



BAY TOWNSHIP

Winter 2014 Newsletter

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A member of the Michigan Township Association

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Newsletter Editor

**The Board of Trustees meets the
2nd Thursday of every month at 7 PM
at the Bay Township Hall in Horton Bay**

Recap of the August Township Forum on Roads

The Bay Township Trustees hosted a panel discussion on our roads on Monday, August 11, 2014 at the township hall. Trustee Bill Wehrenberg provided an overview of the condition of our roads and informed residents of how the township road millage is being used. George Lasater, County Commissioner for Bay Township, discussed how the county-wide road millage is being used. Keeping in mind that all public roads in Bay Township are the responsibility of the Charlevoix County Road Commission, Pat Harmon, Manager, discussed issues facing the Road Commission. Discussion was opened to the public following the presentations.

Many thoughts and suggestions were received at this very well attended meeting and with these comments foremost in mind, the Board of Trustees will soon start formulating a multi-year road improvement plan for the township using our road millage funds. You can review highlights presented at the forum by going to our Bay Township website (www.charlevoixcounty.org/govern0283.asp) and clicking on "Road Forum Presentation". We would like to extend a big "Thank You" to our speakers and all who made this educational forum possible. For an update on where funds were spent in 2014, go to page 2 and read what Clerk Jim Vanek has to say.

Best Wishes to Steve Migda!

Steve has been our Bay Township Assessor for the past 14 years and resigned effective November 1, 2014 in order to spend more time with his family and adorable grandchildren. He says he "came to enjoy the people in the township and sought to always be fair yet follow the laws." We wish him the very best and thank him for his many years of service and hard work for Bay Township! To hear from our new Assessor continue on to page 2.

From Your Township Clerk:

Congratulations to all 562 Bay Township residents for coming out on a cold rainy November Midterm Election day to vote! **Bay Township had a 55.8% voter turnout!** That was the third highest turnout for Charlevoix County being beat out only by St. James and Peaine Townships on Beaver Island.

“Thank-You” for renewing the township road millage for another two years. This millage generates nearly \$140,000 a year and is used to fund road improvements within Bay Township. This year, nearly \$155,000 went toward the improvement of 0.63 mile of roads in the Villa de Charlevoix subdivision. We welcome your input. I can be contacted at: clerk@baytownship.org or (231) 582-3594. James Vanek, Bay Township Clerk

From the Desk of the Assessor.

My name is Anna Wasylewski and as of November 1, 2014 I am Bay Township’s new Assessor. I have been the Hudson Township Assessor for the past 10 years and prior to that I served on the Board of Review for 7 years. I hold the certification of Michigan Certified Assessing Officer. I was born and raised in Poland and have been living in the area for 24 years. I have 4 children.



Here is some current information that might be of interest to you. First of all, if you live in Bay Township and it is your primary residence you are eligible for Primary Residence Exemption (PRE). MCL 211.7dd(c) defines a principal residence as the “... [one] place where an owner of the property has his or her true, fixed, and permanent home to which, whenever absent, they intend to return.” Please let me know if you have any questions or need the exemption affidavit. There is a new exemption for disabled veterans Starting in 2013 the homestead of a disabled veteran who was discharged from the armed forces of the United States under honorable conditions is exempt from the collection of taxes. To obtain the exemption, an affidavit shall be filed with the supervisor or other assessing officer. December Board of Review will meet on December 9th, 2014. The Board can hear appeals for 2014 poverty exemption. Due to the State Tax Commission's recommendation that every year assessors inspect 20% of properties in the township, starting in 2015 there will be inspections of existing structures for accuracy and updates. If you have any questions or do not wish to grant permission for anyone to access your property, please call Bay Township Assessor Anna Wasylewski at 231-549-3019 or email at assessor@baytownship.org.

From the Planning Commission

The Bay Township planning commission continues to work amending the current zoning ordinance. We are working with M.C.Planning to prepare language changes to the Waterfront overlay district, section 5.4 agricultural setbacks, PUD modifications, and section 14.9 ZBA findings of fact. Whenever possible we try to "bundle" several projects together to make it more efficient for the public hearing, county and legal review, and Board of Trustees approval and adoption processes.

We have been fortunate to have our members participate recently in three local MSU Extension sponsored training events. These were an excellent opportunity to get up to speed on several topics, such as streamlining the zoning ordinance, contentious ZBA issues, Michigan Land Division Act, and the Charlevoix County recreation plan. We are pleased to have the revised Private Road Ordinance in place, and expect to make good progress on our current projects. As always we meet the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM and the public are always welcome.

Sincerely, David Skornia, PC Chair

Bay Township Fire Service Update

The Resort/Bear Creek Fire Department has recently opened a new sub-station at the intersection of Camp Daggett Road and US 31. The station houses a fire engine (pumps, water and hoses) and a tanker (water). In light of the fact that this station is much closer to the majority of residencies in the Township, your Board of Trustees has been evaluating our overall fire service program. The evaluation has included staffing, level of training, distance and travel time, and total equipment available. Based on this review, the Board is pursuing negotiations with Resort and Bear Creek Townships pursuant to that fire department covering the northern portion of the township while the Boyne City Fire Department would continue to cover the southern portion of the township. A secondary benefit of such a change is that residents in the northern portion of the township would most likely see a reduction in their homeowners insurance based on the fact the Resort/Bear Creek fire station would be much closer to their property. You can learn more about this fire department at <http://www.resorttownship.org/departments/fire-departmen>. Further updates on the progress of this potential change will be posted on the township web page - <http://www.charlevoixcounty.org/govern0283.asp>. If you have any questions please contact Trustee Bill Wehrenberg; contact information is on the Bay Township web page.

From Zoning Administrator:

During my time with Bay Township as Zoning Administrator I have met a lot of really interesting and great people. Even those people that I have had to confront on a zoning ordinance issue or have had to tell no, have been, in most cases, very rewarding and enjoyable to work with. I do have to say, that the first response when they find out who I am, varies considerably. There are many people that feel we need considerably more regulations that protect us from the rest of the world, and those who think that no regulations would be ideal. Most are in between. I've learned to be a good listener. All can prove their points and have very interesting perspectives.

The Bay Township Planning Commission is charged with finding a balance. Of course we need a plan for orderly development and change. Who wants a land fill or a noisy industrial enterprise next to them? Who wants our most valued attraction, our lakes, polluted or destroyed with development? Who wants the land altered to a point where it's not recognizable as the reason we live here? Who wants the government involved in every aspect of our privacy or to be able to tell us what we can or can't do to our property?

In addition, the economy, the environment, recreation, schools, businesses and resident's needs, are constantly changing. The Planning Commission would like to hear your concerns, your ideas and your plans for our community. They do listen and they do spend a tremendous amount of time trying to do what is best for the township and incorporating it into the zoning ordinance.

Because we do not live in a perfectly flat, square, plain jane area, it is impossible to develop a perfect, one size fits all, zoning ordinance. The Zoning Board of Appeals hears cases that may not fit exactly into the ordinance. Irregular lot configuration, size or unusually difficult terrain are fairly common reasons for considerations. Waterfront properties can also pose some interesting situations as well as subdivisions or lots created prior to zoning. They are also charged with interpreting the ordinance as well as many other responsibilities. Both boards are always looking for good people to serve their community. As Zoning Administrator, I would encourage you to attend, share your opinions and maybe consider serving.

Ron Van Zee, Zoning Administrator

Bay Township Still Needs You!

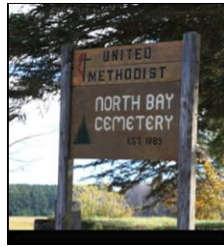
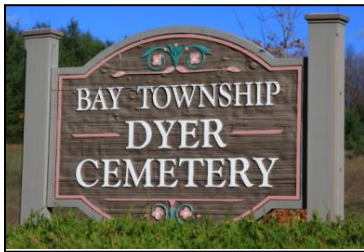


Maybe you don't want to wait for the newsletter to find out what is happening in Bay Township government. Perhaps you have an issue or want to share a thought on a topic but don't want to wait for the next master plan public survey. You are always welcome to attend any of the monthly township meetings. Both the BOT and the PC have public comment sessions at the beginning and conclusion of their meetings. Lately we have had a good turnout at several BOT meetings. Although some topics are somewhat contentious, we have received a lot of great citizen input on the governance of the township. Also, positions are currently open on the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals and we are looking for people who want to serve their community. The position form can be found on the Bay Township website.



In 2007, the Worcester family, along with veterans, and others who had helped with their annual Christmas wreath ceremony in Arlington, formed Wreaths Across America™, to continue and expand this effort, and support other groups around the country who wanted to do the same. This nonprofit organization continues the Arlington tradition as part of its mission to Remember, Honor and Teach.

In 2013, Wreaths Across America and their national network of volunteers laid over 540,000 memorial wreaths at over 900 locations in the United States and beyond. This was accomplished with help from 1659 fundraising groups, many corporate contributions, and donations of trucking, shipping, and thousands of helping hands. Their annual pilgrimage from Harrington, Maine to Arlington National Cemetery is known as the world's largest veteran's parade, stopping at schools, monuments, veteran's homes and communities all along the way to remind people how important it is to remember, honor and teach.



The Bay Township Area Cemeteries (BTAC) group is proud to be an official location for Wreaths of America!

The Bay Township Cemetery Committee has teamed up with the Horton Bay United Methodist Church to form the BTAC group. There are currently at least 43 veterans confirmed buried in our 3 cemeteries in Bay Township. Our goal is to place a wreath on the grave of every veteran in our 3 cemeteries: Oaklawn Cemetery on Horton Bay Rd. N., Dyer Cemetery on Camp Daggett, & North Bay Cemetery on Church Rd. **Each wreath is only \$15.00.** For every 2 wreaths that are ordered, an additional one will be received to be placed on a veteran's grave along with the 7 Ceremonial Wreaths.

When you donate you can choose from several options: You may specify the veteran on whose grave you would like the wreath placed, or sponsor "in honor of" or "in memory of" a veteran, or you may let the BTAC group decide for you where the wreath will be placed. **Please call Georganna Monk (Local Location Leader) at 231-883-9867 if you have any questions about sponsoring wreaths, how to obtain a sponsorship form, or to volunteer. Sponsorship forms are available to download on the Bay Township website: www.charlevoixcounty.org/govern0283.asp or in the red box at the kiosk in front of the township hall. ** PLEASE NOTE: Placing a wreath on a specific gravesite can only be arranged by notifying the Location Leader****

If you mail a sponsorship form directly to WAA it must be postmarked by November 28, 2014. **All mailed sponsorship checks must be made out to WAA – NOT to the BTAC group.** To sponsor a wreath online, go to www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org, click on "Sponsor Locally" and type our group ID MI0057 in the "Find a Fundraising Group" box and hit Search. You will then see "Bay Township Area Cemeteries". Click on "Bay Township Area Cemeteries". Here you can read information about BTAC and also sponsor a wreath by clicking "Support MI0057-Bay Township Area Cemeteries". The deadline to submit a sponsorship online is December 1, 2014. If we surpass our goal the remaining wreath sponsorships will be applied to 2015. **All sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.**

Please plan to attend the Ceremony at Dyer Cemetery on Saturday, December 13, 2014 at 11:45 (Sharp). At Noon (EST) a moment of silence will be held across the entire nation. At this time the 7 ceremonial wreaths will be placed and then the wreaths will be placed on the graves of the veterans throughout our 3 cemeteries. The Boyne City American Legion Ernest Peterson Post 228 will be assisting at this ceremony. It will be a very special time to be able to honor these men and women by placing a wreath that will mark their grave until the following Spring. **Bay Township is proud to be the first township in Charlevoix County to participate in Wreaths Across America!**