



FROM SUPERVISOR BILL FREY

Your Township Officials

Supervisor-
William Frey
Clerk-

Jolene Upchurch
Treasurer-
Cindy Baum

Trustee- Denise Gordy
Trustee- Tad Cousino

Your Township Office

Sue Smith
Diane LaPlante
Dan Smith- Assessor
Michael Demski- Building /
Zoning Official

Bill Hines – Chief of Police

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General News & Info

- The township hall has a new roof, the old roof was leaking quite badly....\$19,500.00
- We also have a new storm sewer on the South side of the building. A large sink hole developed under Manhattan Street at the corner of the Township parking lot to the fire department...\$25,000.00 and additional \$19,500.00 for paving.
- The above budget additions have contributed to a total of \$160,000.00 in unanticipated expense has been incurred since the beginning of the budget year. (July 1st thru June 30th).
- The Suder Road paving project from Dean to Sterns Rd. is almost complete. We are having some issues with the Road Commission as to replacement of driveways and grading which I am hopeful will be resolved in the immediate future.
- The rest of Suder to the state line is scheduled to be repaved next year.

Airport

The Township is attempting to balance the rights of the airport owner, who wishes to expand and the surrounding neighbors. It is the Township position that any expansion of the airport must meet the requirements of the Township Ordinances. State law also protects airspace for all of Michigan's licensed airports. Also under state law, the Township and County Zoning Acts of the State of Michigan were amended in the year 2000. The amendment added language that required the incorporation of an airport approach plan into the local zoning ordinance. Allegedly the airports approach plan, which includes height protection for the airport, was adopted by the Michigan Aeronautics Commission (MAC) on or about July 17, 2002. The airport originally was granted a special use permit to operate as a private airport for part of the property only. The township requires special use approval for private airports and would require additional approval for expansion of the airport.

See more from the Supervisor - Page 2



The township has recently changed the service provider for our web site. This change has allowed us more control and provides for more timely updates. Please be patient if you encounter problems, with the site, as we continue this transition. As always, please give us your comments on how we can improve the web site.



Allied Waste (BFI) Services

A reminder: Bags for individual pick-up service are available at the Township Hall at a cost of \$2.00 each.

Also available are tags, for use with your bags, at a cost of \$1.50 each.

This year at the township we are introducing yard waste bags for yard clippings. The bags will be \$.40 each or \$2.00 for a bundle.

Life in a Township

Living in a township provides families with a number of services that match the needs of the community. Township governments are efficient, low-cost units of government, accountable to the people.

The Local Touch

There are three main services that state statute requires townships provide for residents and businesses: assessing, collecting taxes and running elections.

Because of townships, assessing is done locally. That means if you have questions about your assessment you can ask someone who is familiar with your property. And if you have questions about or wish to challenge your assessment, the board of review members are residents of your community.

Because of Townships, when you cast your vote in an election, you can do so at a neighborhood precinct. And, if you need an absentee ballot, your township clerk is nearby and available to assist in ensuring that you are able to vote.

Because of Townships, when your tax bill is due, you can just drive down the road to drop it off at the township hall. And if you have any questions about it, you can call your treasurer, instead of finding a stranger, you find a neighbor answering the phone.

Township's matter because townships are a low-cost form of government closest to the people. More than 50 percent of the state's residents live in townships. And, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, townships spend one-eighth of the amount cities do in providing services for residents.

Budget Issues Impact Local Government

Lansing is dealing with a lot of issues right now. The item getting most of the attention is the budget. With all the problems with the state budget, some legislators feeling the pressure started pointing fingers in other directions, questioning how others were doing their jobs. Some thought that if they could move services that townships provide for residents, such as assessing, elections and tax collection as outlined in House Bill 4780, to the county that government would save money. The reality is just the opposite.

The introduction of the legislation has caused a number of people to begin to ask questions. Is bigger really better? Economists at Michigan State University decided to study this idea. Their conclusion: Moving assessing from the township level to the county level would increase the cost by 10 percent.

In fact the more people look at how townships impact the cost of local government services, the better Michigan looks. According to U.S. Department of Census information, Michigan spends 22 percent less on local government operations than the national average. That's savings to our residents of \$3 billion a year. Townships may be one of the few things in our state that is heading us in the right direction in order to make us more competitive in the national or worldwide marketplace.

Townships keep costs down because people like you volunteer your time to staff our fire departments, or help run elections. You understand that government doesn't need to be all things to all people: sometimes it needs to focus on what is necessary and leave it at that.

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK - Cindy Baum

Erie Township

Winter Hours:

**Monday-Friday
8:00 AM to 4:30 PM**

Closings:

- **December 24, 2007** - Christmas Eve
- **December 25, 2007** - Christmas Day
- **December 31, 2007** - New Years Eve
- **January 1, 2008** - New Years Day
- **January 21, 2008** - Martin Luther King

Need Help With Home Repairs?

The Township has funds available through our Community Development Block Grant program for lower income qualified residents who need help with home repairs. For information please call Sue Smith ext. 6 for an application and more information.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Septic System Check list

- Regularly inspect your system and pump your tank as necessary.
- Use Water efficiently
- Don't dispose of household hazardous wastes in sinks and toilets.
- Plant only grass over and near your septic system. Roots from nearby trees or shrubs might clog and damage the drain field.
- Don't drive or park vehicles on any part of your septic system. Doing so can compact the soil in your drain field or damage the pipes, tank, or other septic system components.
- For more information about Septic Systems, contact: U. S. Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.gov/owm/septic.

It's winter tax time again and your 2007 bill will be mailed on Friday November 30th. Winter taxes are due and payable from December 1, 2007 – February 14, 2008 without penalty or interest. Winter deferments are available for qualifying agricultural properties, senior citizens, eligible veterans and servicepersons and persons with disabilities. Deferment applications are available at the township hall. For any questions regarding eligibility please call (734) 848-5915 ext. 3.

Taxes can be paid at the township hall, Monroe Bank & Trust - Erie Branch, by mail (postmarks are accepted), or in the drop box in front of the township hall.

The township winter hours are 8:00 a.m. TO 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please see the list of holiday closures for this tax season on the left.

Please look over your bill carefully for any errors or discrepancies regarding your Principal Residence Exemption, the description of your property or any other clerical errors.

For those of you with an escrow account your tax bill will be sent directly to your mortgage company. If you would like a duplicate copy of your tax bill mailed to you for your records please call the office.

For any of our senior residents or those who are having financial difficulties there are a number of programs and agencies available to assist you.

- MCOP - various senior programs (734) 241-2775
- Monroe County Senior Legal Serv. (734) 241-7644
 - Filling our 1040CR Property Tax Credit
 - Home Heating Credit
 - Other Legal Services
- Commission on Aging (734) 240-7358
 - Help Seniors with taxes
- Area Agency on Aging 1-B (800) 852-7795
 - Reverse Equity Mortgages
- Michigan Veteran's Trust (734) 240-7359
- Department of Human Services (734) 243-7200
 - State Emergency Relief Form
 - Help with Property Forfeiture
- Salvation Army (734) 241-0440
 - Food Programs
 - Prescription Drug Assistance

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT – Dan Smith

ERIE TOWNSHIP REAPPRAISAL CONTINUES

The reappraisal of Erie Township is continuing through this fall and winter mostly in the southern part and waterfront subdivisions. Field representatives are visiting each property to gather structural data including exterior measurements and interior features. All members of the field staff have Township logo signs on their vehicles and picture identification visible on their person.

The field staff are not appraisers, they are only gathering data that will be used to update and computerize the existing records and computer systems.

Taxable values will not be affected unless new construction has taken place since the last review. Taxable values are uncapped the year following a change in ownership and annual increases are based upon the consumers price index or 5% whichever is less, plus any new.

The taxable value increase (for inflation) was 3.7% for 2007 which was used to calculate your current (Dec.) tax bill and will only be raised (for inflation) by 2.3% for 2008.

Assessments are based upon 50% of market value. Market trends are determined by neighborhood locations, by analyzing sales that have occurred during a two year period commencing on April 1, 2005 through March 31, 2007 or sales from the most current year.

For information or questions regarding the reappraisal, call Dan Smith at 734-848-5915 ext. 4.

From the Clerks Desk - Jolene Upchurch

For the 2008 Presidential Primary Election, the Precincts will be split so Erie will no longer have Precincts 1A, 1B and 2A, 2B. The new Precincts will be divided according to County Commissioners. All registered voters of Erie Township will receive a new voter ID card before the November 2008 Election.

Anyone going to the polls to vote in 2008 will need to bring a form of I.D. The state requires a voter to show a driver's license, state I.D. or other form of picture I.D. as acceptable identification to vote. Election Inspectors will need to see this before they can issue a ballot.

If any Erie resident that is a registered voter and would like to be on the permanent absentee voter list for any up coming elections please sign below, cut out blue slip and send to the Township addressed to the Clerk. (Clerk Jolene Upchurch, Erie Township, PO BOX 184, Erie, MI 48133)

The Clerks office is always looking for new election workers. If anyone is interested please contact my office, 734-848-5915 ext. 2.

I am open to any comments or suggestions you might have for the clerk's office. I hope everyone has a Safe and Happy Holiday Season.

I would like my name to be on a permanent absentee voter list for all Elections

SIGN
HERE _____

PRINT NAME _____

DATE _____



**THE ERIE
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

It is fall again. The smell of burning leaves is around us. Please be careful while burning your leaf piles. Take note of the wind and do not let burning leaves unattended. Permits can be obtained through the Township Hall. The Fire Department participated in Fire Prevention and Awareness at the Erie Mason Central Elementary School. Grades pre-K through 5th grade around 500 attended. We are accepting applications to be on the Erie Fire Department. This is a way you can participate in your community, and it can also be a rewarding experience. We want to thank everyone who came and supported our last breakfast. Our next breakfast will be in the first part of next year. The Fire Department hopes all of your holidays are safe and happy.

Dave Duvall, Chief-Erie Fire Department

**FROM THE
CHIEF OF POLICE**



The Erie Township Police Department has seen a large increase in identity theft cases over the past year. Please remember to completely destroy any mail that has your personal information on it. A good way to destroy this mail is to invest in a good quality shredder or to burn it.

Criminals will also target trusting residents that are willing to give their personal information over the telephone or via the Internet. Please remember to never give your Personal information to anyone who you do not know, or cannot confirm their legitimacy.

Identity theft is the largest growing crime in the United States. This crime wave costs citizens of this country an estimated \$800,000,000 dollars a year. If you feel you have been a victim of identity theft, please call the Erie Township Police Department as soon as possible. We have remedies that can quickly put an end to any damage that may be occurring to your identity.



**THE MORIN POINT
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Some reminders in October we had fire prevention week not only should we make sure everything is in good order but we should also practice what to do in case of a fire and how to get out safely. In November we had the time change. We should have checked the batteries in our smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

At the present time we have 29 members on the department. We would like to welcome 4 new members to the department. They are Mark Henry, Kameron Jacoby, Kayla Mehki and Jessica Close. All four are now enrolled in the Firefighter I&II which is a 240 hour course that will end in April. Jessica has already completed her 80 hour First Responder Class.

We are always in need of personnel if you would like to join, stop down any Wednesday from 7p.m.-9p.m. or call the station at 848-8942 and leave a message.

On behalf of the members of our department we would like to wish you a Happy Holiday and a Happy New Year.

Chief Pat Zaleski

BURNING PERMITS



Just a reminder: a "no cost" burning permit is required for all open burning. Permits can be obtained by stopping in the Township Hall or by phone. Permits may be obtained for brush, leaves and bare wood or bonfires (up to one cubic yard in size). Any other open burning may require special approval of the Fire Chief. You may obtain a copy of the Burning Ordinance at the Township Hall for more information.

Additionally, NO BURNING shall be done on Ozone Action Days (even if you have a permit).

Building Department News

The Permit Process

To obtain a permit you may call or visit the Building Department. The code official can explain the code requirements and you'll need to complete an application for a permit. You can also print an application from our website, under departments. Applications may be returned: in person (at the counter or the outside drop-box), by mail and by fax for small projects. When you submit the application, sketches, plot plans or other documentation will need to be submitted for review. The majority of permits cannot be issued immediately, but applications are processed with minimal delay (1-2 days for small projects and 1-2 weeks for large new structures). If the application is approved, a permit is issued and you will receive a call to pickup your permit.

If you do not perform the work yourself, you must hire a licensed contractor to perform the work. The contractor is responsible for obtaining permits related to your project. The cost of the permit is the same for a homeowner or contractor so do not be fooled by a contractor telling you to obtain the permit. You'll be required to post the building permit in a window or other prominent place at the construction site.

Any proposed changes should be brought to the attention of the code official immediately. Changes require review and approval in the same manner as the original application. Phases of construction require inspection visits. The person responsible for each construction project must request the inspections. Normally 24 to 48 hours advance notice is required.

Your safety is of vital importance to us. Safety is the reason residents and builders need to seek building permits. No matter what the specific project is code enforcement protects property values, public health, safety and welfare. You also have an investment in the home or business you are about to build or remodel. When the work does not comply with codes, your investment could be lowered. Additionally, insurance claims may be denied on work which has not been inspected and approved. When building permits are filed and building codes followed, it ensures compliance with codes which have been adopted as laws by local, county and state governments.

You will need a permit for work to install or repair fireplaces, pools, decks, fences, roofs, windows, exterior coverings, hot water heaters and furnaces, plumbing, air conditioning units, sheds and other accessory buildings and for most home remodeling.

Not sure if a permit is required?

Please check our website – erietownship.com - for more information or call the Building Official.

Sheds, Storage and Ag Buildings

Accessory structures up to 200 square feet and all Ag buildings require a zoning permit to ensure compliance with requirements for size, location and height. Most structures over 200 square feet also require a building permit and shall meet all code requirements. The following is a brief overview of the requirements to permit accessory structures in the rear or side yards, based on the size of the unit:

a) 200 square feet or less

1. Minimum 4 feet from property lines (including overhangs).
2. 10 foot Setback from all structures.
3. Maximum 10 feet in height.
4. Zoning permit and Plot plan required.

b) Larger than 200 square feet

1. Minimum 8 feet from property lines (including overhangs).
2. 10 foot Setback from all structures.
3. Maximum 18 feet in height.
4. Zoning permit, Building permit and Plot plan required.

Please remember Agricultural buildings, if used "100% for farm use", **may** be exempt from a building permit but still require a zoning permit. Please consult the zoning ordinance and building code for complete requirements. Remember, **plan ahead and contact the Building Department before beginning your projects.** Permit applications may be obtained: at the Township hall, by fax on request, and printed from our web site at erietownship.com

SMOKE ALARMS – Legislation **now in effect** and requires the installation of smoke alarms in residential buildings constructed before November 6, 1974. Under this legislation, building owners had one year from the effective date of March 14, 2006 to have smoke alarms installed. The Michigan Building Code dictates where smoke alarms are required. Generally, smoke alarms are required: on each story/level, in every sleeping room and the area outside of sleeping rooms. Please contact the building department for specific requirements.

Parks and Recreation Department News



Dear Erie Township,

We would like to thank everyone who helped out during our community build from Sept.20-22. It was a huge success thanks in part to all the volunteers we had. Whether it was food/drink donation or you physically got out there to give us a hand we appreciate everyone's help. This is something we can be very proud of as a community.

If you haven't had a chance to see the new playground equipment at Maplewood Park please stop by and take a look. A32x32 steel framed pavilion will be going up in the coming weeks to complete the park.

Over the last three years we have strived to build better parks for our township. Some of the things completed include: a new backstop, new bleacher covers, 4 glass basketball hoops, and a resurfaced court at Maplewood Park. At South Erie Park we installed new bleacher covers and installed 2 glass basketball hoops. Soon to be coming at Morin Point Park is a 20x20 steel framed pavilion.

We would like to give special thanks to the businesses for their part in the community build.

*Taylor Excavating-donated his time and equipment to excavate the whole playground plus tearing down of the old equipment. Dan we can't thank you enough for all you did for us.

*Erie IGA-donated lunch on Thursday

*Erie Restaurant & Bar-donated lunch on Friday

*Tony Packo's-donated lunch on Saturday

*Franks Jewelling-donated sign to advertise

*Hertz Rental Equipment-donated equipment during build

*Allied Waste-donated the dumpster

Once again, thank you for all you did.

Sincerely,

Erie Township Parks & Rec.



**THANKS
ERIE!**

ERIE BRANCH LIBRARY & COMMUNITY NEWS



Laptop Story Times are held on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

Erie Book Club is held on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:00p.m.



Quilting with Sharon is held on the 1st Monday of the month at 6:00 pm.

*****Special Programs*****

Monday, December 17, 2007 6:00p.m. "Cocoa and Cookies with Santa"



Santa Claus is coming to the library. He sees you when you're reading and knows when you're at the library, so come and have some cocoa with Santa and good cheer! No registration is required.

Thursday, December 27, 2007 6:00 p.m. "Royal-Tea"



For this year's annual young ladies tea, we will be having Monroe County's Royalty with us. Refreshments will be served. Watch for more information.

Monday, January 14, 2008 6:00p.m. "Winter Wonderland Party"

Snow stories will be shared and snow crafts will be made.



Monday, January 28, 2008 7:00p.m. "Tax Tips"



Pat Pitcher from H&R Block will be with us again this year to explain the new tax laws. She will be able to answer any of your questions too!

Monday, February 25, 2008 6:00p.m. "The Stars Speak with Janet Amid"



Janet is back with us this year with one of the most popular programs we have here at Erie. Be prepared to share your birth date and time and place for an outlook for 2008.

Watch for a special Science Program Series coming for January, February and March.

Dawn Shock, Community Librarian
Erie Branch Library

MASON HIGH SCHOOL SWIM POOL PROGRAM

Open to the public - every Wednesday for 2 one hour sessions

7-8 PM and 8-9 PM - Each session costs \$1.00 - Certified Life Guards are on duty.

For further information contact Grace Connolly at 848-4257



SANTA CLAUS is coming to Erie – Saturday, December 8, 2007

Santa's parade starts at 11 AM from St. Joseph School to the VFW hall. Following the parade children 12 and under are invited to join Santa at the VFW Hall for lunch and a gift. In case of rain meet at the VFW Hall at 11 AM.

Sponsored by: The Erie VFW & Knights of Columbus.

ERIE TOWNSHIP
2065 ERIE ROAD
PO BOX 187
ERIE, MI 48133

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ssmith@erietownship.com
dlaplante@erietownship.com



We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.erietownship.com

Erie Township – At Your Service

Winter hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

Phone System menu:

If you are calling about a current tax payment, property information, burn permit, park reservation, or general information - ext. 0

Township Supervisor, Bill Frey - ext. 1
Clerk, Jolene Upchurch - cemetery, voter or election information - ext. 2
Treasurer, Cindy Baum - special assessment or water info. - ext. 3
Assessor, Dan Smith - ext. 4
Building/Zoning Official, Michael Demski - ext. 5
Office Coordinator, Sue Smith - payroll or payables info. - ext. 6
Storm Water Management issues - ext. 7
Secretary, Diane LaPlante – ext. 0
Police Clerk, Sarah Kennedy

If you need the Erie Police Department for a non-emergency, please call 848-4082.

The Erie News

**Please Look Inside For Important Information
From Erie Township!**

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2065 ERIE ROAD
PO BOX 187
ERIE, MI 48133

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ERIE, MICHIGAN 48133

