



City of Otsego Agenda

A Publication of the City of Otsego

Winter 2013



Thank you to all of the Volunteers that have made our downtown and Brookside Park look so festive. Our community takes great pride in our City and it is very apparent, whether it is Spring, Summer, Fall, or Winter!



THANK YOU MAIN STREET VOLUNTEERS

Did you know that Otsego Main Street is run almost entirely by volunteers? Our volunteers average a combined 155 hours of service per month. WOW! We're thankful for each and every volunteer that lends a hand. We're happy to acknowledge some volunteers whose service earned them the title of Volunteer of the Month. Thank you to Sue Bosma and Linda McPherson for their work on the Art Garden. They have spent countless hours pulling that project together! Thank you also to Chuck Wolthuis and Mike Wolthuis



for showing up on the weekends and simply going above and beyond the call of duty to help make our Main Street program a success!

Look for more Volunteering Opportunities!



The Ice Rink is coming soon! The frame has been assembled and soon we'll be able to make the ice. This is a project that requires lots of helpers to maintain. If you would like to be on the Ice Rink Team, please contact the Main Street Office. We'd love your help! 692-2336



2013 Winter Taxes

Matthew Storbeck, City Treasurer

Winter tax bills were 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 6th, and an adjustment can be made for this year's taxes. Otherwise, corrections to the Winter Tax cannot be made until July of 2014.

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.

TRANSFER STATION HOLIDAY HOURS

CLOSED - Tuesday, December 24, 2013
CLOSED - Tuesday, December 31, 2013



DROP BOX LOCATED AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF CITY HALL

City Hall Will Be Closed

December 24, 25, & 31, 2013, & January 1, 2014

City Manager's View



City Manager
Thad Beard

As we all enter into the Holiday Season, and we approach the New Year, the City welcomes the new City Commission. The City has elections every two years for three seats. This year Tom Gilmer, Ryan Wieber and Kathy Misner all ran unopposed. Tom Gilmer and Ryan Wieber were both elected to four year terms and Kathy Misner was elected to a two year term. At the Organizational Meeting, Commissioner Gilmer was appointed by the Commission to serve as the City Mayor. Mayor Gilmer then appointed Commissioner Misner to serve as Mayor-pro-tem. Below is a photograph of the 2013 City Commission: Matt Shankle, Cyndi Trobeck, Mayor Tom Gilmer, Ryan Wieber and Kathy Misner



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 maintains a healthy Fund Balance. While we budgeted a use of the Fund Balance to cover costs associated with our day to day services, in reality we did not spend all of the funds budgeted. The audit revealed a 2% increase of the Fund Balance from 15% to 17%, for the fiscal year ending June 20, 2012.

The City is fortunate to have personnel who are creative enough to adjust to the changes brought on by the new Michigan economy and humble enough to accept and even request ideas for improvement and efficiencies. During the Holiday Season it is especially appropriate for me to share my thanks for all of the City employees. I am blessed with great employees who make Otsego a great place to work, play and ultimately stay.

Happy Holidays!

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



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.



REMINDERS

As Winter Returns -

PLEASE REMEMBER:

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



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.

2013 DECEMBER BOARD OF REVIEW

The December Board of Review will be meeting on Tuesday, December 10, 2013, at 8:00 a.m. If you have a discrepancy regarding your Principal Residence Exemption on your Winter 2013 taxes, **you must contact City Hall before Friday, December 6, 2013.** If you have any questions, please contact the Treasurer's Office at 692-2741.

Otsego

MAIN STREET HAPPENINGS

MAIN STREET MICHIGAN

Fall was a busy season for Otsego Main Street! In September, at the Creative Arts Festival, our Economic Restructuring team conducted a survey of our visitors. We learned that people want more festivals! We aim to please... so our Promotions committee is brainstorming ideas now! What ideas do you have for a future festival?

October began with Autumn Bliss, our fall downtown decorating event. Volunteers spent time arranging pumpkins, bales of straw, cornstalks and mums throughout town. We were pleased to see our business owners decorating their storefronts as well.



October also saw our first Riverwalk event. This nature scavenger hunt took place along our beautiful, colorful river walk on a gorgeous fall day! The Museum (Historical Society) offered information about the history of the river while the Otsego Library provided a hands on craft table. The Kalamazoo Nature Center was also on site along with Zeus – the tallest dog alive! The children especially enjoyed going home with painted faces and many went home with prizes from our raffle.

The Art Garden has seen tremendous progress this fall! 100 brick pavers were created by community members and are now in place on the path. We've also added our first art installation – an incredible piece by Raven Landry Keckler (Raven's Tattoos). The snow will soon cover our lovely garden and put it to sleep for the winter. We can't wait to see the beauty that the spring will bring.



Our town came to life on December 6th at our Hometown Christmas Celebration!

Once again, volunteers made it happen! From the lights on the trees to the ornaments, to the window decorating... Volunteers worked hard to bring a festive feel to our downtown!

Finally... our website is live! Visit us at otsegomainstreet.org for all of your important Otsego info!

2013 PROPERTY TAXES COLLECTED BY THE CITY OF OTSEGO

Below is a breakdown of the property taxes collected by the City of Otsego by resolution of the Board of Supervisors October 15, 1962 under the auspices of Act 82, Public Acts of 1961. The separate taxes of each operating unit have been combined into one column as shown below. The millage rates represent dollars per \$1,000 of taxable value. [Note: Residential properties are exempt from school operating millage up to the percent that property is claimed as the homeowner's principal residence (P.R.E.).]

TAXING UNIT	TOTAL RATE	BREAK-DOWN	NON-P.R.E. PERCENT OF TOTAL	P.R.E. PERCENT OF TOTAL	SUMMER BILLING	WINTER BILLING
City	13.7721					
Operating		12.0854	21.4%	31.4%	12.0854	
Solid Waste Reduction		1.3307	2.4%	3.5%	1.3307	
Fire Truck Debt		0.3560	0.6%	0.9%	0.3560	
County	5.8977					
Operating		4.6377	8.2%	12.0%	4.6377	
Ops. VET Relief Fund		0.0200	0.0%	0.1%	0.0200	
Road Tax		1.0000	1.8%	2.6%		1.0000
Senior Service		0.2400	0.4%	0.6%		0.2400
Otsego Public Schools	25.0000					
Operating		18.0000	31.9%	EXEMPT		18.0000
2004 Debt		7.0000	12.4%	18.2%		7.0000
Allegan Co. Int. Schools	4.1217					
Operating		0.1157	0.2%	0.3%		0.1157
Voted Special Ed.		2.5297	4.5%	6.6%		2.5297
Voted Voc. Ed.		1.4763	2.6%	3.8%		1.4763
State Education Tax	6.0000		10.6%	15.6%	6.0000	
Otsego District Public Library	1.6988					
Operating		0.9888	1.8%	2.6%		0.9888
Debt		0.7100	1.3%	1.8%		0.7100
TOTAL MILLAGE (NON-P.R.E.)	56.4903		100.0%		24.4298	32.0605
LESS SCHOOL OPERATING FOR EXEMPT HOMESTEADS	-18.0000					-18.0000
TOTAL MILLAGE (HOMESTEAD)	38.4903			100.0%	24.4298	14.0605



OTSEGO FIRE DEPARTMENT

Holiday Safety Tips



- ◆ Do not plug more than 3 strands of lights unless the directions indicate it is safe.
- ◆ All decorations should be flame retardant or nonflammable and placed away from heat sources.
- ◆ Never throw wrapping paper in the fireplace. Embers could cause a chimney fire or the wrapping paper may ignite suddenly creating a flash fire.
- ◆ Do not over load your electrical circuits, wall outlets or extensions cords. Use a "listed" power strip with over-current protection.
- ◆ Use caution with small children in the home. Decorations could be sharp or breakable. Keep small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid swallowing.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



POLICE BEAT



Police Chief, Gordon Konkle

As the Christmas time quickly approaches we all seem to get busier and busier. And while this is a wonderful family time, it is also a dangerous time to be driving. Alcohol related accidents increase, as well as, weather related driving issues. But something that most people never consider is the distractions we encounter every day that put all of us drivers and our passengers in danger. In this world of instant communications, rarely do people drive anywhere without talking on their cell phone or even though it is illegal, texting something while in the car. These distractions and others as simple as looking back or talking to your children while driving take our mind and eyes off what we are doing if only for a moment. Unfortunately it only takes a second to miss a child, a pedestrian walking, or another car stopping short when we are distracted from what we are doing. Please

slow down while driving, pay attention to the weather conditions and not just how quickly you need to get where you are going. Be careful in school zones and in areas of pedestrian traffic. It seems like at least once a week I hear complaints from parents about speeders driving recklessly around the schools while they are picking up and dropping off children. When we run radar and make traffic stops in these areas frequently we are told by the drivers we stop that they didn't realize how fast they were traveling as their minds were occupied with where they were going or what they need to do next. It only takes a second of being distracted to cause an accident and consequences that you can never undo. As much as I would like to tell you that it is teenage inexperienced drivers we stop, that is just not what I have encountered. Many times it's parents with children in the car, apologizing profusely because they are endangering what is the most important things in their own lives, young children just like their own. This is a hurried world, most families today have both parents working and when you throw in childcare, school activities, and work its hard not to feel the pressure of getting everyone where

they need to be.

A similar problem occurs downtown, constantly pedestrians attempting to cross the street find themselves dodging traffic even while they are crossing legally at the light with the pedestrian crossing sign telling them it is safe to cross. People are in a hurry, they don't want to miss the green light so they look right past the pedestrian in the crosswalk. None of these drivers are bad people, they would never mean to hurt anyone, but they are in a hurry or they are distracted by something else they are doing.

Please take a minute to slow down and think of what is really important. Enjoy the gifts you already have in life and treasure the holiday season with family and friends. Take care while driving this winter, drive defensively and in the same way, when walking never take for granted that you are seen or the driver will stop. I hope that everyone enjoys the holiday season and if you can, enjoy our wonderful winter too.



CITY OF OTSEGO CALENDAR

DECEMBER, 2013

2	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
3	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
3	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
5	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
9	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
10	BOARD OF REVIEW	
16	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
23	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
24	CITY HALL CLOSED	
25	CITY HALL CLOSED	
31	CITY HALL CLOSED	

JANUARY, 2014

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

FEBRUARY, 2014

3	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 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	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
24	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

MARCH, 2014

3	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
4	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
4	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
6	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
9	DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS	
10	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
17	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
24	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

APRIL, 2014

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

MAY, 2014

1	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
5	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
6	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
6	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
12	DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	7:30 A.M. CITY HALL
19	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
26	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
Main Street Office.....	692-2336
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
Matt Shankle.....	Commissioner
Ryan Wieber.....	Commissioner
Cyndi Trobeck.....	Commissioner
Thad Beard.....	City Manager
Angela Cronen.....	City Clerk
Mike Bosch.....	DPW Supervisor
Tom Dunn.....	WWTP Superintendent
Gordon Konkle.....	Chief of Police
Matthew Storbeck.....	Treasurer
Chad Tackett.....	Fire Chief
Kevin Harris.....	Assessor
Molly Wieber.....	Main Street Manager

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HAPPY NEW YEAR