

Dexter Village Update

Summer 2012

Volume 12, Issue 2

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Dexter Tornado

Thank you to all residents and local businesses for the overwhelming outpouring of support during the tornado. We were very blessed to have no loss of life during this unprecedented area event. We look forward to the day that all of our displaced families are back home.

President's Message - Another Budget Year Kicks Off



The Village of Dexter's new fiscal year begins on July 1st. Village Council unanimously voted to keep the total millage rate the same at 13.5562 mills for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. This marks the 7th year in a row that the millage rate has remained constant, proving that you can do quite a bit with what you have if you plan correctly and think creatively.

As you will see later in another area of this newsletter, the Village has been very successful at pursuing a wide range of grant opportunities. Over the past 5 years, we have leveraged your tax dollars in a variety of ways to improve the Village's infrastructure and the overall quality of life for our residents, businesses and visitors. At the same time, we have maintained our long term focus

of protecting the health, safety and welfare of the Village, both physically and fiscally.

The Village strives to be a great employer, provide a fair salary structure and manage the long term responsibilities and liabilities associated with employee retirement and health care benefits. To that end, the upcoming budget includes a small salary increase for our non-union employees, since most of them have not had a salary increase since 2008. Our bargaining employees agreed to a two year wage freeze from July 2011 through July 2013 to help the Village realign the employee cost structure with the reduced revenues that the Village was receiving as a result of lower property values. This year our non-union employees will be receiving a 1.5% salary increase as well as a small bonus (1.5%). The 2013 - 2014 budget will include a 1% increase in the salaries of our bargaining employees consistent with the negotiated terms of the 3 year agreement signed in March of 2011.

The Village has two unfunded liabilities: one associated with employee retirement benefits and the other with retired employee health care. Reducing these liabilities has been a priority for this Council over the past 4 years.

~ Continued on Page 3 ~

Grants Help the Village Improve

Over the past five years the Village has received \$4.6 million in grants from both the federal and state government. Using our 2010 population of 4067, this equates to \$1,131 per resident.

These grants have allowed the Village to take on less debt while completing major infrastructure improvement projects. Please see the next page for a listing of the grants that have been received.



Village of Dexter - Grant and Outside Funding Summary

Funding Agency	Year Funding Used	Amount Received	Total Project Cost	Purpose
US Fish & Wildlife Service - Fish Passage	2008	\$48,750.00	\$514,865.73	Removal of the Mill Creek dam
Michigan Department of Energy	2010	\$50,000.00	\$78,870.42	Retrofitting 120 downtown street lights with energy efficient LED light bulbs
Chelsea Area Wellness Foundation	2010	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	Start up costs for the Community Garden
Michigan Economic Development Corporation	2011	\$13,250.00	\$26,500.00	Redevelopment Planning for 3045 Broad Street which will be owned by the Village in 2012
Chelsea Wellness - 5 Healthy Towns	2011	\$10,000.00	\$13,000.00	Play Equipment in Mill Creek Park (formerly Warrior Creek Park)
DTE Energy Foundation Tree Planting	2012	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	Tree Replacement due to tornado damage
Total - General Fund		\$128,000.00	\$639,236.15	
Michigan Department of Natural Resources	2010	\$450,000.00	\$1,432,600.00	Development of Mill Creek Park
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality	2010	\$48,000.00		Boating Access and Parking Improvements
Washtenaw County Parks - Village granted non-motorized trail money to the Border to Border Trail project, which the County is repaying towards Village projects	2012	\$468,119.00		Starway between Mill Creek Park and the Library, Village share of Border to Border Trail to Westridge, Additional Funding for Mill Creek Park
DTE Energy Foundation Tree Planting	2011	\$2,830.00	\$2,830.00	Tree planting in Mill Creek Park
Total - Mill Creek Park		\$958,949.00	\$1,435,430.00	
State of Michigan - Local Jobs Today Program	2008	\$84,750.00	\$694,028.96	Reconstruction of Dexter-Ann Arbor Road from Meadowview to Lexington
Washtenaw Area Transportation Study - Federal Transportation Fund	2008	\$391,942.00		Reconstruction of Dexter-Ann Arbor Road from Meadowview to Lexington
Washtenaw Area Transportation Study - Federal Transportation Fund	2010	\$100,000.00	\$144,000.00	Rehabilitation of Ann Arbor Street from Kensington to Meadowview
Washtenaw Area Transportation Study - Federal Transportation Fund	2013	\$400,000.00	\$400,000.00	Allocated funds can be used for Central Street, Main Street or Baker Road
Total - Street Funds		\$976,692.00	\$1,238,028.96	
Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority	2008	\$10,000.00	\$22,650.00	Back-up generators for sewer system lift stations
Michigan Department of Community Health	2009	\$24,999.00	\$25,000.00	Equipment needed to add fluoride to Village drinking water
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality - American Reinvestment and Recovery Act Funds (Principle Forgiveness on Loan Balance)	2010	\$1,120,193.00	\$2,800,483.00	Sewer system improvements including lining of structurally deficient sewers and the construction of an Equalization Basin to handle water caused by rain storms
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality - American Reinvestment and Recovery Act Funds (Principle Forgiveness on Loan Balance)	2010	\$816,151.00	\$2,040,377.00	Water System Improvements including the addition of the 5th Well and wellhouse, high service pump upgrades and water main replacement
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality - Green Project Reserve (Principle Forgiveness on Loan Balance)	2011	\$620,000.00	\$1,550,000.00	Water main replacement
Total - Water & Sewer Funds		\$2,591,343.00	\$6,438,510.00	
Grand Total		\$4,654,984.00	\$9,751,205.11	

President's Message - Continued

Continuing with that priority and the commitment to fiscal stability, the 2012-2013 budget includes a contribution of 10% of salary toward the defined benefit plans that remain in order to reduce our unfunded liability associated with our employees retirement benefits. (The defined benefit plan has been closed for employees hired after March 2011.) This is approximately double our minimum required percentage payment, but we feel this shows our high level of commitment to our employees and to getting back to being fully funded. In addition, this year's budget includes a \$95,000 contribution to our retiree health care fund. The Village started this fund in 2008, and we have been able to modestly contribute to it over the past few years. This past year, Village Council passed a resolution supporting a larger contribution to increase our savings in the retiree health care fund. While we still have a long way to go to be fully funded in this area, we have taken some important steps in the right direction.

In the budget year ahead, the Village will continue to use General Fund dollars to fund our law enforcement and fire protection services. We will continue our current arrangements with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's office for Police Services and the Dexter Area Fire Department for Fire and Rescue Services. Despite increases in those two areas, your General Fund tax dollars continue pay for things like the Mill Creek park improvements, maintenance of our buildings, parks and public grounds, our planning department, tree planting and maintenance, public art, street lighting, sidewalk improvements, refuse collection, brush collection and leaf pickup. The General Fund will continue to fund our share of the Washtenaw Area Value Express (WAVE) Community Connector and Door to Door service. One key capital improvement from the General Fund in the upcoming year will be a new connector sidewalk with pedestrian crossing signals between the Cedars of Dexter and Westridge Subdivision at the intersection of Dexter Pinckney Road and Island Lake Road. This capital improvement project continues the Village's priority on providing connectivity, walkability and safe pedestrian travel throughout our community.

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2012 Village Election

The filing deadline for the Village elections is August 14, 2012 at 4:00 pm There will be three Trustee positions, as well as President and Clerk, on the November 6, 2012 ballot. The terms of office for these non-partisan positions is four years.

To run for Village Office you must:

- ⇒ file a petition of at least 6 but not more than 20 signatures
- ⇒ complete an "Affidavit of Identity"

Forms should be picked up and filed at the Scio Township Clerk's Office, 827 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103.



As we enter the political sign season please remember that the signs must not be placed in the Village right-of-way which is generally the area between the sidewalk and the curb in front of your home. If you do not have a sidewalk, please keep the sign closer to your house than the road. Thank you for your cooperation.



Road Projects - Main Street and Central Street

Thank you for your cooperation during the Main Street project. We hope you agree that this temporary inconvenience was worth it for a new surface on Main Street and new pedestrian friendly crosswalks.

Our second road project this year is the reconstruction of Central Street from the Mast Road Bridge to Second Street. This project will also include new sidewalk on both sides of the road, an upgrade of the underground storm sewer, and the addition of new streetlights that match the current downtown street lights. The railroad crossing for pedestrians will be better defined, which is an important safety enhancement to this area. The additional sidewalk will also connect to the future segment of the Border to Border Trail that is planned to connect the Village to Dexter Huron Metropark. Two way traffic will be maintained on Central Street during the two month project using the signal method that was used during the Mast Road bridge project last summer.

President's Message - Continued

Our Street Fund will continue to fund a portion of the salaries and benefits of our Department of Public Services employees. Road maintenance and care, such as crack sealing, street sweeping and snow removal is covered under your street funds. Storm water management and public education on the importance of understanding where our storm water ends up is also funded by our Street Fund. The Central Street Project from the Mast Road Bridge to Second Street is the major capital street improvement project that will be funded in

2012 -2013. Residents will see this project starting at the end of our 2011-2012 fiscal year and it will carry over through the first quarter of our new budget year. The project will enhance our northern gateway to the Village with new street lighting, street trees, stamped concrete crosswalks, improved railroad crossings and pavement in an area that was hit pretty hard by the March tornado. Lastly, our Street Fund budget includes a couple of storm water improvement projects that should help manage storm

water better throughout the Village.

The Village's Water and Sewer Funds are called enterprise funds. This means that they are self-sustaining funds, collecting revenue through water and sewer rates to cover and support the expenses necessary to maintain and operate our public water and wastewater systems. Years ago these funds were subsidized from the Village's General Fund, but that situation has been corrected.

Village Council unanimously voted for modest increases to our water (3%) and sewer (6%) rates to keep these funds healthy. The Village recently completed significant improvements to its water distribution system in the old Village areas, replacing aged 4-inch water main with new 8-inch mains. This investment should serve the community for many years to come and help the Village provide reliable water service and fire protection.

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Water Usage

The Village is experiencing an unprecedented demand for water on weekdays from 6 am to 8 am. To help reduce this demand we are asking that residents change the timing on lawn irrigation systems to either before 6 am or after 8 am. We appreciate your cooperation.

Water & Sewer Bond Refinance



In 1999 and 2000 the Village made significant upgrades to the water system and wastewater treatment plant. Due to the financial situation of the Village at that time the loans that were taken out, they were for 40

years. Though the Village had made extra payments to shorten the term of the loan, the 40 year loan duration meant that the payments would continue past the useful life of some of the equipment that was installed.

With interest rates at historic lows, the Village decided to

explore refinancing these loans to lower the interest rate and shorten the term. In May of 2012 the refinancing was completed, which shortened the term of the loans by five years and will save the Village water and sewer system \$1.3 million.

Ordinance Reminders



To protect the health, safety and welfare of all residents the Village has ordinances in place to regulate certain actions. Copies of both the General Code (GC) and Zoning Ordinance (Z) are available on the reference desk of the Village website. The following are ordinance compliance reminders on some common violations:

Grass (GC 18-31) – Please maintain lawns, grass and noxious weeds to a height of less than 8 inches.

Vehicles (GC 18-114) – All vehicles must be licensed and operable unless they are stored in a fully enclosed structure.

Recreational Vehicles, Boats, Trailers (Z 3.18) – Must be stored within the side or rear yards and cannot be stored in the front yard for more than 48 hours. In areas governed by Home Owners Associations, storage of these vehicles is limited to inside of a fully enclosed structure.

When a property is in violation of an ordinance, a letter is sent requesting that the violation be corrected. If the violation is not corrected a ticket is issued, which can result in a fine.

President's Message - Continued

For 2012-2013, budgeted projects include repairs to one of the Village wells, repairs to fire hydrants, cleaning of the clear well and rebuilding of one of our high service pumps. In the upcoming fiscal year, the Village will make significant improvements at our wastewater treatment plant to our sludge handling process. These improvements required the 6% sewer rate increase that was recently approved, but were absolutely necessary to maintain our water quality initiatives and improve the efficiency of our existing treatment plant.

We feel that we are doing a lot for all of our residents and businesses with the tax dollars that we are collecting. We are proud of the fact that we are able to have another balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year and look forward to providing the best services in the most efficient manner we are able. The Village's budget is available on line or at Village offices. On behalf of all of us on the Dexter Village Council, I encourage you to review the budget document for the 2012 – 2013 fiscal year. We always look forward to input and feedback. I wish everyone a fun, safe and happy summer season. I look forward to seeing you around our town.

Shawn Keough, Village President

Parks Update

Mill Creek Park slated to open soon: By July 2012 the Village will complete the construction of the Mill Creek Park. Over the last year we have watched the former dam impoundment transform into a beautiful destination right in the downtown.

The park includes a system of walking paths that connect to the Washtenaw County Border to Border Trail, an amphitheater for concerts, fishing and observation decks, non-motorized board

launches and lawn areas for relaxing. This summer the Village will also be completing construction of a stairway to connect the park to the Farmers Market and Dexter Library. We hope that everyone is looking forward to the completion of the park.

Dexter Geocache Trail: Dexter's parks now have a geocache trail that takes visitors on a tour of Dexter and the parks. Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor

treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location. For more information visit www.mi-geocaching.org

Warrior Creek Park/Mill Creek Park: Warrior Creek Park has a new name! Located behind the Fire Hall, it will now also be known as Mill Creek Park.



Where's the Scoop?



Please remember that the village does have an ordinance that requires people walking their dogs to pick up after them.

Some of you may wonder then, "Why is it that people on my street do not pick up after their pet?" Well, that is a difficult question for the village to answer, especially when the consequences of not picking up after pets impacts everyone. Pet excretions can be stepped in and then brought into homes, it can be the carrier of disease, and it can get into the water that we all use.

Because there are over 4,000 residents in the village, we need your help with education. The village asks that you do your part, not only to inform your neighbors, but also to help educate other residents on the ordinance and why it is in place. If you see someone walking their dog and not picking up after them, be a good neighbor, and ask them if they need a bag, or inform them that there is an ordinance in place to help protect the health, safety and welfare of all residents.

Please help keep the village's parks and streets free from dog excretions, and help to keep dog excretions off the shoes of residents everywhere. For more information please contact the village offices.

Odds and Ends

Recycling: In 2011, Village residents and businesses recycled 272 tons of material, which is an average of 24 tons per month. Help us beat this number in 2012 by recycling as much as possible. Through April 2012, we have recycled 89 tons, which is an average of 22 tons per month. If you need additional recycle bins, they can be purchased at the Village Office (8123 Main) for \$5. Residents can put as many bins out to the curb as they need. Thank you for helping to keep recyclable material out of the landfill.

Grass Clippings: Please do not blow grass clippings into the street when mowing your lawn. These clippings travel into our storm sewer system which can cause the drains to clog. If you have a landscaping company that mows your lawn please pass this information along to them.

Website: The Village has been working on updating our website. This process has taken a little longer than we had hoped; however, we are now in the final stages and should be prepared to launch the new site this summer. If anyone has any pictures of the Village that

they would like to share, we are collecting pictures for use as part of the website development. Please send them to villagewebphotos@gmail.com.

Village E-Mail Update List: Are you interested in an easy way to stay current on Village information and events? The Village e-mail update is sent every two weeks and includes details on upcoming events, project updates, due date reminders and general Village news. Your e-mail address will not be visible to others. To sign up visit the Village website at <http://www.villageofdexter.org>

and click on the “E-Mail Updates” link.

Regional Fire: On March 12, 2012 Village Council voted unanimously to support the conceptual Interlocal Agreement for fire and rescue services with Dexter Township, Scio Township, Webster Township and the Village of Dexter. Scio Township unanimously adopted the same resolution on January 24, 2012. To continue the process Dexter Township and Webster Township will need to pass similar resolutions. This important initiative would improve the level of service in all four communities and provide an equitable cost structure for providing these services for years to come.

Village tax bills will be mailed out the first week in July. If you do not receive your bill, please contact the Treasurer at msherry@villageofdexter.org or (734) 426-8303 x 14. Taxes are payable without penalty through September 14, 2012.

Please Promptly Report Water & Sewer Problems



If you are experiencing any issue related to your sewer or water service please let the Village utility department know

immediately by calling 734-426-4572 (office phone) or 734-368-5212 (after hours). It is important that the utility department be aware of issues as soon as possible so that if it is a symptom of a more serious problem, it can

be addressed quickly. Village utility staff has a combined 90 years of experience with our water and sewer system and are happy to assist residents with working out concerns in this area.

Help Keep Our Water Clean

Go native. Native plants are better able to tolerate Michigan’s climate, require less fertilizer and water, and are more disease resistant. Native plants also attract butterflies and birds.. Use a wide variety of plants to help control pests and minimize the need for pesticides.

Water wisely and use mulch. Lawns need about one inch of water per week. Over-watering results in shallow-rooted plants that are less tolerant of heat and drought, and more prone to disease. Use a rain gauge and water only when necessary, instead of on a fixed schedule. Place a thick layer of mulch (e.g., 4 inches) around trees and plants to help retain water and reduce weeds.

Mow high. 3 inches is the rule! Tall grass promotes root growth and shades out weeds. Let grass clippings fall back on the lawn. Clippings recycle nutrients back into the soil, so fertilizer needs can be reduced by 25% or more!

Rake it or leave it. Follow your community’s leaf pick-up guidelines. Avoid raking leaves into storm drains or roadside ditches that lead to our lakes and rivers because decaying leaves use up water’s oxygen and harm fish and aquatic insects. Try mowing leaves into your lawn—they also make a good fertilizer!

Use less for pests. Use pesticides and herbicides sparingly. Limit application of these chemicals to problem areas only and help protect your kids, pets, and the environment.

For more easy steps on protecting our lakes and rivers, visit www.semco.org or contact the Village of Dexter, 426-8303. Remember, our water is our future—and it’s ours to protect.

Cityhood Next Steps



On May 9, 2012 the Boundary Commission reviewed all materials received at the January 17, 2012 public hearing and during the 30 day public comment and 7 day rebuttal periods following the meeting. The Commission voted 5-0 to recommend that the Director of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs approve the Village's cityhood petition with the revised boundary that was presented by the Village and Webster Township.

The Commission met again on June 13, 2012 and approved the draft "Summary of Proceedings, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law" which makes a recommendation to the Director that he approve the petition with the revised boundaries and order the incorporation proceedings to continue. If the Director takes the Commission's recommendation and signs the final order of approval, the 45 day referendum period will begin. The final order of approval does not become "final" until the expiration of the

referendum and potential voting period.

If the Director does not agree with the Commission's recommendation that the incorporation should move forward, the Village's incorporation process ends.

Referendum Period

During this period, citizens may gather signatures of 5% of the Village's registered voters in order to place the question of whether or not the incorporation process should continue on a future election ballot.

If enough signatures are gathered, the petition is reviewed by the Boundary Commission and if it is approved, the Commission orders an election to be held on the next available date (4th Tuesday in January, 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in May, 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in August or 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November). The question of whether the process should move forward is placed on the ballot as a yes or no vote.

If there are not enough signatures gathered to place the question on a future ballot during the 45 day period, a vote on the question would not be scheduled, the final order of approval becomes final and the Boundary Commission orders that election be held to elect a Charter Commission.

If there are enough signatures gathered during the referendum period, and the result of the scheduled vote is against continuing with the incorporation process, the Village's incorporation process ends.

If the result of the scheduled vote is in favor of the Village incorporation process continuing, the final order of approval becomes final and the Boundary Commission orders that an election be held to elect a Charter Commission.

Selection of Charter Commission/Creation of City Charter

Village voters will elect a nine member Charter Commission to write the Charter (or governing document) for the new City. Those interested must file petitions with 20 signatures from Village residents.

Once the Charter Commission is elected they must meet within 10 days after the election, select officers, and establish the rules for their proceedings including how vacancies will be filled.

After the Charter is drafted it is sent to the Michigan Department of Attorney General for a review that the proposed charter is in compliance with Michigan law. Once the Charter is approved by the Attorney General, Village voters will vote on whether or not to accept the document. At this election they will also elect a new slate of Elected Officials (titles dependent on new Charter).

If the Charter passes the Village officially becomes a City.

If the Charter does not pass within three years of the date that the Director's Final Order approving the incorporation becomes final, then the process ends.

Village of Dexter
8140 Main St
Dexter MI 48130
(734) 426-8303

Council President:

Shawn Keough

President Pro Tem:

Ray Tell

Council:

Jim Carson

Paul Cousins

Donna Fisher

Joe Semifero

James Smith

Clerk

Carol Jones

Village Staff

Donna Dettling,

Manager

Courtney Nicholls,

Assistant Manager

Marie Sherry,

Treasurer/Finance

Allison Bishop,

Community Development

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The Village Offices are located at 8123 Main St, 2nd Floor, above the PNC Bank. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Elected Officials:

Shawn Keough, President: skeough@villageofdexter.org (313) 363-1434

Jim Carson, Trustee: jcarson@villageofdexter.org (734) 502-4257

Paul Cousins, Trustee: pcousins@villageofdexter.org (734) 548-3293

Donna Fisher, Trustee: dfisher@villageofdexter.org (734) 649-5169

Joe Semifero, Trustee: jsemifero@villageofdexter.org

James Smith, Trustee: jsmith@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8885

Ray Tell, President Pro Tem: rtell@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-3398

Carol Jones, Clerk: cjones@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8114

Staff:

Village Manager: ddettling@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8303 x 11

Assistant Manager: cnicholls@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8303 x 17

Treasurer: msherry@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8303 x 14

Community Development: abishop@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8303 x 15

Utility Billing: eaiken@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8303 x 12

Administrative Assistant: btuscano@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8303 x 10

Public Works: kaugustine@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-8530

Public Utilities: dschlaff@villageofdexter.org (734) 426-4572

***Village meeting dates and times are available on our website at
www.villageofdexter.org - Reference Desk***

Dexter Farmers Market



The Dexter Farmers Market is having a great season. The Market is averaging 20 vendors on Saturdays and 10 on Tuesdays. Please stop by and see what they have to offer!

Saturday – 8:00 am to 1:00 pm

Tuesday – 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Items for sale include locally grown fresh produce, fresh fruit, plants and flowers, baked goods and crafts.