



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

SUMMER 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

**** PLEASE NOTE ****

Tax payment receipts will only be sent upon request or if a self-addressed stamped envelope is included with payment.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

- CHUCK KORN.....SUPERVISOR
- LANIE MC MANUS.....CLERK
- JEANE BLOOD LAW.....TREASURER
- BOB FEATHERSTONE.....TRUSTEE
- DENISE SCHMUCKAL.....TRUSTEE
- KIT WILSON.....TRUSTEE
- MOLLY AGOSTINELLI.....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 STUDZINSKI.....BUILDING OFFICIAL
- BETTY TEZAK.....DEPUTY CLERK
- BRIAN VANDENBRAND.....DEPUTY PLANNER

ROAD MAINTENANCE

Spring road construction projects are underway at Cedar Run Road and the Cass Road Bridge. The Grand Traverse County Road commission has approved two additional Garfield Township road projects for the construction season. The first project is the Cass Road/Keystone Intersection. Improvements include geometric improvements and new signals. Garfield Township approved a special assessment district for the Oak Terrace Subdivision. This project will include extension of sewer and water as well as complete road reconstruction. The projects are currently out for bid with projected start and completion between May 1, 2016 and November 1, 2016. We will keep you updated on our website when these projects are scheduled to begin. In the case of Oak Terrace, road improvements are made based on several factors. The County Road Commission uses the asset management process, traffic patterns, network considerations and funding availability to determine which roads need repairing. If funding is available, the Road Commission will match contributions up to 50% for local road improvement costs, Garfield Township will contribute 25% of improvement costs, leaving the remaining 25% to be paid by property owners in the affected area. To assist property owners, the Township will offer to finance owner portions through a special assessment district at a low interest rate. Property Owners would then make payments to the Township over a period of time through annual installments. There are limited funds available for these projects and preference is given to roads in the poorest condition. Requests should be made to Township Supervisor, Chuck Korn. Contact him at (231) 941-1620 or by email to: ckorn@garfield-twp.com

FROM THE TREASURER

JEANE BLOOD LAW

Summer Tax Deferments Available! If you are 62 years of age or older, and/or totally disabled, and your gross household income was not over \$40,000 during the preceding calendar year, you may qualify for a deferment of your summer taxes. This makes the summer taxes for your primary residence due on February 14, 2017, instead of September 14, 2016, which will give you more time to make payments with no late interest. If you have qualified in the past you will be receiving an application in the mail around July 1st, 2016. If you think you may qualify and did not receive an application in the mail, applications are available at the Treasurer's office. If you have any questions, contact the Treasurer's Office as soon as possible at 225-3168 or 225-3043. Winter deferments may be obtained at the GT County Treasurer's office.

PARK AND TRAIL NEWS

Phase II of the Buffalo Ridge Trail is now under construction! This exciting pathway begins at West Middle School, crosses through Great Wolf Lodge's back pasture, connects to the Silver Lake YMCA, and then continues down to Silver Lake Road at Creekside Drive. Get ready to check it out!

Exciting things are also happening at the Boardman Valley Nature Preserve. Concepts have been reviewed for a new playground area at recently acquired property off of Keystone Road. Grant funded improvements to the riverfront area near the "Boardman Y" will soon be underway, including a kayak launch, renovation of the pickleball courts, and more.

Construction of a new disc golf course will soon be underway at the Silver Lake Recreation Area. This course will be designed and installed by the Carly Jean Lewis Playground non-profit group. The design will take advantage of areas which are currently underutilized, while limiting impact on existing nature trails. The new holes will be great not just for disc golf, but to help dog walkers and hikers experience new areas of the park. Cool things are also in the works at the Miller Creek Nature Preserve, including a potential fishing platform and additional trails through beautiful natural environments. Please visit our website for more information on all of your beautiful township parks!

BUSINESS OWNERS

Any changes to signs, whether a new sign or face replacement, requires a sign permit prior to installation of the sign. Sign companies should know that permits are required prior to installation but it's the business owners' responsibility to be sure that proper permits are pulled. Failure to obtain a sign permit prior to installation will force the fee to be doubled for the required permits.

If you have questions about when a sign permit is required, contact the Zoning Department.

ORDINANCE #46

We would like to remind residents and businesses who are disposing of old or unwanted items, to please remember to place or store such items inside a building until they are properly removed. Per Junk Ordinance No. 46, items such as parts of machinery, appliances, unwanted building materials, or any other unwanted items are prohibited from being stored outdoors. Please contact the Zoning Dept. if you have any questions pertaining to storing junk material, as we want to help continue to protect people and our environment.

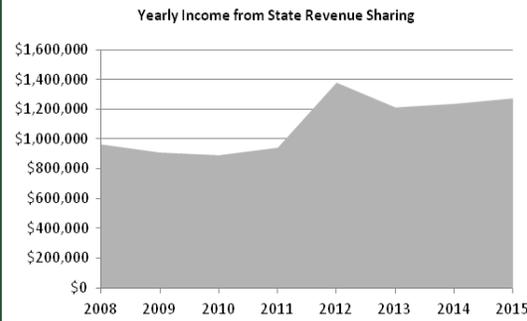
PARK RESERVATIONS

The Silver Lake Recreation Area has three pavilions available for parties, birthdays, family reunions, graduation open houses, etc. for a nominal fee. Please call ahead to make sure the date you need is available. Call (231) 941-1620 for more information.

DOG PARK REMINDER

Please note: the dog park at the Silver Lake Recreation Area is for the enjoyment of DOGS ONLY! Allowing children within the dog park is against park rules not only because of potential injuries, but because it is unfair to dogs and their owners who may face liability if a child is hurt. Please enjoy the other 82-acres with your children and leave the 2-acre dog park for our four-legged friends. Thanks!

INCREASES IN STATE REVENUE



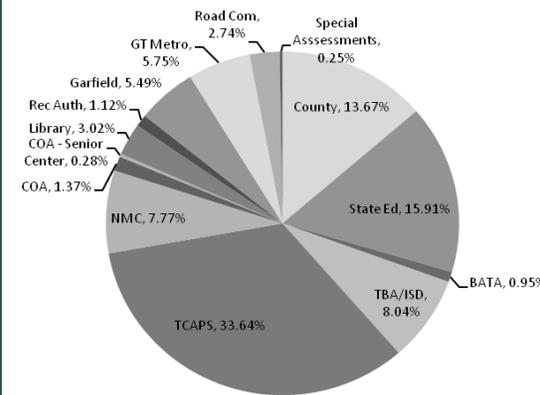
Revenue sharing comes from the State of Michigan's 6% sales tax levied on goods and services sold. A portion of the total amount collected is divided up and dispersed to Michigan cities, villages, and townships. This money is earmarked by the Michigan State Constitution and State Statute to help pay for core governmental services such as police protection, fire service, roads, water, and sewer services. In 2015 Garfield Township's State Shared Revenue was \$1,270,721.00, which was a 2% increase from 2014. Township revenue was down 18.83% from 2014 to 2015 due to a decrease in the millage rate to 2 mills, which was offset by fund balance. Expenses were up 5.34% due to township building repairs, replacing a 1998 truck, and increased expenses in legal, publishing, advertising, printing, and training.

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

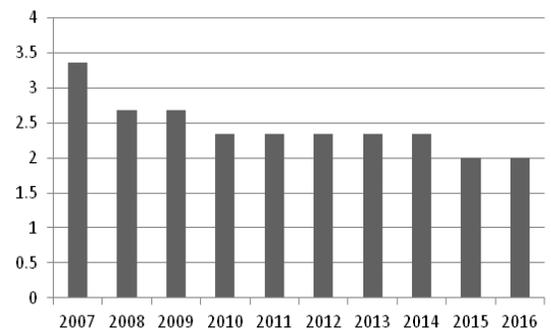
The Township Board and the staff at Garfield Township are always looking for ways to make sure that helpful information is getting to our residents. We have a website dedicated to Garfield Township filled with information for each department as well as other local agencies. If it affects you, we try and address it. If you are looking for forms and/or application you will find them online. If a form or application is not uploaded on the website, let us know and we will be happy to email you what you are looking for. Please don't hesitate to contact the Garfield Township Hall with your questions or concerns.

WHERE DO YOUR TAXES GO?

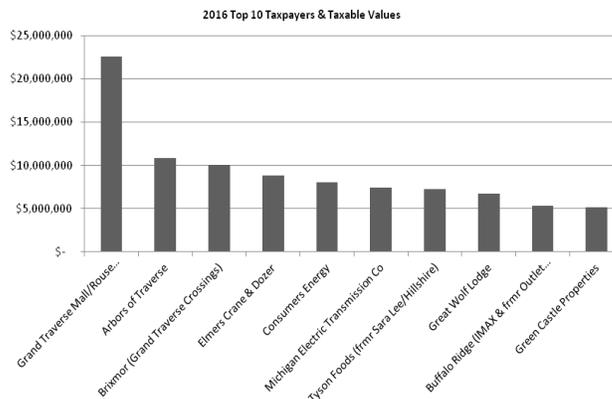
Where do your property tax payments go? The pie chart shows the breakdown of where your property tax payments are actually going. Only 5.49% of the tax monies collected by Garfield Township actually stays within the township. The rest is divided and distributed between the other various taxing authorities. Garfield Township has reduced its millage rate several times in the last twelve years, with the 2016 millage rate at its lowest yet, set at 2.0000.



Garfield Township Millage Rate History



TOP TAXPAYERS & TAXABLE VALUES



The Grand Traverse Mall has been and remains the largest taxpayer in Garfield Township for the past six years. The Arbors added several new apartment buildings, boosting their value to #2 from #6 last year. While 2015 also saw expansion at Tyson Foods (locally known as Sara Lee), the phase out of industrial personal property tax caused their value to drop nearly 60%. Brimor held steady at #3, followed by Elmer's (up from #9) and Consumers Energy.

FROM THE GRAND TRAVERSE CO. SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The average trip inside a store to grab a few things—about 15-20 minutes or so—can leave your pets vulnerable to the intense heat inside your parked car. According to weather experts, the temperature inside your car can rise almost 30° while you are inside shopping. A parked car can quickly turn into an oven, in the sun or the shade. Never leave a dog in a parked car. Even on a mild 73°F day, with a window cracked open 1", the temperature inside a car parked in the sun can reach a sweltering 105°F in 30 minutes. On a 90°F day, the interior of a vehicle can reach a staggering 125°F in 30 minutes. During warm weather months, GT County Deputies handle numerous complaints of dogs left alone in parked vehicles. It is a violation of Michigan law if you fail to provide adequate care for your pet by leaving them in an excessively warm vehicle. A person who violates the law can be charged with a misdemeanor, which is punishable with imprisonment for not more than 93 days, a fine of not more than \$1,000.00 and community service for not more than 200 hours. Please think twice before bringing your pet with you on errands around town and exercise good judgment.



-Lieutenant Barsheff—GT Sheriff's Office

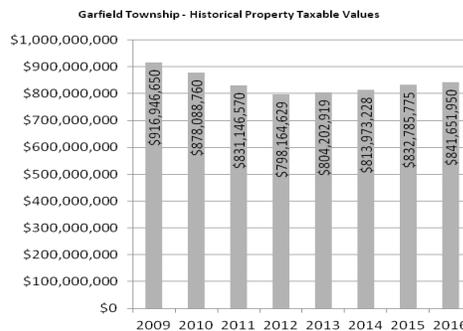
FROM THE METRO FIRE DEPARTMENT CHIEF PARKER

There is nothing like outdoor grilling. It's one of the most popular ways to cook food. But, a grill placed too close to anything that can burn is a fire hazard. They can be very hot, causing burn injuries. Follow these simple tips and you will be on the way to safe grilling. Safety Tips: *Propane and charcoal grills should only be used outdoors. *The Grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches. *Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area. *Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grill and from trays below the grill. *Never leave your grill unattended. *Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.

PROPANE GRILLS: Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop call the fire department. **If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not move the grill. For more Grilling safety tips, visit the Township Website and access the link to the Metro Fire Department.**

HISTORICAL TAXABLE VALUES

The Township hit its highest taxable value ever in 2009, then decreased by nearly 13% through 2012 - where values "bottomed out" following the 2008 recession. Since then, there has been steady growth averaging 1.33% - slightly less than the average CPI increase of 1.47% over the same period. These value increases include the settlement of a major tax appeal with the Grand Traverse Mall, the phase out of industrial personal property as well as the construction of several new apartments and the IMAX theater. With more apartments, new homes and other projects under construction, as well as increasing real estate prices in general, values for 2017 are expected to be even stronger.



FROM THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

As seasons change, township residents and business owners work to improve and maintain their properties. New construction is starting and property sales show values are on the rise. Like the weatherman monitors changes in the weather, the Assessor's office monitors what is happening in the real estate market. Visiting each property that sells, every property that is being improved and 20% of each property class helps us analyze the market and determine property values. With warmer temperatures, the assessing staff will be out reviewing property data. If your property hasn't been visited in the past five years, you've taken out a building permit or you recently purchased, you should expect to see us. If no one is home when staff comes to visit, a yellow card will be left on your door with questions for you to answer and return. We want to help you understand your property value and how it is determined. Please call, email or stop by the office if you have questions. We look forward to working with you!

2016 HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF

If you missed the first few drop-offs there are two more dates! HHW drop off will be held Thursday August 25, 2016. There will be a Saturday drop-off on October 1, 2016 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Appointments are required for all HHW collections by calling 231.941.5555 or by using the online scheduling system at www.recyclesmart.info.

DROP BOX AVAILABLE

Need to drop something off at our offices after hours? Residents can use the gray drop box located in front of the town hall under the covered entry way. Please use this box for dropping off tax payments, absentee applications, absentee ballots, etc. This box is secure and is checked daily.



2016 BOARD MEETINGS

June—8th & 22nd

July—13th & 27th

August—10th & 24th

September—14th & 28th

October—12th & 26th

November—9th & 23rd

December—14th & 28th

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

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

YARD WASTE PASSES

Garfield Township saves its residents hundreds of dollars by offering free Yard Waste Passes every Spring and Fall. Keep up the nice work and keep those beautiful yards free of unwanted debris. When the leaves begin to fall, watch for notices on our website for the next dates when Yard Waste Passes will be available.

TOWNSHIP CLERK UPDATE

LANIE MCMANUS

2016 has been a very busy year in the clerk's office. The Presidential Primary had about a 50% turnout and we are now preparing for the August Primary. July 5, 2016 is the last day to register if you wish to vote in that election. Call our office or look on MI.gov/sos if you aren't sure if you are registered to vote.

Did you know that if you are sixty years of age, you are eligible to be put on the permanent absentee voter list? This means that before every election you would receive an application for an absent voter ballot. When these completed applications are returned to us, we then issue or mail a ballot to that voter. Due to the state legislatures eliminating straight party voting, we are anticipating long lines at the polls in November. Voting absentee may be an option that fits your needs better than standing in a long line to exercise your right to vote. If your name is currently on the permanent absentee voter list, but you have recently moved, you will most likely need to request to be placed on the list again as that information does not follow to your new address. Applications for absentee ballots, as well as applications to register to vote, can be found on the Garfield Township website or at MI.gov/sos. The applications explain the process and requirements. Be sure to get out and vote on August 2 and November 8, 2016. We'll see you at the Polls!



VOTING PRECINCTS

Garfield Township has 6 voting precincts for their 14,000 + voters. If you unsure of your precinct designation ,please call the Township office to ensure no confusion on election day.

- Precinct 1-2025 E. Silver Lake Road (Fire Station #12)
- Precinct 2-3848 Veterans Drive (Township Hall)
- Precinct 3-3000 Albany Street (Fire Station #11)
- Precinct 4-2650 LaFranier Road (County Building)
- Precinct 5-3686 S Airport Road (First Christian Church)
- Precinct 6-1881 LaFranier Rd. (Road Commission Bldg)

BUILDING DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Garfield Township adopted the new Michigan Residential Building Code on February 8, 2016. We have free booklets available which include, requirements regarding decks, swimming pools, energy code, new homes, additions, accessory structures, and other miscellaneous code information. Because of numerous inquiries regarding accessory structures, it should be noted that if the floor area of the accessory structure does not exceed 200 sq. feet, a building permit is NOT required. However, a land use (zoning) permit is still required if the structure is over 100 feet. Structures under 100 square feet still need to meet the set-back requirements for the specific district. As always, if you have any questions regarding the construction codes, feel free to contact us.

ZONING DEPARTMENT

We would like to remind our residents that vacation home rentals (any rental that is less than 30 consecutive days in length) are not allowed in Garfield Township. We have had some staffing changes at Garfield Township. Please join us in welcoming Michael Green, AICP, as our new Zoning Administrator. Michael comes to us from Wexford County and is ready to help you with zoning questions and permits. Remember, to call Michael with any questions you may have before you build a structure or hang a sign.



TOWNSHIP MEETINGS

The Open Meetings Act states that all meetings of a public body shall be open to the public and shall be held in a place available to the general public. All persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting except as otherwise provided in this act. Here at the Township we want to make sure that if you are unable to attend the meetings, the minutes are available on our website. In addition, did you know that you can watch the Township Board meetings and the Township Planning Commission meetings without leaving your home? You sure can! Grab a bag of popcorn and your favorite beverage and log into our website. Click on meetings and access the video that is attached (usually available the day following the meeting). Get informed on what is happening in your Township. If you have questions, please ask. We are but a phone call away.



Now accepting
VISA, MasterCard, Discover & American Express!

Make your Tax Payments with credit card OR debit card by going online to the Township website:
www.garfield-twp.com

All credit card or debit card payments are subject to a 3% convenience fee.
Payment services provided by Point & Pay, LLC

HOLIDAY HOURS

Township offices will be closed the following days to celebrate the Holidays for 2016:

- Independence Day—July 4
- Labor Day—Sept. 5
- Veterans Day—Nov. 10*
- Thanksgiving Day—Nov. 24
- Christmas Eve—Dec. 22*
- Christmas Day—Dec. 26*
- New Year's Day—Jan. 2
- *date observed