walk near lit candles or luminaries.
- Have your candy checked by an adult before eating.

The Kimball Township Fire Department will be handing out treats and refreshments at both fire stations on Halloween night, October 31st from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. They will also check your child's candy for safety reasons.

- Fire Station #1, 1970 Allen Road
- Fire Station #2, 400 Henry Street

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!



INSTALL. INSPECT. PROTECT. CAMPAIGN

SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

The U.S. Fire Administration's *Install. Inspect. Protect. Campaign* is aimed at encouraging Americans to practice fire safety by 1) installing and maintaining smoke alarms and residential fire sprinklers, which can save the lives of residents and fire fighters, 2) practicing fire escape plans, and 3) performing a home safety walk-through to remove fire hazards from the home.

When both smoke alarms and fire sprinklers are present in a home, the risk of dying in a fire is reduced by 82 percent, when compared to a residence without either. According to the National Fire Protection Association, between 2003-2006, almost two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

The USFA offers a few helpful tips on smoke alarms and sprinklers:

- * Place properly installed and maintained smoke alarms both inside and outside of sleeping areas and on every level of your home.
- * Get smoke alarms that can sound fast. The U.S. Fire Administration recommends that every residence and place where people sleep be equipped with both ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms or dual sensor smoke alarms, which contain both ionization and photoelectric smoke sensors.
- * Test smoke alarms monthly and change alkaline batteries at least once every year, or as instructed. You can use a date you already know, like your birthday or when you change your clocks as reminder.
- * If possible, install residential fire sprinklers in your home.
- * Avoid painting or covering the fire sprinkler, because that will affect the sensitivity to heat.

For more information on the *Install. Inspect. Protect. Campaign* and other fire prevention information, please

visit www.usfa.dhs.gov/smokealarms. Or contact your local Fire Department at (810) 982-9461, or email:

firedept@kimballtownship.org.

Remember to Install. Inspect. Protect.
Smoke Alarms Saves Lives.



Board of Trustees Meeting Synopsis

Audit

Our 2013-14 audit has been completed. Once again this year we have received a good report from our auditors. Our general fund balance has increased. This means that our expenditures did not exceed our revenues from taxes and from state revenue sharing. This leaves Kimball Township in excellent financial condition.

Our fund balance in water and sewer also increased. However, with the depreciation of assets, we did see a decline in overall assets in water and sewer. The City of Port Huron continues to raise water rates and that will likely result in water rate increases in the future.

Our budgeting practices have proven to be solid. Department heads continually monitor their budgets as do both Supervisor Usakowski and Treasurer Jackson. The *board of trustees* reviews the budget monthly. This has led to great success with our finances. While other municipalities face large budget cuts, Kimball Township, despite reduced property values, is in excellent financial condition.

Trash Collection

Thank you to all of the residents that responded to our survey on trash collection. Our board has made a very specific effort to reach out to residents on many issues. We had nearly 400 responses to the survey.

In the end, the survey results were nearly split 50/50. The board established several goals when going through our strategic plan, and one of those was to see a more unified community. We did not feel that moving forward with trash collection would keep the community unified, since the vote was so close.

Residents who are still interested in having township wide trash collection, can petition for the collection.

Assessing

I have another article in the newsletter specifically on the issue of assessing. Our goal as always is to provide a fair assessment across the board. Property values have been declining for several years. Keep in mind that the County Equalization department tells us what our assessed value must be each year, and we do not control that.

As always, my door is always open. I will meet you at your home if necessary. I have gone out on assessing measurements, ordinance enforcement issues, and I've met with community members regarding roads and ditches. Feel free to call with your concerns, suggestions and ideas.

Rob Usakowski, Supervisor

THANK YOU!

We would like to send out a big “Thank You” to everyone who attended the Kimball Township Fall Extravaganza and to those who made it possible. We hope to see you all next year.

REMINDER

There is no burning allowed in Kimball Township on October 30th and the 31st.

Burn permits are required for burning leaves. You Can purchase a burn permit at the Township Office for \$15.00.

Starting the first of January, you can purchase a new burn permit for \$15.00 which is good from January 2, 2015 through December 31, 2015.



THANKSGIVING FUN FACTS

- * A spooked turkey can run at speeds up to 20 miles per hour. They can also burst into flight approaching speeds between 50-55 mph in a matter of seconds.
- * Contrary to popular belief, Native Americans did not eat cranberries. They did, however, find them extremely useful for dyeing fabric and decorating pottery.
- * Here's one of those funny Thanksgiving facts: Turkeys have heart attacks. When the Air Force was conducting test runs and breaking the sound barrier, fields of turkeys would drop dead.

CHRISTMAS FUN FACTS



- * Christmas trees have been sold in the U.S. since 1850.
- * Alabama was the first state in the United States to officially recognize Christmas in 1836.
- * Christmas wasn't declared an official holiday in the United States until June 26, 1870.
- * There are approximately 21,000 Christmas tree farms in the United States. In 2008, nearly 45 million Christmas trees were planted, adding to the existing 400 million trees.

UNITED STATES PRESIDENTS

A N P E M P G J R I H H Y M W N T
 C A T C V D R E C I X Y M A L O M
 V C J T L E V E S O O R M D I S W
 J O G P L V D N W G A I O I N N A
 N O S I R R A H O O M U N S C H S
 T L S V L D R U N S H T R O O H
 Y I B O S Y N U C O K N O N L J I
 T D Z U K F B W L U T C E T N O N
 B G K J C G A Y E Q W N A S W E G
 V E W R I H D Q V G J O I J I C T
 R O L Y A T A L E G O F Q L I E O
 M T O J A F D N L X D Q H F C C N
 V L O E Y B T M A T C J T T H A B
 J E F F E R S O N N O L U K M J K
 F X M P U R B E D V A N B U R E N
 N A G A E R F I L L M O R E L T L
 M C K I N L E Y G P S T X T G I H

| | | | |
|------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Buchanan | Fillmore | Lincoln | Roosevelt |
| Cleveland | Harrison | Madison | Taylor |
| Clinton | Jackson | McKinley | Truman |
| Coolidge | Jefferson | Monroe | Van Buren |
| Eisenhower | Johnson | Reagan | Washington |

COMMUNITY ENTERTAINMENT TIME

Starting the first Thursday and every Thursday thereafter from September thru December

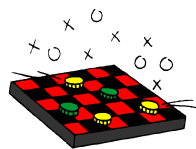
Cards (Euchre, Bridge, Pinochle, etc.) and

Board Games (Checkers, Chess, Backgammon, (etc.)

Will be available at Kimball Township Municipal Offices

From 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Bring your group or come alone and meet other people interested in a friendly game of your choice.



FROM THE DESK OF ROB USAKOWSKI

As some of you may be aware, Township officials have had some concerns regarding our assessing. In 2013, the State Tax Commission returned our tax roll when we passed the 14 point review. This means our records have a good accuracy rate and our processes and procedures meet all of the requirements. However, in 2014, just one year later, we started to see some irregularities in ECF's and in personal property.

Supervisor Usakowski along with a handful of residents took the concern to the State Tax Commission. Over the past six months, Supervisor Usakowski has worked with the State Tax Commission, Representative LaFontaine's office, and Senator Pavlov's office to get some resolution on the issue. After 6 months of persistence, the State Tax Commission has finally given us an answer.

The ECF's will be corrected. County Equalization will work with the State Tax Commission to correct this issue. It primarily affects about 300 pole barns in Kimball Township. In some cases, the Township over assessed and in other cases it under assessed. The net effect to Kimball Township residents will be zero. However, it will have some impact on individual taxpayers.

Once the corrections are made, anyone with a change in assessed value will receive a new property tax statement. You will also have a right to appeal the new valuation. Because of other factors such as Proposal A, we are unsure of the effect on taxable values for individual taxpayers at this time.

Similarly, we had some concerns about how certain personal property was being handled. We will be making corrections there as well, although we expect that the number of people affected will be rather small.

Although the State Tax Commission must take the roll so the correction can be made for 2014, there will not be another complete reappraisal, nor will there be an Audit of Minimum Assessing Requirements. The process is simply to correct these two errors. There will be a cost in making the correction, but we feel that it will be small enough that we will be able to fit it into our current budget.

The assessor has been dismissed from her position in Kimball Township. Supervisor Usakowski followed our disciplinary procedures in making his decision. This was part of progressive disciplinary steps. The former assessor has a right to appeal the dismissal to the board of trustees. The former assessor also faces a possible suspension from the State Tax Commission. She will need to go through the states disciplinary hearing process before a decision is made and the could take several months.

Kimball Township officials are currently seeking a replacement for the assessor. We hope to have that new person in place by the end of September.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause to our residents, but we felt this step was necessary to give everyone a fair assessment.



NEXT ISSUE JANUARY 2015

**Postal Customer
Kimball, MI 48074**

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit 005
Smiths Creek, MI 48074

Kimball Township
2160 Wadhams Road
Kimball, MI 48074