



3848 VETERANS DRIVE / TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684  
(231) 941-1620 / FAX: (231) 941-1588  
www.garfield-twp.com ~ updated frequently!

WINTER 2016

# Garfield

## Charter Township

SERVING THE CITIZENS OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN

### TOWNSHIP HOURS

Monday —Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

CLOSED FRIDAYS

### HOLIDAY HOURS

Township offices will be closed for the observance of the following holidays:

Christmas Eve—Dec. 22, 2016

Christmas Day—Dec. 26, 2016

New Year's Day—Jan 2, 2017

M.L. King Jr. Day—Jan. 16, 2017

President's Day—Feb. 20, 2017

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

CHUCK KORN.....SUPERVISOR

LANIE McMANUS.....CLERK

JEANE BLOOD LAW.....TREASURER

MOLLY AGOSTINELLI.....TRUSTEE

STEVE DUELL.....TRUSTEE

DENISE SCHMUCKAL.....TRUSTEE

DAN WALTERS.....TRUSTEE

### STAFF

HILARY ALPERS.....ASSESSING CLERK  
AND TREASURER'S ASSISTANT

JUDY BATTLE.....ADMIN. ASSISTANT

AMY DEHAAN.....ASSESSOR

RICH DERKS.....BUILDING INSPECTOR

MICHAEL GREEN.....ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

ROB LARREA.....PLANNING DIRECTOR

CHLOE MACOMBER.....DEPUTY TREASURER

BILL MOUSER.....FACILITIES MANAGER

SUE MUHA.....APPRAISER

DOROTHY PETROSKEY.....OFFICE COORDINATOR

THOM SCHMUCKAL.....ZONING CODE

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

KRISTEN STEGER.....ASSISTANT ASSESSOR

CARL STUJZINSKI.....BUILDING OFFICIAL

BETTY TEZAK.....DEPUTY CLERK

### WELCOME NEW TRUSTEES!

**Daniel "Dan" Walters** was born and raised in Traverse City Michigan. He is a sixth generation resident of the Traverse City area. He attended Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools until graduating in 1979. He received his Associates in Applied Science Degree, Heavy Equipment Service in 1981 from Ferris State University. He returned to Traverse City where he began his career working at a locally owned businesses until he formed Grand Traverse Diesel Service. He takes pride in the fact that he still services his first two customers today, 30 years later. It is Dan's belief that service is what sets him apart from his competitors. He built his current location in 1993 and is working on his third expansion.



Dan spent 10 years as a volunteer fire fighter for Garfield Township Fire Dept. He retired as Asst Chief in 1988. Dan serves on advisory boards for Wexford Missaukee Vocation Education and Ferris State University in the Heavy Equipment program. Dan enjoys the four season recreation offered by the area he lives in. Fishing in the summer, hunting in the fall, snowmobiling in the winter and going to the U.P. (Upper Peninsula) any time he can get away.

**Steve Duell** is a lifelong resident of Grand Traverse County. Steve graduated in 1981 from Traverse City Senior High School. He went on to earn an associate's degree in Drafting and Design from Northwestern Michigan College and earned his Bachelor Degree in Manufacturing Engineering from Ferris State College. Steve formally was a Grand Traverse County Sherriff Reserve and is the Owner of two (2) Garfield Township businesses: Duell Building & Remodeling, LLC and a Family owned and run horse farm, Casalae Farms, Inc. Steve serves on the Garfield Township Zoning Board of Appeals. In his spare time, Steve is a Horse Judge and is pursuing a USEF Arabian/Half Arabian Judges Card. Steve is married and has two grown sons.



### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Robert "Bob" Featherstone passed away on October 30, 2016. He was elected to the Township Board on November 7, 1978. He attended his first Town Board meeting on November 22, 1978 and continuously served for twenty years until November 30, 1998. After being a private citizen for ten years, Robert Featherstone was once again elected to the Township Board of the Charter Township of Garfield on November 4, 2008. Robert Featherstone continuously served on the Town Board for the last eight years and also served on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Grand Traverse Metro Emergency Services Board and the Elections Committee during the last eight years. Thank you Bob, you will be missed.



We also wish to thank Kit Wilson. Kit was elected to the Township Board in November of 2008. Kit served as Township Trustee for 8 years and served as the Board representative on the Township Planning Commission.



Garfield Township would also like to recognize **Terry Clark**, for his 37 years of service to the Planning Commission, Joint Planning and ZBA. We would also like to thank Traverse City resident **Jan Warren** for her commitment to the Grand Traverse Commons redevelopment project. Thank you for making Garfield Township a great place to live, work and play! You will all be missed!

## FROM YOUR TREASURER

In the Treasurer's Department we hear a lot of comments while accepting tax payments, and most have to do with the amount of taxes due. Hearing these comments from the residents makes me wonder – how can I save our taxpayers money or make it a little easier? Here are a few suggestions:

- 1.) Check with the Assessor to ensure your property is assessed correctly.
- 2.) Always make note of the tax due dates and pay your taxes on time to avoid interest and penalties.
- 3.) Take advantage of our free brush pass offered in the spring, fall, and after some severe storms to haul away your unwanted seasonal yard waste.
- 4.) Complete a deferral application. If you qualify, completing one could save you from unwanted interest and penalties if you are unable to pay your taxes by the set due dates.
- 5.) Choose American Waste, the Township's preferred waste hauler. This will reduce your monthly costs and will reduce wear on our roads.
- 6.) Ask about an Absentee Ballot for future elections. If you have a qualifying reason, filling out one of these will save you time and gas. Call the Clerk's Office for more details.
- 7.) Use our Township parks for sports and exercise to reduce stress and to improve your health to avoid doctor's visits. All of our parks are dog friendly and our East Silver Lake Park has a dog park area to help your pooch stay fit and avoid vet visits. Visit our website to see all of our Garfield park locations.
- 8.) Attend board meetings and talk to your Trustees, Elected Officials or Township employees about cost saving ideas. We always welcome ideas of how we can serve you more efficiently. Not everyone will directly see the cost savings, time savings or health benefits from this list, but hopefully it is informative and helpful to you in one way or another!

## ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS

Around January 1<sup>st</sup> each year our assessing department will be sending you a letter with a 5076 form (Affidavit to Claim Small Business Tax Exemption) printed on the back and a L-4175 form (personal property statement). It is very important that you review, complete the appropriate form and return it to our assessing department. If your business qualifies, the 5076 could exempt you from having to pay personal property taxes for the 2017 year. Otherwise, completing the L-4175 will make sure our assessing department has accurate information for your assessed and taxable values.

**To qualify for the tax exemption you must file a 5076 affidavit each year.** These forms will be sent to all business owners. The 5076 form **MUST** be returned to Garfield Township by **February 10<sup>th</sup>** each year. Personal property statements must be returned by February 20<sup>th</sup> each year. Please contact our assessing department with any questions regarding the personal property tax exemption or filing your personal property statement at (231) 941-1620.

## FROM THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

With the large volume of sales taking place, we want to be sure buyers know what to expect following their property purchase. Often when a property is sold, the assessed (AV) and taxable (TV) values are quite different (i.e. AV = \$70,000; TV = \$52,534). And, while the AV is our attempt to reflect 50% of the true cash value of the property, typically properties sell for more than that.

For example, assume the property sells for \$150,000 - 50% of that is \$75,000. The AV will not automatically go to exactly \$75,000 - values of all property within a neighborhood are increased, or decreased, by the average difference between AV and the sales price of the sold properties. Again, using this example,  $\$70,000/\$150,000 = 46.67\%$ . This ratio is used to determine the following year's AV because it is less than 50% - meaning that we have under-valued this property by 7.1%.

In terms of TV, the passage of Proposal A of 1994 put a "cap" on TV - until there is new construction OR a sale occurs. In this instance, the seller paid taxes based on a TV of \$52,534. The buyer will pay on that same TV until the end of the year; however, the following year, the TV will rise to meet the AV. If we determine that we have under-assessed all property in a neighborhood by an average of 5%, the next year's AV will be  $\$70,000 + 5\%$ , or \$73,500. The TV for the next year will also be \$73,500, and the buyer will be paying higher taxes than the seller did - because the cap provision gave a break to owners who remained in their homes for long periods of time.

Our goal is to help you understand how AV and TV are determined. If you have questions, please call us!

### 2017 BOARD MEETINGS

January—11th & 25th  
February—14th & 28th  
March—14th & 28th  
April—11th & 25th  
May—9th & 23rd  
June—13th & 27th

All meetings begin promptly at 6:00 p.m. upstairs in the Township Hall.

Meeting agendas, minutes and videos can be viewed on the Township website.

The Township Board meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

The Planning Commission meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

The Zoning Board of Appeals meets on an as needed basis on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m..

The Parks and Recreation Commission meet 4 times per year, usually in January, April, July and October on the first Tuesday at 4:30 p.m.

All meetings take place at the Garfield Township Hall unless stated otherwise on the agenda. We welcome your participation!

### METRO FIRE

Did you know you can get a discount for smoke alarms for your home? Visit Grand Traverse Metro website and read about the Safe Neighborhood Campaign. There you will find area retailers who offer 20% discounts on smoke alarms for your home!  
[www.gtmetrofire.org](http://www.gtmetrofire.org)

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Falling behind on your mortgage, condo association fees, and/or property taxes due to a hardship?

Go to  
[www.stepforwardmichigan.org](http://www.stepforwardmichigan.org)  
or call 866-946-7432 to speak with someone about assistance that may be available.