

Scio Township

Fall 2017

COMMUNITY REPORT

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Scio Township Fire Department's

Annual Halloween Party

Sunday October 29 1 - 4 p.m.

Kids, come in costume and bring your parents!
Sit in the fire trucks!

Refreshments Games Prizes

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK

The Anatomy of Our Township

The fall season is upon us, and I hope all our residents have had an enjoyable summer. We often get questioned on the township form of government, how it functions and how is it different than a city. The following is provided to help clarify and answer some of those questions. I cannot take total credit for this, I found an article titled 'Anatomy of a Township', (cannot recall where it came from) and edited it with additional Scio specific information for further clarification:

Scio Township is your home - your community. Maybe you have recently moved here, or maybe this is your hometown and you have never lived anywhere else. Whatever your situation, you may not be aware of the types of government that manage our little part of the world. Many questions have been addressed regarding the local "Department of Works," or who is our "Mayor?" These questions come from new, as well as long standing residents and they reflect a lack of understanding about the type of government which exists here. Maybe the information in this article will help you gain an understanding of what the Township can and cannot do to serve its citizens.

The Township of Scio (the official name) is a General Law Township. Townships first came into existence in Michigan through the Northwest Ordinance passed in 1787. They are generally six miles by six miles for a total of 36 square miles (Scio is less due to parts having been annexed to the cities of Ann Arbor and Dexter), and vary in population. They were originally formed to localize relief for the poor, cemetery maintenance, horse and cattle problems, and assessing property. Though the duties and responsibilities have changed with the times, the scope of the responsibility for the most part has not changed for General Law Townships. Townships that have become "Charter" Townships have to offer some different public services and have a greater direct taxing ability.

Scio Township does not have a mayor or city council because we are not a city. Scio is governed by an elected Township Board of seven people, consisting of the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer and four Trustees. Scio also has a Township Manager, who along with the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer are responsible for the day to day operations of the Township. The Trustees are not in the office daily, but mainly serve as policy makers. The seven member Board meets twice monthly on a continual basis; however, they occasionally schedule



special meetings to handle emergencies or added business. The areas of supervision for the daily functions of the Township office are divided between the Manager, Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer. Some of the duties are stipulated by statute and others are organized for efficiency in managing the Township.

A General Law Township is funded mainly through State Shared Revenues, and does not have the authority or ability to levy any tax on its residents without a vote of the people. Consequently, the township does not currently offer street cleaning, refuse hauling, sidewalk maintenance or other services typically provided in a city because tax payers have not passed a millage to cover those costs. The extra fees that have been levied in Scio include the Road Maintenance SAD, and Proposal J - The Land Conservation millage, and the Fire/Public Safety millage.

General Law Townships are also prohibited by law to construct and maintain their own roads. The County Road Commission is the regulating agency that must care for the roads. That does not prevent the local residents from determining that they want more than the Road Commission can provide, and in so doing can fund additional road work through special assessments by working with the Road Commission and the Township

There is far more to your local government than this short article can cover. There is the connection with county agencies, services provided at the Township Hall, our responsibility with regard to new construction, your Freedom of Information Act rights, ordinance restrictions and many, many more areas that you can obtain information by contacting us. We will be more than happy to help you find answers to your questions or put you in touch with someone who can.

Jack Knowles

November is election time again!

Don't forget to **VOTE** November 7



Our 2017 was much busier than we had planned, with a third election coming up on November 7th. There are two Proposals on the ballot—a Washtenaw County millage request for mental health services, and a request from Washtenaw Intermediate School District for a millage renewal. Because it is a 'local' election we will be consolidating precincts in order to save resources; you will vote at your regular polling place, and if there are two precincts that regularly vote at that station, they will be combined.

You can look forward to using the new voting equipment that we expect will take us several years into the future. All of the tabulators and ADA accessible machines, except for the back-up equipment we ordered, were covered by the State with funds that were remaining from the Help America Vote Act federal grants. If you'd like to experience how the new scanner or ADA equipment works before November 7th, we plan to have them set up at the Scio Township Fire Station during the Halloween Party on October 29th. We hope you'll come try them out!

Your Precinct (reprinted from the Spring newsletter)

In Scio Township, we have two school districts, two US Congressional Districts, two State House Representative Districts, and two County Commissioner Districts. Because of this, up until January, most of our eight precincts had two ballot styles and some had three. This required that we have on hand up to 23 different ballot styles for each election and our Election Inspectors had to be sure to give you the correct ballot style when you came in to vote. This adds time and needless complications to the voting process. Also, we had to stockpile enough Absentee Ballots (remember 23 different ballot styles) to ensure that everyone who applied could be sent the correct ballot. In addition, the minimum order per style is 50 ballots. For some of the

ballot styles, we were ordering 50 ballots for 1 or 2 voters! In order to eliminate this issue, we have changed our Precinct Boundaries to more closely align with the various districts. As a result, we have reduced the number of ballot styles for eight precincts from 23 to 11...most of them will now have only 1 ballot style. (Do you know an election worker? Can you hear them cheering?) These changes also balanced the number of voters in each precinct. By law, a precinct can have a maximum of 2,999 voters. Previously, Precinct 2 had only 1,025 voters and Precinct 7 had almost 2,700. With the new precinct boundaries, our voters are spread more evenly among the precincts.

Before heading to the polling place in November, check your card and note your polling place. If you lost it, you can always check where to vote at the state's Michigan Voter Information Center, <https://vote.michigan.gov/mvic/> Most importantly, your Congressional, State House, County Commissioner and School District are still the same. For some of you, only your Precinct and Polling Place may have changed.

Deputy Clerk

In July I appointed a new part-time Deputy Clerk, Jessica Flintoft. She is a Scio Township resident and brings significant experience from her prior work in local government and non-profit organizations in areas of prisoner reentry and ending homelessness. Outside of her work as Deputy Clerk, she consults around the country to support local and state level reforms to the criminal justice system that improve public safety and reduce mass incarceration. She enjoys being a public servant, and is looking forward to getting to know Scio Township having moved here just over a year ago. She is particularly interested in policies and practices that maximize voter turnout and best ensure the fair administration of elections. She will be helping to showcase the new equipment at the Halloween Party, and will be in the office and in the polling places on Election Days. I hope you'll have a chance to meet her and welcome her to our team!

A Note from The Treasurer's Desk

The 2017 summer tax season is over and the winter season is close upon us. Many thanks to those who have provided updated mailing addresses. I ask again for all to make sure we have correct information.

There is a change we have had to implement, 1- PLEASE DO NOT SEND POST-DATED CHECKS. We no longer can accept them. They will be returned.

Due to the timeliness of the mail delivery, I am emphasizing the importance of NOT waiting until the last week to mail your payment. We get no mail on Tuesdays and the normal one to two day delivery is questionable. Please mail your payment early.

Have a wonderful Fall and as always, thank you for making my job easy.

Please mail your payment early.

Bicycle Safety - This is the first in a series

We are becoming more accepting of these 2-wheel non-motorized vehicles functioning as the "daily driver" for commuters

Our mobility options are evolving. In Scio Township more and more people are using alternate transportation options rather than the old standby, the personal automobile. Ride-sharing services and mass-transit operators in the Township report steady growth in ridership.

Another growing mode of individual transportation used by Americans since the mid-19th century is bicycling. There is a new interest in bicycling. Local and national specialty bike retailers are expanding in the area. Big box retailers have increased their inventory of bicycles and related accessories. The schoolyard is no longer the only place where we see bike racks filled with bikes. We expect to see the folks that pedal the scenic Huron River Drive every day. Likewise, we are becoming more accepting of these 2-wheel non-motorized vehicles functioning as the "daily driver" for commuters during morning and evening peak traffic times.

So how do we safely manage a safe interaction and traffic flow between motor vehicles and bicycles occupying the same traffic lanes, as well as train bike riders and motor vehicle drivers to behave well together?

The answer to the question is multifaceted. It will involve new transportation infrastructure design, understanding the characteristics of today's typical bike rider, and educating the public on the proper use of personal protection devices.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Highway Loss Data Institute (IIHS/HLI) reports; "Traffic infrastructure design can reduce crashes. Helmets provide critical protection for bicyclists. Among most bicyclists killed in crashes, head injuries are the most serious injuries. Helmet use has been estimated to reduce the odds of head injury by 50 percent."

The IIHS/HLI notes this data:

"Two percent of people killed in motor vehicle crashes are bicyclists..."

- A total of 817 bicyclists were killed in crashes with motor vehicles in 2015. This represents a 13 percent increase from 2014 and the highest number of bicyclist deaths since 1995.
- Bicyclist deaths have decreased 19 percent since 1975.
- In 2015, 88 percent of bicyclist deaths were those ages 20 and older.
- Deaths among bicyclists younger than 20 have declined 88 percent since 1975, while deaths among bicyclists 20 and older have more than tripled.
- In every year since 1975, many more male than female bicyclists were killed in crashes with motor vehicles.
- The decline since 1975 among female bicyclists (34 percent) was larger than the decline among male bicyclists (15 percent)."



Over the next few issues of this Newsletter we will begin to "peel this onion". However, these articles are only intended to raise the visibility of bicycling safety and not be the "end all, be all" on biking safety.

Here are some valuable resources available to everyone:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration;

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/bicyclists>

Center For Disease Control and Prevention; <https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/bicycle/index.html>

KidsHealth; <http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/bike-safety.html>

Bicycle Safety: <http://bicyclesafe.com/>

Next issue will look at avoiding the most common crash between a bike and a car.

SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT'S

30th ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARTY

Sunday, October 29, 2017

From 1:00 to 4:00 pm

Come meet the firefighters!

This is a costume party, with a bounce house, colors the clown, candy, refreshments, and games.

**Fire Station on
1055 North Zeeb Road**



www.sciotownship.org

Water Turn-Off Advisory

Let the Department know you are planning to turn off the water supply to your home.

Scio Township water service customers planning to perform plumbing repairs and/or improvements to their property and need to turn off the Township water supply to the home please read the following:

1. Call the Scio Township Utility Department (STUD) at 734-369-9350 and let the Department know you are planning to turn off the water supply to your home.
2. STUD must locate the outside curb box (water shut off valve in yard) before turning water off inside your house or building.
3. Avoid plumbing work on weekends. If you break the gate valve (water shut off valve at the water meter in your house) Township Utility Department staff will have to find and shut off the water supply on the outside of your home.
4. Normal working hours are from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday thru Friday. Work performed by the Utility department staff on holidays and after work hours work will be charged to your account at the overtime rate.



5. If you have valves replaced in your home, have good quarter turn ball valve installed.

Please be careful when turning off the water gate valve inside your home or building. These valves are made of very soft brass, and there is the chance that the valve may break if care is not used when turning them. Typically the gate valve will break in the off position.

Our regular business hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm., Monday through Friday. If you have a water or sewer emergency, please call (734)-651-4770. You will be asked to leave a brief message. Please speak slowly and clearly, and leave your name, address and phone number including the area code where you can be reached ASAP. Do not attempt to leave a detailed message at this time. The emergency number is to report water and sanitary sewer emergencies. Overtime charges may apply depending on the type of emergency.

Your cooperation is sincerely appreciated.

October is Fire Safety Month

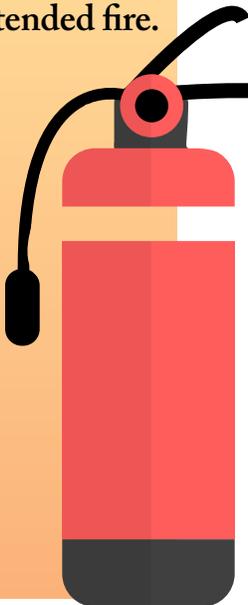
Check your house for hazards that may increase your risk of an unintended fire.

Modern houses and furnishings burn much faster than they did 30 or more years ago. Newer building materials and fabrics burn hotter and also release toxic fumes. The best way to prevent injury, death or a loss from a fire is to prevent the fire from starting. Now that cooler weather is becoming more common and more activities will be moving inside the home, it is time to check your house for hazards that may increase your risk of an unintended fire. These tips are designed to help keep your family safe.

1. If you have a wood burning stove or fire-place, get the chimney inspected and cleaned at least once each year by a certified chimney sweep
2. Check around your furnace, wood stove, space heaters and hot water heater to make sure you have a clear space at least 3 feet around all sides (no storage of boxes, paper or other combustible materials)
3. Make sure you have smoke detectors on each level of your house, inside each bedroom and in the hallway outside sleeping areas and test them monthly
4. Clean your furnace filter and have your heating system serviced and adjusted prior to fall/winter use

5. Install at least one carbon monoxide detector on each floor of your house if you use natural gas or propane for heating
6. Use gas fired turkey fryers outside (not in the garage) and do not place a frozen turkey into hot oil
7. Always clean the lint from your dryer, do not leave the dryer running when sleeping or leaving the home and only use metal (not plastic) piping for your dryer vent
8. Check your fire extinguishers to make sure the gauges all point to the green area
9. Never leave candles unattended and keep curtains and other flammable materials away from heaters and open flames
10. Create a home evacuation plan, ensure everyone knows at least 2 ways out of every room in the house and conduct practice fire drills so you know what to do in the event of a fire

We hope you and your family enjoy the fall and winter weather and upcoming holiday season. If you have any questions about practicing good fire safety or keeping your family safe please call or stop by the fire station at 1055 N. Zeeb Road 734 665-6001.



Invasive species first reported in Scio

Be on the lookout for Japanese stiltgrass and report the location and photos of any suspected findings

A pair of dedicated Scio Township residents found and reported the discovery of Japanese Stiltgrass on their property, the first reported citing of the Asian plant in Michigan. This invasive species is believed to have arrived in the U.S. in the early 20th century. It's now widely distributed along the East Coast and in southern states. Japanese Stiltgrass has been found in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio and other states. Japanese Stiltgrass was added to the State's invasive species watch-list in 2015.

Identification

Stiltgrass is a weak rooted sprawling annual grass that can grow to heights of 6 feet, though it is usually much shorter. Taller plants typically lie flat along the ground or propped up against other vegetation. Plants usually have multiple weak stems, with aerial rootlets near the base, giving rise to the common name 'stiltgrass'. The leaves are short with smooth edges and a noticeable silvery midrib on older leaves. The flowers and fruits are borne on thin spikes on the top of a delicate stem. In the fall, the tops of the plant turn purple or brown in color, giving this plant one of its other common names, Nepalese browntop. In winter, the thatch is a distinct bright tan to orange color.

Why be concerned?

"This annual grass is considered highly invasive, taking hold in areas of disturbed soil along banks, roadways and woods," said Greg Norwood, invasive species coordinator for the DNR's Wildlife Division.

"Seeds can be transported by water or on animals, and seeds can remain viable in the soil for three to five years. Because deer don't feed on Japanese stiltgrass, it often takes over in areas where deer browse on native plants and leave open patches of soil."

What is being done?

The DNR is collaborating with The Stewardship Network, a nonprofit conservation group based in Ann Arbor, and other partners to identify the extent of the infestation.

To date, small "satellite" populations have been located on the original property and a nearby site. The primary infestation was treated with herbicide, and plant material was burned. The small patches of grass at the satellite locations were removed by hand and disposed.

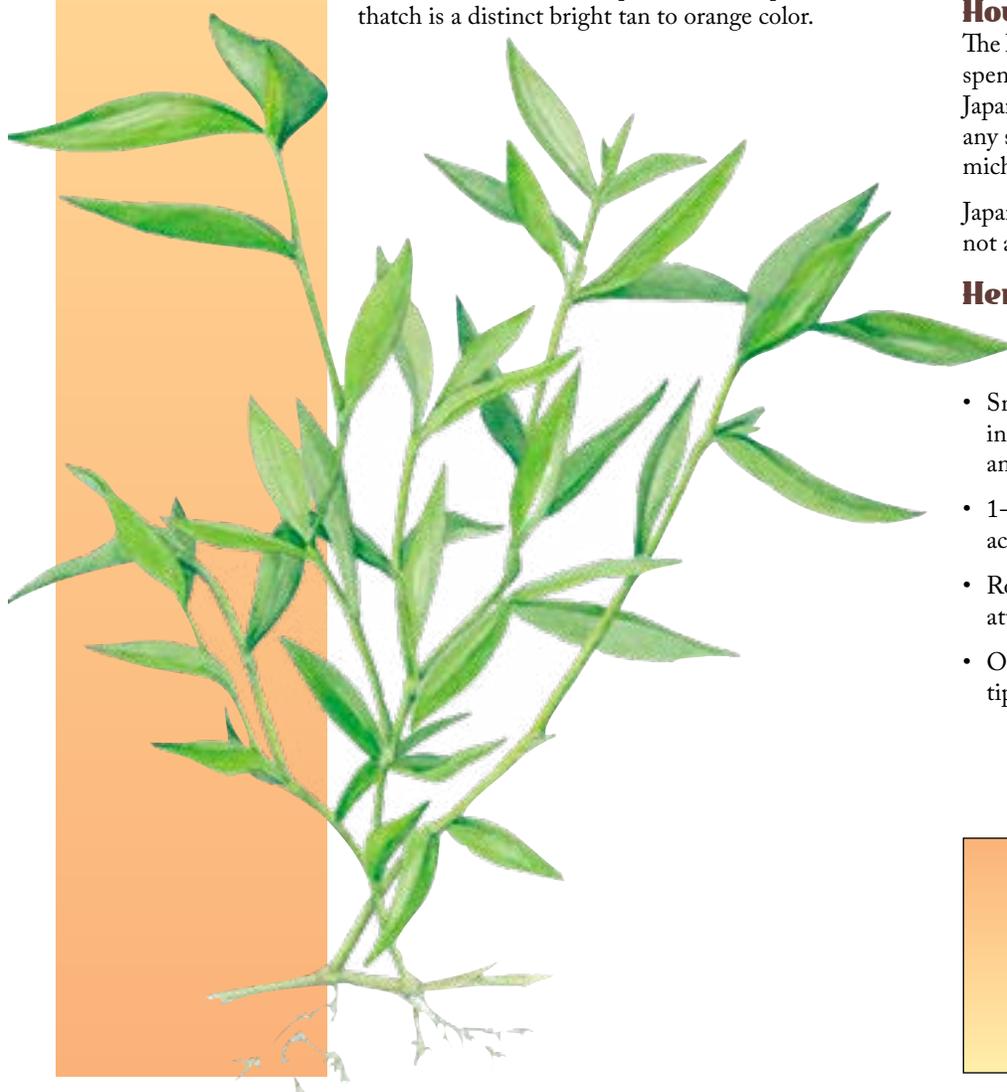
How can you help?

The DNR is asking landowners, land managers and anyone spending time in the outdoors to be on the lookout for Japanese stiltgrass and to report the location and photos of any suspected findings to Greg Norwood at norwoodg@michigan.gov.

Japanese stiltgrass looks like some native grasses, so it may not appear out of the ordinary to the general observer.

Here is what to look for:

- A thin, bamboo-like grass with jointed stems and well-spaced leaves.
- Smooth green leaves 2 to 3 inches long and one-half inch wide, tapering to points at both ends, often with an off-center silver stripe or mid-rib.
- 1- to 3-foot-high beds of grass, with some stems running across the ground and others shooting upright.
- Roots, both at the base and stem joints, which are weakly attached to the soil and easy to pull up.
- One to three slender, green flower spikes at the stem tips, appearing in August or September.



YOUR AD HERE!

Contact
newsletter@sciotownship.org
for more information



Get involved in your community

Photo by Nancy Hedberg

Scio Township Information

Scio Township Hall
827 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(734) 369-9400; info@sciotownship.org
visit us at: www.sciotownship.org

Township Office Hours

Monday to Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Utility Department Hours:

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Utilities Emergency (734) 651-4770
Utilities Administration (734) 369-9350

Township Board of Trustees

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Donna Palmer, Treasurer – dpalmer@sciotownship.org
Christine Green, Trustee – CGreen@sciotownship.org
Kathleen P. Knol, Trustee – kknol@sciotownship.org
Irwin G. Martin, Trustee – Imartin@sciotownship.org
David Read, Trustee – DRead@sciotownship.org

Board meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Hall. E-mail sent to townshipboard@sciotownship.org will be forwarded to all members of the township board.

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Jim Merte – jmerte@sciotownship.org – Assessing/IT
Fran Szuma – fszuma@sciotownship.org – Administrative Clerk

The Scio Township Community Report

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David Read

Other Phone Numbers

Emergencies 911
Fire Department Administration (734) 665-6001
Sheriff's Department,
Zeeb Road Sub-Station (734) 994-2911
County Building Inspection Services . . . (734) 222-3900

Washtenaw County Information:

Water Resources Commissioner:

(734) 222-6860; drains@ewashtenaw.org

County Road Commission

(734) 761-1500; wrc@wroads.org

County Commissioner:

District 1 – Kent Martinez-Kratz
Martinez-KratzK@ewashtenaw.org

State Information:

State Representative

District 52 - Donna Lasinski
(855) 627-5052; DonnaLasinski@house.mi.gov

State Senator:

District 22 - Joe Hune
(517) 373-2420; SenJHune@senate.michigan.gov

Governor:

Rick Snyder
(517) 373-3400; rick.snyder@michigan.gov

Federal Information:

U.S. Representatives:

District 7 – Tim Walberg
(202) 225-6276; www.walberg.house.gov

District 12 – Debbie Dingell
(202) 225-4071; www.debbiedingell.house.gov/contact/email

U.S. Senators:

Debbie Stabenow
(202) 224-4822; senator@stabenow.senate.gov

Gary Peters
(202) 224-6221; www.peters.senate.gov/content/contact-gary

President of the United States:

Donald J. Trump
(202) 456-1111; president@whitehouse.gov



Scio Township Hall
827 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

PRE SORTED STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO 308
ANN ARBOR, MI

Postmaster: leave with current resident

The goal is to reduce the number of heavy trucks on Township Roads and bring efficiency to residents.

BY BRYCE KELLEY, TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Township-wide trash and recycling services

Scio Township will be soliciting bids from qualified companies to provide curbside trash and recycling services throughout the Township. Refuse collection will be shifted from multiple private bidders who contract individually with homeowners to the Township-wide PREFERRED VENDOR contract. Curbside recycling pickup will also be available.

Participation in the Township-wide Preferred Vendor Waste and Recycling Services collection program will be available to single family residences. Homeowner Associations (HOA's) will also be encouraged to opt-in to the program.

The Township of Scio will be evaluating quality of service offered, experience, cost, and other intangibles. The goal is to reduce the number of heavy trucks on Township Roads and bring efficiency to residents. More information will be available in 3-4 months as the Township advertises and begins the review process.

