

Acme Township
6042 Acme Road,
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Phone: (231) 938-1350

Office Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Board of Trustees</p> <p>Bill Kurtz, Supervisor bkurtz@acmetownship.org</p> <p>Dorothy Dunville, Clerk ddunville@acmetownship.org</p> <p>H. William Boltres, Treasurer bboltres@acmetownship.org</p> <p>Wayne Kladder, Trustee tcwj@acmetownship.org</p> <p>Paul Scott, Trustee</p> <p>Erick Takayama, Trustee etakayama@acmetownship.org</p> <p>Frank Zarafonitis, Trustee frankiez@chartermi.net</p> | <p>Acme Township Staff</p> | | | | |
| | <p>Doris Boltres, Deputy Treasurer (231) 938-6213 (work) (231) 938-9244 (fax)</p> <p>Sharma Zollinger, Deputy Clerk szollinger@acmetownship.org</p> <p>Sharon E. Corpe, Township Manager scorpe@acmetownship.org</p> <p>John S. Hull, Zoning Administrator jull@acmetownship.org</p> <p>Nancy Edwardson Office Assistant nedwardson@acmetownship.org</p> | <p>Dawn Plude, Assessor dplude@acmetownship.org (231) 409-1827 Office Hours on Wednesdays</p> <p>Tom Henkel Parks and Maintenance Supervisor</p> <p>Ernie Keech, Sexton (231) 267-5735</p> <p>Bob Sillers, Community Policing (231) 938- 2583</p> | | | |
| <p>Monthly Public Meetings</p> <p>All meetings are open to the public and made accessible to individuals requiring special assistance. Agendas are available at the township hall or via the website approximately one week prior to each meeting.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Twp. Board of Trustees: First Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.</td> <td>Planning Commission: Last Monday at 7:00 p.m.</td> <td>Zoning Board of Appeals: Second Thursday at 7:30 p.m.</td> </tr> </table> | | | Twp. Board of Trustees: First Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. | Planning Commission: Last Monday at 7:00 p.m. | Zoning Board of Appeals: Second Thursday at 7:30 p.m. |
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THE OUTLOOK

"Citizen Driven"

May 2007

Supervisor's Update *Bill Kurtz, Supervisor*



First, thank you for your support in February. The Board of Trustees will keep working hard to make Acme the best community it can be. Here are a few of the things going on in the township right now. **The National Governor's Association Annual Meeting** will be held here this summer. We are optimistic that this event will give a boost to our local businesses and provide an opportunity to showcase the area to people from around

the country. The meeting has already prompted state assistance with our roads. Most of you have seen the construction at the M-72/US 31 intersection. MDOT is installing a right turn lane from US 31 northbound on to M-72 eastbound and two signalized left turn lanes from M-72 westbound to US 31 southbound. Traffic models predict that the right turn lane will improve the ability for cars to safely turn east on M-72 from US 31 southbound without a left turn signal. MDOT will monitor and refine the signal cycle through the summer and will consider adding a left turn signal for US 31 southbound based on what they see. Along with a reduction in wait times at the light, MDOT is installing sidewalks and landscaping as part of a streetscaping project at the corner. The target date for construction completion is June 29.

The public hearing on the 2007-08 fiscal year budget is currently proposed for June 19, 7:00 P.M. at the township hall. A firm date will be set during budget workshop discussions at the June 5 Board meeting. We expect to approve another surplus for our general fund budget, demonstrating a disciplined approach to spending and active investment management of our fund balance.

During our budget discussions, we must also discuss an increase to sewer and water service rates. General township sanitary sewer service rates have not increased in 6 years, while certain localized sanitary and water systems have never seen rate increases over 11 to 20 year system lifespans. Meanwhile, operation and maintenance (O&M) expenses have continually increased. Initial projections indicate that a substantial rate increase similar to that recently experienced in Elmwood Township is necessary to pay for daily operations and meet existing debt obligations for past local and regional system expansions.

A rate increase does not indicate complacency on our part. Two years ago we cancelled a costly and as-yet unneeded expansion to the sanitary system along US 31 North, reducing interest costs by \$780,000. We are working with East Bay and Elmwood townships to closely monitor the function and fiscal health of the septage treatment plan, and to promote efficient use of O&M dollars at the county level. We need to plan ahead because O&M costs are largely

based on the percentage of total county wastewater flows originating in our township and will rise as additional houses and businesses tap into the system.

There is good news in the area of development and land use planning in Acme Township. Upon completion of the current public comment period, the Planning Commission will consider final approval of a future land use map amendment to our Master Plan. They have also recommended Zoning Ordinance amendments to the Board that if adopted will create a wider range of residential development options while protecting the natural environment, and begin streamlining the business development approval process. New condominium developments at Windward Ridge and in Acme Village totalling around 80 residential units have been approved. LochenHeath continues to refine development plans for its gated community. An equestrian event center is under construction and preparing to open this summer, and we are processing an application for a family-operated cheese making business that would obtain raw materials from and return by-products to area farms.

Our struggles with the developers of The Village at Grand Traverse (VGT) and Meijer, Inc. continue. We continue to believe the answer to this conflict lies with RTKL, a Chicago-based worldwide planning firm selected by the New Urbanism Advisory. The Board renews its invitation to VGT and Meijer to work with us and RTKL to design a town center that meets both the letter and spirit of the township Master Plan. We reaffirm the commitment we made over a year ago to contribute \$50,000 towards the design process. With help from this leading international design firm and cooperation between government, citizens and developers alike we believe we can create a town center that will be economically, socially and environmentally vibrant and a model for the state and the nation.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians has requested that approximately 145 acres of land surrounding Turtle Creek Casino, divided approximately equally between Acme and Whitewater townships, be placed into federal trust. Many of our residents expressed concern about the loss of control over tax revenues and land use decisions that would result if the application is approved. The township has expressed these concerns in a letter to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, copies of which are available at the township office or on the township website. We believe that by opening lines of communication with the Tribal Council through mutually respectful and frank discussion, that the rights and interests of all parties can be promoted.

The road ahead is filled with both challenges and opportunities. As always I appreciate the opportunity to hear and discuss your comments, questions and ideas.

Visit Acme's Website at www.acmetownship.org
THE OUTLOOK - May 2007

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Shoreline & Open Space Preservation Efforts Building Momentum

“You know you’re in Acme Township - we’re water friendly. You can see it, get to it, play in it!”

Formed by the Board of Trustees in August 2005, the Acme Shoreline Preservation Advisory believes Acme has its best chance ever to acquire key bayfront properties to be set aside for public use as open space, extending existing park land along the shoreline.

As indicated in our Mission Statement: “It is the Advisory’s goal to advise the Board of Trustees regarding the acquisition, restoration, and protection of the scenic character and public usability of the irreplaceable shoreline of Acme Township for current and future generations.”

Several factors point to the timing being right to step up efforts to achieve these goals:

- ◆ Key properties are or may soon be for sale.
- ◆ Traverse City has proven success with a similar initiative.
- ◆ There is positive sentiment in the Grand Traverse region for such projects.

◆ Acme Township residents demonstrated desire to protect open space by adopting a millage for farmland preservation.

◆ Mounting redevelopment pressures may permanently alter East Grand Traverse



Bay scenery and public shoreline access opportunities.

A key outcome of a May 19, 2006 planning retreat was a “Vision in Action” that will help township officials and citizens achieve a common mission. We have initiated dialogue with waterfront property

owners and are preparing to inform and engage the public in developing a master plan for the Acme shoreline should property be acquired.

Rotary Charities of Traverse City recently awarded Acme Township a \$5,000 Planning Grant towards the approximate \$7,900 cost for a shoreline master plan by R. Clark & Associates, with remaining funds coming from private donations. A fund-raising subcommittee is exploring additional public and private grant and individual and corporate contribution opportunities.

Are you curious to learn more? Would you like to contribute your time, talent and/or resources? Please come to our monthly meetings on the second Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. at the township hall, call Co-Chairpeople Pat Salathiel (938-2128) and Paul Brink (938-9785), and watch for updates on the township website.

- Paul Brink, Pat Salathiel, Charlene Abernethy, Louann Brohl, Kathleen Guy, Fran Gingras, Noelle Knopf, Dave Krause, Jim Maitland & Owen Sherberneau

2007-08 Budget , Water and Sewer Usage Fees

We are preparing Acme Township’s budget for the July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008 fiscal year. Preparation of a draft budget is one of the Township Supervisor’s statutory duties. The entire administration works cooperatively: department heads provide budget proposals for their functions which the Supervisor compiles and provides to the full Board of Trustees for discussion, decision and ultimate adoption.

Our annual general operating expenditures budget is approximately \$775,000. We currently project completing the 2006-07 fiscal year with up to a \$35,000 surplus of current year revenue over current year expenditure. This second consecutive balanced budget can be attributed to closely-managed expenditures and increased investment returns through active portfolio management by our Treasurer despite decreases in state revenue sharing.

Our general operating revenue comes from three primary sources:

- ◆ State sales tax sharing accounts for nearly \$300,000.
- ◆ Local property taxes account for about \$225,000.
- ◆ Approximately \$225,000 comes

from administrative and franchise fees and investment income.

Our General Fund Balance Forward is hovering just below \$1 million - over a year’s operating expenses.

We have special funds with separate budgets for a variety of township activities. Many are funded through separate assessments or millages, such as the Fire Fund (variable annual assessment, currently 1.5 mills), the Farmland Preservation Fund (approximately 0.9233 mills in 2007) and the Community Policing Fund (0.257 mills).

The Sewer Fund revenues come from connection and usage fees used to pay operating and maintenance (“O & M”) expenses and bond debt related to past system construction or enhancement. Most expenses are based on the Acme-generated percentage of total regional sanitary waste flows. Adding new users to the system increases both revenues and O & M expenses.

There are four key components to township-owned water and sewer infrastructure at present: the general sanitary sewer, a localized common sanitary system in Orchard Shores, a water

system for Hope Village and sanitary and water systems at LochenHeath.

O & M expenses have risen steadily but user fees have remained constant. The last general sanitary service rate increase occurred in 2001. Rates for Orchard Shores have been the same for about 20 years, and Hope Village rates have been likewise static for 11 years. As a result the balance in the Sewer Fund is rapidly depleting and revised user fees must be considered.

The Board of Trustees will hold a budget workshop during the regular Board meeting on Tuesday, June 5, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the township hall. The annual public hearing regarding the proposed 2007-08 budget for the general and special funds will be scheduled then, possibly for Tuesday, June 19, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. Budgets for all funds will be discussed and ultimately adopted, and there will be discussion and a decision as to a potential water and sewer usage rate increase. We encourage everyone interested to review proposed budget information available through the township website or at the hall and to attend and participate in these meetings.



FIFTH ANNUAL CLEAN-UP DAY

Saturday, June 9, 2007

8:00 a.m. - Noon

New Hope Church, 5100 Bethesda Ct.

Acme Twp. property owners may come to the township hall Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. to pick up an official flyer with township seal good for one free load. Those without official township seal will be charged as follows.

Put yours in a safe place . . . replacement flyers will not be issued!

One (1) free load (one [1] pick-up bed OR 4’ x 8’ trailer load per flyer)

Charges - these apply EVEN IF PART OF YOUR FREE LOAD:

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| No flyer, additional loads or oversized loads | \$37.00/cubic yard |
| Batteries | \$ 5.00/each |
| Tires | \$ 6.00/each |

We WILL accept:

Wood, metals, tires, batteries, hot water heaters, large appliances, household furniture, construction debris. Latex paint cans only accepted if empty or contents are dried. Refrigerators, freezers and air conditioners must be tagged & certified refrigerant free.

We CANNOT accept:

Refrigerators, freezers & air conditioners WITHOUT tag and certification, brush, yard waste, stumps, non-latex paints, thinners, solvents, household cleaners, junk automobiles, engine oil or other hazardous, flammable or explosive materials.

How are Road Repairs Accomplished?

Sharon Corpe, Township Manager

Many of you have called to discuss concerns about your roads and seek help in getting them repaired. The need is real as demonstrated in the attached table. Any meaningful discussion about fixing them begins with a few basic facts:

- ◆ Property taxes do not currently pay for road maintenance or improvement.
- ◆ Road Commission operations are funded through a \$0.19/gallon gasoline tax. This is a fixed number of pennies per gallon and not a percentage. When gas prices rise the tax revenue tends to decrease as people buy fewer gallons to save money.
- ◆ By state law, the Road Commission is responsible for maintenance (patching, plowing) and repair of “county primary” roads. Very few township roads carry this classification (parts of Five Mile, Bates and Yuba Roads.)

◆ By state law, the Road Commission is responsible for maintenance of “county local” roads (most township public roads), but may pay for no more than 50% of the cost of extensive repair or reconstruction - and are not required to

contribute at all. Funding must come from other sources such as additional millages or special assessments (SADs).

- ◆ The County Road Commission is not currently contributing to county local road major repair/reconstruction.
- ◆ The Road Commission may soon ask for a county-wide road millage.
- ◆ Overlayment for roads rated “fair” currently costs approximately \$110,000/mile and lasts 5-10 years.
- ◆ Reconstruction of roads rated poor/failed currently costs about \$1 million/mile and lasts 20-30 years.
- ◆ Most road materials are petroleum based. Road building machinery runs on

petroleum products. So, rising gas and oil prices can cause construction costs to rise as road funding declines.

There are two ways to form a road SAD. The township can declare intent and move forward unless a certain percentage of road frontage owners petition against it. Or, a certain number of road frontage owners can petition for a SAD and the township can move forward unless a certain number petition then against it. Township administration has traditionally preferred the latter method, feeling it’s better to work with situations where improvements are desired than proposing projects and expenses that are not desired.

If you would like to explore the possibility of a road repair SAD, please call me or Bill Kurtz. We and Infrastructure Advisory Chair (and former Road Commission Engineer) Mark Lewis can discuss the process and provide tools to help you conduct a petition campaign in your neighborhood. Let’s work together to promote safer roadways in Acme Township.

Road Rating Table

| Road Condition | Miles | Percent |
|---------------------|-------|---------|
| Very Good/Excellent | 10.7 | 17.17% |
| Good | 28.2 | 45.19% |
| Fair | 14.6 | 23.31% |
| Poor/Failed | 8.9 | 14.33% |
| Acme Totals: | 62.5 | 100.00% |