How Do You Share A Vision?

It's really quite simple - you show up for a meeting with people interested in what you have to say about the future of Laketown Township! No, the people you will be talking to are not your Board of Trustees or the Planning Commission, but professionals hired to guide the township in the development of a new Master Plan. A Master Plan is a guide to the future land use and development of our township and should reflect the thinking and desires of township residents and not just the Trustees and the Planning Commission. Even though we have a zoning ordinance guiding, by law, development within Laketown Township we still need to dream and plan for the future. Do we have enough park land? If not, where and what should be planned for to best serve all township residents. Should we be planning for more single-family development or is there room for multiple residential uses? Do we wish to encourage more retail/commercial space and, if so, where should it be? The Blue Star corridor offers opportunity for development, but is there room for industrial uses as well? Should we be working with adjacent townships and communities as we develop to avoid land use conflicts? We do not have thousand acre farms, but we do have farmers who wish to continue farming even though there may be residential uses adjacent or nearby. Can we accommodate all uses?

About a month ago you received a green post card outlining the dates scheduled for you to voice your views and opinions. I encourage you to attend one or more of the meetings here at the township hall - our consultants need and desire your input as we plan for the future of Laketown Township:

- July 12 @ 6:30 PM
- July 23 @ 6:30 PM
- July 26 @ 6:30 PM - reserved, if necessary

The men and women of the Graafschap Fire Department, together with dozens of volunteers, again put on another fantastic Pancake Breakfast! Thank you to everyone who had a hand in making it another successful event!

You have probably noticed activity in your neighborhood as Comcast continues to proceed with its plan to provide fiber optic lines to all of Laketown Township providing high speed internet, cable and telephone service. We have had a small but very dedicated group of residents to thank for this! They continued to work on a plan and never gave up on the feasibility of bringing fiber service to a successful conclusion.

Comcast has indicated that service should be completed by the end of the calendar year. THANK YOU to everyone who in any way made this possible!!

Finally, we have a new face in the township hall. Heather Jahr comes to us following the retirement of Paul Smith as Assessor. I wish Paul well in his much deserved retirement and happily welcome Heather to Laketown Township.

Welcome Heather!!!
My dear wife of 50 years and our entire family share a love of nature and this spring has been incredible with unique sightings. We have seen a great variety of birds, deer, coyote, turkey, tons of crows, too many starlings, raccoon, opossum, and a lot of unusual wildflowers. We live in a special area along the lakeshore.

Summer taxes were mailed the first week of July and are due on or before September 14, 2018. Remember that postmarks are not accepted as a payment date. We always appreciate prompt payment.

Hamilton Public School District taxes are only collected for the winter tax cycle as the school district has requested so residents in that district will have a larger winter tax bill.

Some residents may be eligible for deferment of taxes or qualify for a hardship exemption. Application for deferment of taxes must be applied for both summer and winter taxes. Hardship exemptions are granted by the Board of Review and must be applied for annually. Applications are available at the township office or call 616-335-3050 with questions.

As a part of our commitment to provide citizens with efficient and convenient service, Laketown Township offers Point & Pay to offer debit/credit payment of taxes through the internet and in the office. American Express, Discover, Master Card and Visa credit/debit cards and electronic checks are accepted. Point and Pay, our service provider, charges a 3% convenience fee with a minimum charge of $2 for processing. There is a $3 flat fee for electronic transactions up to $10,000 and $10 for transactions over $10,000.

Both winter and summer tax payments may be made through the last day of February at the township hall before it goes delinquent to Allegan County. Interest accrues monthly.

Our family moved to Laketown in 1974 from South Holland, Illinois and love our township. I have been blessed to serve our residents on the township board since 1992. My passion for being a public servant continues strong and I love listening to your concerns and attempt to find a solution to each issue. Please feel free to contact me anytime and anywhere about your concerns.
FRONT of BALLOT — Precinct 1, 2 and 3

Precinct 1
2nd side

Precinct 2
2nd side

Precinct 3
2nd side
Concerts and More at the Felt Estate

There is still time to catch a concert at The Felt Estate – Thursday, July 19 we feature Schlitz Creek, a great bluegrass group; and July 26 we feature our long-time favorite, Zion Lion Reggae Band. Food on Thursday, July 19 will be from Two Scott’s BBQ; and food on the 26th from Dokk’s Firehouse Dogs.

As always, we want to thank everyone who came out to support the Felt Estate by attending the Thursdays at the Felt concert series. Community events like these bring us together and make wonderful use of this local historic treasure. And proceeds go to further restoration of the estate.

The Felt Estate is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Michigan Historic Site. We are one of only a handful of restoration projects to achieve LEED-EB Gold certification while keeping the historic integrity of the structure intact. Our community preservation project is known around the state and beyond as a “best practice” in restoration for adaptive use. The Felt Estate is powered by a 100kw solar array. We hope residents are very proud of this incredible community asset.

If you are interested in renting the Felt Estate for your next family or business event, please contact Staci at 616-335-3050 or events@feltmansion.org

THURSDAY CONCERTS RETURN

We hope to see you at our summer concert series, Thursdays at the Felt. All concerts are free. Food service begins at 6:00 p.m. and music begins at 7:00 p.m.

July 12 - Brena - Classic rock cover band
July 19 - Schlitz Creek - Bluegrass
July 26 - Zion Lion - reggae

This year we will have a different food vendor at each concert – and we will announce those on the website www.feltmansion.org We will see you soon at the Felt!

Herrick District Library continues to welcome local authors during its Herrick Reads series this summer. Jacqueline Carey, New York Times bestselling author of the Kushiel’s Legacy series and West Michigan resident, will be celebrating the recent release of her new book Starless when she speaks at 7 p.m. Monday, July 16, at HDL’s main library, 300 S. River Ave.

Hometown favorite author of Christian and biblical fiction Lynn Austin will discuss her books 7 p.m. Tuesday July 24, at the Holland Township Fire Station No. 1, 131 Riley St., next to HDL’s North Branch.

Ascent is an in-depth history of the West Michigan Regional Airport from its 1942 beginning as a barn through years of growth connecting West Michigan’s advancing industries to the global community. Author Myron Kukla will speak at 7 p.m. Monday, July 30, at the main library.

In her new memoir, A Lone Birch: My Artistic Journey, Kate Moynihan discusses her evolution from a nurse who noticed patient reactions to color to author and painter. She will speak at Herrick District Library 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 31.

In August, HDL along with the city of Holland, BPW and the Outdoor Discovery Center, will sponsor two free movies in Kollen Park. After National Night Out on Aug. 7, a screening of “Coco” will be featured starting at dusk. On Aug. 16, “Jumanji 2: Welcome to the Jungle” will show beginning at dusk.

Anyone from birth to adult can sign up for summer reading at either HDL location or online at herrickdl.org. Each age category has different prizes for completing 10 of 20 tasks listed.

Also check HDL’s website, herrickdl.org, for more details on the dozens of free events for everyone from birth to adult happening all summer long. From storytimes to animals to drawing classes and dragons, everyone will find something to love at Herrick District Library this summer.
I would like to start this newsletter by recognizing a few of our personnel for recent accomplishments. Cadet Riley Capel and recruit Noah Sall recently passed their Firefighter (FF) 1 & 2 training through the Allegan County Fire Academy. For seven months, two to three times a week, three to four hours a night, Riley and Noah met with their classmates to learn the needed skills and information needed to pass the State of Michigan Firefighter 1 & 2 test. Their class was the first in recent history to have a 100% pass rate on the test with an average score of over 83%. Great job Riley and Noah.

We also had four personnel recently complete an EMT class. FF Zoey Hallam, FF Blake Stewart, FF Sean Reilly and Recruit Noah Sall. They are in the process of taking their National Registry exam to complete their licensure. Great job Zoey, Blake, Sean and Noah.

Deputy Chief Sarah Bushee recently completed Leadership Strategies for Community Risk Reduction at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. This was a weeklong class that taught the students how to develop a plan that will reduce fires or other emergencies in their communities. Sarah also completed her Fire Instructor II certification at the Arkansas Fire Training Academy. This was a difficult test and out of the 13 students in her class, Sarah was one of two students to pass the written test on the first try. Sarah is one of the first firefighters in Allegan County to complete a NFPA compliant Fire Instructor II course. Great job Sarah.

We are so proud of our department members’ commitment to training and their willingness to spend time away from their families to become better trained and prepared.

You may have noticed we recently replaced the Halogen lights on the sides of the fire station with LED fixtures. We received a rebate of just over $500 from the Holland Board of Public Works for the installation of these new energy efficient fixtures.

Our new Self Contained Breathing Apparatus and Stabilization Jacks, that were almost entirely funded through grants are now in-service. We are in the process of converting our older rescue vehicle into a Heavy Rescue, in collaboration with Saugatuck and Hamilton Fire Departments. This vehicle will carry items that are commonly not carried on a fire engine. Collaborative Resourcing is great way to reduce the cost to communities, by sharing ownership of vehicles or equipment that are utilized infrequently.

Please remember that tree limbs or brush are the only items that may be burned, and a burn permit is required. Call the Township Hall or Fire Station for a permit. Have a safe and enjoyable summer. Grill safely.

We are out at many community events this summer including the concerts at The Felt Estate. Be sure to say hello when you see us out at local community events.

The grant application for Laketown beach through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust fund has been approved by the State and the next steps are obtaining surveys, appraisals, and purchase agreements. The grant request is to purchase land located in the center of the park, land along the north side of 142nd Avenue, and vacant lots near the parking lot entrance to improve accessibility. We are blessed to have an access point for residents and visitors to admire the stunning views and beautiful lake front and are working hard to maintain and protect this park. We continue to address several areas of concern which include stabilization of the dune, parking, and capacity issues. We annually plant grass and erect snow fence to minimize erosion and unfortunately individuals whom climb over the fencing and up the hills of the dune destroy these efforts. Thank you to the many residents and visitors who have picked up trash, planted grass, respected the park boundaries, and communicated concerns to the board throughout the year. We greatly appreciate your active help and participation in keeping this area clean and safe.

Control and eradication of invasive species in the parks continues to be addressed. Invaders include: Garlic Mustard, Autumn Olive, Japanese Knotweed, and Oriental Bittersweet (plants); Hemlock Wooly Adelgid, Spotted Wing Drosophila (a fly) and as well as the native Blueberry gall wasp (insects). The Adelgid feasts on the sap of Hemlock and Spruce trees while the fly and gall wasp affect Huyser Farm. We continue to partner with the MSU extension office to study the insects at Huyser. If you see paper items hanging in the blueberry bushes these are specimen collection cups and not trash. The Japanese Knotweed at Huyser Farm was treated in June through a grant in partnership with the Outdoor Discovery Center, and treatment of Oriental Bittersweet at Wolter's Woods is planned for this year.

We have had several discussions with the City of Holland and been invited to collaborate for input on their Master Plan proposal for Lakeview School Park which is located at 32nd St and Lugers. This park offers substantial recreational opportunities to a large number of Laketown residents whom reside near this park. Initial discussions include pickle ball and basketball courts, a soccer field, splash pad, playground, walking trails, and improved parking.

Mark your calendars for a “Meat and Greet” for Wed., Sept. 19 at 6 p.m. at the Township Hall. Bring your family and enjoy a free hot dog meal and meet the commissioners. We would like to hear your ideas and thoughts about the parks and recreational opportunities. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the township hall and we welcome your attendance.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laketown Township Board</th>
<th>Township Staff</th>
<th>Allegan County Directory</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Township Office - (616) 335-3050</td>
<td>Manager - Al Meshkin</td>
<td>County Commissioner -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor - Terry Hofmeyer</td>
<td>Assessor - Heather Jahr</td>
<td>Dean Kapenga - (616) 218-2599</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer - Gary Dewey</td>
<td>Administrative Assistants: Kathy Stoike, Charlene Fields, Jenifer French, Diane Ybarra, Staci Veldt</td>
<td>Animal Control - (269) 673-0519</td>
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<td>Clerk - Wendy Van Huis</td>
<td>Facilities Operations - Dan Williams</td>
<td>Central Dispatch - (269) 673-3899</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustee - Linda Howell</td>
<td>Graafschap Fire Department - (616) 396-4060</td>
<td>County Clerk - (269) 673-0450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustee - Ed Stielstra</td>
<td>Building Inspector - Al Ellingsen - (269) 214-2582</td>
<td>Drain Commissioner - (269) 673-0440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Commission Chair - Jim Lorence</td>
<td>Mechanical Inspector &amp; Plumbing Inspector - Bob Modreske (616) 477-4040</td>
<td>Health Department - (269) 673-3411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Board of Appeals Chair - David Weishaar</td>
<td>Electrical Inspector - Gordon Bosch - (616) 396-1448</td>
<td>Register of Deeds - (269) 673-0390</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation Chair - Michelle Sall</td>
<td></td>
<td>Road Commission - (269) 673-2184</td>
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<td>Senior &amp; Veterans Services - (877) 673-5333</td>
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<td>County Treasurer - (269) 673-0260</td>
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Streets Lights - contact Consumers Energy (800) 477-5050 or email at customer@consumers.energy.com

State Representative - Mary Whiteford (517) 373-0836
State Senator Tonya - Schuitmaker (517) 373-0793
U.S. Congressman - Fred Upton – (269) 982-1986