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Township Calendar

January 9	Township Board Meeting
January 16	Planning Commission
January 23	Township Board Meeting
January 25	Board of Appeals
February 13	Township Board Meeting
February 20	Planning Commission
February 22	Board of Appeals
February 27	Township Board Meeting
March 12	Township Board Meeting
March 19	Planning Commission
March 26	Township Board Meeting
March 28	Board of Appeals

Tax Reminders

- Taxes are due February 14, 2012.
- You may make partial payments.
- Interest will be added to the balance due.
- Taxes will be turned over to the county after February 29.



www.byrontownship.org

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 1

WINTER 2012

From the Supervisor Audrey Nevins Weiss

Happy New Year!

Beginning in 2012, the residents of Byron Township will be given the opportunity to bring their household waste products to the Kent County Landfill for no charge. Four times each year, coupons will be printed in the Byron Bugle that will allow residents to use the landfill for free. As part of the new contract agreement between Byron Township and Kent County Department of Public Works, I was able to negotiate this new service for our residents. There will be specific dates announced and residents will be required to bring their coupon and proof of residency in the Township. Please watch future editions of this newsletter for more information.

In the coming year we will have several major road construction projects. Clyde Park Avenue between 68th and 76th Street will be widened and sidewalks added in the spring of 2012. This project is another cooperative agreement between Byron Township, the Kent County Road Commission and Federal Highway Administration. Also, 84th Street between Clyde Park and Division Avenue will be resurfaced along with completion of 100th Street between Byron Center Avenue and Wilson. This project, which began in the fall, will be completed in the spring of 2012.

We continue to receive many compliments from residents and business' on 84th Street for the Downtown Revitalization Project. Last year, we received an award from the Michigan Concrete Association in a statewide competition. In November, we received a national award for the project. Byron Township was the only project in Michigan to receive a national award of excellence. Again, this was collaboration between Byron Township, the Kent County Road Commission, the Downtown Development Authority and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Just a reminder that during winter months we must all do our part to help with snow removal and safety. The Kent County Road Commission maintains our streets and private sub-contractors maintain many of the cul-de-sacs. It is important that we do everything possible to move cars off the street and make as clear a path as possible for the snow removal equipment. Also remember to check your mailbox to make sure it is securely fastened. By doing these simple things we can greatly assist those working to remove snow and make our streets safer for everyone.

I look forward to the opportunities and challenges of 2012. Like always, I invite anyone with a concern or suggestion to contact me personally at 878-1222. I would also thank everyone that contacted me in 2011 with your suggestions, recommendations and concerns. I look forward to continuing to serve you in the coming year.

Water and Sewer Department

Clerk's Corner

Joel Hondorp

2012 Election Schedule

February 28 - Presidential Primary

May 8 - If Needed

August 7 - Primary Election

November 6 - General Election

For the February 28 election, it is a Presidential Nominating Election for the Republican and Democrat parties. The Michigan Democratic Party will not be using the results of this election; however. They will be holding caucus elections in May. You will need to check off which ballot you wish to receive. Your selection of ballot will not be recorded on your permanent voter record. If you need an Absentee Ballot you may contact the Clerk's Office.

If you want to be on a permanent Absentee list all you need to do is contact the office. You will then get an application for each election. Being on the list only gets you an application. You need to fill out an application for each election.

A recent change in elections is that School Board elections have been moved statewide to the even year November election, so for those school districts in this area, they are moving from the May ballot to November. There may be a May Election if a proposal is placed on the ballot. Right now nothing is scheduled, but check the April edition of this newsletter for updates.

Every 10 years the state and county need to redistrict for Congressional, Legislative and County Commission. That work has been completed. We are in the same State House, State Senate and County Commission Districts. There is a small portion of the township. Between Ivanrest and Homrich and north of 68th Street in the 2nd Congressional District. The rest of the township is remaining in the 3rd.

Treasurer's Forum

Carol Houseman

I hope you and your family had a wonderful Holiday Season. You should have received your statement by now. If you didn't, let us know and we can send you another one, or you can always pull up your tax information on our website, www.byrontownship.org, click on Byron Property Tax Database and then click on current tax. Taxes are due by 5pm on Tuesday, February 14, 2012. You can continue to pay your taxes at the township through Wednesday, February 29. If you can't pay the full amount, we do accept partial payments. Any interest or penalty is only applied to the balance. On March 1st, unpaid taxes are turned over to the county. The exception to the rule is personal property taxes. These taxes are always paid at the township.

Dog licenses are also available in my office. You may purchase the licenses now through March 1. Remember to bring your proof of rabies and if your pet has been altered. If you wish, you can renew your dog license on line at www.accesskent.com. Select Online Services and then select Dog License Renewal. If you ever have questions, please stop in or call 878-3196 and Jacki and I will do our best to help.

NEW WATER/WASTEWATER RATES

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2012

You go to the kitchen and open the faucet and the water flows like...well...water. You turn a dial and the washing machine's soapy rinse water disappears down a drain. You don't think about it, it just happens...

The Byron-Gaines Utility Authority works hard to keep the 24/7/365 provision of clean, safe drinking water and sanitary sewer services as transparent to our customers as possible. You shouldn't have to think about it; that's our job. We do, however, need you to take a moment to think of how much it costs to keep the water flowing and wastewater draining away.

Byron Township's Water & Sewer Department along with Gaines Charter Township Water & Sewer department faces sizeable expense in providing life-sustaining water and wastewater services. However, the water & sewer department does not receive revenue from property taxes or any other financial support from the Township Government. The water & sewer department is an enterprise fund; an organization that provides goods or services to the public for a fee that makes the entity self-supporting. The total cost of the operations and maintenance of the water and sewer department are financed entirely from user fees – that are paid by you every quarter.

Every year the two townships review its rates based on the last fiscal year's expenses and local income (meter and inspection fees) to make sure they are sufficient to cover the cost of providing services.

Regular rate adjustments are necessary to make sure the rates generate the right amount of revenue and cash flow to provide reliable and sustainable services to the community. The City of Wyoming provides our water and treatment of our wastewater; therefore, rates are also in direct correlation to what Wyoming charges us for the commodity. Rates must keep up with the increasing cost of operations, including increases in electricity, raw materials like fuel and chemicals, insurance and labor, and changing regulatory requirements. Rates must also include depreciation expense and provide funds for emergencies.

On December 12, 2011, at its regularly scheduled meeting, the Township Board approved the latest rate study and its recommended rates. The new rates will increase the average quarterly household bill approximately \$5.61, or about \$0.06 cents a day. The new rates are effective January 1, 2012.

POTABLE WATER RATES

Billed at approximately 92-day intervals, the water rates consist of two separate charges:

Water Ready to Serve Fee ~ based on meter size and applicable to each domestic water meter account regardless of the consumption quantity.

Consumption Charge ~ the charge applicable to each 1,000 gallons of water that passes through the water meter.

Potable Water Ready to Serve Fees Charge (per quarter)

Individually Metered Residential, Non-residential and Multi-family Residential

Mter Size (Inches)	Existing Rate	Rate Effective January 1, 2012
5/8"	\$16.80	\$ 15.60
1"	\$16.80	\$ 15.60
1 1/2"	\$68.79	\$ 62.99
2"	\$120.97	\$110.77
3"	\$272.78	\$249.78
4"	\$486.26	\$445.26
6"	\$1,093.49	\$1,001.29
8"	\$1,942.67	\$1,778.87
10"	\$3,036.16	\$2,780.16

Potable Water Consumption Rates ~ per 1,000 gallons

Individually Metered Residential, Non-residential and Multi-family Residential

	Existing Rate	Rate Effective January 1, 2012
Rate per 1,000 gallons	\$ 2.00	\$2.25

WASTEWATER RATES

Just like potable water rates, wastewater rates consist of two separate charges ~ a sewer ready to serve fee based on water meter size and applicable to each account, regardless of the consumption quantity, and a consumption charge applicable to each 1,000 gallons of water that passes through the domestic water meter. There are NO ready to serve fees charged for water or sewer on an irrigation meter nor are there consumption charges for SEWER on an irrigation meter.

Wastewater Ready to Serve Fees Charge (per quarter)

Individually metered Residential, Non-residential, and Multi-family Residential

Meter Size (Inches)	Existing Rate	Rate Effective January 1, 2012
5/8"	\$ 16.40	\$ 14.80
1"	\$ 16.40	\$ 14.80
1 1/2"	\$ 67.11	\$ 59.10
2"	\$118.01	\$ 103.94
3"	\$266.11	\$234.37
4"	\$474.37	\$417.79
6"	\$1,066.75	\$939.52
8"	\$1,895.17	\$1,669.12
10"	\$2,961.92	\$2,608.64
12"	\$4,269.33	\$3,760.11

Wastewater Volume Charge per 1,000 Gallons

Separately metered Dwelling Units shall be billed at 74.6% of total metered Public water usage, unless a separate sprinkling meter is installed, then the dwelling unit (domestic meter) shall be billed sewer consumption at 100% of total metered public water usage.

Rates per 1,000 gallons		
Existing	\$3.65 (billed at 100%)	\$2.7229(billed at 74.6%)
Effective January 1, 2012	\$3.78 (billed at 100%)	\$2.8199(billed at 74.6%)

Payment Options

We have several different payment options. Of course you are always welcome to step into the Township Office Water & Sewer Department and pay in person with cash or a check.

You can find a form on our website for an automatic withdrawal out of your checking or savings account quarterly. There is no charge for this from the township and it is a one time set up for continuous withdrawals on the 20th of the month that your quarterly bill is due. You will still receive a utility bill; however on the bottom left it will say “**Auto-Draft Do Not Pay**”. If you chose to pay it before the 20th that month, it will not be deducted from your account that month.

Also available is a customer initiated debit/credit or checking or savings withdrawal when you receive your bill. On our website: www.byrontownship.org, on the left side you will see “water & sewer”. Click on that and you will see a button that says, “Pay Bill”. That will guide you through the process of paying that bill only either by debit/credit card or a withdrawal from your checking or savings account. When you use your debit or credit card the merchant will charge approximately 3% in a convenience fee that will be added to your total. For a checking or savings withdrawal, the merchant will charge a nominal fee of \$0.25 to be added to your total amount. (If you don’t have access to the internet, we have a kiosk here at the township for your use to make utility bill payments.)

We have paperless billing available to you. Email Julie@byrontownship.org and let us know that you would like to set up paperless billing for your quarterly water & sewer utility bill.

Watch for messages on your bills, and glance at the back side of your bill for important information about leaks and penalties.

Please inform us when you will be gone for an extended period of time as the post office will no longer forward your postcard bill to you unless we either have your correct mailing address or we put it in an envelope.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to call us at (616) 878-0660 or visit our website at www.byrontownship.org and click on water & sewer.



www.byrontownship.org

Byron Township Phone List	
Main Line	616-878-9066
Supervisor	616-878-1222
Clerk	616-878-9104
Treasurer	616-878-3196
Inspections	616-878-9155
Assessor	616-878-6033
Water and Sewer	616-878-0660
Recreation	616-878-1998
KDL Branch	616-647-3830
Sheriff Substation	616-632-6490
BGUA	616-971-0002

Winter Safety

- Sidewalks– Byron Township Ordinance 350 states: “It shall be the duty of all owners of premises within the limits of the Township to keep all sidewalks...in good repair and free of obstructions (i.e. snow), and/or conditions.” Please keep your sidewalk safe for your neighbors and fellow Township Residents.
- Use care with space heaters. Keep heaters away from curtains and furniture. Make sure there is plenty of ventilation when using liquid fueled heaters such as Kerosene heaters.
- Keep spare blankets, hats, gloves in the trunk of the car in the event you get stranded on the roadway. Also make sure you have a flashlight in your car.

Byron Township Branch Winter Programs

The Kent District Library Byron Township Branch of KDL has great programs for all ages to fight off boredom during the long, dreary Michigan winter months. You can find out about these programs and much more at www.kdl.org.

Programs for Children

Teddy Bear Clinic - Saturday, January 21 at 10 am

Alphabet Safari - Saturday, February 11 at 10 am

Winter Storytimes - begin the week of January 9th

Check out the KDL website at www.kdl.org for more information about the above programs.



Program for Dads and Sons

Pizza and Pages -Dads and sons here is a night for you! A father and son book group for boys in grades 4-7. Discuss your favorite books while eating pizza! Tuesday, January 31st at 6:30 pm.

Teen Programs

Teen Zone is a great way to help plan library teen programs, discuss books, play games, and get together with your friends. January 24 and February 21 at 3:30pm

Programs for Adults

Book Lovers Swap-N-Share - Swap a favorite book with someone else and hear about some good reads from KDL staff! Thursday, January 12th at 6:30 pm. Refreshments and drinks provided.

Good Reads for Great Discussions will meet on Thursday, February 9th at 6:30 pm to discuss the book, *The School of Essential Ingredients*, by Erica Bauermeister. Stop by the library to pick up a copy!