

Charter Township of Brighton

Volume VIII, Issue 12

Winter 2010

TAKE TIME TO REFLECT

It seems these days we are bombarded constantly with bad news, dire predictions for the future, and in general, incivility. It is easy to get drawn into the doom and gloom that surrounds us. It is however an opportunity to look around and appreciate what we have right at our fingertips.

Brighton Township is a beautiful community. We have hills and valleys, lakes and streams, woods and wildlife. We have four seasons of recreational opportunities. We live in a close knit, family oriented community where people tend to know one another. We are close to a small town



where we can do our shopping in a safe and pleasant environment yet within an easy drive to major metropolitan amenities. Take the time to reflect on the treasures that surround us. Take a walk around your neighborhood and say hi to friends, old and new. Marvel at the beauty of Fall. Smell the fresh air and enjoy the silence of nature. Watch a deer run through the backyard. It is all free for the asking.

If you need more adventure, go to a high school athletic event and cheer for the home team or take in a local play. Then visit downtown Brighton and replay the event with family and friends over a piece of apple pie and a cup of coffee. Enjoy all the things we tend to take for granted. Forget the bad news—**ENJOY LIFE!**

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Regular Board Meetings are on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month. The meetings are held in the Board Room in the lower level of Township Hall and are broadcast live on Cable Channel 15.

Meeting start time is 7:00 P.M.

SANITARY SEWER FUND FINANCIAL UPDATE

As you know, the Township was approached to provide sewer collection and treatment to protect the water quality for the lakes back in 1999. The Township sold bonds and constructed the system based on the information available at the time including environmental concerns, design considerations, estimated costs, and projected growth patterns to name a few. While the circumstances have changed dramatically since then, the Township continues to monitor the fund's financial obligations. In 2010 the Board adopted a multi-pronged approach to dealing with the debt service issue including:

- Approaching surrounding communities and offering to partner with them for sewer services. *Genoa Township and Brighton Township have approved entering into an intergovernmental agreement to provide a Genoa Township business with sewer services resulting in an additional 5 REU's (residential equivalency units).*
- Conducting an audit of our customer base to ensure customers were being billed for the correct number of assigned REU's.
- Billing vacant parcels that have purchased capacity in the system a quarterly capital charge for their debt service repayment obligations. *These vacant parcels increased the billing base by 308 parcels, an almost twenty percent increase.*
- Negotiating a multi-year contract with the contracted treatment plant operator, Infrastructure Alternatives, Inc. *In fact, we got them to sharpen their pencil a little more this year.*
- Direct procurement of supplies and equipment to avoid mark-ups and utilize our tax exemption status.
- Creation of a bond reserve fund.
- Bond refinancing is being planned for 2015. This would essentially convert the existing 20-year bond into a 30-year bond resulting in a more manageable annual payment amount.
- Adoption of a Capital Improvement Plan & Financial Analysis which assumed a zero-growth scenario and calls for regular rate adjustments.

While these are not all popular, they are necessary for the Township to ensure that the Sanitary Sewer Fund can meet its financial obligations. Contact Dan Bishop, Township Manager, at 810-229-0550 for more information.

LOOKING FOR A BUILDING PERMIT?

The Township transferred its Building Department responsibilities over to the Livingston County Building Department late last year. While building permits are issued through the County, the process still begins at Township Hall with a Land Use permit application filed with the Township Planner.

This permit ensures all construction is compliant with local codes and ordinances. Application requirements include a drawing of what is proposed, what buildings or structures are on the property, how far away the existing and proposed structures are from the property lines, and other relevant data. If the proposal is compliant with all local codes and ordinances, a Land Use Permit will be issued. The approved permit is then taken to the County Building Department and submitted with the applicable building permits. The County Building Department will perform all necessary inspections and notify the Township upon completion of the project. In some instances a waiver will be issued or a Land Use Permit will not be applicable. For example, basic furnace, air conditioning and roof repairs or replacements do not require Land Use Permits.

It is recommended that you contact the Township Planning Department at 810-229-0562 if you have questions. Also, a County Building Department representative is available at Township Hall on Mondays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. to answer questions or via phone at 517-546-3240.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL

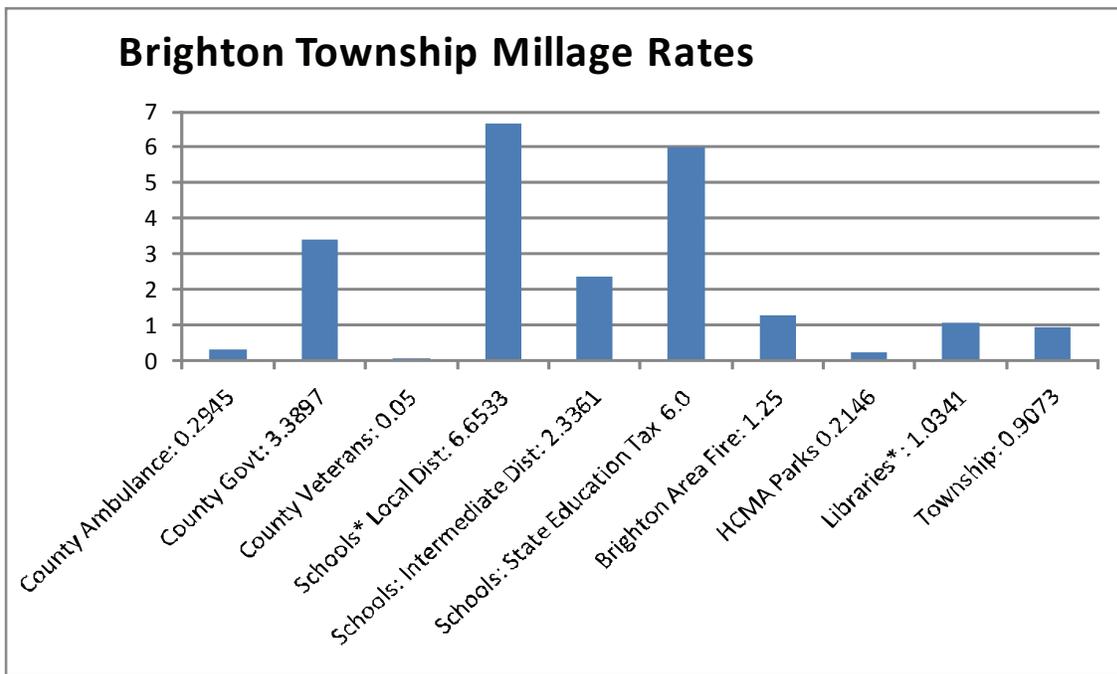
Occasionally we get calls about local animal control ordinances. The Township utilizes the Livingston County Animal Control department for domestic animal issues. If a dog is running loose, Livingston County Animal Control may be able to help. They can be reached at 517-546-2154.



TREASURER’S TIDBITS

I PAY TAXES — WHERE DOES MY MONEY GO?

The Treasurer’s office is often asked what we do with the money we collect during the Winter and Summer tax seasons. While the local Treasurer collects the money, it is actually dispersed to the various taxing jurisdictions. The chart below identifies the millage rates for the various taxing jurisdictions within the Township and assumes a Principal Residence Exemption. Absent this exemption, the State Education Tax portion increases to 18 mills. Brighton Township is home to multiple school and library districts so the local school district and library millages are averages. To determine your tax liability, you would multiply the Taxable Value by the total millage rate then divide by 1000. (i.e. TV x Millage Rate / 1,000 = Taxes owed) Still have questions, contact *your* Treasurer, Lana Theis, at 810-229-0556.



Local School District	Millage	Local Library	Millage
Brighton	5.8	Brighton	0.8892
Hartland	7.6	Cromaine	1.5212
Howell	6.56	Howell	0.692
*Average - These local school district millages are in addition to the 6 or 18 mill State Education Tax as noted above	6.6533	*Average	1.0341



Did you know?
 There are 8,275 parcels in the Township.
 Population, April 1, 2001 Census* - 17,673
 Population Estimate, July 1, 2010* - 18,615
 Registered Voters, November 2010 - 13,938
 * Source—SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Charter Township of Brighton

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NEW TOWNSHIP HALL HOURS

Brighton Township offices are closed daily for lunch from 12:30 P.M. to 1:30 P.M. The uniform lunch hour enables staff to be available to the public throughout the workday and minimizes the impact of recent staff reductions. Previously lunch hours were staggered and staff availability was unpredictable. Additionally, appointments can be made with the Assessing and Planning Departments ahead of your visit to save time.



ASSESSING UPDATE

Please be on the lookout for your 2011 Notice of Assessment, Taxable Value and Property Classification. This notice will tell you what your 2011 assessed and taxable values are and if there has been a change in your property classification. You should receive your form around the first week in March. Contact information for the Assessor's Office and the 2011 March Board of Review meeting dates and times will be listed on the notice. The purpose of the March Board of Review is to hear and decide assessment appeals, poverty exemptions or property classification appeals.

Please contact the Assessor's Office at 810-229-0558 if you have questions regarding your assessed or taxable values.

Please forward newsletter comments to the editor:
clerk@brightontwp.com

Please be sure to add "newsletter" in the subject line

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*Regular Meeting Days and Times**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1st & 3rd Mondays of every month at 7:00 PM

PLANNING COMMISSION

2nd and 4th Mondays of every month at 7:00 PM

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

4th Wednesday of every month at 7:00 PM

**Meetings are subject to change. Contact the Clerk's office at 810-229-0560 for more information.*

***Phone messages may be left at (810) 229-0550 for all trustees.*