



Washington Township News

June 2004

Issue Number Thirteen

Editor: Debra Kolasinski

Trustee News



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Diana McIntosh
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Zoning Inspector

Howard Rudes
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WILL OUR TOWNSHIP CEASE TO EXIST?:

Washington Township, along with the other smaller townships in Ohio have some alarming and threatening issues at hand! The Local Government Fund (LGF), a primary source of revenue for townships, is now a legislative priority before the 125th General Assembly. Essentially, the State of Ohio is entertaining the idea to use the LGF to help balance the hole in the State budget. The moneys received from the LGF go toward roads, fire, and police departments, zoning, all major responsibilities of townships. Without this revenue, townships will be forced to cut back on the basic services listed above, which they provide to approximately 40% of the state's population. Additionally, the loss of this revenue would be very hard to replace in townships due to the difficulty in passing property tax levies.

Courtesy of the Ohio Township News, March-April 2004 issue, we would like to pass on to you a skillfully executed article:

I have been the Executive Director of the Ohio Township Association for over 24 years and periodically we sense that something is happening or might happen. Today we are beginning to sense an issue that is serious. The issue has to do with townships and whether they will continue to exist in Ohio. I am not saying that townships will disappear, but we are sensing that some changes may happen sometime in the future. The most important thing to remember is that you can do something about it by getting energized, by writing or talking to your state legislators, by becoming highly visible in your community and by elevating your township services in the minds of the public.

One of the most critical things that we are seeing in Columbus is a multitude of bills in the General Assembly that are beginning to chip away at township and local government authority. The questions eventually will be why do townships exist, why do we need township and village government, why do we need to give local governments money out of the state budget?

I would be remiss if I did not raise the continuing problem with the local government fund (LGF), and this contributes to what we are beginning to hear about a lack of concern regarding local government, including townships. On average throughout the state, the LGF is the second largest source of money for townships. When you take the second largest source of revenue out of the township budget you have a major problem. And yet, we hear legislators at the statehouse talking about eliminating the LGF. The elimination of the Local Government Fund would be in addition to the increased estate tax exemption, the accelerated phase out of the tangible personal property tax, and the \$10,000 roll back the state is no longer funding. The state is saying, in essence, no more local government money from the state budget. Legislators are saying that they will balance the state budget on the backs of local government. This merely transfers the budget problem to the local governments and done nothing overall to solve the existing budget issues.



Moving into the spring and summer months the road department has a number of projects now going. The most noticeable is the Summit Street Bridge project. This project will be here for the next two years. The starting date for the bridge project is May 3, 2004. The two southbound lanes will be reconstructed first with a tentative re-opening date of November 2004. Then in the spring of 2005, the two northbound lanes will be under construction. You will also see a slowdown of work, this will allow the utility companies to relocate their lines.

The Point Pleasant Way project will be starting in early summer. This project consists of grinding and resurfacing roads, replacing some curbs and reconstructing most of the driveway approaches. The streets that will be reconstructed this year will be Point Pleasant Way, Coveview, Bridgeview, Creekview, and Shorebridge. Please, when the temporary no parking signs are posted – do not park in these areas. If anyone parks in these areas, construction could stop.

PLEASE DO NOT BLOW GRASS INTO THE STREET – this creates an eyesore for the entire neighborhood, plus it could plug up the sewers in the area, which causes flooding when we receive a heavy downpour of rain.

Garage sale signs must be removed after your sale is over. The road department spends almost two hours every week removing and picking up these signs.

The street sweeping project is on the way. We have swept all the Township streets twice so far this year. We have removed eight cubic yards of debris off the street. This would have gone down the sewers which could have caused potential flooding problems.

Thank you for your cooperation throughout the winter and spring months. If you have any questions or concerns, please call me (Bryon McIntosh) at 419-726-6908 or email us at roads@washington-twp.com.

Trustees continued –

Contact your legislators today, both house and senate members, and let them know township government is still a very efficient and cost-effective form of government in Ohio. Express your concern with any legislation that would remove or limit your authority. Explain how important the LGF is to your township and townships across the state. We need your continuing effort, to counteract what we sense is happening. Make sure your legislators know that you are ready to fight to save township government and not be swallowed by counties or cities or regional government. Are townships going to exist in a decade, two or three? Yes we will, but we need to fight every so often to assure that and the time appears to be now.

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FIRE and RESCUE NEWS



Point Place Days

The parade at noon kicks off the Point Place Days. We will be participating in the parade, hot air balloon glo, and the canoe race with multiple apparatus. Come see your local men and women who serve your community.

Pancake Breakfast

Come celebrate Point Place Days by joining us at our pancake breakfast on Sunday, June 6th from 8 am to 1 pm. Children \$2.50 and adults \$5.50. We will be serving pancakes, eggs, sausage, hash browns, orange juice, milk, and coffee. Takeout orders available by calling 419-726-2453.

Summerfest 2004

Summerfest will be Friday, June 25th from 6 pm to midnight, and Saturday the 26th, 2 pm to midnight. Friday's entertainment will be provided by 56 Daze. Along with the entertainment, we will have our vendors serving a variety of their specialty food items. There will be games for both children and adults and plenty of ice-cold refreshments.

On Saturday, June 26th we start at 2 pm. Chicken dinners will be featured. Saturday's live entertainment will be provided at 7 pm by Skoobie Snaks. The highlight of the evening will take place at 10 pm when the sky over the Point Place/Shoreland area will come alive with our ever-popular fireworks display.

Life Flight and ProMedica Air are flying their helicopters to Shoreland Park Saturday at 5 pm. Adults and children are welcome to meet the pilots and paramedics who fly over our community every day saving lives. Children (and adults too) are encouraged to sit inside and look at all the equipment. Any changes or updates regarding Summerfest, please visit our website, www.wtfd.net.

Boating Tips

It is that time of year again, when we are all anxious to get out on the water. Just remember to check all of your equipment to make sure everything is working properly, especially safety equipment. Check your life jackets for dry rot, function and size. **Make sure you have enough for everyone on your craft. Check and make sure your flares are usable and dry. The water temperature is still in the 50's and 60's so make sure you dress not only for the outside temperature, but for the water temperature as well.

Notice to Residents

ROAD CLOSINGS:	June 25 and June 26, 2004 at noon Patriot Drive at Angel Avenue Fortune Drive at Foch Avenue Hammond Drive at Angel Avenue Pageland Drive at Foch Avenue	June 26, 2004 from 7:30 pm to 11 pm Shoreland Avenue from Summit to Raintree Drive Summit Street from Shoreland Avenue to 131 st Street
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BY REQUEST FROM A TOWNSHIP RESIDENT, WE ARE RERUNNING THIS ARTICLE.....

The Washington Township Board of Trustees passed a resolution requiring the registration and regulation of transient vendors and notification by charitable vendors within the unincorporated territory of the Township. It was determined that the unregistered and unregulated sales and solicitation by transient vendors create a risk of increases of crime, fraud, and invasions of privacy. The Board of Trustees desires to protect public safety and privacy interests of its residents, which interests are compromised by unregulated sales and solicitation by transient vendors. Our resolution was revised by Mr. John Borell with the Lucas County Prosecutors Office, and then passed by the Board of Trustees on September 17, 2003, being thirty (30) days following the filing of this resolution with the Washington Township Clerk. To give you a quick overview of this resolution, a transient vendor must first fill out a registration form at Township Hall and submit \$75.00 to apply for a permit to solicit in Washington Township. A permit is valid for 90 days and must be carried by the transient vendor and within plain view while selling or soliciting on the streets. This permit may not be transferred to any other individual, nor can it be issued to a group or team, and will not be issued on an organization-wide or company-wide basis. Transient vendors may only conduct door to door sales from 9:00 am till 9:00 pm Monday through Sunday. A transient vendor permit issued under this resolution may be revoked by the Township Trustees and/or the Township Clerk for various violations of this agreement. Any homeowner may register their home as a "Do Not Solicit" location by completing a "No Solicitation" form which may be obtained at the Washington Township Office, 5714 Blessing Drive during normal business hours. The administrative secretary will maintain current lists of property addresses for which a "no solicitation form" has been completed. You will be provided with a "no solicitation" decal which may be affixed to or near the front door. All transient vendors will be informed that attempted sales or solicitations of homes registered as a "do not solicit" location and where a "no solicitation" decal or sticker is affixed is subject to revocation of the vendor's permit. A copy of this resolution may be obtained at Washington Township Hall if you choose to review it in its entirety. Also, you may register as a "no solicitation" location after September 17, 2003. The decal will be provided to you free of charge.



POLICE DEPARTMENT



Resident Alert!

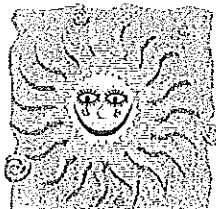
Several of our Officers that work midnights have reported garage doors being left open at night. This is an invitation to burglars and other uninvited guests such as raccoons, possums, and other critters! Let's talk about burglars for a moment, when neighborhoods are being "cased" burglars are looking for easy prey, and an open garage is an engraved invitation to a burglar. Attached garages are a special treat for a burglar as many folks do not lock the door leading from the garage to the house. The Police Department is asking everyone to take a moment at night and make sure that your garage doors are closed and secured.

Vacation Time

With Summer just around the corner, it's time to start making vacation plans. When securing your house take some time and make sure that you leave it with that "lived in" look! Consider using timers in several rooms throughout the house, and set the times for variable hours. Discontinue the newspaper delivery, as well as mail delivery. Allow trustworthy neighbors or other friends to park in your driveway at different times. Contact the Police Department to be placed on our house watch. Just call us the day prior to leaving on your trip.

Summertime Activities

Here are some safety tips in keeping your homes safe throughout the Summer. When you work outside, make sure your doors are secure. People working in rear yards have been known to leave the front door open, and while working in the back, someone enters the front and helps themselves to your valuables. Consider trimming down the bushes near windows and doorways, this is a favorite place for would-be thieves to hide while they attempt entry into your house. Brush and other thick foliage also make for a great hiding spot of ill gotten gain and other items acquired by less than honest means to be picked up later. Consider using yard and porch lights with motion detectors, this saves energy while providing you with added security. Finally, IF YOU SEE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS OR A CRIME IN PROGRESS OR YOU ARE A VICTIM OF A CRIME, CALL 9 1 1 IMMEDIATELY.... EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT SURE THAT SOMETHING IS ACTUALLY GOING ON. THE POLICE DEPARTMENT NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT CRIME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



Tasers

The Washington Township Police Department will be placing two taser units into service starting in mid June. Police departments across America and right here in Lucas County have started using tasers as a method of non-lethal force while increasing protection to Officers and the general public.

Welcome Aboard

The Washington Township Police Department has added six new officers to the ranks of the Police Auxiliary Unit. The six new officers now bring the Auxiliary up to fully authorized strength of ten. These officers are fully certified as police officers by the State of Ohio. Watch for new faces sometime in June. Our new officers are: David Bacon, Josef Cernevicus, Zachary Essex, Jody Pratter, Jacob Stelmaszak, and last but not least Kevin Zimmerman Jr. We wish all of them good luck.

ZONING

The Washington Township Zoning Department has experienced many changes in the past few months. Firstly, Mr. George Macadam, Chairman of the Zoning Commission, recently resigned from the Board. Thank you George for the many years of dedicated service to Washington Township. Mr. Bill Ducey has been elected to fill the seat of Chairman of the Board. Good luck Bill! Mr. George Green, Sr. is acting Vice-Chairman of the Zoning Commission. To our regret, Mr. Richard Whitney, also had to resign from the Commission. Thank you for all your years of service Mr. Whitney and God speed. A warm welcome to Jim Binienda, a new board member to the Commission. Good luck Jim! The Zoning Commission is presently holding meetings to review a new zoning resolution that was prepared by the Lucas County Plan Commission. We would like to extend a big thank you to John Nagy, Lucas County Plan Commission for taking the time to attend the meetings to assist our Board on this important project.

Most of all..... Thanks to all of the residents for your cooperation and patience on Washington Township's zoning issues. Have a great summer!

Back in February, a luncheon was sponsored on behalf of Mayor Ford and the City of Toledo, inviting local governments to discuss "regional cooperation". We here at the Township asked ourselves..... "Is this annexation?" It looked like it, it smelled like it, hmmm ... could it be? We all went to find out, all three Trustees and the department heads. As a matter of fact, I believe every entity in Lucas County had representation, along with media coverage. After lunch, we were presented as address on "UniGov" given by the Urban Affairs Department from the University of Toledo. For the most part, we agreed to meet again in about a month to further negotiations. For the next Lucas County Township Association meeting held in March, Mr. Cochran, Ohio Township Association-Executive Direction, came from Columbus to lecture on the important and valuable roll that local, grass-roots government plays in the "big" picture. Springfield Township was gracious enough to hold this event, and here's the rest of the story.....

With courtesy from the Holland-Springfield Journal, April 6, 2004 issue, we share with you this brilliantly composed article:

*Cooperation not unification
Township advocate believes 'unigov' no
good for Lucas County*

by: *Beth Church*

Instead of focusing on the proposal for a "unigov" throughout Lucas County and Toledo, township officials believe good old-fashioned cooperation could solve area problems.

"Regional government doesn't work. It's just that simple." said Michael Cochran, executive director of the Ohio Township Association.

"It further removes government from the people, from the voters who should have the final say and have a voice not just at the ballot box," he said.

Mr. Cochran was the keynote speaker at a Lucas County Township Association meeting on March 25, at the Springfield Township hall.

In February, Toledo Mayor Jack Ford announced the unigov concept of combining offices for a regional government during his State of the City address to save money and improve economic development competitiveness.

Springfield Township Trustee Marilyn Yoder serves as president of the Lucas County Township Association. Recalling a similar movement toward regional government in Toledo in 1993. Mrs. Yoder said, "It looks like history is trying to repeat itself."

Mr. Cochran admits he is biased in favor of local government. Describing himself as "a township advocate," he has served almost 25 years as executive director of the OTA.

"I will say very clearly to you, I am absolutely opposed to any type of regional government or unigov," he said.

Mr. Cochran cautioned that often the officials who are advocating regional government are those who would be in control of it.

"It will be their government to run," he said.

In contrast, he has seldom heard of a regional government movement coming from citizens.

"Has anyone come up to you and said the problems are so great we've really got to have a unigov? To get rid of townships, villages, small cities, and go to a larger government?"

Proponents of regional government have cited Indianapolis as a successful example of regional government, but Mr. Cochran denies that.

"Does anybody believe Indianapolis doesn't have economic problems, job problems, crime problems?" he said. "They have the same problems and a government that is trying to deal with them. It doesn't change anything."

Citing Columbus and Franklin County as another example, he said local officials there are "so far removed from the people."

Reading letters to the editor in the Columbus newspapers, Mr. Cochran sees the frustration of area citizens.

"Whether it's a drainage problem or police problem or an ambulance problem, they can't get any access to the people who are making those decisions," he said.

The benefit of local government – especially in townships, villages and small cities – is that residents can "get to know officials."

Their ability to contact elected officials by telephone or see them at community meetings is enhanced in small jurisdictions, he said.

He also cited the example of Summit County, which changed to a charter form of government and now has 11 county commissioners.

"In their move to bigger government, can anybody point to Summit County today and say that has been a huge success?" Mr. Cochran said, "Why haven't any one of the other 87 counties done that? It didn't make the situation better at all."

Instead he said the Akron mayor found much regional success in trying to work together with townships.

"He tried to improve relationships," he explained. "There's a hint of where the direction ought to be: towards cooperation."

This cooperation included forming partnerships and signing joint economic development district agreements.

"Leave the structure the way it is, and make sure the laws are on the books that jurisdictions can use to cooperate, to work together," he explained. "I think this is the future."

"If Lucas County needs a major economic push, push that on the basis of cooperation between local governments," he suggested.

Lucas County Commissioner Harry Barlos said he would be encouraged to see the state legislature grant more authority for county and township officials to form partnerships.

He believes the unigov, or regional government movement is just "a new fad" in response to the current mediocre economy in Ohio.

He would prefer to see revenue sharing partnerships among local governments.

continued on next page

Holland-Springfield Journal article continued...

Commissioner Barlos recalled that he was involved in several "annexation battles" as former mayor of Maumee. "And not much has changed in 20 years with certain jurisdictions not trusting each other." he said. "We have to start cooperating and creating opportunities for us to work together," he said.

Mr. Cochran warned township officials not to believe everything they read in a recent report from the Urban Affairs Center of the University of Toledo on the unigov concept. "Studies and reports just like public opinion polls, can reach whatever conclusions the writers want them to reach," he said.

Lucas County Commissioner Maggie Thurber said she also was opposed to a regional government idea. "I agree with you whole-heartedly, the less government, the better," she said. However, she questioned Mr. Cochran on whether he thought unigov could be more cost effective. "How would you suggest township trustees address the claims that by eliminating duplication you'll save taxpayer dollars?" she said. "That is the thing being thrown up at all of us."

Mr. Cochran called the claims of eliminating duplication "a red herring." "You can legitimately ask yourself, where's the duplication?" For instance, he asked whether a unigov police force would hire the same number of officers as all county, municipal, village, and township departments now employ. "What is now multiple forces would be under one force, but the number of people are going to be the same," he explained. "Or they're really arguing, are they going to cut your police services?" "The only place the money is in is personnel. What personnel are they going to cut?"

He also used the example of the many volunteer fire departments that likely would not remain on a volunteer basis if brought under one department. "It's foolish to think that a larger government is going to do what all these small governments did with fewer people. It isn't going to happen." he said.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, ALONG WITH THE OTHER SMALLER TOWNSHIPS ARE AT GRAVE RISK IF WE LOOSE THE REVENUE FROM THIS FUND. WE WOULD LIKE TO ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN THIS BATTLE TO RETAIN OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND. PLEASE LET YOUR U.S. SENATORS AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES KNOW HOW YOU FEEL!! (Addresses and phone numbers can be found inside the Newsletter on page 2.)

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