

FOCUS ON DANBURY TOWNSHIP 2016 YEAR-END REVIEW

By Dianne Rozak, Danbury Township Trustee
www.danburytownship.com

A look back at 2016 shows yet another year of accomplishments with much being done to improve the quality of life here in Danbury Township. Our staff of dedicated employees has performed a monumental amount of work for our residents and visitors. Road Superintendent Brett Waldron and his employees have continued to do an extraordinary job of keeping parks, roads and other township property in excellent condition. Activity in the department included 13 funeral services and improvements to the road inside Sackett Cemetery; coordinating brush grinding and leaf drop off; free mulch distribution to the public; three successful clean-up weeks; expert maintenance of the parking areas, lawns and ball fields at our six parks and the cemeteries; shelter house maintenance and rentals; crack sealing; general maintenance on township buildings and equipment; attendance at training sessions; election set-up; road berming; tree removal and participation for the third straight year in the Wreaths Across America program.

Our township police department, managed by Chief Michael Meisler, consists of eight full-time police officers and K-9 Officer Joe-Joe. The department provides protection 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our fleet consists of seven marked and two unmarked vehicles. Purchase of police cars is done on a rotation to ensure safety and efficiency. During 2016 our officers drove over 147,000 miles. Total incidents for the year were 4,869 which was a slight decrease from the prior year. Our department handled 32 incidents inside the Village of Marblehead and 201 within Lakeside. K-9 Joe-Joe assisted with 36 drug searches, 2 building searches, 3 tracking situations and numerous other police details. He was also involved in 40 training events. Police incidents garnering the highest amount of attention included evidence collection, theft by unlawful taking, property damage, civil disputes, animal complaints, house watch requests, alarm calls, vehicle lockouts, suspicious persons or vehicles, traffic complaints, assisting fire and EMS, verbal traffic warnings and requests for extra patrols. The neighborhood and business watch program has been successful and includes signs placed around the township in participating areas. Patrolmen Josh Young and Brian Sloan were honored at the Annual Hero Awards Banquet by the Safety Council of Northwest Ohio for their heroic actions during an attempted suicide on the Edison Bridge. New firearms were purchased and police officers participated in on-site and web-based continuing education and training. A police office was opened at Danbury Schools to ensure an as-available police presence and the DARE program was begun for sixth-grade students. The main police department is located at 419 S. Bridge Road. At this location residents can utilize our secure document shredding service and may also drop off their unwanted prescriptions for safe disposal. Call the department at (419) 732-2549 to make arrangements for these free services.

The Danbury Township Fire Department, led by Chief Keith Kahler, reported 684 EMS calls, 53 fire calls, 39 motor vehicle accidents, 53 fire alarm activations and 4 carbon monoxide activations. A new Sutphen pumper truck has been ordered and is expected to arrive in late spring. A successful ISO inspection was completed and a \$3,500 EMS grant was received from the Ohio Division of EMS for equipment and training. In addition to the Chief, the department roster totals 47.

The Danbury Township Zoning Department, overseen by Kathryn Dale, AICP, continues to be a busy hub for residential and business growth and expansion. Kathy is assisted by Cheryl Harmsen. Cheryl is also the Safety Coordinator for the township. 2016 was the busiest and best year for zoning in a decade. There was a 41% increase in the total permits processed (73 more than in the prior year) with 253 being issued. Single family home permits were above average; commercial activity remained similar to the prior year but produced an increase in the number of people who will be employed; overall revenues increased; popular residential improvements included additions, porches, decks, accessory structures and fences; and a new zoning fee structure was implemented. The township continues to see people retiring permanently to the area and making improvements to their properties instead of starting anew. The Board of Zoning Appeals heard 31 cases during the year which is a 42% increase over 2015 and the Zoning Commission heard 6 cases. Much was accomplished during the year beyond the day-to-day office activity and included preparation for the Land Use Plan, changes to text amendments, in-house BZA and Zoning Commission training and the lengthy process of transferring zoning records to an electronic filing format. During 2016 the Zoning Department responded to a total of 7,477 calls, emails and in-person inquiries and went on 1,053 site visits.

Although 2016 saw the defeat of a one-year 1.65 mil levy for township hall renovations the levy will again be placed on a future 2017 ballot. The trustees continued their relationship with Workplace Resources for an employee assistance program; participated in the Ottawa County Safety Council; held a successful third-annual dog show benefiting the Humane Society; obtained a grant from the OSS Joint Solid Waste District to repair damage to the recycling area asphalt and submitted another grant to the Ohio History Connection for exterior wall restoration at the Keeper's House.

I would like to thank my fellow trustees Charles Scott and Dave Hirt and our fiscal officer Shelley Seamon for their outstanding efforts. We are all working very hard to meet the continual growing needs of your township. We wish you a safe and productive 2017. Please do not hesitate to call any of us with your questions and ideas.