Running with John…

Sharing the Village Hall

It is funny, people keep asking me – “you know you can tell me the truth, is it really working out for the Village and the Township Officials to share a building?” It is not only working out, it has been great. The staffs get along well, none of the municipal officials have killed each other, we are each saving a considerable amount of tax payers dollars and we are sharing in paying for technical advances that make us both more efficient and responsive to you our residents.

Welcome Shipston Aluminum Technologies

Yes, that plant has changed hands again. The exciting news is that the new owners want to grow the plant and keep it, rather than invest in it and try to sell it for more than they paid for it. The other exciting news is they are already well along with a major expansion project. So, welcome Shipston – glad to have you in our Township.

Bike Path News

Krueger to M104 Path – things are definitely moving along – legal agreements with All Shores Wesleyan Church are signed, we have a permanent easement, we have hired a contractor, almost all the engineering work is complete and most of the MDOT-M104 agreements are in place. We just need to resolve an easement issue on the east end. We still plan to have the path completed by early fall 2016 – this will be a beautiful path for all to enjoy.

Bike Path Maintenance – We will be crack sealing all the places that need it on all our paths during mid to late June this year. We are also doing some work where it is needed with some of the boardwalk entrances.

Rycenga Park Bathroom Expansion Project

Thanks to a grant from the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation, a very significant donation from the Rycenga Family and the use of dedicated Township funds we will be able to expand the bathrooms at Rycenga Park. Rycenga Park is great, but there just are not enough bathrooms with all the people who are using the park. We hope we will be able to do this project in mid to late summer this year. Oh yes, the new bathrooms will be separate stall – no boy or girl designation.

The New Fire Station – W@W!

The building already looks beautiful. Buck Construction of Muskegon is doing a great job – they are on or ahead of schedule and are a very good company to work with. Yes, this will be the first new LEED building built along the lakeshore and we hope it will end up LEED Gold. LEED status cannot be determined until the construction is completed. By the way, there was no tax increase to build this building and both the Buchanan and 148th Ave. fire stations are already sold.

Township Board Issues

There is a substance called coal tar which is used in most asphalt sealing products. There is a significant amount of information indicating coal tar is a cancer-causing substance which builds up as a result of run-off into ponds, rivers, streams and lakes. Coal tar is illegal in some states and in some Townships in Michigan. Our Board is seriously considering whether we should do an extensive educational campaign or write an ordinance banning coal tar sealants.

Property Rentals for Short Term and Group Rentals in R1 and R2 Districts in the Township

This is a very tough issue which has been debated in many municipalities. Fortunately, it is not a major problem in our area yet, but with all the beautiful natural resources we have in our Township and how much money can be made with short term vacation property rentals our Board wants to determine what the best stance is for us to take moving forward. Other municipalities have done everything from very strict ordinances to nothing. I would be extremely surprised if we follow either of those leads.

Remember – Your Spring Lake Township was the first and still one of two out of the 1,250 Townships in Michigan to achieve the Township of Excellence Award. We also have the lowest combined water/sewer rates and the lowest municipal taxes of any municipality in our area. We collaborate on many, many things to save YOU money.
Waste Haulers

John Nash, Township Supervisor

Back in 2005, we established a new waste hauler program in Spring Lake Township. The main reasons were to develop a program where garbage trucks were only on our residential streets one day a week for safety and road life reasons; so that we could standardize prices among haulers and eliminate fuel surcharges; and to establish uniform guidelines. Now, over ten years later, we have achieved all those things plus free recycling which does not happen in many other areas.

A few things which would help the waste haulers and the residents:
- If you put your garbage in a garbage bag and then put that bag in the garbage bin, if your bin tips over or something else happens there will be much less mess to clean up.
- Please be sure if you have multiple bins they are at least three feet apart. This includes the new recycling bins which one hauler currently uses and the rest will be using soon.
- Our haulers are very considerate about what they will pick up. If you have any questions call them to verify what they will and will not pick up.

I appreciate the fact that there has been no substantial increase in the price for garbage service in Spring Lake Township in the last ten years. You have to know they pay their employees more and their health insurance costs have significantly increased. I am told the cost per truck has almost doubled and the only thing that has gone down is fuel prices for a short period of time during that ten year period.

Planning Update

Lukas Hill, Community Development Director

For the first time in many years, Spring Lake Township has two new large scale residential developments in the works. The first one is “Arcadia” which is on 148th Ave. just north of the Spring Lake High School. If you have been by the area, you’ve likely seen the tree clearing. Arcadia will consist of 89 single family home sites and 22 attached condominiums. Design elements include protection of wetlands and wetland buffers, hiking trails, pond access and a possible future commercial area. Sewer will be extended from Cross Creek Drive about a quarter mile “cross country” to 148th Ave. to serve this development. Easy access to M104, the Aquatic Center and bike paths are also positive attributes to the development. We anticipate road construction and utility installation beginning in early July 2016.

The other development is called “Spring Ridge,” which consists of 55 lots located on Van Wagoner between W. Spring Lake Road and 168th Ave. This development is still in the preliminary stages of review. Elements include sidewalks, two parks and a new bike path along the frontage of the development on Van Wagoner.

Assessing News

Heather Singleton, Assessor

New construction is in the air all around the Township! New developments, additions and remodels are in full swing! We continue to see numerous sales transactions and the market is strong!

Ask us about the Conditional Rescind Form if you have bought a new house and have your previous house still for sale.

Please contact our office with any address changes to ensure that you receive your bills and assessment change notices. The address change form may be found on our website.

The Township is in the process of performing a Natural Features Inventory of Township-owned land including areas along the Grand River and Little Black Lake. We are also looking at a broader inventory of the entire Township to better understand where our remaining sensitive landscapes are located. The Township is working together with the City of Norton Shores to develop a passive park area on the newly acquired property on the east side of Little Black Lake, just north of the Eagles Campground. Initial ideas include a parking area, nature paths and a kayak launch.

Our department is open Monday through Friday 8 am to 5 pm by phone and for walk-in traffic. If your concern is complicated, it is recommended that you make an appointment, so that we can address your concerns uninterrupted. Visit our website and you may find the answers to your questions among the links or a form that you may need.

Our direct department number is (616) 844-2108. Our e-mail addresses are as follows: dnorth@springlaketwp.org and hsingleton@springlaketwp.org. Our website: http://www.springlaketwp.org/departments/assessing-department/
News from the Clerk

This year is a busy election year. The primary election will be held on Tuesday August 2, and the presidential election will be held on Tuesday November 8. The August ballot includes primary elections for federal office, along with state, county and local races. The November election will include the general elections for federal, state, county and local representation and several ballot proposals.

The legislature has eliminated straight ticket voting in November general elections and we are expecting long ballots. Remember that absentee ballots can be requested for all elections. If you work or shop outside of Spring Lake Township, you can be considered absent from the jurisdiction and are eligible to vote absentee. To request an absentee ballot, call me at 844-2101. If you are on the permanent absentee voter list, you have already received your application. If you would like to be placed on the permanent absentee voter list, call the Clerk’s office and someone can help you.

Election information, precinct locations and helpful voter information is available on the Township website, http://www.springlaketwp.org/departments/clerk/. You can also call me at 844-2101 with any questions.

Make your voice heard and vote!

Deputy Spotlight

Do you know what to do when an emergency vehicle approaches? See the following law from the Michigan Vehicle Code which addresses what to do:

257.653 Immediate approach of authorized emergency vehicle; duty of driver of another vehicle; duty of streetcar operator; violation as civil infraction.

(1) Upon the immediate approach of an authorized emergency vehicle equipped with not less than 1 lighted flashing, rotating, or oscillating lamp exhibiting a red or blue light visible under normal atmospheric condition from a distance of 500 feet to the front of the vehicle and when the driver is giving audible signal by siren, exhaust whistle, or bell:

(a) The driver of another vehicle shall yield the right of way and shall immediately drive to a position parallel to and as close as possible to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway, clear of an intersection and shall stop and remain in that position until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer.

Emergency vehicle drivers are trained to go to the left of traffic when approaching your vehicle; however we often have to go to the right due to congested roadway conditions. I have experienced people stopped in the roadway when emergency vehicles are approaching. This causes a danger to you, other motorists and the emergency responders.

Please move over to the right shoulder as far as you can and stop. If you are in the center lane (such as on Savidge St.) please do not sit in the middle lane; whenever possible immediately move over to the right shoulder of the road. If you are on a highway do not pull to the median (left side); please pull to the right hand side of the roadway. When on a divided roadway you do not have to pull off when an emergency vehicle is on the opposite side of the divide. By practicing these simple measures we’ll all be safer. Drive safely, Spring Lake Township!

Manager’s Update

A priority for Spring Lake Township is to work to improve communication with our residents. One of the ways we do this through our electronic newsletter (“E-News”). The E-News is an email that is sent out once or twice per month with the intent of providing short, timely news items. There is information about road closings, Township projects and quick announcements. For example in a previous E-News we sent out a link to our Drinking Water Quality Annual Report, which can be found at http://www.springlaketwp.org/DrinkingWaterReport.

If you would like to sign up for our E-News, please send us an email and we will put you on the list. Or visit our website at www.springlaketwp.org — find the sign-up link on the home page.

Have an AWESOME summer.
Fire Department

There continues to be great progress on the building of the new fire station. The exterior shell of the building has been completed and work has moved to the inside to construct the interior walls. The windows will be installed soon and the roof should be completed soon. All of the underground site work has been completed and the addition of curb and gutter and concrete drives are soon to follow.

Throughout this design/construction process, we have strived to make this facility sustainable and functional. Solar panels will be added to the flat roof of the apparatus bays and we have followed a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) design process. With four LEED rating levels: Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum, we are pursuing the Gold level.

The project remains on schedule with the projected move in date of October. At that time we also plan to have a community open house at the facility.

Visit our website to sign up for the Township e-mail newsletter!

Drinking Water Quality

Spring Lake Township receives water from the Northwest Ottawa Water System, which is operated by the City of Grand Haven. NOWS water is very safe, regularly tested and those test results are excellent – considerably above the recommended standards. In addition to the testing that is performed by the Northwest Ottawa Water Treatment Plant, additional water samples are taken in the Spring Lake Township distribution system and tested to provide additional safeguards for our customers. The 2015 Drinking Water Quality Report can be found on our website at http://www.springlaketwp.org/DrinkingWaterReport

If you are away from home for over a week it is always a good idea to let each faucet run for 20 seconds before you use the water. More information on lead exposure can be found at https://www.epa.gov/lead/protect-your-family-exposures-lead. If you would like to have your water tested, for $16 you can take a sample of your water to the Ottawa County Health Dept. and they will test it for you – call 616-396-5266 for more information.

Remember to clean up after your dog. Township ordinance requires that you clean up feces made by your dog. Let’s keep the bike paths and streets clean for everyone’s use. Thank you for your cooperation!

SPRING LAKE TOWNSHIP

101 S. Buchanan St.
Spring Lake, MI 49456
Phone: 616-842-1340
www.springlaketwp.org

Office Hours: 8am to 5pm Monday-Friday

Spring Lake Township Board of Trustees

John Nash Supervising
H. Carolyn Boersma Clerk
Jim Koster Treasurer
Rick Homan Trustee
Ronald Lindquist Trustee
Lawrence Mierle Trustee
Rachael Terpstra Trustee

CALENDAR

Meetings at Barber School, 102 W. Exchange

Spring Lake Township Board of Trustees
Second Monday at 7pm

Spring Lake Township Planning Commission
Third Wednesday at 7pm

Spring Lake Township Zoning Board of Appeals
Fourth Thursday at 7pm

Holiday Office Closings
July 4, 2016
September 5, 2016
November 11, 2016
November 24 & 25, 2016