

Chester Township Newsletter

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OCTOBER 2016

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CALENDAR

Oct 10-Township Board Meeting
Oct 11-Voter Registration deadline for November election
Oct 24-Planning Commission Meeting
Nov 1-Public Test of Election Equipment 11 am
Nov 5-Office open for absentee voters 9 am-2 pm
Nov 8-Election Day
Nov 14-Township Board Meeting
Nov 28-Planning Commission Meeting
Dec 12-Township Board Meeting
Dec 26-Office closed
Dec 26-No Planning Commission meeting
Dec 28-Treasurer's office open 9 am-5 pm

All meetings of the Chester Township Board or any township committees are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

ELECTION NOTICES

The General Election will be held on **Tuesday, November 8, 2016.**

Absentee Ballots-If you are over 60 or permanently disabled, you may request to be put on a permanent list to receive an application for an absentee ballot. If your name is not on the permanent list, you may still request an application prior to each election. If you have any questions, or would like your name added to the permanent list, please contact the clerk's office.

Online information is available at www.michigan.gov/vote. You can check your registration, see a sample of your ballot, track an absentee ballot, and more.

FEATURED SUBJECT

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

Assessment notices for 2017 will be mailed in early February. Please contact our assessor if you have questions about your assessment, or would like to make an appointment with the Board of Review.

If you have noticed an increase in either or both the Assessment and Taxable Values on your property, the following definitions should assist in giving you a better understanding into what they are and why they have increased.

Assessed Value-the assessed value as shown should represent 50% of the current true cash value of your property. As the value of your property and surrounding properties changes, the assessment of your property changes.

Taxable Value-the taxable value is the number that your property taxes are calculated on. It is the last year's taxable, multiplied by the Consumer Price Index (rate of inflation).

Example-if last year's taxable was \$51,217.00 and the current CPI was 3.3% you would calculate this year's taxable as follows:
 $\$51,217.00 \times 1.033 = \$52,907.00$

Increases in either the taxable or assessed values will also occur when there is an alteration to the property.

Taxes are calculated by multiplying the millage rates against the Taxable Value. For each millage point, \$1.00 is assessed per \$1000 of taxable value.

Uncapped-when property changes hands, the taxable value is raised to the current assessed value. This action is a result of Proposal A which was adopted on March 15, 1994. Exemptions from this rule are available under certain conditions. Please contact the assessing office for more information.

Principal Residence Exemption-the Principal Residence Exemption (P.R.E.) status of a property is set for the year as of May 1st. This was formerly known as the Homestead Exemption. To qualify for the exemption, this must be the property you occupy for your principal residence on May 1st. Please check the percentage on your assessment notice or tax bill for accuracy. To qualify for a P.R.E., the home should be the address from which you register to vote, obtain a driver's license or file your income tax return.

"What is the Board of Review?"

The Chester Township Board of Review is a three person panel charged with reviewing the assessment roll, correcting errors and hearing appeals from property owners.

Errors, such as incorrect names, property descriptions, etc., should be corrected by contacting the Township Assessor who can work with the Board of Review to make any necessary changes.

Appeals by property owners regarding assessments and values will be heard by the Board of Review. Appeals can *only* be made at the March meeting of the Board. The goal in assessing property is uniform assessments and adherence to the statutes of the State of Michigan. Property owners who are concerned about their assessments can make an appointment to meet with the Board of Review by calling the township office. If you are unable to appear in person, a letter may be sent. Check your assessment notice for more information.

This is only a short overview of this very complex process. If you would like more detailed information it is available by contacting the assessor's office.

CEMETERY CLEAN UP

Fall cleanup of the cemeteries will begin soon. All plantings not in a container and other decorations will be removed. Except for Christmas & Easter, decorations are not allowed from September 1st until May 1st.

If you are interested in purchasing a cemetery lot, they are available to residents at a cost of \$200.00. Contact the township office for more information.

HALL RENTAL

The Community Room at the Chester Township Hall is available to rent. The cost for residents is \$100 for up to 6 hours and \$150 for rentals lasting between 6 and 12 hours. Non-residents will pay additional costs. Please call the township office or check our website for more information.

HISTORICAL NEWS

If you have any historical photos showing Chester Township's past that you are willing to share, we would like to add them to our collection. If you stop by the office, we can take copies and you can keep the originals, if you prefer. We have added a Township History link to our website. We hope you will check it out and let us know if you have any items to add.

NOTARY PUBLIC

Notary public service is available at no charge to residents at the township office. Please call first to be sure the clerk or treasurer is in.

OTTAWA COUNTY HELPLINE

If you need information about resources to help with counseling, food, clothing and shelter needs, senior citizen programs, job assistance, substance abuse services or any other health and human service problem, just dial 2-1-1. Cell phone users can call 888-353-6717.

This is a 24 hour, 7 day a week service that can link you with the agencies, professionals and business who can help.

TAX PAYMENTS

The Treasurer's office will be open extended hours for tax payment collection. On Wednesday, December 28th the office will be open from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm. There will also be extended hours on February 14 and February 28. Your payment must be received by the due date. **Postmarks are not accepted.** Please allow plenty of time for the mail service to deliver your payment. There is a drop box located near the front entrance that can be used when the office is not open. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be included to receive a stamped receipt.

A new line item on your tax bill shows as County CMH. This stands for Community Mental Health. It was approved by voters at the March 2016 election.

Supervisor-Gary Meerman

Township Officers:

Treasurer-Dianne Berenbrock
Trustees-Troy Goodno & Ed Kelly

Clerk-Jan Redding

Office Hours: Monday 1:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Wednesday & Friday 9:00 am-2:00 pm

Website: www.chester-twp.org