



City of Otsego Agenda

A Publication of the City of Otsego

Spring 2012

Spring is in the Air!

If you love to garden or want to learn more about gardening, we have an opportunity for you! Each year the City has flower beds that need to be planted and taken care of. If you are interested or know of anyone that loves to garden and wants to become involved with the Community - Call City Hall for further details. It won't be long before planting begins. **THINK SPRING!!!**



Congratulations

Jane Tice!

Jane Tice, former City Clerk was honored at the January 16th City Commission Meeting. She received a Key to the City and a Resolution from the State of Michigan for her many years of service as the City of Otsego Clerk from 1967 to 1991. Thank you Jane for your many years of dedicated service to the community!



HYDRANT FLUSHING



The City of Otsego Water Department will flush all fire hydrants **April 23 through May 4**. This is done to remove any stale water that may be in the system and ensure that the fire hydrants are working properly. You may experience some reduced pressure and discoloration during this process. If discoloration occurs, let your water run until it clears.

NEW RECYCLE INFORMATION

Residents of the City of Otsego have been given carts to replace the bins that are used to pick up Recycling. The City contracts with Bestway Disposal to collect recyclable materials the first Tuesday of each month from each home that has a recycle cart placed on the curb.

If you do not have a cart and wish to participate the new carts can be obtained at City Hall. There is no longer a need to separate recycling materials. All materials must be placed in the cart container for pickup, materials that are not in the container, will not be picked up. The new use of the cart will allow for more materials to be placed in the container and will allow for safer, more efficient collection of materials. If you have questions, please contact City Hall or visit the City's website at www.cityofotsego.org.



TRANSFER STATION COUPONS

Coupons will continue to be distributed during the months of **March, April, and May**. City residents will be entitled to dispose of one load of trash/rubbish (no larger than a pick-up truck can hold) free of charge. Household garbage is NOT accepted at the Transfer Station. Please remember, this service is for Otsego City Residents only. In order to take advantage of this service, pick up your coupon at City Hall when you pay your utility bill. One coupon will be issued per address, per year. City residents who do not pay their own water bills may bring proof of address within the City limits to City Hall to receive a coupon. The Transfer Station is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. For further details or questions, please call City Hall.

WINTER PARKING RULES REMAIN IN EFFECT



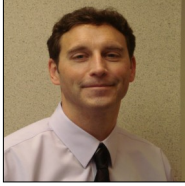
Parking is PROHIBITED on any public street in the City of Otsego from 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. Parking is prohibited during the months of November **through April** in order to facilitate snow removal. Violators will be ticketed.



GARAGE SALES - Don't forget to obtain your garage/yard sale permit before having a sale. Cost of the permit is \$1.00 and may be obtained at the City Clerk's Office. Each residence is permitted two sales per year with a maximum duration of three days each.

City Hall Will Be Closed Friday, April 6 & Monday, May 28, 2012





City Manager
Thad Beard

City Manager's View

PROPERTY VALUES CONTINUE TO DECLINE

For the fourth consecutive year, City residents will see a decrease in their property values, and as a result, most will see a reduction in their tax bill. On average, the residential property values have been reduced 6.2%. Last year the reduction was 3% and the year previous it was 6% which was coming off a year of (2009) of 11% reduction. As a home owner, this will generally result in a reduction in taxes paid. As a unit of government, which relies on taxes to pay for police, fire, parks and recreation and essential services, we will see 6.2% less in revenue, again, to fund those services. Other property values are being reduced as well. Industrial property values are down an average of 4.37% and Commercial property values are down an average of 2.1%. The City previously requested voters to approve a Headlee override, which would have allowed the City to levy its "full" millage rate of 12.5 mills. The request was voted down, so the City will continue to evaluate services provided and reduce costs to operate under the reduced millage rate of 12.0854 mills.

CITY AND MDNR REQUEST GRANT FUNDS TO REMOVE CITY DAM

The City has filed a joint application, with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, for grant funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to remove the City dam. The City and the MDNR previously received grant funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to complete a feasibility study for the dam removal. The feasibility study is the tool being used in the grant application to identify how the dam will be removed, upon receiving the grant funds. If the City and the MDNR are successful in receiving the grant funding, the work should begin this summer. The removal of the dam would lead to further clean up of the river contaminants and restoration of the natural habitat. The joint application is requesting approximately \$1.3 Million for dam removal and associated activities.

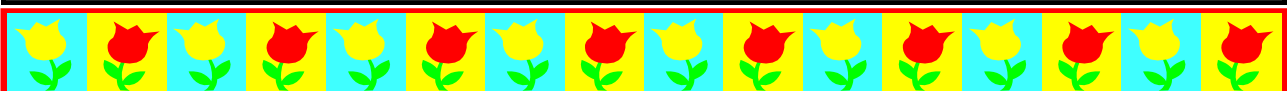
Fire Department News



With the decrease of a solid middle class, and increase in single parent homes, the "latchkey" child is more prevalent than ever. Frances Alston of New York City Child Study Center cites a U.S. Census report in an article on education.com which indicates that one third of all children between the ages of 5 and 13 are home alone at some time during the week. 15% of children are home alone before school and 9% in the evenings. Increasing numbers of children being left home alone is obvious concern for the fire service.

Now consider National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) statistics indicating that cooking-fire injuries start to increase at age 10 and that child-set fires increase on the weekends and during summer, peaking between 3 and 8pm. Could the numbers provided by the U.S. Census support the NFPA statistics and indicate that "latchkey" children are cooking for themselves and possible siblings after school, on weekends and in the summers?

According to the U.S Fire Administration (USFA), Curiosity about fire starts at age 3 and 84% of unintentional fires are started by children under 10. Further, 54% of all arson fires are committed by juveniles under 18. According to San Diego, CA-based Burn Institute, 34% of child fire victims set the fire themselves, 40% of residential fire deaths are a result of child-set fires and nationally, fire play is the leading cause of death in the home. Obviously, children and fire continue to be a problem and while what we are doing today may be effective in some areas, we still have a great deal of room to improve and should be trying to find ways to do so.



2012 Property Assessments

By, Matthew Storbeck, Finance Director

Property owners will receive their 2012 Assessment Notices during the first week of March. This notice will include the 2012 Assessed Value (AV), State Equalized Value (SEV), Taxable Value (TV) and classification for the property. AV is the amount the City Assessor calculates to be one-half of the fair market value of the property based upon construction, square footage and sales studies of similar properties. SEV is the State of Michigan's belief of one-half of the fair market value of the property after applying a factor to all properties within a class (residential, commercial, etc.). To my knowledge, the City has not ever received a factor from the State of Michigan.

Over the past year residential properties experienced an overall market value decrease of approximately six percent. Commercial properties, decreased in value two percent overall. Changes in market value affects both the AV and SEV. The 2011 Inflation Rate Multiplier is 2.7 percent, which will be used to calculate the change in TV. TV, the value that determines property taxes, cannot increase more than the inflation rate, as determined by the Michigan Department of Treasury, or 5 percent, whichever

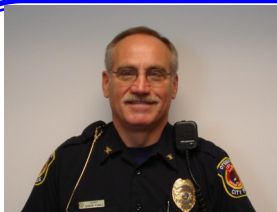
is less, until there is a change in ownership of the property.

Also, please examine the assessment notice to verify the Principle Residence Exemption (PRE). This value used to be called the "Homestead Exemption" but was often confused with the state income tax exemption referred to by the same name. The PRE percentage is that part of a residential property occupied by the owner. If the property is a multiple residence, then it should be based upon the square footage of the home that occupied by the owner. The PRE is the percentage the property will be exempt from the 18 mill public school operating millage for 2012.

Protest to the Board of Review is necessary to protect your right to further appeals to the Michigan Tax Tribunal for valuation and exemption appeals and/or the State Tax Commission for classification appeals. Properties classified Commercial Real, Industrial Real or Developmental Real may be appealed to the regular March Board of Review or to the Michigan Tax Tribunal prior to May 31. Commercial Personal, Industrial Personal, or Utility Personal Property

may be appealed to the regular March Board of Review or to the Michigan Tax Tribunal prior to May 31 if a personal property statement was filed with the local unit prior to the commencement of the Board of Review as provided by M.C.L. 211.19.

The Board of Review will meet Monday, March 12, 2012 from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m., Thursday, March 15, 2012 from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, March 17, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. until noon at the Otsego City Hall, 117 East Orleans Street, Otsego, Michigan. The Board will also meet Tuesday, March 6, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. for organizational purposes only. Please call (269) 692-3391 to schedule an appointment. You may also mail your protest to City Hall, but they must be received by Friday, March 9, 2012.



Police Chief, Gordon Konkle

POLICE BEAT

Today's social media has opened doors and changed how we look at the world in ways most of us would have never imagined when we were teenagers. While there are so many positive aspects of social media, there are also pitfalls that people, especially teenagers, can fall victims to. I wish that I could give parents an easy answer to the problems they either have or will inevitably encounter with their children. Such as fraud, child predators, bullying, and questionable photos sent via text or the computer that our children sometimes don't have a clue that they are involved in. The truth is that most of our children know their way around the internet and social media sites better now than we will even grasp. But as parents, oh yes, here comes the hard part, you and I are responsible for our children's welfare and behavior until they become adults. In all the years since I was a teenager the more things have changed, the more in some cases they have stayed the same. There were a lot of things that I would have never told my parents until I was caught red handed. That hasn't changed a bit whether you believe it or not. Of course back then it was because the punishment doled out by our parents was usually swift and severe. Now I am not saying that was the best way

to raise a child, but it certainly kept a lot of us on the straight and narrow the vast majority of the time.

However, I don't want to talk about how people discipline their children. What I want you all to be aware of is the need to check up on your children to the point where you at least have a good idea of what they are doing. The heartache it will save both you and your child is immeasurable. Teenagers, whether Middle School age or seniors in High School, will push the limits as far as they can, that's normal and even good. But some of the internet and social media activities that are so foreign to adults can end up costing your child more than money or time. We've all seen the TV Investigative Reporting on Child Predators, or bullying where children have committed suicide because of the harassment. Recent circumstances have occurred where school age students have taken nude or suggestive pictures of themselves and then sent them out thinking that only the one person they sent them to would ever see the picture. We can all guess how this comes out, and while some might think that it is just kid stuff and other than embarrassment how bad can it be. Well, if you were the parent of a girl or boy, who suddenly is constantly harassed and humiliated you might see

it a little differently. This humiliation is every bit as intense as the bullying that has caused young people to take their own lives and it's not much of a stretch to imagine the same results.

Those other kids spreading the pictures around, just kid stuff right? Not today! If the person in the photo is under 18 years old then all of this activity falls under the Child Pornography Laws and all are felonies. On top of all other criminal sanctions and fines, this "harmless kid stuff", if charged and convicted, lands everyone involved on the Sex Offender Registry. These "kids" now would have to register with their local Police Departments and have restrictions on where they can live and where they can go. Now everyone who has a computer can, and trust me will, monitor their every move. This is just the tip of the iceberg. I haven't even mentioned being rejected by a college or career field later in life. This could be a problem that literally follows them for the rest of their lives and the sad part is that most of it can be avoided by parents keeping a close watch and perhaps placing re-



strictions on our children's computers, phones, and social network use.

CITY OF OTSEGO CALENDAR



MARCH, 2012

1	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY		
5	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
6	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY		
6	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY		
12	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M.	CITY HALL
19	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
26	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL

APRIL, 2012

2	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
3	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY		
3	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY		
5	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY		
6	CITY HALL CLOSED- GOOD FRIDAY		
9	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M.	CITY HALL
16	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
23	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL

MAY, 2012

1	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY		
1	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY		
3	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY		
7	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
14	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M.	CITY HALL
21	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
28	CITY HALL CLOSED - MEMORIAL DAY		
29	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL

JUNE, 2012

4	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
5	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY		
5	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY		
7	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY		
11	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M.	CITY HALL
18	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
25	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL

JULY, 2012

2	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
3	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY		
3	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY		
4	CITY HALL CLOSED		
5	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY		
9	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M.	CITY HALL
16	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
23	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL

AUGUST, 2012

2	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY		
6	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
7	PRIMARY ELECTION		
7	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY		
7	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY		
13	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M.	CITY HALL
20	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
27	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL

SEPTEMBER, 2012

3	CITY HALL CLOSED		
4	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
4	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY		
4	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY		
6	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY		
10	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M.	CITY HALL
17	CITY COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL
22	CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL		
24	PLANNING COMMISSION	7 P.M.	CITY HALL

CITY CONTACTS

Police & Fire Emergency.....	911
Fire Non-Emergency.....	694-4390
Police Non-Emergency.....	692-6111
Chief of Police.....	692-6111
City Manager	694-6146
City Clerk	692-3391
Finance Director	692-2741
Dept. Public Works	694-6636
Treatment Plant.....	694-9194

Website: www.cityofotsego.org



The Agenda is a quarterly publication of the
CITY OF OTSEGO

Tom Gilmer.....	Mayor
Kathy Misner.....	Mayor Pro-Tem
Stacy Rogers.....	Commissioner
Molly Wieber.....	Commissioner
Cyndi Trobeck.....	Commissioner
Thad Beard.....	City Manager
Angela Cronen.....	City Clerk
David Dutton.....	DPW Supervisor
Tom Dunn.....	WWTP Superintendent
Gordon Konkle.....	Chief of Police
Matthew Storbeck.....	Treasurer
Chad Tackett.....	Fire Chief

117 East Orleans Street
Otsego MI 49078
269-692-3391

