

Portland Township News

Summer 2019

773 East Grand River

P.O. Box 314

Portland, MI 48875

www.portlandtownship.org

Your Township Board in Action

by Chris Jensen, Township Supervisor

The Portland Township Board continues to be active and busy. In addition to taking care of business at our monthly meetings, we also try to stay up-to-date and educated so that we can make the best decisions for our residents. Here are some of the things that we have done in the past six months:

- **Filled all vacancies** for Board of Review, Planning Commission, Portland Area Municipal Authority, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Portland Library Representative.
- **Attended the Michigan Townships Association Convention** in Grand Rapids on April 2-3. This annual event includes training sessions that cover a wide variety of issues that affect townships. It also gives us the opportunity to talk to other township officials and to compare notes with them about things that affect us.
- **Continued to provide monthly recycling services** to our Township residents and participated in the Annual Community Cleanup.
- **Renewed a franchise agreement** with Consumers Energy to maintain natural gas service in the Township.
- **Approved a balanced budget** for 2019/2020 and approved the new budget for the Portland Area Fire Authority that will include the purchase of a new pumper truck.
- **Adopted ordinances** on Solar Energy Systems and Home Businesses
- **Attended a training session on Managing and Maintaining Gravel Roads** presented by the Center for Technology and Training. This provided excellent information and tips on how to improve our gravel roads all year long.
- **Went on our annual spring "Ride-Along"** with members of the Ionia County Road Commission.

Don't forget to use our website to stay in touch with everything that's happening in Portland Township: www.portlandtownship.org.



Annual ICRC Ride-Along

Each spring the members of the Township Board spend a morning with two members of the Ionia County Road Commission, driving around the Township to look at the conditions of the roads. During this trip we are able to point out areas that we are concerned about and the ICRC shows us areas that they feel need attention.

The information that we gain on this annual tour is invaluable. It educates us, helps us know what to look for, and gives us the knowledge we need to make the best decisions about where to spend your tax dollars.

Proposed Marijuana Ordinances

by Sue Vanlente, Township Trustee

At the May 8, 2019 Township meeting, the Township Board discussed passing ordinances to prohibit medical and recreational marijuana establishments within the Township. These ordinances would not prevent the private use of marijuana as allowed by Michigan law, but would state that all commercial establishments would be prohibited within the boundaries of Portland Township. The ordinances will be voted on at the June 12, 2019 meeting.



A survey that was sent out with tax statements in November 2017 showed that 70% of Township residents did not want commercial marijuana activities in Portland Township. In the 2018 election, Portland Township residents again expressed a negative opinion by voting down the recreational marijuana proposition that was on the state-wide ballot.

Property Tax Receipt Change

by Leanne Simon, Township Treasurer

Because fewer and fewer people require property tax receipts, the Township Board has decided to follow the lead of many other townships and no longer mail receipts to every taxpayer. This is effective immediately and is a permanent change.



If you want a receipt mailed to you, you MUST request it when you make your tax payment. If a mortgage company pays your property taxes and you would like a receipt, you will have to phone me or email me and leave a message. Be sure to give your address or parcel number, as well. Phone 517-647-2075 or email twp_treas@sbcglobal.net. You can also go to ioniacounty.org/online-services/ to print your own receipt. Please allow one week for the payment to process and show up online.

How Township Money Supports Road Projects

by Charlene Keilen, Township Clerk

The survey that we sent out in the fall of 2017 showed that roads and road improvements were the number one priority of Portland Township residents, and Township roads continue to be at the top of our agenda at nearly every meeting. This year a large part of our road budget is being directed to Cutler Road.



Cutler Road elicits more questions and more comments than almost any other road in the Township. It is a boundary road between Portland and Danby Townships, and long ago when the County roads were mapped and assigned, Portland Township was assigned the first 1/4 mile (to the I96 overpass). Maintenance for the rest of the road, all the way to Clintonia Road, was assigned to Danby Township. Cutler Road is also the heaviest travelled gravel road in Portland Township. A 2018 traffic count showed that 718 vehicles, including 22 heavy trucks, use the road daily. A large portion of those drivers live in Portland Township, and we hear frequently from them about the condition of the road.



Last year we entered into a one-time agreement with Danby Township to share the costs of major improvements to the road over a three-year period. In 2018 we shared the cost of ditching, removal of trees, and the addition of gravel. This year when the I96 bridge project is completed, we will pave our portion of the road from Grand River Avenue to just past the overpass. Next year (2020) we plan to share the cost to resurface Cutler Road, as far as Clintonia, with limestone or asphalt. In addition, the bridge over the Looking Glass River is scheduled to be reconstructed in 2021. Our share of that cost will be approximately \$103,000.

The Cutler Road overpass was removed at the end of April and will be reconstructed this summer. The project is being funded by the State of Michigan.

Other road improvements scheduled and budgeted for this year include:

- 10,000 yards of gravel will be placed on the roads that have been selected this year.
- Two applications of brine will be applied to all gravel roads.
- Looking Glass Avenue will be chipped and sealed from the city limits to the end of the asphalt.
- The Ionia County Road Commission will crack/chip/seal Divine Highway from David Highway to the city limits, and will do a new overlay and chip/seal on David Highway from Lyons Road to Libhart Creek. The County will cover the cost of these two projects.

Recycling Update

by Mark Simon, Township Trustee

On January 1, 2019, Danby Township ended their participation in the recycling partnership with Portland Township. Recycling continues to be a priority to us and our past survey shows that it's a priority to our residents, as well.

Recycling in Portland Township is about as easy as it can be. Granger Waste Management suggested that we use single-stream containers, which means that you don't have to sort your recycled products, everything can be put into one bin. We ask that you break down cardboard boxes and smash other items before bringing them to the site. This allows for more materials to be put into each bin. The fewer bins we use, the less our cost. We have workers on hand at the site to help out if needed. Please DO NOT leave items on the ground---this is littering.

Recycling is done on the fourth Saturday of the month and the following Sunday. Hours are 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Our location is 1 Industrial Drive, just past Municipal Supply. Brian Wohlscheid provides this site at no cost to the township; please thank him when you see him. For complete information, please visit our website: www.portlandtownship.org.

**Portland Township Board
Meets 2nd Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.**

Supervisor, Chris Jensen
portlandtscjensen@gmail.com
(517) 647-2479

Clerk, Charlene Keilen
portownship@att.net
(517) 647-6643

Treasurer, Leanne Simon
twp_treas@sbcglobal.net
(517) 647-2075

Trustee, Sue Vanlente
suevanlente@gmail.com
(517) 575-8000

Trustee, Mark Simon
mgsimon@wowway.com
(517) 647-4892

**Planning Commission
Meets first Wednesday of March,
June, September and December at
7:00 pm**

Chair, Cindy Selden
Secretary, Sue Vanlente
Hope Partlow
Tony Dixon
Ross Schneider
Marcy Lay
Evelyn Walkington-Jensen

**Zoning Board of Appeals
Annual Organizational Meeting
second Wednesday of each January
at 6:30 pm. Then as needed.**

Kris Bond
Mark Simon
Larry Pung
Marcy Lay
Tom Klein
Alternate, Eileen Main

**Board of Review
Meets in December, March, and
July**

Chris Jensen
Cindy Selden
Nick Sandborn
Matt Robertson
Russell Franke
Alternate, Keith Baker

Zoning Administrator

Jeanne Vandersloot
(616) 897-4242
zoningadmin@msn.com

Assessors

Dean and Jason Kohagen
(989) 383-0306
jkohagen@bsasoftware.com