

CITY OF DOUGLAS NEWSLETTER

Winter 2010

Volume 6, Edition 1

Douglas Receives NEA Grant

Community & Economic Development Director Ryan Kilpatrick announced receipt of the "Your Town" workshop grant from the National Endowment for the Arts at the February 1st City Council meeting.

The \$22,000 grant will be used to bring design professionals to Douglas to help tackle critical regional planning and design issues. The design workshops have been produced in all regions of the country to learn the importance of design in building a future for the communities.

Kilpatrick hopes to address design issues along the "West Michigan Pike" (Blue Star Highway), a lack of pedestrian connections to the waterfront and nearby communities as well as economic sustainability and promotion of job growth in the fields of art and design as well as other occupations which require a high degree of creative capital.

Douglas is in a strong position to coordinate efforts with the Cities of South Haven and Saugatuck in an effort to focus on sustainable methods of transportation that may include pedestrian/bicycle pathways.

WINTER EVENTS IN DOUGLAS

Pancake Breakfast
Second Sunday each month
St. Peters Church.

Many Bed & Breakfast Inns offer special winter weekend activities / rates.
Murder Mystery, Culinary Cooking Classes, Winery Weekend and Sweet-heart Sampler to name a few.

Cross country skiing or snowshoeing, at its' best, on area golf courses and along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

CITY MANAGER SEARCH BEGINS

City Council members started the new year off by accepting the resignation of City Manager David Kowal. Mr. Kowal's resignation becomes effective in May. In the position for three years, Dave feels it is time to move on.

On Monday, January 18th council members met with Frank Walsh, City Manager of St. Joseph, who has agreed to help with the recruitment process. Resumes will be accepted until February 26th. Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter, resume, salary history and references to: Frank Walsh, City of St. Joseph, 700 Broad St., St. Joseph, MI 49085.

It is with heavy hearts that City Hall Staff will bid Dave a fond good-bye. We wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HOURS AND SCHEDULES

CITY HALL (269) 857-1438
Monday-Friday 8:00am - 4:30pm

COUNCIL MEETINGS
First and third Mondays 7:00pm

PLANNING COMMISSION
Second Wednesday 7:00pm

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Fourth Tuesday 7:00pm (As needed)

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Second Tuesday 6:00pm

All City meetings are held in Dutcher Lodge City Hall unless otherwise noticed.

City Manager David Kowal
By Appointment

City Clerk Jean Neve

City Treasurer Bob Drexler

City Assessor Kelley Ziesemer
By Appointment
Tuesdays 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Community/Economic Development Director
By Appointment Ryan Kilpatrick

Police Department Chief Ken Giles
47 W. Center Street
Douglas (269)857-4339
Dial 911 after hours to speak to an officer.

Department of Public Works Director
(269)857-2763 Max Rodgers

Building Permits 1 800 626-5964
Michigan Township Services
111 Grand Street
Allegan MI 49010

E-Mail Addresses for City Staff

General e-mail
douglas@ci.douglas.mi.us

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Assessor Kelley Ziesemer
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Department of Public Works
Director Max Rodgers
mrodgers@ci.douglas.mi.us

Police Department
Chief Ken Giles
chiefgiles@sdpd.us

Did you know?????

You may look up tax and assessing information on the City website. Log into: www.ci.douglas.mi.us then click on "Services", "Tax & Assessing" and "Property Tax & Assessing Information". The city zoning ordinance, code of ordinances and much more may also be found by logging into the city website.

The City of Douglas now offers the convenience of accepting credit cards for municipal payments. A third-party convenience fee will apply to cardholders who wish to pay via credit card.

Property characteristics and assessment sales data is available on the City website for your review to confirm our data is accurate.

From the Assessor.....2010 Assessment Information

This year the decline in the housing market will be reflected when assessment notices are mailed to each property owner in late February. Most residential assessments in the City of Douglas will see a decrease in 2010. This decrease will apply to those areas where properties have been sold for less than double the assessed value and sold within the past year. The changes to those properties affected will be determined by the average relationship of sale price to assessment. In areas where sales have been limited or non-existent, the average change in surrounding neighborhoods will be taken into consideration when determining the percentage change in assessment.

As mandated by law the sales used to determine the 2010 assessments occurred between October 1, 2008 and September 30, 2009. Please note that, based on strict guidelines issued by the State, foreclosure sales are typically not considered when determining assessments. Commercial and Industrial properties will also see a reduction for the year 2010.

As required, in the Constitution (Proposal A Amendment), there is a predetermined rate of change that is used as the basis for determining taxes. The CPI (Consumer Price Index) for the year 2010 is -0.3%. This rate will be applied to the 2009 taxable value when determining the 2010 taxable value for a property. If the assessed and taxable values are the same, and the assessed value is reduced more than the CPI, these two values will continue to be equal. The CPI does not apply to properties that have been sold or had improvements made during the year.

Assessment Change Notices (State Form #L-4400) are mailed the last week in February. When you receive this notice, please review it carefully. In addition to value changes the notice will indicate your principle residence status and property transfer status classification.

The Board of Review will meet March 10 and 12, 2010 to hear appeals; appeals are by appointment only. If, after you have received your Assessment Change Notice, you believe the assessed value of your property does not accurately reflect the market value for that property, please call 269 857-1438 to schedule a Board of Review appointment.

**WHERE DOES THE TAX MONEY GO?
2010 Rates Estimated; Subject to Change**

	<u>Summer Mills</u>	<u>Winter Mills</u>	<u>Total</u>
State Ed (SET)	6.000	0	
School Operating*	8.4792	8.4792	
School Debt	1.300	1.300	
School Supplement	0	1.04160	
School Recreation	0.23050	0	
Intermediate Schools	5.52340	0	
County Operating	4.65770	0	
Roads	0	0.99980	
Seniors	0	0.23990	
Transit Authority	0	0.48610	
District Library	0	0.48410	
Fire District	0	1.1000	
City Operating	13.0818	0	
TOTAL Non-Homestead	39.2726	14.1307	53.4033
TOTAL 100% PRE	30.7934	5.6515	36.4449

* If your property is 100% Principal Residence Exempt (PRE) you do not pay school operating millage. To calculate tax amounts multiply your Taxable Value by the millage rate and divide by 1,000.

EXAMPLE: \$100,000 taxable value x 36.4449 (100% PRE) divided by 1,000 = \$3644.49

**DOUGLAS DUTCHERS BASE BALL CLUB
2010 SCHEDULE**

May 1 2:00 p.m.	Tulip Time Festival Match Riverview Park, Holland
May 8 2:00 p.m.	Tulip Time Festival Muziek Parade, Holland
May 15 2:00 p.m.	vs. Chicago Salmon Lincoln Park, Chicago, IL
June 5 8:30-5:00	Silas K. Pierce Tournament Riverside Park, Grand Rapids
June 19 2:00 p.m.	Douglas Dutchers Home Opener Beery Field, Douglas
June 26 1:00-5:00	Heritage Days Huntington, IN
July 4	Fourth of July Parade Saugatuck
July 17 2:00 p.m.	vs. Bonneyville Millers Beery Field, Douglas
July 24 2:00 p.m.	vs. South Haven Barkpeelers Beery Field, Douglas
July 31 2:00 p.m.	vs. House of David Echos Beery Field, Douglas
Aug. 7 1:00-5:00	Billy Sunday Festival Winona Lake, IN
Aug. 14 2:00 p.m.	vs. Ludington Mariners Beery Field, Douglas
Aug. 21 & 22	6th Annual Milwaukee Cream City 1860 Base Ball Festival Big Bend, WI

**Come on out to Beery Field for a
Vintage Base Ball Game!**

**CURBSIDE RECYCLING CHANGES
FROM BAGS TO BINS IN 2010**

In April, current recycling households will be receiving one bin from Allied Waste. This new bin will be used to place your recyclable material in for curbside collection. Each bin must have material sorted, paper and cardboard in one and glass, metal, aluminum cans and plastic containers in another. Large plastic totes and plastic baskets may be used as bins, if needed. The current bag collection system will be terminated after your bin is received in April.

Contact Ben Williams at 269 673-5415 with questions or if you do not receive a bin.

WATER STREET

Reconstruction of a portion of Water Street, between South and Randolph has begun. Contractors estimate completion by the first of April with the final asphalt layer finished as soon as possible as weather allows.

2010 SUMMER SOCIALS

Thursday evening summer socials at Beery Park are scheduled for the following dates.

**JULY 1, 15, & 29
AUGUST 12 & 26**

Mark your calendar!

2010 Census to Begin

Be Cautious About Giving Info to Census Workers

With the U.S. Census process beginning, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises people to be cooperative, but cautious, so as not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft. The first phase of the 2010 U.S. Census is under way as workers have begun verifying the addresses of households across the country. Eventually, more than 140,000 census workers will count every person in the United States and will gather information about every person living at each address including name, age, gender, race, and other relevant data.

The big question is - how do you tell the difference between a census worker and a con artist? The BBB offers the following advice:

If a census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag, and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home.

Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census.

REMEMBER, NO MATTER WHAT THEY ASK, YOU REALLY ONLY NEED TO TELL THEM HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE AT YOUR ADDRESS.

While the Census Bureau might ask for basic financial information, such as a salary range, **YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION.** The Census Bureau will not ask for Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers, nor will employees solicit donations. Any one asking for that information is NOT with the Census Bureau.

And remember, the Census Bureau has decided not to work with ACORN gathering this information. No ACORN worker should approach you saying he/she is with the Census Bureau.

Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail or in person at home. However, the Census Bureau will not contact you by email, so be on the lookout for email scams impersonating the Census.

Never click on a link or open any attachments in a email that are supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The official website for the 2010 Census is: <http://2010.census.gov>