



City of Otsego Agenda

A Publication of the City of Otsego

Fall/Winter 2023

2024 ELECTIONS

WATCH OUR FACEBOOK PAGE AND WEBSITE FOR UPDATED NEWS AS THE CITY RECEIVES IT FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

POSSIBLE 2024 ELECTION DATES:

*Presidential Primary February 27 or March 12, 2024

*Primary - August 6, 2024

*Presidential Election - November 5, 2024

NINE DAYS OF EARLY VOTING

The State of Michigan is still in the process of establishing procedures for the nine days of early voting. The nine days of early voting are for State and Federal Elections only. When the Presidential Primary date is established, we will begin the process of informing voters of the new procedures. All City of Otsego Voters will have an opportunity to vote at Otsego City Hall, from 8am-4pm, during the early voting period. More information will be communicated once we have more information from the State of Michigan.

IF YOU SIGNED UP TO AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A BALLOT

If you signed up to automatically receive a ballot, you will not receive a ballot automatically for the Presidential Primary Only. This is due to the fact that you must pick a Party to receive the appropriate ballots. Letters or postcards will be mailed out to the Permanent Ballot Voters to choose a party ballot. If you are on the Permanent Application List, you will receive an application before each election.

Please call the City Clerk's Office at 692-3391, or email Clerk Angela Cronen at acronen@cityofotsego.org

CITY HALL HOURS

**MONDAY - THURSDAY 7:30 A.M. TO 5:30 P.M.
FRIDAY - CLOSED**

FALL LEAF PICK-UP

As the end of summer draws near, it is once again time to think about our annual FALL LEAF PICK-UP.



Dates for the pick-up are the following:

1st Round - October 30 – Nov. 2

**Farmer & Allegan St. (M-89) - Nov. 2

2nd Round - Nov. 6 - Nov. 9

**Farmer & Allegan St. (M-89) - Nov. 9

****PLEASE NOTE THAT RANDOM PICKUPS MAY OCCUR BEFORE AND BETWEEN SCHEDULED PICKUPS.**

****Please do not put the leaves out before October 27th.**

Watch for additional announcements on the City's Website, in the "Shoppers Guide", and Facebook.

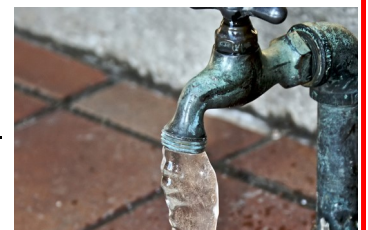
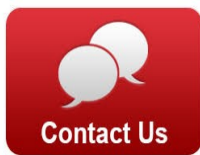
The City's policy is to canvass all streets twice during the two week pick-up period. **REMEMBER: With the exception of Allegan Street & Farmer Street, all leaves are to be raked into the street next to the curb.** If the leaves are not in the street they will not be picked up.

Please do not place anything except leaves in the street. The City places these leaves on a compost pile and therefore, branches, twigs and other yard waste must not be included. Brush and other yard waste may be taken to the City's Transfer Station free of charge. It is the City's policy to canvass the City two times. If leaves are placed in the street after completion of the canvassing, they will not be removed. It is the resident's responsibility to dispose of the leaves at the Transfer Station.



FROZEN WATER PIPES

If you experience discoloration in your water or reduced water pressure, **please notify** City Hall immediately at 692-3391. As temperatures fall, our Water Department may advise customers to **leave one faucet running with a pencil size stream of water**. Please be aware if it is a very cold winter ~ 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 and when you cease running your water, for any potential adjustment to be made on your utility bill**. Please watch for Public Notices in the *Shopper's Guide*, our Facebook Page, & Website pertaining to running water. Call 692-3391, if you have any questions.



NOW is the time to prepare for cold temperatures and insulate your water pipes. Please be advised that if your inside pipes freeze, it is not the responsibility of the City, and credits will not be issued.



City Manager
Aaron Mitchell

CITY MANAGER'S VIEW

Helen Ave./River St. Project

As we look back at the recently completed large road project of the Dix St./Washington St. resurfacing, we cannot look back too long for we must plan for another significant road project for the 2024 construction season; the Helen Ave./River St. project. If you live on Helen Ave. or routinely use it, you are well aware that this stretch of road is long overdue for some significant maintenance. Helen Ave. will receive a major facelift in 2024.

All of Helen Ave. from Farmer St. to John St. will receive a drastic update with all new roadway and curb. The structure, placement of utilities and appearance will be different when completed. River St. will not be fully resurfaced, we will simply be upgrading the water main to expand coverage and capacity.



The goals of this project will be a complete reconstruct, which will include the upgrade of water, sanitary and storm water lines. Some of these pipes are over 100 years old! So, you can be confident that we got our money's worth out of them. The road itself will be greatly improved as well. The current roadway is concave with the storm water collecting down the center. This project will put the storm water collection in the gutters along the edges of the road. This is the preferred method and will reduce needed maintenance for years to come. Another goal of this project is to prepare for the development of the former Rock-Tenn property at the end of Helen Ave. Nothing is finalized but the developer is looking at starting construction next year (more details to come, when available). This project will include the upgrade of two water sources; one off of Helen Ave. and one from River St. As this work is completed, we must plan ahead for the next 100 years. We want to make sure we think of everything before we start. We do not want to have to come back and upgrade any piece of infrastructure after the new

road is completed. That is why we are taking such a comprehensive look at this project. We are excited to unveil our plans for this project. However, we also understand that this project will be an inconvenience for those in the Helen Ave. Neighborhood. We will be speaking to you individually to explain the project in detail at a public meeting in the coming months. This work will be bid out to contractors in January with an expected Summer '24 construction season. More to come in the future.

Food Truck Ordinance

You may have noticed over the Summer that we passed a Food Truck Ordinance. We tried to find the appropriate balance between welcoming food trucks to bring food options to our residents without betraying our existing restaurants who are members of our community and tax payers. I think we were able to strike that balance.

The new ordinance states that food truck vendors:

- ◆ Must apply for an annual permit from City Hall which includes a background check and proof of health license,
- ◆ Must display blue permit when in service,
- ◆ May only operate within the restricted area (downtown, City parks and along the M89 strip) 1 day/week,
- ◆ May operate freely within the City outside of the restricted areas.

Food trucks have been operating within Otsego for almost a year now. When we initially received requests to operate within the City, we monitored their use and it was well received by all. Fast forward to the present where we have a well-thought out ordinance, we anticipate that food trucks will be rather popular in Otsego for years to come. For more details about this or any other City of Otsego ordinance, please feel free to visit our website at www.cityofotsego.org.



**TUESDAY
OCTOBER 31, 2023
4PM TO 6PM
TRAIL FOR TREATERS
DOWNTOWN OTSEGO**
Presented by:
Otsego Rotary



**Saturday,
December 2nd**

Watch the Shopper's Guide for event times. Many New activities for 2023! Activities for all ages. If anyone wants to volunteer at the event, please contact 692-3391.

WINTER REMINDERS

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



**RECYCLE
PICK-UP**



**FIRST & THIRD TUESDAY OF
THE MONTH**



**FALL BACK
NOVEMBER 5, 2023**



OTSEGO POLICE DEPT.



Police Chief, Bradley E. Misner

What do you think of when you think of fall? Football, Apple Picking, Pumpkin Spice, Back to School?

With school being back in session, student safety is a major priority for our department. We want parents to know that their children are in a safe learning environment while at school.

Phil Arnsman has taken on the roll as the School Resource Officer (SRO) for Otsego Public Schools; a partnership between Otsego Police Department and Otsego Public Schools.



Phil is no stranger to law enforcement. He's been serving Allegan County communities for over 26 years. His recent retirement from the Allegan County Sheriff Department after 20 years, allowed him an opportunity to become the SRO. When Phil was asked about this position, he stated, "I'm excited for this position because of the great school district that Otsego has. I enjoy spending time with the kids at the schools. I look forward to building a positive relationship with the students and am excited for what the school year will bring."

Phil and his wife Jessica have two children, Ben and Taylor who also attend Otsego Public Schools. When Phil and Jessica are not busy with their children's full schedules, you can find Phil outside enjoying many different activities.

Please help me in welcoming Phil to Otsego. We hope you, the students and staff have a fantastic school year.

How many of you remember the significance of June 30, 2023? This is when Michigan became a Hands-Free state. What does that mean? It means drivers can be pulled over and ticketed if they are caught holding or using a cellphone for any reason such as: making/receiving a call, sending/receiving text messages, scrolling through social media applications, watching/recording videos, browsing the internet or entering information into GPS/navigation system. There is however, an exception to this law when calling or texting 911, a law enforcement agency or another emergency service to report an emergency or seek help. While traveling around Otsego, your safety is our priority so please do so hands-free.



**TRANSFER
STATION
HOLIDAY HOURS**

**CLOSED
November 23, 2023
Dec. 26, 2023
Jan. 2, 2024**

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 restricted during the months of November through April in order to facilitate snow removal. Violators will be ticketed.





OTSEGO FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Brandon Weber

Welcome New Full-Time Firefighters



Collin Ailes, Michael McGrail, Mike Bush

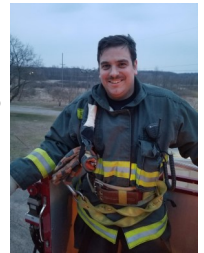
Collin Ailes:

I have a family of three, along with my wife and young child. I grew up in Kalamazoo and have lived in Otsego for about 10 years. I have an Associates degree in Fire Science and hold Firefighter I and II certifications, as well as Hazardous Materials Operations, Rope, Confined Space, and Swiftwater Rescue credentials, and a Medical First Responder license. I enjoy spending time with family, camping, and playing sports.



Michael McGrail:

I was born and raised on the east side of the state and came to West Michigan to attend WMU where I met my wife. We moved to Otsego 11 years ago where I currently live with my wife and 2 children. I joined the Otsego Fire Department as a paid on call firefighter 6 years ago to serve my community and fell in love with the job. I am also a member of the Oshtemo Township Fire Department. For fun I enjoy spending time with my family, golfing, and spending time up north. I look forward to serving the community for years to come.



Mike Bush

I was born and raised in Otsego. He attended Otsego Public Schools and graduated in 1998. After graduation, Mike moved and joined the Gobles Fire Department and attended the local fire academy as a way to be able to serve and give back to his community. Throughout the years and after relocating he ultimately ended up back in Otsego to join the greatest small-town fire department in Michigan!!

Mike is currently the lead training officer for the Otsego Fire Department, as well as a member of the Allegan County Firefighter Training Council, the Michigan TRT-5 Tech rescue team and a firefighter for Wayland/Yankee Springs Fire Department where he and his family spend a lot of time in the summer months.



Mike has been married to his wonderful wife Stephanie for 25 years. They have three sons Stephen, Nathan & Dylan and two granddaughters. Mike had the pleasure of being able to serve with his two youngest boys while they finished out high school as cadet members on the fire department. When Mike is not working at the fire station or at his small business, he can be found camping at the lake with his wife, entertaining the kids and spoiling the grandkids, working on vehicles, and enjoying life with friends.

Mike looks forward to interacting with the community through outreach and public education, and foresees great things happening in Otsego.

Safety Tips

Heating season is upon us, and October, which is Fire Prevention Month is just around the corner. Statistics show that most fire deaths occur in the overnight hours; with 50% of those fatal fires starting in the living room, 17% in the kitchen, and 16% in bedrooms. We encourage you to check smoke detectors in your own houses, as well as those of elderly friends and family members who may not be able to take care of this important task on their own.



Recommended placement of smoke detectors include on every level of the home and in every sleeping area. Hand in hand with this is identifying and correcting fire hazards in the home! Along with smoke detectors and heating comes carbon monoxide detectors and their foibles. We also encourage you to not only test these important devices, but also to learn the difference between a low battery/age alert tone from an alert coming from the presence of carbon monoxide. Both types of devices have finite lifespans and need to be replaced periodically. Consult the manufacturer of yours to know its lifespan and limitations.

Snow is invariably not far away. As a reminder, residents are responsible for maintaining free and unobstructed access to fire hydrants. We thank you in advance for keeping those accessible to us when we urgently need them.



New OFD Full-time Firefighter Transition

After the residents of Otsego trusted us with the recent Public Safety millage increase, we needed to make some changes within the Otsego Fire Department (OFD). If you remember back to the Spring, OFD was needed to either expand coverage by hiring 3 full-time firefighters to have 24/7 coverage at the station with an approved millage or a reduction of services by removing medical first response if the millage failed. Fortunately, the millage was passed and we were able to retain medical first responder services for our community. We were able to hire 3 firefighters from within OFD and setup multiple new policies and schedules to make the shift possible. The new policies and procedures are modeled off of common practice from other comparable departments across the State of Michigan.

The shift was made on July 1st. The full-time firefighters work 24-hour shifts that start at 7 am every day. In order for 3 firefighters to cover 365 days of the year firefighters work either 2 or 3 days per week. The full-time firefighter responds to any and all calls for service. No longer does it fall back solely on the on-call firefighters. The on-call firefighters respond to all non-medical emergencies as they always have, these include fire and accident calls. The medical calls are where the change is for our on-call firefighters. The only medical calls that now go to the on-call firefighters are:

- Large Medicals- Some medical calls require for more than one firefighter to properly handle the emergency. When that is known, the full-time firefighter will ask for 911 to send the on-call firefighters a tone for additional support.
- Simultaneous Medicals- It is not uncommon to have more than 1 medical call at a time. When the full-time firefighter is on a call and an additional call comes in, they notify 911 to send on-call firefighters a tone to respond.

One of the biggest obstacles with the implementation of this change was the scheduling of many different tasks that were originally done by the on-call firefighters when possible. Items such as truck checks, inventory checks, station maintenance and cleaning, etc. These tasks are now able to be scheduled to be completed in between response for service. This ability to assure that these tasks are completed will allow for OFD to remain proactive and stay on top of equipment maintenance among other departmental responsibilities. Saving the taxpayer money in the long run.

As a whole, the transition has gone very well. The full-time firefighters are responding to an even higher percentage of calls than predicted. The best part of this transition is that it improves coverage and response time to any and all emergencies.

SEWER BACK-UPS - Call City Hall first at 692-3391. If it is ***after hours***, please contact our Police Department at 692-6111.

City of Otsego Property Tax Collection

2023 Tax Year

Below is a breakdown of the property tax rates/millage 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 tax rates of each operating unit have been combined into the total rate column shown below. The millage rates represent dollars per \$1,000 of Taxable Value. [Note: Residential properties are exempt from School Operating Taxes 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	17.1658					
Operating		11.1452	17.7%	24.8%	11.1452	
Solid Waste Reduction		2.0206	3.2%	4.5%	2.0206	
Fire Truck Debt		0.0000	0.0%	0.0%	0.0000	
Public Safety		4.0000	6.4%	8.9%	4.0000	
Allegan County	6.9630					
Operating		5.1419	8.2%	11.4%	5.1419	
Ops. VET Relief Fund		0.0200	0.0%	0.0%	0.0200	
Road Tax		0.9654	1.5%	2.1%		0.9654
Senior Service		0.4930	0.8%	1.1%		0.4930
Medical Care Facility		0.2448	0.4%	0.5%		0.2448
Conservation		0.0979	0.2%	0.2%		0.0979
Otsego Public Schools	26.4900					
Operating		18.0000	28.6%	EXEMPT		18.0000
2006, 2007 & 2020 Debt		8.4900	13.5%	18.9%		8.4900
Allegan Area Educational Svc Agency	4.8564					
Operating		0.1400	0.2%	0.3%		0.1400
Voted Special Ed.		2.9783	4.7%	6.6%		2.9783
Voted Voc. Ed.		1.7381	2.8%	3.9%		1.7381
State Education Tax	6.0000		9.5%	13.3%	6.0000	
Otsego District Public Library	1.4977					
Operating		0.9677	1.5%	2.2%		0.9677
Debt		0.5300	0.8%	1.2%		0.5300
TOTAL MILLAGE (NON-P.R.E.)	62.9729		100.0%		28.3277	34.6452
LESS SCHOOL OPERATING FOR EXEMPT PRINCIPAL RESIDENCES	-18.0000					-18.0000
TOTAL MILLAGE (P.R.E.)	44.9729			100.0%	28.3277	16.6452

2023 DECEMBER BOARD OF REVIEW

The December Board of Review will be meeting on Tuesday, December 12, 2023; at 10:00 a.m., City Hall. If you disagree with the percentage shown for your Principal Residence Exemption on your **Winter 2023** taxes, you must contact City Hall **before** Thursday, **December 7, 2023.** If you have any questions, please call 692-2741.

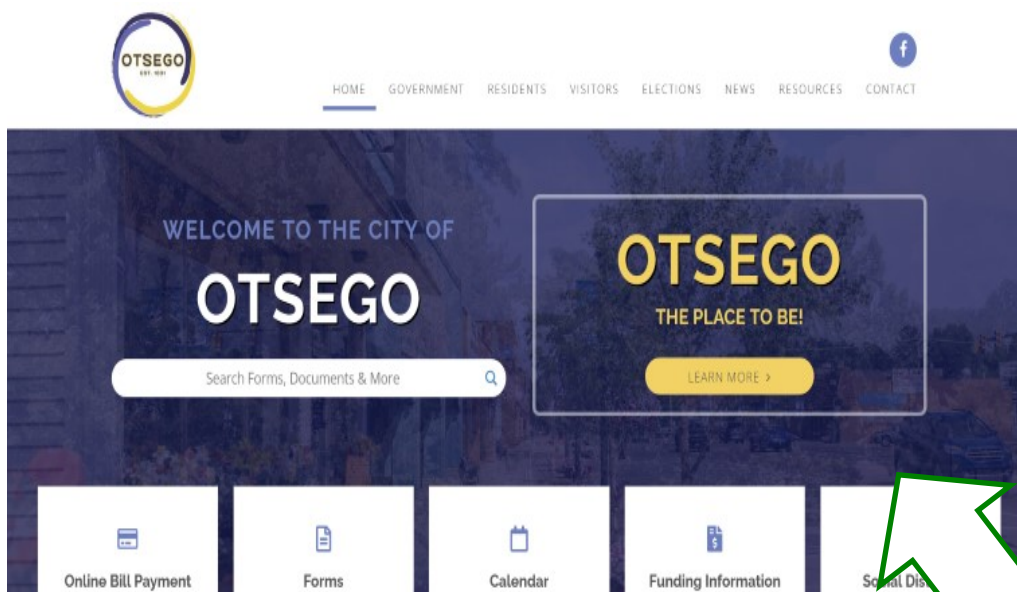
2023 Winter Taxes

Matthew Storbeck, City Treasurer

Winter tax bills are mailed to arrive on the first day of December. Please note that tax bills are sent to both property owners and mortgage servicers. If you do not receive a tax bill, please call our office at 269-692-2741, and we will send another bill. Residential property owners are encouraged to check their Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) 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 2024.

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 27th or February 12th, at the taxpayer's discretion. This will allow us time to make contact in cases where problems arise.

Also, please remember that a receipt will not be mailed back for a payment 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.



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OTSEGO

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Forms



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Funding Information



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REMINDER

CITY COMMISSION MEETINGS

1ST AND 3RD MONDAY
OF THE MONTH

PLEASE CHECK OUR

WEBSITE

WWW.CITYOFOTSEGO.ORG

FOR AGENDAS AND
MINUTES & OTHER
IMPORTANT
INFORMATION

CITY OF OTSEGO CALENDAR

OCTOBER, 2023

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	
16	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
17	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
23	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
31	TRAIL FOR TREATERS	4:00 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M.

NOVEMBER, 2023

2	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
6	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
7	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
7	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
11	VETERANS DAY SERVICE	11:00 A.M.
20	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
21	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
23	CITY HALL CLOSED	
27	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

DECEMBER, 2023

2	HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS	
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	
12	BOARD OF REVIEW	10:00 A.M.
18	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
19	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
25 & 26	CITY HALL CLOSED	
27	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

JANUARY, 2024

1 & 2	CITY HALL CLOSED	
3	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
3	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
3	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
4	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
15	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
16	CURBSIDE RECYCLE	
22	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

FEBRUARY, 2024

1	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
5	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
6	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
6	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
15	WINTER TAXES DUE	
19	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
20	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
26	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

MARCH, 2024

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	
18	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
19	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
25	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 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 Manager694-6146

City Clerk692-3391

Finance Director692-2741

Dept. Public Works694-6636

Website:

www.cityofotsego.org



The Agenda is a quarterly publication of the
CITY OF OTSEGO

Stacey Withee.....Mayor
Lauri Krueger.....Mayor Pro-Tem
Wayne Rayburn.....Commissioner
Chuck Moore Jr.....Commissioner
Jason Smith.....Commissioner
Aaron Mitchell.....City Manager
Angela Cronen.....City Clerk
Mike Bosch.....DPW Supervisor
Luke Keyzer.....WWTP Superintendent
Brad Misner.....Chief of Police
Matthew Storbeck.....Treasurer
Brandon Weber.....Fire Chief
Lydia Paille.....Assessor

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



CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED

November 23 - December 25 & 26, 2023 & Jan. 1 & 2, 2024