

TOWNSHIP OF SUMMIT

2121 Ferguson Road
Jackson, Michigan 49203
517-788-4113 - www.summittwp.com

2015 Newsletter

From the Supervisor's Office – As in prior years, we're taking advantage of the annual Assessment Change Notice mailing to include some information on current events in your Township. You may also access the Township website at www.summittwp.com for specific information from each of the Township departments.

The first order of business is to welcome and introduce our new Township Clerk, Meghan Dobben. Meghan was appointed by the Township Board of Trustees, effective January 1, 2015. She replaces Janie Hildebrandt, our Township Clerk since 2008, who has retired effective the end of 2014. Janie recently married and is moving to Florida. She's been a tremendous asset to the Township during her tenure and, though we will miss her dearly, we wish her good health and happiness. We're all looking forward to Meghan's presence on the Township Board.

From the Clerk's Office – There will be a statewide election on May 5, 2015. Our precinct locations will remain the same: Cornerstone Christian church, Summit Township Hall, and Jackson Free Methodist Church. All voters will receive a new voter I.D. soon. Please note the polling location where you are to vote. This will eliminate confusion on Election Day and the process will be smoother for both voters and election workers.

As a reminder, we do not maintain a permanent list to mail applications for Absentee Ballots. However, we will be happy to supply our residents with an application for a ballot via phone request. You may also visit the Township Office to fill out an application or mail in a request with all required information. Please remember that a valid picture I.D. must be presented to receive a ballot in person. Also, per election law, a ballot can only be handed to the voter for whom it is intended.

One last thing to remember, voters who decline to show their I.D. at the polls CANNOT vote.

From the Treasurer's Office - Property tax and water & sewer bills may be paid at First Merit Bank branch offices at 4515 Francis Street and 1514 West Morrell Street or at the Township offices at 2121 Ferguson Road. Also, please check our website, www.summittwp.com, for information on two electronic payment options. The first – a direct debit opportunity is offered at no cost to you. This can also save you time and money by eliminating check writing and postage. The second – use your credit card. There is a convenience fee charged to utilize this method.

From the Assessor's Office – The enclosed Assessment Change Notice shows information of interest for the 2015 property tax cycle. Your property taxes are based on two factors – the CPI multiplier and the millage rate. This year's Consumer Price Index (CPI) multiplier is 1.016. This multiplier times your 2014 taxable value creates your 2015 taxable value. The exception to this is if the property has transferred during 2014. If the property transferred, any benefit the previous owner had would be adjusted for the new owner of the property. We expect that most residents will see a flat to slight increase in the taxable value of their property. The other factor needed for calculating the tax bill is the millage rate. The specific rate(s) being applied will be listed on the summer and winter tax bills.

From the Building Official's Office – If you have any questions about a construction project you are considering, please contact the Building Inspection Department (517) 788 4113, extension 257. Getting answers to questions before you begin can save time and money. As a reminder, Jackson County is one of the "Highest Potential for Radon Gas" counties in Michigan. You can obtain a short term test kit from the Jackson County Environmental Health Department (517-788-4433) for \$11.00. This is a 3 to 7 day test and will indicate what the radon level is in your home.

From the Department of Public Works – We continue to manage our costs very effectively; however we have reached a point where we need to consider a water rate increase. We anticipate reviewing the cost/rate structure this year and implementing the rate increase by the fourth quarter. Just to put this in context, water rates have not been raised since 1998, nearly 17 years ago. Even with this proposed increase, Summit Township will have one of the lowest water rates in the state of Michigan. We also wish to remind residents that **sewer pumps are not permitted to be discharged into the**

sanitary sewer system. This practice results in ground water using up needed sewer capacity along with causing unnecessary treatment cost.

From the Fire Chief – 2014 was a good year for the Summit Fire Department. We settled a three year contract with Firefighters Local 1639. In October we took delivery of the first of two new rescue pumpers that will allow us to reduce our fleet from five pieces of fire apparatus to three while increasing our efficiency as well as effectiveness. As we enter 2015 we look forward to putting the second rescue pumper in service, as well as continuing to provide quality service to Summit Township residents. Run totals for 2014 are as follows: Fire related 144, Emergency Medical Services 1,691, Other 515. Total run count for 2014 was 2,350.

From the Sheriff's Detachment – If you're going to be away for an extended period of time, you may request periodic vacation checks of your residence by simply completing a request form which you can obtain at the Township office or the Sheriff's office Website – www.jcsd1.org<<http://www.jcsd1.org>>. Just drop it off at the Township office.

All door-to-door solicitors are required to register with the Township. Please call 911 to report any suspicious activity or anyone you suspect may not be registered. A description of the person(s) and any vehicle(s) would be very helpful.

Also, be on the alert for phone and internet fraud. Before sending money or providing sensitive documents to anyone, ask for a call back number or physical address and verify the requesting party. Any reluctance to provide this information would be a strong indication the request is fraudulent. Never provide sensitive information to anyone soliciting information from you.

Bank and credit/debit card fraud has been on the rise. Be sure to carefully go through your monthly statements and do periodic credit checks to assure your cards have not been compromised. Shredding of documents containing personal and sensitive information can help alleviate the theft of information.

2014 Activites/2015 Plans –

- Construction activity has continued to improve. Klavon's opened in June of 2014 and has exceeded expectations. The patio section will open this spring. In addition, a new 10,000 sq. ft. office building is under construction at 4100 Spring Arbor Rd and Jackson College has begun construction of another dorm which will double the capacity for student housing. Housing starts in 2014 were still well below those we experienced early in the first decade of the 21st century, but improving. 2015 is showing signs of further improvement in new housing and remodels/additions are also up.
- Major road work in the Township was completed over the past summer with the rebuilding of Weatherwax Drive as well as Horton Road between Park Road and Ferguson Corners. You're all painfully aware of that, but it is really nice now that it's finished. This year, the Hague Road bridge over the Grand River will be replaced, causing a closure and reroute of traffic during the construction period.
- In conjunction with this roadwork a new 12'' PVC water main was installed replacing an 8'' cast iron water main on Horton road between Badgley and Park Roads.
- The Planning Commission has started the required 5 year review of the Master Plan and expects to have it completed in the early summer of 2015. There will be at least one public meeting for input.
- The Township applied for a Department of Natural Resources grant to develop a non-motorized trail from Weatherwax Drive along Horton Road to the City Limits. We recently learned that the grant was not approved but we do have the opportunity to reapply this spring. We intend to do this in collaboration with the City of Jackson which will continue the trail on into Ella Sharp Park. This should give both applications more strength in the evaluation/award process by the DNR.