

# Bruce Township Newsletter

**Bruce Township Chippewa County Michigan**

**July 2007**

**3156 E. 12 Mile Road  
Dafter, Michigan 49724**

**(906)635-3058  
www.bruce township.net**



## **Proposed legislation strips election, assessing and tax collection from townships**

Michigan Townships Association Newsletter May 18, 2007

Rep. Paul 'Condino (D\_Southfield) introduced HB 4780-legislation that transfers assessing, tax collection and running elections to the county after December 31, 2008. The legislation is limited to townships only, and strips the authority from virtually all townships. Townships with populations over 20,000 retain these duties as do townships with a population between 10,000 and 20,000 that provide sewer and water to over 50% of the township residents and provide full-time police and fire protection. All other townships would no longer perform these functions. The legislation not only strips the responsibility from townships, it requires the townships to reimburse the county for performing the services. Eight companion bills, HB 4781-4788, were also introduced to amend various laws to implement the change.

## **House Legislation Wrongfully attacks Townships**

Michigan Townships Association Legislative Liaison David Bertram

“The House Democratic plan introduced in May is an absolute direct attack on township government. MTA is outraged and disappointed by the introduction of this legislation. Furthermore, the manner in which this was introduced-without any dialogue or warning-is insulting.

“HB 4780 is radical legislation that strips more than 90 percent of the state’s townships of tax collection, elections and assessing.

Townships are being singled out and are being wrongfully used as a scapegoat for a change in structure of local government. Yet township government is proven to be the most efficient and effective form of local government. There is no evidence of a cost savings by moving tax collections, elections and assessment to the counties: in fact, it will likely increase costs.

More than 50 percent of the state’s population lives in townships: yet townships spend one-eighth the amount of cities on providing services to residents. Does the Legislature have no understanding of the complications and impact this rash decision could have on the everyday lives of families?

“This package shows a lack of respect and appreciation for dedicated public servants who serve not for a paycheck or the power, rather they serve because they care about the community they call home.”

The legislative package creates in law a definition of a “Rural Township,” as those having a population of 10,000 or less or those having a population of 10,000 or more but less than 20,000 that do not provide for and make available fire and police service on a 24-hour basis either through contracting for or directly employing personnel, water to 50% or more of its residents and sewer services to 50% or more of its residents. After December 31, 2008, all “Rural Townships” would be required to send tax collections, elections and assessing functions to the township to the county . Bill sponsor Rep. Paul Condino (D-Southfield).

**Township Meetings are the second Thursday of every month at 7 p.m.**

**Township hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10 p.m. To 4 p.m. Closed Holidays**

**Special meetings and Board of Review are posted on the Hall bulletin board.**

**Planning Commission Meeting on the Tuesday before regular Township meeting at 7 p.m.**

**Dan Gallagher, Township Supervisor 632-0437 (home)**

According to the calendar, summer is here! By the looks of the hay fields and the gardens, we are off to a good start. The high temps that we have been having, might be a sign for the real hot summer that is coming. Just think, Labor Day is aprox. 65 day away, enjoy your summer!!!

We had a great response to our annual spring clean-up again this year. There were 169 dump tickets picked up at the hall and 137 that were turned in at the dump. This is a win/win for all of us in the township. A chance to clean up our yards and also to clean up the township. Believe us we know because we hear about all the junk that is around. Thanks to all that took part in this project.

Speaking of JUNK, we are enforcing our "DISMANTLED OR INOPERABLE MOTOR VEHICLES" ordinance. At the price of scrap metal and the free pick up of old vehicles, there is NO REASON not to get these things out of your yard and off your property. If the Ordinance Officer has to come and visit you and write a TICKET, it's going to cost you. We have made good progress in some places in the township and we will continue to keep at it.

July 12, 2007 we will be having our public hearing on the PARKS & RECREATION PLAN, and at the same time we will be talking about the 9 MILE BOAT LAUNCH SITE. This is a process that we have to go thru to meet the requirements for the grant process. Copies of the plan are available at the township hall for your review.

LEGISLATION STRIPS ELECTION, ASSESSING AND TAX COLLECTION FROM TOWNSHIPS. The front page information is from our Michigan Township Association (MTA) weekly news. Please read the information and make your concerns known to our local representatives.

Gary McDowell State Representative 107th District  
P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909  
Email [garymcdowell@house.mi.gov](mailto:garymcdowell@house.mi.gov)

#### SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

911 REFLECTIVE MARKERS... Since last newsletter we only added 5 more to the list. Folks, we need to get these markers out there!!! Now that our summer people are back we should be seeing more orders for the markers. These are so important to the emergency people that need to find your location as fast as they can. Remember, these make great gift ideas for young and old alike. Call the hall and place your order now...

If you live on Scenic Drive between 13 and 15 mile road, by the time you get this news letter, you should be driving on NEW BLACKTOP ROAD. This project should be done by the 14<sup>th</sup> of July.

We had the road brine out again this year but came up a little short on some of the roads. We thought we had 5 truck loads last year and we ordered the same. But when we got half way thru the process we were running light and trying to get all the roads covered, we still couldn't figure out why we weren't getting what we had covered before. Well to make a long story short, when it came time to pay the bill, we found out that we had 6 trucks last year. We got all the roads in the township, but some of them didn't get two passes like we normally do. As dry as the roads are and were when we put it down, we don't know how good it's going to work this year. Last year it was too wet and we did it too early. This year too dry and not enough material. Hopefully we will get it right next year, or maybe do it twice a year. Now there's a thought!!!!!!!!!!

Our 2007 Equalization Report is out and it shows that we have 2080 parcels of property and assessed values of \$80,373,850.00. In 1997 we had 1,825 parcels, and assessed value of \$35,041,768.00. These numbers give you a good report as the growth that has happened in the township in the last ten years. Property has been split to create these additional 255 parcels, and the price of land and new construction has increased to add an additional \$45 million dollars to the tax rolls. We keep growing every year.

The township hall playground and the Dunbar Park have seen a lot of use so for this year. It is nice to see these facilities used so much. It is up to all of us that use these parks to do our part in keeping them clean. Thanks to the prison crew for the help in keeping these places looking good.

## Clerk Wanda Sawyers

The office has had a busy summer with hall rentals. Almost every weekend is booked until the middle of October. This year the Township will have an audit so that is keeping us busy. It is also the end of the quarter and there are quarterly reports due.

## TREASURER Ruth La Joie

The summer 2007 tax statements will be arriving at your homes by July 2 or 3, 2007. The total amount for the county allocated will be on this summer's bill. There is a 1% admin fee this year, we are the last township in Chippewa County to add this fee. With the cost increases to print the tax roll, tax bills and postage, and the decrease in state revenue sharing, the Township Board felt we had no choice, but to add the admin fee. We now have 2086 parcels in Bruce Township with an State Equalized Value of \$80,000,000.00. You may pay your taxes on M-W-F from 10 AM until 4 PM at the township office or by mail at any time. If you have any questions please call the office(635-3058) by July 17,2007 so corrections can be made this summer.

## ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT Mike Schmidt

The summer season is here and building in the township has been quite active. As of June we have issued 18 permits which reflect a healthy amount of activity in new construction. Remember, if you have any questions as to whether you need a permit for your construction project, check with the Township office prior to starting your project.

You can also use our web site to download a zoning application prior to any construction. A copy of the zoning ordinance with the set backs etc. is also available on our web site. ([www.bruce township.net](http://www.bruce township.net)).

## ASSESSOR'S REPORT Ken Brown

The summer months are upon us and it is time for checking properties around the township for additions and new construction.

It is very helpful for the property owners to report buildings that have been torn down so we can reduce assessments and taxable value of properties.

There are a good number of new homes to be put up this year which has been the norm for the last few years. This has helped the township to show growth over the past 10 years or so. Any one with tax questions can call the assessor at 632-6584.

## Bruce Township Historical Society Dusty Walsh King (632-6788 or Carolyn Person 632-4146)

We are always talking to people in the Township asking history questions and probing memories. We thank all who take the time to speak with us and suggest other people who may remember back then. As we see the large bales of hay in the fields, we think of the good ole days when loose hay was loaded on the wagons and into the barns with horse drawn equipment and man power. We have some photos that people have shared with us showing the operation. Then the stationery baler came on the scene which made handling the hay easier. Ah yes, the good old days...

We welcome any photos (we can copy and return), memorabilia and information. Here are a few questions to ponder:

George Arnott broke and sold wild horses. Where did they come from?

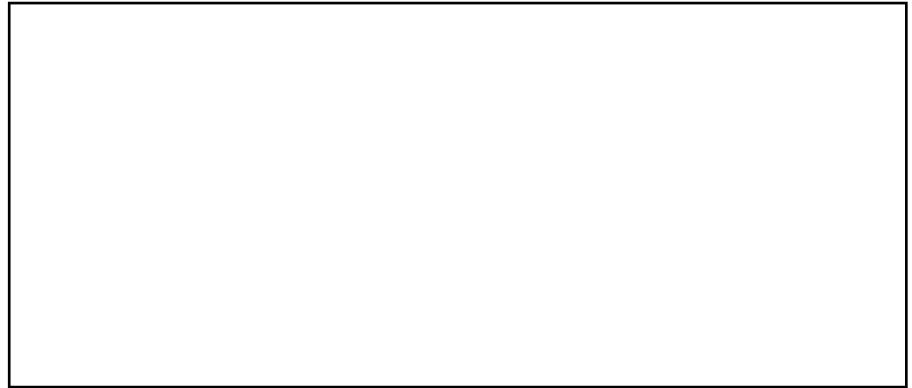
Why was the cemetery on Ridge Road called Mount Zion? Was there ever a church affiliated with it?

When did the Pilgrim Holiness Church hold services and who was the minister?

Was there a sheriff or constable in Bruce Township at one time? (If there was a jail at the rock cut who manned it?)

Is there a map that shows the old school district boundaries?

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### Community Pride

In today's fast moving world and ever changing lifestyles with new inventions everyday, our heads buzz, our eyes cross and we shake our heads on all the things that "are not the way it used to be". One concept that remains constant in the Bruce Township community is Pride. The original settlers that came to the Township were looking for a pleasant place, a place to grow and raise their children, a safe place to live and opportunity to create a comfortable life. The newcomers built schools, churches, roads, worked to establish power and telephone service to their homes and helped neighbors and the community when help was needed.

This is still happening today. Our volunteer fire department is always ready for emergencies. The recreation committee has completed the pavilion and continues to work on providing a play area at the Township Hall and the homemaker group puts on a fantastic dinner for the seniors. Our area churches provide a gathering place for the community. This year alone 50 groups/ organizations have utilized the Township Hall. Through volunteer and Township effort, the Dunbar picnic area is available to the public and is being used more and more. We often enjoy the benefits of living in the community without really thinking how or who made something possible. Our township officials must keep up with State requirements and record keeping, using newly acquired computer knowledge. The legislature is constantly modifying laws and regulations that the townships must follow and implement.

We need to pause and really think of all the good that we have in our Township because people care and are willing to volunteer and contribute. We pay our taxes and it is comforting to know we have officials who are interested in using our tax money for the betterment of the community.

Bruce Township is growing. Property value is growing, too. Bruce Township is an attractive country community. People in our community CARE. We are proud to say we live in Bruce Township.