

## February 2025 “in the loop” monthly e-newsletter



**Need KN95 Masks?** We know Influenzas A & B and RSV are rapidly moving through our community. Do you need face masks? If so, stop by Townhall and pick some up, free of charge. Stay healthy!

**Township Boards, Commissions & Committees** – additional members were appointed in February. Still open positions include: 1 space on the Compensation Commission – 1 alternate position on Multi Lake Sewer Water Authority – if you have any interest please send a letter of interest to [officemanager@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:officemanager@dextertownshipmi.gov) And welcome new members – Dan Barry (Planning Commission), Shaun Smith (Zoning Board of Appeals), and Nick Stamboulellis (Board of Review)

**HOA's** - if your HOA has a contract with a trash provider, where the HOA collects the funds from the homeowners and directly pays the trash provider, would you please contact Karen Nolte at [knolte@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:knolte@dextertownshipmi.gov) or [info@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:info@dextertownshipmi.gov). We are preparing and problem solving prior to the possibility of implementing the single hauler trash provider. Having the trash providers name and expiration of the HOA's contract would be very helpful. Thank you and we'll be glad to answer any questions you may have at this time.

**Broadband Update** (submitted by Karen Nolte) – The Board of Trustees approved a transfer of \$29,500 from the Capital Fund Cellular Connectivity budget line to assist in funding fiber being laid on Jeanette Dr and Tanglewood Trail, and make these last two road “serviceable” by cable companies. The default of Mercury caused these residents to be left without any funding to finish their internet connections. These two roads are a couple of the last vestiges in the township and soon (weather depending) will have cable laid to the homes. We want to thank Washtenaw County for dedicating a portion of their ARPA funds to fund this work and Chris Scharrer, the County Project Manager – who has worked tirelessly to problem solve and create solutions to make these connections possible. Without them, segments of our Township would still lack hope of internet. Thank you to everyone who has worked to allow us to approach our goal of 100% connection possible. If you have any questions, please reach out to [knolte@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:knolte@dextertownshipmi.gov)

## **Dexter Township Office Administrator Report** (submitted by Samantha Edwards)

**Formalizing “In the Loop”** We are looking into three different email marketing platforms to help us enhance and streamline Dexter Township’s e-newsletter “In the Loop”. The overall goal is to establish a more structured and efficient communication system with residents, ensuring they receive updates on township news, community engagement, and important notices. Currently, our contact database includes over 2,000 email subscribers who receive communications from the Dexter Township “Info” email account. The email marketing platform will help us better manage our e-newsletters and township alerts, as well as automating certain functions such as subscriber sign-ups, handling bounce notifications and opt-out requests. This eventual transition will help Dexter Township communication with residents be more organized and will provide email subscribers with a more user-friendly system.

**Transition from .org to .gov Email Addresses** Dexter Township will be transitioning all official email addresses from the .org domain to the .gov domain to improve security and align with government best practices on February 19, 2025. During this transition, any emails sent to previous .org addresses will be automatically forwarded to the corresponding new .gov addresses, ensuring uninterrupted communication. The .org domain will continue functioning as an alias, allowing users to send and receive messages from both domains, but the .gov address will become the official default for all emails. If an external recipient replies to an email originally sent from a .org address, the response will be received in the corresponding .gov inbox. Replies from Dexter Township officials will automatically come from their new .gov addresses.

**AmeriScan Digitization Project** We have successfully completed our large-scale document digitization project in collaboration with AmeriScan Imaging Services. The project, which began on March 7, 2024, concluded on February 11, 2025 with a total of 226,520 documents digitized. The digitization project included a wide range of records, including township meeting minutes, maps, site plans, historical documents, assessing files, administrative files, and various other essential material that must be retained by statute. Many of these documents were stored in the lower level of the township building, where they had been unorganized and difficult to access for many years. By digitizing these records, Dexter Township has improved document preservation, and the newly digitized files will now be easier for township residents, officials, and staff to access. Finally, this project marks a major step toward modernizing the township’s records and will ensure historical and administrative documents are well organized.

### **Dexter Township Supervisor Report** (submitted by Lonnie Scott)

**Hiring a full-time DPZ** -We had 13 applicants for the Director of Planning and Zoning position. Of those, we invited 8 to the first round of interviews. 2 Applicants removed themselves from consideration and 6 were interviewed the week of February 3rd. Trustee Alicia Abbott, Office Administrator Sam Edwards, and I served on the initial interview panel. From there we narrowed the field to 3 finalists. Those three came back for second interviews the week of February 10th. The final interview panel consisted of Clerk Stamboulellis, our planning consultant Megan Masson-Minock, and myself. I'm hopeful to be able to announce a final decision at the Board meeting on February 18.

**Budget Variance and FY 2026 Budget** While we are on track for our overall FY 2025 spending, there are several amendments to the 2025 budget that will need to be made at our March meeting. These are all areas we have discussed previously, namely because of increased use in the planning consultant line, but also other areas such as lawn care because it also includes snow removal, which was not included in the cost estimate for the line originally. We remain in a fiscally strong position as we head into our final deliberations of the FY 2026 budget.

**National Funding Freeze Implications for Dexter Township** As many of you have probably noted from the national news, the chaos of the national political environment is playing out in many ways locally. One of those has been the funding freeze instituted by President Trump's executive order. This freeze has put the \$24.6 million Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) award to the Southern Michigan Conservation Coalition at risk. "Legacy Land Conservancy and 10 additional local partners were awarded the RCP award in late October. This award is primarily focused on permanently protecting critical farm and forest lands in southern Michigan, which are vital to our local communities and economy." I signed on to a letter to Congresswoman Dingell asking that she "[help] to get the passionate folks at the USDA and NRCS to reengage in signing of contracts so we may proceed with this critical work." I'm hopeful we will have more information about this freeze and any additional impact soon.

### **Dexter Township Clerk's Report** February 2025 – (submitted by Michelle Stamboulellis)

**Election Status:** The Dexter Community Schools, School Board, have voted in favor of having a Special Election for their 2025 school bond. This election will occur in spring May 6, 2025 - which includes Dexter Township Precinct #1 and Dexter Township Precinct #3D.

January 28, 2025 all Clerks, that are included in opening up precincts for the upcoming Dexter School Bond, met at the Washtenaw County Learning Center to discuss the election

costs and thoughts about 9-day early voting. Superintendent Timmis was present for the meeting while the Clerk's discussed how we wanted to best run the election. The consensus agreed that we would forgo offering 9-day early voting, this would save the school and taxpayers a lot of money. The school will be responsible for the reimbursement of all the municipality's costs to open and run the precincts to host the election, that fall in the Dexter Community Schools District.

The Dexter Township Clerk's office will go through all the standard election processes, (for those wanting to vote by Absentee Voter Ballot) sending out absentee voter applications to those who are not already listed on the Perm Ballot List, holding Election Commission Meetings, posting all notices for the election in printed paper, and invitation to attend the public accuracy testing. The polls will be open on Election Day only, May 6, 2025 7am-8pm, where you will have choice of receiving your ballot to vote on a walk in basis or bringing your Absentee Voter Ballot to tabulate yourself.

As a courtesy I have included the Dexter Community Schools informative flyer along with my budget request to administer the May 6, 2025 Dexter Schools Bond Election.

### **Board and Committee Reports**

**Farmland and Open Space Preservation Board Meeting Summary** (submitted by Michelle Stamboulellis): I was present at the Farmland and Open Space Preservation meeting this past February 6, 2025. The Board discussed and voted on a new Election of Officers. The gavel was passed by the current Chair Mark Tiecher to Martin Ruhlig to Chair the FOSP Board year 2025, the current Vice Chair Guerin Wilkinson passed on his duties to Kathy Bradbury to Vice Chair the FOSP Board year 2025 and Recording Secretary Kathy Bradbury passed on her duties to Guerin Wilkinson as the new Recording Secretary for the FOSP Board year 2025. The Board had an in-depth discussion about the freeze of Federal Grant Funding and how that could possibly impact land preservation initiatives currently in the works and for future initiatives. Dexter Township is fortunate to have multiple means of acquiring funding from alternate programs which include Bluebelt, Washtenaw County, State of Michigan and our dedicated Dexter Millage. To comply with Supervisor Scott's Three Touch Method, I am submitting the first reading of the BUY/ PROTECT / SELL POLICY. The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Board voted to send this recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The FOSP consultant, Mr. Lonik, will come and present the importance of this policy and answer any questions the BOT may have for him at the March meeting (as a discussion item). Attached is the BUY/ PROTECT/ SELL POLICY document for the Board of Trustees to read. If any Board Member has questions, I will be happy to answer. ([clerk@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:clerk@dextertownshipmi.gov))

**Single Hauler Update** –(submitted by Karen Nolte) – the request for proposals have been sent out to vendor, a Q&A session was held to assist in answering vendor questions. Proposal due date is Feb. 28, 2025. The month of March will be utilized to study the bids and evaluate, with April, 2025 set for selection and negotiations if bids are attractive. Additionally, April is earmarked to introduce bidding results to the Township Board of Trustees. Questions, please send questions to [knolte@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:knolte@dextertownshipmi.gov)

**Short Term Rental Committee** – (submitted by Alicia Abbott) the survey for residents to complete has closed as of Friday, February 21st. Thank you to all who completed and submitted their opinion/comments, it is greatly appreciated. Results will be tabulated and shared with the STR committee...conversations and evaluations continue. Questions? Please email [aabbott@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:aabbott@dextertownshipmi.gov)

**MLWSA – Multi Lake Water & Sewer Authority** – (submitted by Karen Nolte) As reported prior MLWSA received a grant to assist EGLE to help assess emerging contaminants (PFAS) The grant is structured where MLWSA must do the work (water/well testing) and then file for reimbursement from the State. With the current political climate, MLWSA must examine the possibility of the funding being halted. We cannot afford to spend these dollars and not receive reimbursement. Additional updates will be forthcoming. Budgeting is underway and in discussion with finalization set for March 2025. The Operator reports this month, states the water-water plant is running well, with no violations. MLWSA is looking to hire office staff – should you have any interest please contact the Director of MLWSA.

**Budget hearings were held for 2025-2026 budget** - prior to the monthly BOT meeting (summary by Karen Nolte)

Presentations by **W.A.V.E.** were made to the Board of Trustees as they request sponsorship funding. Our township had 125 rides last month, 6 out of 10 riders were people with a disability. Majority of rides were for groceries, wellness, work and medical, in that order. Did you know young people (12 years and older) can ride the W.A.V.E. unaccompanied? Dexter Township accounts for approximately 3% ridership on W.A.V.E.

Additional presentations were made by Chelsea Senior Center and Dexter Senior Center, as they request potential funding from Dexter Township.

**Chelsea Senior Center** - Membership is \$25 per year and CSC has 1,309 active members as of Dec. 2024 with Dexter Twp accounting for 120 members. Over 12,000 meals have been delivered to homebound seniors within the Chelsea High School District and in parts of Manchester. 597 fare-free ride vouchers were given out to seniors 60+ living in Chelsea and Dexter school districts for rides on the WAVE bus. In 2024, 35% of revenue came from contributions from local municipalities, sponsorships from local businesses, fundraising events, program fees and donations. 65% of the operating budget will need to come from grants in 2025.

**Dexter Senior Center** – The DSC is building their new home, a building in front of Dexter Wellness Center and expect to open in May, 2025. Currently, there are 435 active members (13% from Dexter Township) – up 100 from last year. This can be somewhat attributed to the new location and more visibility. Their 2025 expenses are expected to be \$357,000 and they are looking to grow their team, improve meal services, diversify funding and more. Areas of focus are to include: new partnerships, mobile services, improve communication and gather input from our Township residents.

General conversations were had in regards to the operating budget, the capital budget and general appropriations act. Budget hearing will continue and the budget will be voted at the March 18 Board of Trustees Meeting. The Budget portion will be held prior to the regular Board of Trustee Meeting and start at 6pm on Tuesday, March 18, 2025. Questions, comments are welcome, simply email [info@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:info@dextertownshipmi.gov) or reach out to any of the seven trustees.

Hope you are able to join us at one of our meetings. Did you know you can now watch the Board of Trustees on our You Tube channel?

Wish to volunteer, please reach out to Sam Edwards ([officemanager@dextertownshipmi.gov](mailto:officemanager@dextertownshipmi.gov)) we can let you know what positions are available or if you can serve in a backup position

Have a great month!