



City of Otsego Agenda

A Publication of the City of Otsego

Winter 2012

OTSEGO MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Have you heard about the Main Street Program? Hope you are enjoying the new downtown decorations, painted store fronts, the new Community Christmas Tree, and have a chance to visit the downtown stores. So far, over 130 people in our community have volunteered to be part of Main Street. This is very exciting for the community, you don't have to live in the City to participate, this is for our community - open to all ages! If you would like information or would like someone to present the Program to your group, please contact City Hall at 692-3391.

It's become very clear that "Place" matters! People choose to "work, play and stay" in vibrant cities that are safe and offer interesting places to eat, shop and spend time. As a Main Street community, the City of Otsego will be recipients of specialized training for businesses and volunteers. The intent is to revitalize the community through volunteer vision and leadership. The four point approach focuses on Design (enhancing the downtown's physical environment by capitalizing on it's best assets); Economic Restructuring (strengthening our existing economic base while expanding and diversifying it); Promotion (marketing our unique downtown characteristics to residents, visitors, investors & business owners through advertising, retail & special events, as well as marketing campaigns); and Organization, which involves all of the community's stakeholders, getting everyone working toward a common goal and driving the volunteer-based Main Street Program. Please visit us on Facebook - OTSEGO MAIN STREET or visit the City's website at www.cityofotsego.org. **Call to volunteer ~ EXCITING TIMES FOR OTSEGO!**



Thank you Otsego Students for Volunteering

TRANSFER STATION HOLIDAY HOURS

CLOSED - Tuesday, December 25, 2012
CLOSED - Tuesday, January 1, 2013



DROP BOX LOCATED
AT THE NORTHEAST
CORNER OF CITY HALL

2012 Winter Taxes

Matthew Storbeck, City Treasurer

Winter tax bills will be mailed to arrive on December 1. Please note that tax bills are now sent to property owners, as well as mortgage servicers. If you do not receive one, please call 692-2741, and we will send another bill. Residential property owners are encouraged to check their Principal Residence Exemption to make sure they are receiving the proper percentage of credit for school operating taxes. If not, please call before December 7th, and an adjustment can be made for this year's taxes. Otherwise, corrections to the Winter Tax cannot be made until July of 2013.

Taxpayers wishing to have their tax payments taken directly from their bank account may contact us to set up this service. Payments will not be transferred until December 26th or February 10th, at the taxpayer's discretion. This will allow us time to make contact in cases where problems arise. Also, please remember that receipts will not be mailed back for payments received by mail unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is sent with the payment. Please keep the top part of the tax bill and check number for your receipt. Also, you may access the City's web site at www.cityofotsego.org to retrieve tax and payment information, as well as make electronic payments.

City Hall Will Be Closed

December 24, 25, & 31, 2012, & January 1, 2013

City Manager's View



City Manager
Thad Beard



Main Street: By now, I hope that most of you have heard of Main Street. The City has been accepted into the MSHDA Main Street program, in the Associate Level. The City and several volunteers are diligently working to complete a lengthy application to be accepted into the Select Level. There are currently sixteen (16) Associate Level participants and the State limits the acceptance of Select Level communities to only three (3). While the City anticipates several financial benefits after being accepted as a Select Level Main Street community, we are already benefiting from the core principle of Main Street – volunteer driven downtown promotion and events. The most

current Main Street activity is the series of events complimenting the annual Christmas Parade on November 30. "*I'll be Home for Christmas*" was the theme for the events this year. Main Street Volunteers were instrumental in planning several events this year. A special

"thanks" to them and the Otsego High School students who decorated the downtown businesses. Please be sure to visit Otsego Main Street on Facebook to learn even more.

Audit: Another seasonal event is the presentation and review of the Annual Audit. I am quite pleased of the fact that the City obtained another unqualified (clean) audit. I am even more pleased with the confirmation that the City actually spent less than was budgeted for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. In all, the City was able to increase its General Fund balance (savings) by approximately \$17,000, raising it from 15% to 17% compared to the General Fund. Only two years ago, this was only at 10%, which was a concern. The City Department Heads and employees are making every effort to find creative ways to reduce costs in providing essential services to the community. During the Holiday Season it is especially appropriate for me to share my thanks for all of the City employees who make Otsego such a great place to work, play and ultimately stay!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS.

**Holiday Wishes From
The City of Otsego Staff
Have a Happy &
Safe Holiday!**



REMINDERS

As Winter Returns -

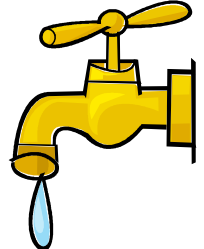
PLEASE REMEMBER:

- WATCH FOR SNOW PLOWING VEHICLES
- REMEMBER FRONT YARD PARKING IS PROHIBITED.
- REMEMBER SIDEWALKS NEED TO BE KEPT CLEAR



FROZEN WATER PIPES

If you experience discoloration in your water or reduced water pressure, please notify City Hall immediately at 692-3391. Leave one faucet running with a pencil size stream of water. Please be aware that although temperatures may rise above freezing, the potential still exists for freezing water lines. Do not stop running water until you have called City Hall and been advised to do so. Otsego City Hall must be notified when you begin running your water, for any potential adjustment to be made on your utility bill.



WINTER PARKING RULES

Beginning November 1, parking is once again 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.



2012 DECEMBER BOARD OF REVIEW

The December Board of Review will be meeting on Tuesday, December 11, 2012, at 8:00 a.m. If you have a discrepancy regarding your Principal Residence Exemption on your Winter 2012 taxes, **you must contact City Hall before Friday, December 7, 2012.** If you have any questions, please contact the Treasurer's Office at 692-2741.



OTSEGO FIRE DEPARTMENT

October marked fire prevention week all across the nation. The Otsego Fire Department held tours at the fire station and also visited schools. Throughout the week, we taught fire safety to over 400 children. Each child gets a bag of fire prevention tips and coloring books. Some of the safety tips they learn we can all live by.

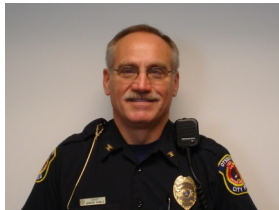
- Make sure you have two ways in and out
- Stay low if there is smoke
- Never hide - go outside
- Have a meeting place
- Never go back inside once outside
- Practice home fire drills
- Never play with matches
- Call 911 for an emergency

In November, we changed our clocks back, remember to also change the batteries in smoke detectors. Make sure you have a working smoke detector on every floor and one outside every bedroom.



November also marked the tenth year with "McDonalds Have Lunch with a Firefighter." Dix St. School and Washington St. School K-5th grade held a coloring contest. The Fire Department picks one winner from each school for each grade. This is not an easy task, when all the kid's art work is great!. The winners were picked up at school for a ride on a fire truck to McDonald's to have lunch with a firefighter. This year's winners were: Alexis Gross, Washington St. winner and winners from Dix St. were Carson Arlington, Lexi Layman, Thelma Weeber, Kyle Searles, Derek Rapa and Kaitlyn Robinson.

POLICE BEAT



Police Chief, Gordon Konkle

Just a reminder that parking on the street overnight (actually 2 am to 5 am) is no longer allowed until May 1st of next year. This allows for snow removal during those early hours especially after a snow storm so that the City DPW crews can clean the streets before everyone has to drive to work in the morning. Currently our Officers are placing a small warning notice on cars parked in violation of the ordinance. We understand that it takes a little time to get used to the parking restrictions each year so hopefully these reminders will give sufficient warnings to those using the street for overnight parking to avoid a \$10.00 parking ticket. So while I am discussing the unpleasant subject of fines, if you do forget and get a parking ticket these can be paid either at the Police Station, City Hall, or by mail. No one likes to throw away \$10.00 on a ticket, but please try to remember that these tickets double after ten days. It is easy to forget and let that time expire, but by doing so you only compound the fine. Finally while we are on this

"unpleasant" subject of fines, each year we end up with several unpaid parking tickets. The main reason these original fines can be paid here in Otsego is to hold down the costs. If someone just ignores the tickets, then I have no option but to send the violation to the District Court in Allegan. They are very good at collecting fines and of course they add additional fees to the ticket to do so. They also have the power to have your drivers license suspended for unpaid fines or in some cases have the Court issue a warrant for your arrest. What a mess this \$10.00 ticket will have caused in those cases. Please no one wants a nightmare like that. We, including me, have all received parking tickets. Like I said earlier, no one likes getting one but just don't let it escalate into a bigger problem by ignoring it.

Recently it seems that we have run into a rash of dog complaints, most involving dogs running loose and complaints of vicious dogs. For the vast majority of people, their dogs are an important part of their families. They would no more allow their dog to run loose than they would allow their young children to play in the street. Dogs can be great escape artists and most of the time it only happens once or twice before the owner figures out the method their little Houdini is using to get away. We understand that and normally

contact with the owner and a warning solves the problem. However, there are a very small percentage of people who got that cute little puppy on an impulse and now that it is grown have lost all interest in it. Many of these circumstances end up in animal cruelty or neglect cases. Most of the time the dog is running loose because the owner took no responsibility in assuring a safe environment for the dog; thus causing the neighbors to now put up with the constant problem of a loose or aggressive dog harassing them, their children or their pets. In these cases you can expect little sympathy in terms of warnings or fines from the Officer or the Allegan County Animal Control Officer we will notify to make follow up visits, which usually results in additional fines. Our fines for these types of tickets double on the second offense, and then triple in costs on the third offense. So, if you are having trouble containing your dog to your own yard, I would suggest that you invest in an underground electric fence. While it is not cheap, it certainly is cheaper than the tickets you will receive. Whether an animal, noise, or trash complaint please be a good neighbor and be considerate of those living around you.



DECEMBER, 2012

3	CITY COMMISSION	
4	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
4	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
6	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
10	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
11	BOARD OF REVIEW	8:30 A.M. CITY HALL
17	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
24	CITY HALL CLOSED	
25	CITY HALL CLOSED	
31	CITY HALL CLOSED	

JANUARY, 2013

1	CITY HALL CLOSED	
3	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
7	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
8	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
8	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
14	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
21	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
28	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

FEBRUARY, 2013

4	CITY COMMISSION	
5	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
5	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
7	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
11	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
14	WINTER 2012 TAXES DUE	
18	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
25	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

MARCH, 2013

4	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
5	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
5	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
7	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
10	DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS	
11	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
18	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
25	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
29	CITY HALL CLOSED	

APRIL, 2013

1	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
2	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
2	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
4	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
8	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
15	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
22	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

MAY, 2013

2	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
6	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
7	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
7	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
13	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
20	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
27	CITY HALL CLOSED	

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
Kevin Harris.....Assessor

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HAPPY NEW YEAR