

CASCADE CONNECTIONS

A newsletter from Cascade Charter Township · Winter 2018

- + The District
- + Winter Taxes
- + Greetings to Deputy Toonstra

NEWS FROM THE SUPERVISOR



It has been a year focused on growth and intention for Cascade Township.

In addition to our normal activities, we have focused on several major projects, collecting input from residents and developing plans to make Cascade

an even more wonderful place to live, work and play based on that feedback.

The first of these was the study of our community pathway system to identify what our residents would like to see moving forward. We are gratified voters overwhelmingly said “yes” to extending the millage on Nov. 6. We have also been actively pursuing several initiatives, including an online survey and community design day public meeting, to solicit feedback from residents regarding the Township’s master plan, which will guide our vision and direction for the next decade.

We are working on a third project to help prioritize the services residents most want us to offer. We held a townhall meeting in late November to look holistically at the needs of the Township, asking residents to identify the services and facilities most important to them. We continue to receive input from residents through an online space needs and facilities survey. If you have not had the opportunity to provide your input yet, we would strongly encourage you to do so by visiting cascadetwp.com.

Once all feedback is compiled, we will host another townhall meeting to report the findings and propose a plan for moving forward. We hope that you will join us in this process – and know that your feedback is greatly desired and appreciated.

Township Contacts

Office Hours

Monday through Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Supervisor

Rob Beahan; 949-1500
rbeahan@cascadetwp.com

Clerk

Sue Slater; 949-1508
sslater@cascadetwp.com

Treasurer

Ken Peirce; 949-6944
kpeirce@cascadetwp.com

Trustees

Jim Koessel
jkoessel@cascadetwp.com
Jack Lewis
jlewis@cascadetwp.com
Tom McDonald
tmcDonald@cascadetwp.com
John Shipley
jshiple@cascadetwp.com

Manager

Ben Swayze; 949-1500
bswayze@cascadetwp.com

Assessing

Roger McCarty; 949-6176
roger@cascadetwp.com

Building Inspections

Brian Wilson; 949-3765
bwilson@cascadetwp.com

Community Development

Steve Peterson; 949-0224
speterson@cascadetwp.com

Fire

Adam Magers; 949-1320
amagers@cascadetwp.com

Sheriff/Non-Emergency

632-6100



new tools for SHOPPING, DINING AND RECREATING IN CASCADE

Cascade's economic development department strives to attract and retain businesses, while maintaining a healthy business environment that enhances the lives of residents and visitors.

As part of that strategy, the Cascade DDA has developed tools for residents and visitors to get information about businesses, activities and events in the community. These include:

MadeinCascade.org: Businesses are invited to share company information, hours, events and news in a single spot for all things Cascade. Please check it out and if the businesses you frequent have not added their information, suggest they take advantage of this tool.

Business Guide: The first edition of the Business Guide has been distributed to area hotels, sports facilities and event venues. It features events happening in the Township and information about local businesses. Stop by the Township office and pick one up. The second edition of the Business Guide will be printed soon, with updates to follow throughout the year.

As more information becomes available and businesses apply to be included, we will continue to improve these resources to ensure residents and visitors can take advantage of the exciting things happening in Cascade Township. For more information, visit MadeinCascade.org.



The District Branded Items

The District consists of Cascade's downtown areas, including the Village, the Interchange Area, the 28th Street Corridor and Centennial Park.

WINTER TAXES INFORMATION

Winter 2018 tax bills and informational notices were mailed on Dec. 1.

Winter taxes are due and payable now, and may be paid without any penalty or interest charged as late as Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019. If you do not receive a tax statement during December, please check the township's website at cascadetwp.com or call the treasurer's office at 616.949.6944.

Payments are receipted on the same business day they are received. We recommend you allow seven days to ensure a timely delivery. An informational letter is enclosed with the bill for alternative payment instructions and an E-Z pay application. Please include a telephone number on checks.

Please visit the website for tax information at cascadetwp.com, then:

1. Click on 'Quick Links' (left side of screen)
2. Click on 'Property / Parcel Lookup'
3. Enter the parcel number, address or name in the search bar
4. Click on the parcel number and the tax information tab

On March 1, 2019, all unpaid real property taxes will be forwarded to the Kent County treasurer for collection. Postmarks are not accepted.

For more information, contact the Treasurer's office at (616) 949-6944 or visit cascadetwp.com.



30TH STREET CEMETERY EXPANSION CONSIDERED



Sue Slater, Clerk

The Cascade Township Board is considering a potential expansion of the 30th Street Cemetery, which will allow for more burial spaces. The Township owns approximately 6.5 acres of undeveloped land as part of the cemetery, which has been reserved for an expansion to meet the future needs of the community.

In July, residents attended an initial meeting to discuss the project and to provide feedback. From this feedback, the Township developed a final conceptual design for the Board to consider that would increase the limited number of available sites.

A second meeting will be held at the Wisner Center on Thursday, Dec. 6 at 5:30 p.m., where the updated plans based on feedback received will be reviewed. Should the Township Board decide to move forward with the project, it is anticipated construction would take place in the summer of 2019.

Preliminary and final conceptual drawings for the project and other relevant documents can be reviewed at cascadetwp.com/Community/Community-Projects.aspx.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION UPDATE

The Cascade Community Foundation's Iron Chef event was successful in raising funds for the Foundation as well as Kitchen Sage. The event featured chefs from community establishments, including Noto's, Nonna's Trattoria, Thornapple Brewing, Blue Moose and Cascade Roadhouse. During the event, the Claude & Marion Robinson Community Leadership Award was presented to Forest Hills Foods for its dedication to the Cascade community.

The Foundation has granted more than \$25,000 in 2018 to area non-profits serving the greater Forest Hills Area. Some of these grants include:

- \$5,000 to the American Heart Association for a Hands-Only CPR Kit for Forest Hills Central High School
- \$4,500 to the Mental Health Foundation of West Michigan for one adult and two youth Mental Health First Aid Courses at the Mary Free Bed YMCA
- \$700 to Senior Sing-Along for the fall season program for Cascade seniors
- \$3,000 to Junior Achievement for The Junior Achievement Program in Ada

For more information on the grants awarded, visit cascadecommunityfoundation.com/grants-given.

This holiday season...

TOYS FOR TOTS

The Cascade Township Fire Department is accepting new and unwrapped toys for the Toys for Tots program. Toys can be dropped off from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday.

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

After the holidays, bring your tree to the parking lot behind Fire Station 2, 2990 Buttrick Ave. for recycling. The program will last from Dec. 26 - Jan. 9.

a note from **DEPUTY ERIC TOONSTRA**



Greetings. My name is Eric Toonstra and I am the new Kent County Sheriff's Office east district community officer. I have been in law enforcement for 12 years and have been a patrol officer in the east district for the last 18 months.

During my career in law enforcement, I have been a K-9 handler and a field training officer. I look forward to using my experience to work with and alongside the citizens of Ada, Cascade and Grand Rapids Townships in effort to maintain the high quality of life your community is known for.

As a communication link between Cascade and the KCSO, I work to create awareness of issues relating to current local crimes as well as determine the best response to those issues. I am available to meet with businesses, neighborhood associations or any other group, small or large. We offer training for neighborhood watch programs

and Citizen Response to Active Shooter situations. We also provide information regarding realtor safety, identity theft, and offer 911 police officer presentations in schools, drug and alcohol classes, distracted driving classes and more. If you have a need for any of these training opportunities, please reach out to me – whether you are a resident or business owner in Cascade, I look forward to getting to know you better.

There are many things I would like to share related to Cascade, but space is limited. I will leave you with some advice for the holiday season. Please lock your cars and homes during this busy time of year and never leave expensive or personal items in open view inside a vehicle. There have been several incidents of theft-related crimes recently, and all have been the result of unlocked doors.

I have included my phone number and email, so feel free to contact me with questions, concerns, requests – or just to say hello.

Eric.toonstra@kentcountymt.gov / 616-632-6435

from the historical society

THE MINERAL SPRINGS HOTEL: **THE PLACE TO BE**

The village of Cascade Springs was platted in 1890 and in 1892, a deed was issued to Charles and Nellie Holt. By 1892, in partnership with another resident, they had built a three-story hotel on the east bank of the river opposite the point where the spring bubbled up. The hotel cost \$8,000 and was located near what is now 2251 Cascade Springs Drive.

In addition to a health spa, the hotel had 50 rooms and wide shady porches where guests could relax on summer days. Leveled green lawns suitable for croquet games surrounded the hotel, and the clay tennis courts were some of the finest around. Peacocks strolled around the tranquil setting, and guests enjoyed fishing in the Thornapple River and had the opportunity to have their catches cooked in the hotel kitchen.

The reputation of the fine meals served in the dining room brought out Sunday diners all the way from Grand Rapids. It was advertised that “with a good team over good roads, you could enjoy the pleasures of this luxury spa in little more than two hours from Grand Rapids.”

The hotel did so well that an annex was built across the road, adding a large room for dining and dancing. The annex lighting was very fancy, with kerosene lamps hanging on chains from the ceiling. Barns housing 150 horses were built a quarter-mile away.



The Mineral Springs Hotel

By 1917, though, the Mineral Springs Hotel was gone. Perhaps if the village of Cascade Springs had prospered or the proposed interurban line had been built, the hotel would have lasted longer. However, by then other mineral resorts had become popular and begun to draw away customers.

The annex stood until 1927 when it was torn down. The lumber was sold and used to build several houses. The barns were gone as well, and all the dams for fishponds had washed away. The springs have been buried by road building and flooding. Today, there is very little to mark the spot where so many had enjoyed fine dining and outdoor activities in a beautiful and tranquil setting.

AIR SEALING AND INSTALLATION TIPS

from your building inspector

New homes are required to be constructed with a continuous air barrier that prevents the loss of conditioned air from inside the home. In fact, homes are now built so “tight” that mechanical ventilation is required to provide fresh air inside the home.

Existing homes, however, may have significant air leaks that can result in much higher energy bills. If you were to add up all the leaks in a typical home, it would be the equivalent of having a window open every day of the year!

Common areas for air leakage include: Some other benefits to air sealing and insulation include:

- Knee walls
- Porch roofs
- Attic access panels
- Recessed lighting
- Attic fans
- Rim joists
- Windows and doors
- Fireplace walls
- Reduced noise from outside
- Less pollen, dust and insects entering your home
- Better humidity control
- Lower chance for ice dams

Often a few tubes of caulk can have a dramatic impact on air leakage and provide a more comfortable home with lower energy costs. For more information, visit energystar.gov or contact the Township Building Department.

UNDERSTANDING PROPOSAL A IN AN INCREASING MARKET

Prior to Proposal A, property taxes were based upon state equalized value, or SEV. With the advent of Proposal A, property taxes are now based upon taxable value. Each year, the assessing office must calculate the SEV for every property based on the period outlined by the Michigan Tax Commission. A property’s taxable status is determined as of Dec. 31.

Each property has a capped value, which is calculated by multiplying the prior year’s taxable value, with adjustments for additions and losses, by the consumer price index as calculated by the State of Michigan; it cannot increase by more than 5 percent.

For 2019, the CPI has been calculated at 2.4 percent. Taxable value, which property taxes are based on, is defined as the lower of state equalized value or capped value. Generally speaking, this means that unless the current year’s SEV is less than the previous year’s taxable value multiplied by the CPI, the current year’s taxable value will increase by the CPI.

With the recovery in market values, the State Tax Commission has mandated local assessors again use a 24-month sales study to determine values for the 2019 assessment cycle. They have pushed back the period of the study from prior years. For 2019 assessments, the 24-month sales study began April 1, 2016 and ended March 31, 2018.

Actual Sale Price is not True Cash Value

The law defines true cash value as the usual selling price of a property. The legislature and the courts have very clearly stated the actual selling price of a property is not a controlling factor in the true cash value or state equalized value as calculated by the assessor. For this reason, when analyzing sales for determining assessment changes, the assessing office will review all sales but exclude non-representative sales from the assessment analysis.

According to Proposal A, when a property (or interest in a property) is transferred, the following year’s SEV becomes that year’s taxable value. In other words, if you purchased a property in 2018, the taxable value for 2019 will be the same as the 2019 SEV.

The taxable value will then be “capped” again in the second year following the transfer of ownership. It is the responsibility of the buyer in a transfer to file a property transfer affidavit with the assessor’s office within 45 days

HALLOWEEN PARTY

a spooky success



On Halloween, Cascade Fire Department's Station 1 became a gathering place for ghosts, goblins and many other costumed creatures. More than 700 bags of candy were shared with visitors.

We would like to say thank you to the following businesses and sponsors for their donations. Without the help of these organizations, we would not be able to host this event.

Brann's Steakhouse & Grill
Carlin, O'Brien & Batson
Cascade Automotive
Cascade Firefighters
Association
Cascade Hospital for Animals
Costco
D&W Food Center
Forest Hills Foods
Front Line Services
Funny Business
Goldfish Swim School
Gordon Food Service

Ingrid Anastasiu - Anastasiu
Homes/kw
Kingsland Hardware
Lacks Enterprises
Little Caesars
Lynne Deering
Meijer
Mister Car Wash
Ranir, Inc.
S. Abraham & Sons, Inc
Walgreens
Walmart

renew your **DOG LICENSE**

Kent County dog licenses are available in our office year-round. A current rabies certificate and proof of neuter/spay should be provided at the time you apply for the license. You may also receive a renewal form from the Kent County Animal Shelter.

of the transfer. Failure to file this form, which is available online or from the local assessor, will result in a penalty of \$5 per day for each day after the 45-day period with a maximum penalty of \$200.

Principal Residence Exemption

If you own and occupy your home as your principal residence, it may be exempt from a portion of local school operating taxes. You may check your percentage of principal residence exemption on your assessment notice.

If the percentage exempt as "principal residence" is 0 on your assessment notice and you wish to claim an exemption for the current year, a principal residence exemption affidavit must be completed and filed with the assessor's office prior to June 1 for a full exemption and prior to Nov. 1 for an exemption for the winter portion only.

If you currently have a principal residence exemption and no longer own and occupy the property as your primary residence, you must rescind the exemption with the assessor's office.

How can I expect my assessment and taxable value to change in 2019?

As stated earlier, for 2019 the time period of the sales study for assessment review is April 1, 2016 through

March 31, 2018. Sales occurring after April 1, 2018 will not be reviewed until the 2020 assessment cycle. Using the current sales data means most areas will have increases reflecting the strong recovery in the real estate market.

Properties where the market increase is greater than 2.4 percent will have taxable values lower than their assessed values. For some properties the gap is significant.

How can my taxable value go up when my SEV goes down?

With the recovery in the real estate market this is now rare but may occasionally happen. Since the beginning of Proposal A in 1994, overall increases in SEV have generally been greater than the increase in taxable value capped at the CPI.

The longer a property has been owned and capped, the greater the gap between SEV and taxable value. Even with a decrease in SEV for 2019, if there is still a gap between SEV and taxable value and the 2019 SEV is greater than the taxable value in the previous year, the taxable value will increase to the limit of the CPI cap.

If, however, the 2019 SEV is lower than the calculation of last year's taxable value multiplied by the CPI, then the 2019 taxable value will be the same as the 2019 SEV.



Cascade Charter Township

2865 Thornhills Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
(p) 616.949.1500
(f) 616.949.3918
cascadetwp.com

events from **KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY**

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY HOST BOOK SALES

Several book sales will take place in the coming months:

- Jan. 26 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- March 16 from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- March 17 from noon to 3 p.m.
- March 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

During the winter months, the Friends sponsor weekly book discussions, monthly free movies for families as well as the Sunday Afternoon Live concert series. The bookstore is open during library hours featuring lightly used books and media of all types.

HARRY POTTER

Harry Potter is coming to the Cascade Township branch during Winter break. Check out some of the magic, including:

- Dec. 28 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Harry Potter Festival, featuring games and activities that will improve reading skills.
- Jan. 2 – 5: Harry Potter Movie Marathon, a showing for those wanting to see the movies on the big screen. Each day, two movies will be shown, with the first at 11 a.m. and the second at 2 p.m.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON LIVE

The library's local concert series, Sunday Afternoon Live, continues this winter! Stop by for music and coffee at the upcoming 2 p.m. shows, including:

- Dec. 9 – Organissimo – jazz
- Jan. 20 – Jimmy Stagger – blues
- Feb. 10 – CrossBow – Celtic strings
- Feb. 24 – Dave Palma – singer/songwriter

READY FOR REINDEER

Traveling all the way from the North Pole (via Rooftop Landing Reindeer Farms), live reindeer will be visiting the library. Dress warmly and don't forget the camera! The visit will take place on Monday, Dec. 10 at 4 p.m.

KDaLe BOOK CLUB

Come to Thornapple Brewing Company for great reading recommendations and check out some librarian favorites on the spot. Drop in the second Monday of every month at 7 p.m. Future dates include:

- Dec. 10
- Jan. 14
- Feb. 11