

Wilson Township News

Board of Trustees

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Wilson Township Meeting Schedule:

- Planning Commission meets at 6:00 PM the 1st Wednesday of the month
- Board of Trustees meets at 6:00 PM the 2nd Wednesday of the month
- Zoning Board of Appeals meets at 7:00 PM the 3rd Wednesday of the month (meets only if necessary)

Wilson Township Honors Its Veterans

In 1992 Morrill Worcester and his business Worcester Wreath Company of Harrington, Maine, had a surplus of wreaths toward the end of the holiday season. Years before as a young boy, Worcester had visited Arlington National Cemetery in our nation's capitol. The experience had reminded him through his life of the sacrifice some had made in order for others, including himself, to succeed and flourish.

Plans were made to lay the wreaths in honor of our Veterans at an older, less visited section of Arlington National Cemetery. Volunteers stepped forward to help deliver and place the wreaths.

The annual tribute went on quietly for several years, until 2005, when a photo of the stones at Arlington, adorned with wreaths and covered in snow, circulated around the internet. Suddenly, the project received national attention. Thousands of requests poured in from all over the country from people wanting to help with Arlington, to emulate the Arlington project at their National and State cemeteries, or to simply share their stories and thank Morrill Worcester for honoring our nation's heroes.

Unable to donate thousands of wreaths to each state, Worcester began sending seven wreaths to every state, one for each branch of the military, and for POW/MIAs. In 2006, with the help of the Civil Air Patrol and other civic organizations, simultaneous wreath laying ceremonies were held at over 150 locations around the country. The Patriot Guard Riders volunteered as escort for the wreaths going to Arlington. This began the annual "Veterans Honor Parade" that travels the east coast in early December.

The annual trip to Arlington and the groups of volunteers eager to participate in Worcester's simple wreath-laying event grew each year until it became clear the desire to remember and honor our country's fallen heroes was bigger than Arlington, and bigger than this one company.

In 2007, the Wreaths Across America non-profit group was founded. The event has expanded to all 50 states to lay wreaths at veterans cemeteries to *remember* our fallen heroes, *honor* those who serve and *teach* our children about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families.

In 2015, **Wreaths Across America** and their national network of volunteers laid over 1,000,000 memorial wreaths at over 1,100 locations in all 50 states, with ceremonies at sea, and at each of the national cemeteries on foreign soil! This was accomplished with help from 2,500 fundraising groups, many corporate contributions, and donations of trucking, shipping, and thousands of helping hands. Their annual pilgrimage from Harrington, Maine to Arlington National Cemetery is now known as the world's largest veteran's parade, stopping at schools, monuments, veteran's homes and communities along the way to remind people how important it is to Remember, Honor, and Teach.

"Say Their Names" is National Wreaths Across America Day theme for 2016. This year, Jeff Argetsinger, sexton and Wilson Township trustee has been the driving force to have veterans in Wilson Township cemeteries included in **Wreaths Across America**. The Boyne City American Legion Post 228 graciously provided the wreaths for Knop, Lewis, and Todd cemeteries. The wreaths will be laid on the graves of known veterans on National Wreaths Across America Day, December 17, 2016 with the help of the East Jordan American Legion Post 227. There will be a small ceremony at Knop Cemetery on this day at 11:00 AM.



Planning Commission - 2017 Agenda

The Wilson Township planning commission will soon begin working on updating the Township Master Plan. As the Planning Commission embarks on this process, one of the issues they will be looking at is housing.

The increased demand for housing in Wilson Township and Charlevoix County was identified in a 2014 target market analysis that was completed by Land USA for the Networks Northwest ten county region. Specifically for Charlevoix County, the analysis found that there is a maximum annual market potential throughout Charlevoix County for 94 new owner-occupied units and 498 new renter-occupied units for a total of 592 units annually. Assuming the market potential is fully realized every year over a five year period, this implies a total market potential for 2,960 units from 2014 thru 2019. This includes house-

holds moving into the county and households moving within the county. The analysis showed that the majority of the market potential is in the cities of Boyne City, Charlevoix, and East Jordan, with smaller market potentials for the surrounding townships. If these cities do not capture the full market potential in any given year, the townships could see increased demand for housing. Permit data does show that Wilson Township is capturing some of this increased demand with permits for new homes increasing each year over the past three years. With the demand for housing increasing, the planning commission must also think about the types of housing.

When talking about housing, a term that is often used in this discussion is "affordable housing", but what exactly does affordable housing mean? Housing is considered affordable if it

costs no more than 30% of a household's income. While household income can vary widely for each household, for planning purposes we look at the median household income for the township as a whole. Data from the US Census and the American Community Survey show that the median household income for Wilson Township is approximately \$51,000. Applying the 30% rule to this amount shows that the average value for affordable housing in Wilson Township is approximately \$157,000.

Using this data and all other available information, the planning commission will be reviewing its role in the housing equation and determine what actions and policies can be included in the master plan to better facilitate the development of diverse housing options to serve the needs of its residents.



Principal Residence Exemption—*are you receiving yours?*

A Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) is an 18 mill school tax exemption on the property that you consider your principal residence, or in other words your permanent home to which, whenever absent, you intend to return.

If you look at your tax bill you can see whether you are receiving an exemption or not. The top part of your tax bill is the portion that gets returned with your taxes. At the top of the lower section, on the right side, you will see a gray box that has three items in it (for example):

State Equalized Value:	100,000
Taxable Value:	59,000
Principal Residence Exemption %:	0.0000

If your tax bill shows the Principal Residence Exemption at 0.0000 %, and you are living in your permanent home, contact the Wilson Township assessor, Todd Sorenson at (231) 582-7122, or email: tbsorenson@gmail.com to see if you qualify for a Principal Residence Exemption.

Why are my winter taxes higher than my summer taxes?

When you compare your summer tax bill with your winter tax bill, you may notice a difference in the amount you have to pay. If you don't have a Principal Residence Exemption, according to State of Michigan Tax Law, you have to pay an addition 18 mills in School Taxes. In Wilson Township the school non PRE millage is applied only to the winter tax bill. If you feel you are being charged the additional 18 Mills in error, contact the Wilson Township assessor, Todd Sorenson by phone (231) 582-7122, or email: tbsorenson@gmail.com.

Wilson Township Treasurer's Notice

On Line Tax Bill Review and Payment Options can be found by going to the website: www.wilsontownship.org. From the top menu bar select Departments and Services, select Treasurer, then click the link "Property Tax Inquiry", or on the home page on the left side navigation bar, select "On-Line Services". After selecting a link, you will be directed to the site [access-mygov.com](http://access.mygov.com) where you can create a free account. From here, you can review and print your property tax bills and receipts free of charge from 2005 through the current tax year. We have also partnered with Point & Pay to offer on line payment options. Credit card payments will incur a fee of 3% of the total payment; an E-check will incur a \$3.00 flat fee. All fees are collected and retained by Point & Pay.

Treasurer's office hours are Monday through Friday 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM with limited availability Saturday and Sunday. This is a home office and the treasurer respectfully requests that no calls are made after 8:00 PM. Messages and e-mails are returned daily. The office is closed on major holidays. If you would like to pay taxes in person, please call ahead to make sure the treasurer is available.

Winter taxes are due Tuesday February 14, 2017. On this day, the office will be open from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM for anyone wishing to pay their taxes in person to avoid paying interest and/or penalty.

Mortgage Escrows: Tax information will be forwarded to your bank per their request.

Receipts are mailed upon request only. To request a receipt, simply make a note on your payment stub. Taxes paid by a mortgage escrow or a title company will automatically generate a receipt to the current owner.

Postmarks are NOT accepted by Wilson Township as an on-time payment. Please be sure to allow time for delivery of your payment.

Address corrections: Please update address changes as soon as possible to avoid a delay in receiving your property tax information.

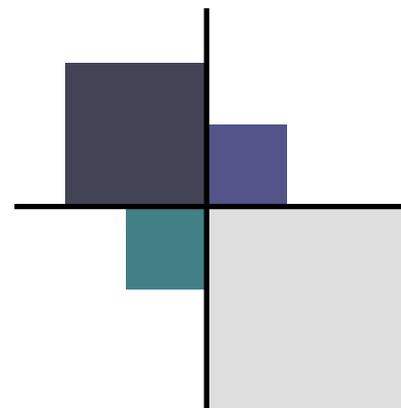
Board of Review (BOR) Corrections: Corrections for the current billing year (July & Dec.) will be made within a week of the Board of Review meeting. Prior year BOR corrections are handled by the Charlevoix County Treasurer. For prior year correction

date timeline, contact the County Treasurer's office at (231) 547-7202.

If you have questions regarding Assessing or Board of Review, please contact Todd Sorenson, Wilson Township assessor, phone: (231) 582-7122, e-mail: tbsorenson@gmail.com.

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What does State Equalized Value and Taxable Value Mean?

On your tax bill you will see two values: State Equalized Value (SEV) and Taxable Value (TV). The SEV is half of the True Cash Value (TCV) of your property. The TCV is established by comparing the value of your property with similar properties in Wilson Township and Charlevoix County. It is

also established by State of Michigan Assessing Manuals that establishes values of various types of buildings in the State. The Taxable Value (TV), or the value you pay taxes on, was established by Proposal A in 1995. Basically what Proposal A says is that the SEV of your property when you purchased

it, becomes your TV, which can only increase by 5% or the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever is lower. The CPI for last year was 3%, and the year before it was 1.6%. The TV can also change if you make additions to your property such as adding a garage or an addition to your home.

Charlevoix County Commission on Aging

- Cemetery questions? Contact Cemetery Sexton Jeff Argetsinger at (231) 582-2770
- Looking for a place to host an event? The Fall Park pavilion and/or gazebo can be reserved (for no charge) on a first-come first-serve basis. The calendar on the township's website and posted in the kiosk at the township hall is updated regularly if you want to see if a date is available. Contact clerk Marilyn Beebe to make a reservation (231) 582-1033 or email marilynbeebe@charter.net.
- Do you have pictures of Wilson Township that you would like to share and have posted on the township's new website? Please email them to: marilybeebe@charter.net.

Wilson Township website:
www.wilsontownship.org

Fall Park Hot Spot:

- Select: Wilson Hot Spot
- Logon: guest
- Password: fallpark1

Charlevoix County Commission on Aging (COA) provides the Seniors (60 and over) of Charlevoix County with a Home Delivered Meal program for homebound seniors and congregate meal sites, better known as Senior Centers that have ongoing activities such as Wii bowling and games, card games, exercise opportunities, crafting, woodworking and so much more. The Centers are located in Boyne City, East Jordan and Charlevoix. Each offers a noon meal. May through August there are Wednesday night dinners served from 5-6 PM, which are very well attended.

The COA also offers In-home Services such as homemaking, personal care, and respite care. There are Foot Clinics at the three centers that are also provided in-home for those seniors who qualify. The COA is available to help seniors of Charlevoix County with finding resources for needs they

may have, such as: MMAP counselors, and emergency funds for various needs.

The Commission on Aging provides transit rides using Charlevoix County Transit at no cost to the seniors through the "Seniors Ride Free Program". This program allows any senior in Charlevoix County to ride the transit anywhere within Charlevoix County at no cost to them, including on Beaver Island.

On Beaver Island, the COA has a "Dining Out" program as well as the Home Delivered Meal program and Special Sunday Dinners September through May.

COA staff are very proud and happy to serve the seniors of Charlevoix County in the best way possible so please give their office a call at (231) 237-0103 and allow the COA staff to see how they can assist you.

2016 Review from your Clerk

This year was a very busy year for the clerk's office with four elections being held from March to November. Voter turnout for the elections was mixed with March at 33.8%, May at 8.9%, August 14.6% and November at 69.1%. As you can see, the voter turnout for the November General Election was huge and it was a record setting turnout. Congratulations to all who dared the lines and did their civic duty. Also a huge thank you to the election inspectors, Carol, Beverly, Christine, Joann, Martha, Pat, and Roseann. While there were lines at times at some of the elections, these ladies did a super job of keeping the lines moving while maintaining the in-

tegrity of the voting process. And if you did come to the hall to vote, I hope you noticed that you didn't have to walk through mud puddles due to the paving upgrade to the parking lot!!!

Also during 2016, a new Wilson Township web site was launched. The new site offers upgrades from the old site such as a site-wide search option plus it is mobile friendly. There is a calendar that is updated regularly if you are interested in reserving the pavilion and/or gazebo (the hall is not available to rent) at Fall Park. The calendar also lists all meeting and township events. There is an online service link to lookup proper-

ty and tax information. There are past and present newsletters, forms for assessing, elections, planning & zoning, public notices, minutes of board meetings, and community links to area schools, district libraries, cities, Chamber of Commerce and Raven Hill. Go to www.wilsontownship.org and check out the new site.

And as a side note, Wilson Township still has a "hot spot" at Fall Park. While at the park, select "Wilson Hot Spot", logon as "guest" and enter the password "fallpark1" for internet access (the logon information is also posted in the kiosk at the hall).