



Ensley Township Newsletter

Volume 14 Issue 1

February, 2008

TOWNSHIP BOARD

- Stephen Knox, Supervisor
- 231-937-4957
- Cynthia Harwood, Clerk
- 231-937-5091
- Faye Folkema, Treasurer
- 616-636-8616
- John VanderMeulen, Trustee
- 616-636-5814
- JoAnn VandenBerg, Trustee
- 616-636-5750

OTHER POSITIONS

- Bob Hawkins, Fire Chief
- 616-636-5256
- Dan Powell, County Commissioner
- 231-834-0957
- Gary Butler, Cemetery Sexton
- 616-636-5385
- Steve Boluyt, Building Inspector
- 616-636-8240
- Pat Huffman, Electrical Inspector
- 616-696-7741
- Bob Hall, Zoning Administrator
- 616-636-8510
- Jason Rosenzweig, Assessor
- 616-636-8510
- Newaygo County Road Comm.
- 231-689-6682

MEETING SCHEDULE

- February 5, 2008
- March 4, 2008
- The Annual Meeting is March 29, 2008. It begins at 10:00 AM.

All regular meetings start at 8:00 PM and are held at the Ensley Township Hall, 7163 E 120th Street, Sand Lake, MI 49343.

2008 Road Projects

This summer, our road project will be to grub, grade and gravel Butternut/Beech from 120th Street to 112th Street. This will complete the stretch from 22 Mile to Croton Township. It will not be paved this year. The cost of blacktop is continuing to increase with the price of oil.

128th Street will be wedged and over-laid between Balsam and Butternut. We will also pave the west side of the intersection of 128th and Butternut Avenue. This area has a history of washing out with heavy rains.

The re-sealing projects will be chosen this spring when the frost comes out of the ground.

Clean-Up Days

Our annual clean-up days will be on Friday, April 4 and Saturday, April 5 from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM at the township hall. There is no charge for rubbish, furniture or scrap metal. Tires must be cut in four pieces. There is a fee of \$15.00 for units with Freon. Large appliances without Freon are \$3.00. Batteries cost \$1.00 to be disposed of. Liquids, cement or shovel offs are not allowed. No loose trash.

Township Seal

We hope you have noticed the seal at the top of the newsletter. This is a picture of the windmill that stood near the corner of 104th and Newcosta. It was erected for Ben Ensley sometime in the 1860's. It was given to Harley Stroven in 1966 by Harry Hackbardt. This windmill was painstakingly restored in Fremont and stands there today in Windmill Gardens. There are two other buildings (the smokehouse and the out house) that were restored and now stand at the Pilgrims' Run Golf Course.

From the Assessor Jason Rosenzweig

Last year was the first year of a three year project to reappraise every property in Ensley Township. I was able to inspect approximately 40% of the properties in the township. I would like to thank all those property owners for their cooperation in the reappraisal process. My goal for 2008 is to inspect another 40% of the properties. The reappraisal involves measuring every home and outbuilding on each property as well as updating the property records to ensure that all information is as accurate as possible. If you are not at home when I stop by, I will leave a postage paid postcard questionnaire that you can complete and send back to me. Your cooperation helps to ensure that all assessments are fair and accurate.

If you plan on splitting your land, the Michigan Land Division Act and the Ensley Township Land Division Ordinance requires township approval. Applications for land divisions can be obtained on-line at the assessor's page of the Ensley Township website, or at the Ensley Township hall.

Per state law, the March Board of Review will be held in March. The tentative dates and times are March 11 from 1pm to 5pm and 6pm to 9pm & March 13 from 9am to 12pm and 1pm to 4pm. Assessment change notices will be sent to all taxpayers in late February / early March. The assessment change notices will contain information on how to appeal your assessment. The March Board of Review has the authority to hear appeals on only the 2008 assessed values. They also can grant hardship exemptions. The township board has adopted the 2008 Federal Poverty Guidelines. The State of Michigan has notified township Boards of Review that all hardship exemptions that are granted will be audited by the State. Hardship exemption applications may be picked up from the Township Hall in Late February.

Should you have any questions regarding your assessment, the assessing process, land divisions, or anything else I may be able to help with, please feel free to contact me at the Township Hall during my normal office hours - Thursdays from 3:30pm to 6:00pm.

New Sign

If you have driven by the township hall, you may have taken note that the old township sign has been replaced with a new one. On the sign is the township seal as well as the board meeting date and time. Look to see election and crime watch information there also. A thank you goes out to Steve Boluyt for a job well done.

Election News

The Presidential Primary was held on January 15. Here are the results.

358 or 19.99% out of 1,791 registered voters turned out to vote.

Republican	
McCain	99
Romney	97
Huckabee	68
Paul	11
Thompson	6
Giuliani	3
Hunter	0
Tancredo	0
Brownback	0
Uncommitted	1
Democrats	
Clinton	48
Dodd	0
Gravel	0
Kucinich	1
Uncommitted	22
Write-in	2

Our next election will be in May when we vote on school board members and/or millage requests.

August 5 is when we have our local elections. This is when we vote on Township and County officials. If you would like to run for a Township position, contact Cindy Harwood for a petition. The forms must be filed by May 13, 2008 at 4:00 P.M.

Historical Society

Anyone interested in joining the Ensley Township Historical Committee, please contact Douglas Verduin at 231-937-4152 or verd@wmis.net. The first project will be the reprinting of the Township's Pioneer Parade.

Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch meets on the third Tuesday of each month. Please join us for an informative, enjoyable time. Become aware of the latest crime in our area with our Community Policing Officer. He has guest speakers come in and give interesting related topics.

Zoning & Planning News

By Bob Hall

Hello, again! As I mentioned in the last newsletter; zoning is a technique that attempts to balance compatible land uses while preserving individual property rights; yours *and* mine. This past year has hosted multiple hearings addressing the needs of people as it relates to residential development; *land divisions, parcel combinations, planned unit developments, private roads and variance requests* have been administratively, judicially and legislatively processed here in Ensley Township. We're you're closest and most personal form of government...be a part of it!

Your Planning Commission was very busy in 2007 making land use decisions that effect every day living and the quality of life here at home. They have been reviewing the Master Plan. The Master Plan is guide that assists the township in preparing for and directing the future shape of the township. As the Planning Commission ventures into 2008 they are asking for your participation.

On Monday March 24th 2008 at 8 p.m., the Ensley Township Planning Commission will be conducting a regularly scheduled meeting to receive 'public comment and questions' regarding open space conservation and farmland preservation. It's no secret that each of us is willing to express our own opinion and that we want our concerns to be heard. Now's your chance!

Assisting the Planning Commission [*during the meeting on March 24th*] will be Ryan Coffey, MSU Extension Land Use Educator. Ryan brings with him an extensive array of knowledge about various population demographics, land use techniques and how we can manage it all through proper '*land use planning*'.

Please feel free to contact me at the Ensley Township Hall on Tuesday and Fridays from 8 a.m. until 12 p.m. and on Thursdays from 12 p.m. until 6 p.m. Also, please call me if you are planning to attend the meeting on Monday March 24th and have questions concerning the topics.

If you would like to come to one of the Planning Commission's regular meetings, they start at 8:00 PM on the following dates:

February 2	March 24
April 28	May 29
June 23	July 31
August 25	September 29
October 27	November 24
December—No Meeting	

Dog Clinic

Our annual dog clinic will be held on February 9 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the Ensley Township Fire Barn. A one or three year license may be purchased. Shots are available for distemper, rabies and/or kennel cough. The three in one shot for cats is also available.

Reminder

The Newaygo County Animal Control is doing a dog census. Be sure you have your dog licensed to avoid a fine.

*To somehow embrace the growth
we cannot stop and preserve some of the past we love so much.*