



City of Otsego Agenda

A Publication of the City of Otsego

Spring 2011

FUTURE NEWSLETTER PUBLICATIONS



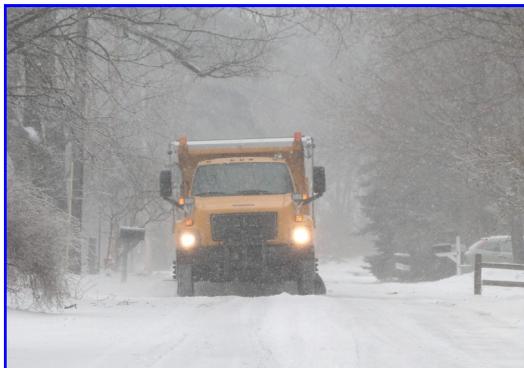
The City of Otsego is announcing that the all future Newsletters will not be sent to each individual residence, beginning with the Summer Newsletter.

The Summer Newsletter will be published in June. Future Newsletters will be available:

- On the City's Website – www.cityofotsego.org
- Otsego City Hall
- Otsego Public Library
- The [City of Otsego, Michigan's](#) New Facebook Page.

If you desire to have the Newsletter emailed to you – please email your request to the City Clerk at acronen@cityofotsego.org.

Thank You



DPW Staff for keeping the City of Otsego safe during the heavy snow & ice events!

2011 Board of Review

The Board of Review will meet Monday, March 14, 2011, from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.; Thursday, March 17, 2011, from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.; and Saturday, March 19, 2011, from 9:00 a.m. until Noon at the Otsego City Hall, 117 East Orleans Street, Otsego, Michigan. The Board will also meet Tuesday, March 8, 2011, at 8:00 a.m. for organizational purposes only. Please call (269) 692-3391 to schedule an appointment. You may also mail your protest to City Hall, but they must be received by Friday, March 11, 2011.



GARAGE SALES - Don't forget to obtain your garage/yard sale permit before having a sale. Cost of the permit is \$1.00 and may be obtained at the City Clerk's Office. Each residence is permitted two sales per year with a maximum duration of three days each.



SCHOOL & CITY ELECTION MAY 3, 2011

Please see the "City Manager's View" on Page 2, for information regarding the City's May Election Headlee Override Proposal

The polls will open at City Hall at 7:00 a.m. and remain open until 8:00 p.m. The last day to register to vote for the May 3rd Election is April 4, 2011. Voter Registration forms are available at City Hall or call 692-3391. Remember to bring Photo ID to the Polls!

If you have any questions, or would like to register to vote, please contact the City Clerk, Angela Cronen at 692-3391.

EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE!

TRANSFER STATION COUPONS

The Transfer Station Program dates have been extended once again, allowing the coupon to be used until December 31, 2011. Coupons will continue to be distributed during the months of February, March, April, and May only. City residents will be entitled to dispose of one load of trash/rubbish (no larger than a pick-up truck can hold) free of charge. Household garbage is NOT accepted at the Transfer Station. Please remember, this service is for Otsego City Residents Only. In order to take advantage of this service, pick up your coupon at City Hall when you pay your utility bill. One coupon will be issued per address, per year. City residents who do not pay their own water bills may bring proof of address within the City limits to City Hall to receive a coupon. The Transfer Station is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. For further details or questions, please call City Hall.



HYDRANT FLUSHING

The City of Otsego Water Department will flush all fire hydrants April 18 through April 29. This is done to remove any stale water that may be in the system and ensure that the fire hydrants are working properly. You may experience some reduced pressure and discoloration during this process. If discoloration occurs, let your water run until it clears.

WINTER PARKING RULES REMAIN IN EFFECT



Parking is PROHIBITED on any public street in the City of Otsego from 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. Parking is prohibited during the months of November through April in order to facilitate snow removal. Violators will be ticketed.

City Hall Will Be Closed Friday, April 22 & Monday, May 30, 2011



City Manager
Thad Beard

City Manager's View

CITY TO REQUEST HEADLEE OVERRIDE

Property Values: As a whole, homeowners will once again see a reduction in their taxable value of their homes. The City is expected to lose 2.74% in taxable value for all residential properties. If you are a homeowner this may bring some relief in your budget, since it certainly means you may be paying less in taxes, again this year. The Industrial and Commercial properties are each losing taxable value as well. The total taxable value of the City (including all properties) is reduced by approximately three and one half percent (3.5%), which means that we the City will capture approximately \$40,000 less in taxes this year.

Statutory Revenues: As you may have noticed in the media, the State is in the process of eliminating their budget deficit. One way in which the Governor proposed was to further reduce the amount of Revenue Sharing with local units of government. In fact the published budget includes the following: "Statutory revenues sharing payments for cities, villages and townships are recommended for elimination in fiscal year 2012" (page B-65 of 2012 and 2013 Executive Budget Recommendation). If the Statutory revenue sharing is eliminated, it would reduce the Otsego General Fund by approximately \$78,000, or slightly less than four percent (4%). The General Fund is the primary operating fund which provides for Police, Fire, Parks & Recreation and General Administration. A reduction of \$118,000 will impact these essential services the City provides.

Headlee Override: In order to help offset the loss of revenue, the City Commission has authorized a ballot initiative to restore the Millage rate of the City from 12.0854 to 12.5000. The 1978 Headlee Amendment protected taxpayers, in the 1990's, before Proposal A, when property values increased faster than the overall rate of inflation. The amendment required local governments to permanently "roll back" their millage so that they could not collect taxes more than the prior year, plus inflation. Proposal A keeps taxable values from increasing faster than the rate of inflation or 5 percent, whichever is less. Even though taxpayers are still protected from inflation, there is no provision to "roll forward" millage to regain revenues lost from the prior rollbacks, even though property values have decreased. Since the early 1990's, the City millage rate has been reduced from 12.5 mills to 12.0854 mills. The City has never requested a Headlee Override, but will do so on May 3. If the voters approve the Headlee Override, the City will collect approximately \$47,000 in additional operating taxes. A \$100,000 home would provide an additional \$20.73 each year, if this is passed.

EMPLOYEE NEWS



The City of Otsego is pleased to announce that Mari Hill has joined the staff as the part-time Accounts Receivable Specialist. Mari is a lifelong resident of the Otsego area, graduate of Otsego High School and holds an Associate Accounting Degree from Kaplan University. Mari started work in her position late last November. Please stop by City Hall and welcome Mari to the City's staff!

Fire Department News



-Thanks to McDonalds

McDonalds had their re-grand opening and donated five hundred dollars to the Otsego Fire Department.

Be Careful With Candles during Power Outages Tips for Fire Safety When the Lights Go Out

The U.S. candle industry and State Fire Marshals are urging consumers to exercise caution if using candles during a power outage. An estimated 20 percent of candle fires involving fatalities occur during the loss of electrical power. Although flashlights and battery-powered lamps are safe sources of light during a power failure, candles are often a reliable back-up source of light during lengthy power outages or when a household flashlight is not available.

To protect your family and home, the National Candle Association and National Association of State Fire Marshals recommend the following precautions if you choose to use candles when the lights go out:

- **Pillar candles and container candles are a better choice during a power outage than taper candles.**

Broader based candles are less likely to be accidentally knocked over. When possible, candles should be enclosed within glass globes for added protection from burns or fire.

- **Place candles on a stable surface in a fire resistant holder that is 12 inches away from anything flammable.**

For added safety when the lights go out, a candle in its holder may be placed on a metal cookie sheet, frying pan or ceramic dinner plate.

- **Avoid moving a burning candle during a power outage if possible.**

It is easy to trip in the dark or brush against something flammable. Container candles may be too hot to handle, causing you to drop the container which could start a fire.

- **Never leave a burning candle unattended.**

Try to restrict people and candles to one room in the house so the location of family members and candle flames always can be accounted for. Extinguish candles upon leaving a room.

- **Make sure the candles are well out of the reach of children and pets.** Young children are especially apt to bump into things when a room is unfamiliarly dark.

- **Don't use candles to search for something in a closet or small confined space** - where clothes, papers or other combustibles could accidentally ignite.

- **Extinguish all candles before going to bed.**

Never use a candle as a nightlight.

Extinguish candles safely.

Extinguish the candle by cupping your hand behind the candle flame before blowing it out – or, better yet, snuff out the flame with a metal candle snuffer. A spark or ember, if blown from the candle, could ignite.



2011 Property Assessments

By, Matthew Storbeck, Finance Director

Property owners will receive their 2011 Assessment Notices during the first week of March. This notice will include the 2011 Assessed Value (AV), State Equalized Value (SEV), Taxable Value (TV) and classification for the property. AV is the amount the City Assessor calculates to be one-half of the fair market value of the property based upon construction, square footage and sales studies of similar properties. SEV is the State of Michigan's belief of one-half of the fair market value of the property after applying a factor to all properties within a class (residential, commercial, etc.). To my knowledge, the City has not ever received a factor from the State of Michigan.

Over the past year, residential properties experienced an overall market value decrease of approximately 3 percent. Commercial properties decreased in value 1.7 percent overall. Changes in market value affects both the AV and SEV. The 2010 Inflation Rate Multiplier is 1.017(1.7 percent), which will be used to calculate the change in TV. TV, the value that determines property taxes, cannot increase more than the inflation rate, as determined by the Michigan Department of Treasury, or 5 percent, whichever is less, until there is a change in ownership of the property.

Please examine the assessment notice to verify the Principle Residence Exemption (PRE). This value used to be called the

"Homestead Exemption" but was often confused with the state income tax exemption referred to by the same name. The PRE percentage is that part of a residential property occupied by the owner. If the property is a multiple residence, then it should be based upon the square footage of the home that is occupied by the owner. The PRE is the percentage the property will be exempt from the 18 mill public school operating millage for 2011.

Protest to the Board of Review is necessary to protect your right to further appeals to the Michigan Tax Tribunal for valuation and exemption appeals and/or the State Tax Commission for classification appeals. Properties classified Commercial Real, Industrial Real or Developmental Real may be appealed to the regular March Board of Review or to the Michigan Tax Tribunal prior to May 31. Commercial Personal, Industrial Personal, or Utility Personal Property may be appealed to the regular March Board of Review or to the Michigan Tax Tribunal prior to May 31, if a personal property statement was filed with the local unit prior to the commencement of the Board of Review as provided by M.C.L. 211.19. Refer to 2011 Board of Review *Article on Page 2*.



Police Chief, Gordon Konkle

POLICE BEAT

We are frequently asked questions involving police issues or the criminal justice system in general. In the next several articles I will list common questions we receive and try my best to answer or explain what you need to do, where you need to go, and what information you will need to avoid making more than one trip.

How do I get approved to purchase a handgun?

The State of Michigan requires that you apply for a permit to purchase a handgun at the police jurisdiction in which you reside (City or County). If you live within the City of Otsego, then you will need to come to the Otsego Police Department for a permit to purchase the handgun prior to actually purchasing the gun. If you currently have a Permit to Carry a Concealed Weapon (CCW Permit), then you don't need a permit to purchase the handgun. Someone with the CCW Permit only needs to register the gun once they have purchased it.

For those without the CCW Permit, you must come into the jurisdiction (Police Department or Sheriff's Office) in which you live, pass a simple safety test and a criminal background check. Once you have successfully completed those steps, you will be issued a permit to purchase a handgun. The permit is good for ten days and as soon as the gun has been purchased you must register it with the police jurisdiction in which you live. It is no longer necessary to bring the actual handgun to the police agency, only return the permit to purchase form with the gun information listed on the permit. If there is some confusion on locating the required information on the gun, then it can be brought in and we will help you locate all necessary information to fill out the form.

What if I inherit or I am given a handgun from a relative?

The person receiving the gun must go through the same steps as though they are purchasing the gun. The goal of the law is to register the gun with the current owner. The owner (purchaser) however, must still meet

the requirements of the law to own the gun. Obviously, the person can't be a felon or mentally unstable regardless of whether the gun was a gift or inherited. Occasionally, the previous gun owner is deceased and therefore unable to complete any paperwork on the transfer of the gun to the new owner. This is not a problem, just bring in any previous gun registration you can find or bring the gun itself and we will attempt to look up the last registered owner. Whether we locate that information or not, the important thing is to have the gun registered into the current owner's name and we will assist you in that process.

Hopefully, this information will help you if you are considering a handgun purchase. If you have any other questions, please give us a call and we will be happy to assist in any way possible. In our next newsletter I will discuss Personal Protection Orders, how to get a P.P.O., what constitutes a violation of the order, and the consequences of a violation.



CITY OF OTSEGO CALENDAR

March 13th



MARCH, 2011

1	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
1	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
3	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
7	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
14	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
21	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
28	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL

APRIL, 2011

4	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
5	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
5	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
7	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
11	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
18	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
22	CITY HALL CLOSED- GOOD FRIDAY	
25	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL

MAY, 2011

2	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
3	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
3	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
3	SCHOOL & CITY ELECTION	
5	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
9	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
16	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
23	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
30	CITY HALL CLOSED - MEMORIAL DAY	

JUNE, 2011

2	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
6	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
7	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
7	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
13	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
20	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
27	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL

JULY, 2011

4	CITY HALL CLOSED	
5	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
5	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
5	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
7	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
11	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
18	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL
25	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M. CITY HALL

City of Otsego
117 E Orleans
Otsego, MI 49078

CITY CONTACTS

Police & Fire Emergency.....911
Fire Non-Emergency.....694-4390
Police Non-Emergency.....692-6111
Chief of Police.....692-6111
City Manager694-6146
City Clerk692-3391
Finance Director692-2741
Dept. Public Works694-6636
Treatment Plant.....694-9194

Website: www.cityofotsego.org

The Agenda is a quarterly publication of the
CITY OF OTSEGO

Tom Gilmer.....Mayor
Kathy Misner.....Mayor Pro-Tem
Joel Thompson.....Commissioner
Molly Wieber.....Commissioner
Cyndi Trobeck.....Commissioner
Thad Beard.....City Manager
Angela Cronen.....City Clerk
David Dutton.....DPW Supervisor
Tom Dunn.....WWTP Superintendent
Gordon Konkle.....Chief of Police
Matthew Storbeck.....Treasurer
Chad Tackett.....Fire Chief

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