



GREENBUSH TOWNSHIP NEWS

WEBSITE: GREENBUSHTWP.ORG

SUMMER 2016

TREASURER NEWS, Reminders, etc.....

Township Officials:

- **Supervisor:** Eugene Jones
barbjones60@gmail.com
(989) 224-4463
- **Clerk:** Bernadette Hayes
hayes@newlookdata.com
(989) 224-6105
- **Treasurer:** Julie Havens
julesh57@yahoo.com
(989) 224-2150
- **Trustee:** Dan Jorae
danieljorae@aol.com
(989) 224-4936
- **Trustee:** Ramona Smith
srsmith1956@hotmail.com
(989) 224-6197
- **Assessor:** Beth Botke
b.bassessing@gmail.com
(517) 204-3752

- **You may pay your tax at FirstMerit Bank now through September 14, 2016.** Payments can be made at the Main Office located at 200 West Higham Street, St. Johns— Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. You will need your entire tax bill and full payment by check or money order. The Bank will stamp your portion of the tax bill as paid and this, along with your cancelled check, will be your receipt. **NOTE: CASH PAYMENTS ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED AT THE BANK. You must pay by check or money order.**
- **PARTIAL PAYMENTS** are accepted if paid directly to the Township Treasurer. Either mail in your payment, or pay in person. After your payment is posted, I will send you a revised bill showing your payment and the new balance.
- **POSTMARKS** are accepted as long as we receive your payment within 5 days of mail date, and **the postmark is clear and legible.** If postmark is missing or unreadable, you may be billed for interest and/or a penalty if received after the due date.
- **Michigan Disabled Veterans may be eligible for exemption of the property taxes on their principle residence** if certain qualifications are met. If you think you might be eligible, please contact our Assessor, Beth Botke for information. **REMINDER: This exemption is granted on an ANNUAL basis. It must be renewed each year.**
- Delinquent **Personal Property Tax** is paid to Township Treasurer. Please call 989-224-2150 for payment information. *A note to anyone changing the name of their company or selling to a new owner—Personal Property (and the tax) follows the Personal Property. The new owner is liable for any unpaid tax.*
- **NOTE:** Tax bills are sent to all property owners on record, even if they are paid by a mortgage company or someone else. The copy sent to you is for informational purposes. If your taxes were paid from your escrow account in the past, that should remain the same. If you no longer wish to receive a copy of your tax bill, please send an email or drop off a signed letter with your name, address, parcel number(s), phone number and the address that you want the bills sent to. Thank you!

Online Access to your Property Information....

Follow these steps to access your property information—current and historical:

- * Type in www.bsasoftware.com in your Internet Address Bar.
- * Click on “Search Online Property” button (Top right, red button).
- * In the “Search Available Municipalities” box type in “Greenbush Township” and click on “Search”.
- * Click on “Tax Information Search” (on the left).
- * Type in your last name & choose the property you want to review.
- * Be sure to click on “Homeowners Viewing Your Parcel Click Here”...follow the instructions and there will be no fee for your own property tax information.

The information on this website is updated daily. You can use this website to verify that your payment has been received and posted to your account.

You may also go to www.clinton-county.org and click on: 1. Online Services, 2. Assessing/Current Tax/Delinquent Tax Lookup, 3. Clinton County On-line Tax Search, then choose from Online Services box on the left (ex. Current Tax Search). You can then search by name, address or parcel number.

2016 Meeting Dates:

- Thursday, AUG 4
- Thursday, SEPT 8
- Monday, OCT 3
- Thursday, NOV 10
- Monday, DEC 5

MEETINGS START @ 7:00 PM and are held @ Township Hall, 1883 E. French Rd.

Check your fire coverage.....

In Greenbush Township you may be charged up to a maximum of \$1,600 in the event of a fire run to your property—the minimum is \$800. Please be sure this amount is included in your Homeowner's policy to cover Fire Runs. It is your responsibility to confirm that you have sufficient coverage.

BRIGGS DISTRICT LIBRARY.....

989-224-4702

In recent weeks, you've probably been hearing about our "new" District Library—formerly known as Briggs Public Library. You may have received information in the mail explaining why they decided to change to a District library, citing the major reason as decreasing funds making it unable to prepare a balanced budget without dipping into reserve funds.

On August 2nd, there will be a 10 year millage request of .75 mills (75 cents per \$1000 of taxable value) on the ballot. Here are some of the facts:

1. This millage will *replace* the previous appropriations provided by the residents of the City of St. Johns & Bingham Townships It will NOT be in addition to (meaning their taxes will decrease...yours will increase).
2. The new District Library will serve the St. Johns Public School District.
3. If this millage passes, the Township will no longer need to pay the library our annual support out of the general fund (\$1,692). Our contribution will be collected through your property tax bill for an approximate total of \$56,000 in 2016. Overall the library anticipates \$464,000 in the first year if the millage proposal passes.
4. ALL residents of the St. Johns School District will be voting on this millage - not just Greenbush Township.

Don't forget to VOTE - Tuesday, August 2, 2016 !!

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE UPDATE.....

As of June 15, 2016 at 10:00 am, Greenbush Township is the sole owner of what was formerly known as Clinton Area Fire & Rescue. CAFR as you knew it, no longer exists except for the winding down period that will end within 45 days after the completion of its annual audit which is currently under way. This was voted on and approved by both Greenbush & Victor Township Boards, and subsequently by the Clinton Area Fire & Rescue Board.

Greenbush and Victor Townships came to an agreement on splitting the assets of CAFR. Once the audit is complete, Victor Township will be paid 57% of any cash remaining after all obligations owing as of 6/15/16 have been paid. Greenbush Township will have the remaining 43% to add to our general fund.

Station 1 and all its contents is now the property of Greenbush Township. Per the agreement, if within 5 years we no longer need the building for a fire station, it is to be sold and after expenses, the proceeds will be split 50/50 with Victor Township. What used to be Station 5 to CAFR, will now be our Station 2 for as long as we maintain a fire department.

- ◆ We currently have 4 Medical First Response Units
- ◆ This is the ONLY fire department in Clinton County able to produce up to 2400 gpm of water from any static water source without the aid of a pre set hydrant or dry hydrant. Static water sources consist of any pool, lake, pond, river or creek.
- ◆ This is the only department in Northern Clinton County able to compress air for SCBA refills on sight of an emergency & not be limited to pre-filled bottles.

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE UPDATE.....continued

- ◆ There is an existing contract providing fire & rescue service to Washington Township. We would like to honor this contract subject to the one year notice that was provided to them by CAFR via Victor Township sometime in January (per CAFR minutes).
- ◆ Should we continue to operate our fire department, the Chief has come up with a projected operating budget of \$80,000 (subject to providing service to Washington Township). This is over \$15,000 less than what was budgeted for GBT this year. This budget includes maintaining any dry hydrants currently in place.
- ◆ Currently the fire department has 29 members: 15 assigned to Station 1, and 14 assigned to Station 2
- ◆ Of the 29 members: 19 are trained in both Fire Suppression and Medical First Response; 5 are Fire Suppression Only; 4 are trained in only Medical First Response.
- ◆ Of the 23 Medical staff members, 11 are trained to the minimum standard set by the State of Michigan; 7 are trained to the Emergency Medical Technician Level; and 5 are trained to the Paramedic Level.
- ◆ We currently owe FirstMerit Bank \$55,208 plus interest. This is the total outstanding balance of the original investment in CAFR, which includes having to pay our share of Bingham Township's portion of the CAFR Loan resulting from when they left CAFR in 2012. This loan is scheduled to be paid in full in 2018. If we were to sell excess equipment, we believe we can raise nearly \$45,000 that could be applied to the loan balance, making it possible to pay this off in 2017.

◆ LISTING OF EQUIPMENT NOW OWNED BY GREENBUSH TOWNSHIP

STATION 1 EQUIPMENT (2761 North US-27) now owned by Greenbush Township (*except as noted):

Engine 11

1983 Pierce Arrow
1500 gallons of water
1250 gallon per minute (gpm) pump
Water shuttle capabilities

Tanker 1

1982 pumper tanker
2000 gallons of water
1250 gpm pump
Can be used as a reserve engine.

Brush 1 *Owned by DNR

1982 Chevrolet Silverado
150 gallons of water
250 gallons per minute

Engine 12

1987 Pierce Dash
750 gallons of water
1500 gpm pump
2 Turbo Drafts (Can produce up to 1200 gpm from any any rule water source) This is one of 2 units in Clinton County with this capability
Full ground ladder capabilities
Medical First Response Unit

Squad 1

1999 Heavy Rescue
2 light towers
Air Compressor that can fill SCBA (self contained breathing apparatus)
Extrication equipment for
Medical First Response Unit

STATION 2 EQUIPMENT (Uncle John's) now owned by Greenbush Township (*except as noted):

Engine 21

1982 Kenworth/E-One Pumper Tanker
1500 gallons of water
1500 gpm pump
Water shuttle capabilities

Brush 2 *Owned by DNR

1982 Chevrolet Silverado
250 gallons of water
250 gpm pump
Medical First Response Unit

Engine 22

1987 Pierce Dash
750 gallons of water
1500 gpm pump
2 Turbo Drafts (see info above @ Engine 12)
Full ground ladder capabilities
Medical First Response Unit

◆ SURVEY RESULTS:

Last winter, we mailed out a short general survey so we could get an idea of what our residents wanted or expected for the future of Greenbush Township's fire & rescue service. We have been having greater attendance at our monthly meetings, but out of over 850 property owners, we only had 131 surveys returned to us (including those that straggled in after the requested return date). This amounts to only 15% of the entire township.

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE UPDATE.....continued

Here are the results of the 131 completed surveys. Please note that some surveys had more than one choice marked...and so were given a percentage in tallying up. Also, some surveys did not have an answer to each question marked, and so the only things counted were the items that were actually marked on the survey:

1. Do you want GBT (Greenbush Township) to continue to provide fire service to its residents? 73 YES 49 NO
2. Who would you support fire & rescue services from? 31.25-Any, .75-Ashley, 8.16-Elsie, 5.5-Maple Rapids, 70.33-St. Johns
3. Would you be willing to pay a millage for fire & rescue services? 50 YES 70 NO
4. Would you rather have a contract or ownership arrangement for this service? 82 CONTRACT 13 OWNERSHIP
5. GBT currently has Medical First Responders. Would you like that service to continue regardless of who provides fire protection?
64 YES 53 NO

To continue....we have been talking to fire departments in the area to see what would be offered. This is what we've come up with:

The City of St. Johns made us an offer of \$40,000 for the 1st year, with increases based on the Consumer Price Index. They will establish a Fire Sub-committee (FSC) to make recommendations regarding the fire department, to the City. This FSC will consist of 2 members of GBT, one being an elected official, 2 members from the SJ City Commission, the City Manager, Deputy City Manager and the City's Fire Chief. The FSC shall meet not less than once every 6 months. THIS IS FOR FIRE SERVICE ONLY. We asked for a quote for services that would include keeping the Station at Uncle John's open, giving them the equipment there along with trained personnel, but have not received anything in writing. A verbal amount was mentioned of costing \$900 per month (maintenance) for each vehicle plus the employees. The SJFD currently has 4 Fire and/or Rescue units, plus the Command Unit. They have a pumper tanker on order and expect it this fall, but when this is placed in service, they will be retiring one of the existing pieces of equipment that they now use. They are not interested in covering Washington Township.

The Elsie Area Fire Department has been very happy working with CAFR as a partner. They would like to see that continue as they work well together. They currently cover the South end of Chapin Twp, Duplain Twp (for 2.5 mil), and Fairfield Twp (1.7 mil). The use Elsie Ambulance Service, so have no MFR's. They would provide service only on the northeast section of Greenbush Township at a cost of 2.5 mils for the properties involved. Based on taxable values it would cost approx \$54,000. They are not interested in covering Washington Township.

We also talked to the Maple Rapids Fire Dept. They currently cover all but 1 square mile of Essex Township, 1/3 of Fulton Township and part of Lebanon Twp. They offered to cover the Northwest corner of Greenbush Twp., around 6 square miles, at a cost of \$10,000 and includes Medical First Responders. They currently have a mutual aid agreement with CAFR and the two departments work well together. They are a fully equipped fire department with a roster of 24 people, of which 11 are medically trained personnel. Again, no interest in covering Washington Township.

The Ovid Area Ambulance Service is or will be closing, leaving Clinton Area Ambulance Service to cover a much larger area. They are training some of their personnel as Medical First Responders to lighten the load on CAAS.

Lynn Weber of Clinton Area Ambulance Service has been a Paramedic for many years. He has been attending our meetings and trying to convey how important and *vital* Medical First Responders are to an ambulance service. And ultimately to you, the patient. Lynn has been concerned that if we lose the Medical First Responders in this area, they will not be able to provide the same quality of service and patient care.

Ashley has a stand alone MFR unit that operates for \$20,200 per year. Just a tidbit in case we ever try to do something like this here in Greenbush Township.

We have full comparisons of the surrounding area fire departments that we've been in touch with available on request. Please email or call Bernadette (her info is on Page 1) to receive a copy.

In closing, no final decision has been made as to the future of a fire department or medical first responders for the residents of Greenbush Township. *Please* verify any information you see or hear. Call or email any board member if you have any questions or suggestions.

HAVE A SAFE SUMMER!!