



Lincoln Charter Township Communicator

Township Supervisor: Dick Stauffer - Ext. 14

Dear Lincoln Charter Township Resident,

Our township has 50 miles of subdivision and 30 miles of local roads. The Berrien County Road Commission owns the roads but, due to years of state transportation revenue declines, they can't provide necessary maintenance. The unavoidable fact is, if we want good roads we will have to fund our road maintenance and repair costs ourselves. This year your township will spend about \$113,000 for streets and roads. Even with that we've had to delay maintenance on some roads until next year.

We believe you rightly expect us to bring a serious road funding problem to your attention, because roads are essential to good township infrastructure.

To address this need, your board voted in May to place a 6-year, 0.25 millage for road maintenance and repair on the August Primary ballot. This would generate about \$154,000 to be used exclusively to care for township roads. As a homeowner, your annual cost would be \$25 for every \$100,000 in taxable home value (\$200,000 market value).

To explain the need to come to you at this time to maintain safe township roads for you and your family, these are the financial facts that confront us:

- State revenue sharing has declined by \$144,400 since 2008. Instead of reinstatement, we expect future state reductions.
- Our Berrien County Road Commission slurry seal funding declined \$16,000 from last year. Reductions are projected for next year.
- Slurry seal costs for our roads increased 60% over the past 4 years.
- Property tax revenue declined 6% in 2009; further declines are likely.
- It costs \$18,000/mile to preserve a good road; \$100,000/mile to rebuild a bad road. Repair money today, saves five times that later.
- A successful millage will allow us to continue the yearly slurry and cape seal program and address other needed road repairs.

Your township board continues to reduce costs wherever possible. There were no staff pay increases for 2010. Overall staff has been reduced over the past three years. We've changed our insurance coverage, and offset the recent city water increase by reducing our community water surcharge.

These reductions help hold the line, but they won't produce the added dollars needed to address the normal wear and tear of traffic on our roads.

If you have questions regarding the proposed road maintenance and repair millage, my phone number is 429-1589 Ext. 14. Please call me. I will be glad to answer your questions and consider any thoughtful options you offer to maintain our roads at the level of repair all township residents expect.

Regards,

Dick Stauffer
Supervisor, Lincoln Charter Township

Lincoln Charter Township

2055 West John Beers Road
P.O. Box 279
Stevensville, MI 49127-0279
Phone: 429-1589 Fax: 429-0880
www.lctberrien.org

Office Hours 2010

The twp. office hours are
9 AM to 5 PM Monday thru Friday

Holiday Closed Dates

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| July 2..... | 4th of July |
| July 5..... | 4th of July |
| Sept. 6..... | Labor Day |
| Nov. 25 & 26..... | Thanksgiving |
| Dec. 24..... | Christmas Eve |
| Dec. 27..... | Christmas Day |
| Dec. 31- close at noon | -New Year's Eve |

You can obtain the minutes for meetings, public notices, building permit applications and other helpful materials on our website: www.lctberrien.org

Board of Trustees: Meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in regular session. Special meetings are held as posted. The fourth Tuesday is reserved for possible special meetings.

Street Light Outages: To report a street light out or not working properly, **copy down the pole number**, which is located on a metal tag on the pole, and record the location and call the Township Office at **429-1589 Ext 24.**

Garage Sale Permits & Signs: Permits are required for garage sales and may be picked up at the Twp Hall. **NO signs are allowed on public property such as street signs, utility poles, or ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY.** (The road right-of-way is 33 feet from the center of the road.) **Any signs found on public property will be removed, including property along the cemetery on St. Joseph Ave., 2 permits per household.** (Residents of the Village of Stevensville need to pick up permits at the Stevensville Village Hall.)

Fall 2010 Cemetery Clean-up Dates:

Remove floral decorations: Oct. 18-22
Maintenance Clean-up: Oct. 25-29
Put new floral decorations out: Nov. 1

2010 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Dates:

Go to www.berriencounty.org/recycle for collection dates and other recycle information, or call direct to **269-983-7111, Ext. 8234** for info by phone.

Sewer Backups: Make us your first call if you have a sewer backup. We will check the main line, which may save you from having to call a plumber. If available we can print you a copy of your sewer line & clean outs. After hours call 983-7141 and dial 0 for the operator. *Please call at anytime if you notice the red light on at any of our lift stations.*

Peddlers/Solicitors must have a permit to go door to door in our Township. Residents should ask to see a permit, if they do not have one call our Township Hall or the Police Department. There is a Police background check before a permit is issued.



Thank you to the 2nd grade Stewart Cub Scouts Wolf Pack for completing their conservation badge by picking up trash at the baseball and softball fields.

Township Clerk: Stacy Loar-Porter - Ext. 20

Deputy Clerk: Jen Koeppe - Ext. 12

Voter Registration: Ann Duensing - Ext. 24

2010 Elections Information

Primary Election: Tuesday, August 3, 2010 Polls are open 7:00 am-8:00 pm
Close of registration is July 6, 2010.

The ballot will include: Governor, U.S. Representative, State Senator, State Representative, County Commissioner, Precinct Delegate and the following Township Proposal:

LINCOLN CHARTER TOWNSHIP ROAD MILLAGE FOR ROAD MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

Shall the Charter Township of Lincoln levy .25 mills, which is equal to \$25.00 dollars for each \$100,000 dollars of taxable value on the real and personal property subject to taxation, for a period of six years commencing in 2010 through 2015, inclusive, for the purpose of funding maintenance, repair and replacement of roads within the Township? This levy will raise approximately \$154,000 in the first calendar year.

General Election: Tuesday, November 2, 2010 Polls are open 7:00 am-8:00 pm
Close of registration is October 4, 2010.

To view a sample ballots please visit our website, WWW.LCTBERRIEN.ORG.

Absentee Ballots: If you are 60 years or older, expect to be absent for the entire time polls are open or are physically unable to attend the polls without the assistance of another; you may apply for an Application for Absent Voter Ballot. You may contact Jen Koeppe for details at 269-429-1589 ext 12 or you may obtain the application on our website; http://lctberrien.org/election_info.htm or on the State of Michigan Website; <http://www.michigan.gov/sos/> under Elections in Michigan.

College Students- Students may begin requesting an absent voter application at this time. A member of your immediate family or household may pick up and deliver an absent voter **application**. You can receive an absent voter ballot at your registered address or may request the ballot be sent to your college address. **An un-voted ballot may not be given to anyone other than the voter that requested the ballot;** however a family member may return the voted ballot to the Township.

Computerization makes its way to the election process.

The State of Michigan and the Bureau of Elections has launched a new program to provide laptop computers to cities and townships who are participating in the Qualified Voter File's Electronic Poll Book Program. The program is funded by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA).

Lincoln Charter Township will be participating in this program beginning with the August Primary Election. Each precinct has been given a laptop and scanner. When a voter enters the precinct they will present their state issued driver's license or identification card, which the election worker will then scan, the laptop will bring up the voter's name, address and birth date. If the voter does not have a license or id the election worker will still be able to register the voter after they have signed an affidavit of identification. The laptops and E Poll Book Program are stand alone systems and do not communicate with any other program. The program only records the fact that the voter has voted, it does not in any way record how the voter has voted.

Lincoln Charter Township welcomes Volunteer Corps

The mission of the Volunteer Corps is to provide a volunteer workforce to perform community improvement projects. The first project planned is to paint the 1,100 fire hydrants within the township. Glenn Youngstedt, who is a Township Planning Commissioner, is managing the project and the Fire Department will provide the paint. If you're interested in volunteering to paint a hydrant in your neighborhood please give Glenn a call at home 428-2787, cell at 861-2886 or email at glennyoungstedt@aol.com. The Township web site will be updated to provide access there as well.

Lost & Found: Check with the Township Hall if you have lost anything at our parks.

**Assessing Department: Barb Cheek/Assessor - Ext. 13
Linda Copeland/Assistant Assessor - Ext. 22**

The July Board of Review (BOR) will be meeting on July 20th for the purpose of correcting clerical errors or mutual mistakes of fact as well as the correction of Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) errors. Please check your tax bills to make sure that the information on the bill is correct. If your PRE designation is incorrect please call this office immediately so that the correction can be made at the July meeting. The BOR does not meet again until December, 2010.

All properties' assessed values are evaluated annually by the Assessor and new property values are assigned to each parcel in the municipality. That work is reviewed by the Board of Review in March of each year. Taxpayers also have the opportunity to review or appeal the Assessor's work at the March Board of Review. After the March Board of Review ends the Assessor's work is reviewed by the County and then the State through the Equalization Process. The state also conducts periodic reviews of Local units work to make sure that each unit is in compliance with the laws regarding assessment administration practices, procedures and records. If at any time you have a question regarding Assessment procedures, please feel free to call this office at 269-429-1589 extension 22 or 13 and we will do our best to address your concerns.

Property Record Cards are public information and may be reviewed Monday thru Friday, 9am to 5pm at the Lincoln Charter Township Hall. The information is also available on line thru the BS&A Software internet website which can be accessed on the Lincoln Charter Township website Assessors department http://www.lctberrien.org/assessing_department.htm and clicking on the link <http://directory.is.bsasoft.com> (BS&A charges a nominal fee of \$2 per parcel for the user.)

The State Tax Commission (STC) strongly recommends that Assessors visit each property on a 5 year cycle. The purpose of this is to update our records and correct them if necessary. In keeping with safety and security procedures, personnel from the Assessor's Office will be carrying a picture ID and driving a marked Township vehicle. Letting our appraiser inspect your property thoroughly will insure that we have correct records and avoid mistakes. Properties that are being reviewed will also receive a questionnaire and we ask that you please fill it out and return it to this office at your earliest possible convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Treasurer Department: Terrie Smith/Treasurer - Ext. 17
Jacquie Godush/Deputy Treasurer - Ext. 11**

It is tax time again and the township summer tax bills have already been mailed out. **If you have not received your bill, please call our office immediately. The due date for your summer bill is Tuesday, September 14, 2010 by 5:00 p.m.** Any bills received after that date and time will be returned for additional interest. **If you mail your payment, please allow five days. If paying online, please allow ten days. Don't wait until the last minute and get caught with a late fee.** Don't forget that we also have a drop box right outside the front door to the township that can be used anytime, day or night. **So, if paying last minute, take a drive and save the fine.** Additional tax information about paying online, getting a receipt, wrong tax bill, etc. is available on the back of your tax bill. Please make sure to check it out.

Due to many layoffs and a tough economy, we understand that some of our residents may find it difficult to make their whole tax payment at once. If you need to make partial payments, call the township office at (269) 429-1589 extension 11 or 17 before making a payment and the treasurer's office will help you set up payments that work within your budget.

Summer deferments are still available if you are a senior citizen (62 years of age), or a paraplegic, quadriplegic, eligible serviceperson, veteran or eligible widow, blind person, or a permanently disabled person, with a household income of \$40,000 or less. **Applicants must supply a copy of their Michigan Homestead Property Tax Credit with their application. Deferments must be filed by 5:00 p.m. on September 14, 2010. Remember this is not an exemption, only a deferment.** Finally, stamped receipts of your tax payment are available at the township office. If you want a receipt, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope when mailing in your payment with your **entire tax bill** and we will stamp the top portion and return it to you. If you are paying in person, please bring in the **entire tax bill, not just the payment stub**, and we will be happy to stamp the top for your records.

**Lincoln Charter Township Fire Department
Chief Ron Burkett 428-2385 Ext.12**

Our firefighters would like to thank all of those who supported our Pancake Breakfast fundraiser in May. We will now be holding our Pancake Breakfast on the first Sunday following the Blossom Time Parade. **SEE YOU ALL THERE!!!!!!**

Address signs may save your life. We continue to respond to homes that have no address numbers or are very difficult to see in the dark. Signs can be purchased for \$15.00 and are available at the Township Hall.

Our department has completed the purchase of portable radios for each firefighter with funds received from a 2009 grant. This will help communications at incidents as well as provide additional safety for our firefighters. The next phase will be to purchase headsets for each fire apparatus (fire truck). These headsets will eliminate noise when trying to communicate inside and around apparatus.

Firefighters will again be servicing fire hydrants in the Township. Please remember it is against the law to block access to hydrants with vehicles or landscaping that prevents or hinders access.

Burn Permits: Please remember if you plan on burning brush and /or yard waste please come to the Township Hall and get a burn permit. Burn permits are free and are good for 3 consecutive days. Burning tips: Never leave a fire unattended, No burning after dark, and please be considerate of your neighbors.

Congratulations to Joe Carpenter and Brian Gist for successfully completing there State Certification.

Lincoln Charter Township
2055 W. John Beers
PO Box 279
Stevensville, MI 49127

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
STEVENSVILLE MI
PERMIT NO. 279

ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER

Lincoln Township Recreational Parks & Beaches

The Township Board is again moving forward with park improvements. If you have driven south on Cleveland Avenue you will see that the much awaited restroom/ concession stand at the soccer park is now becoming a reality. The water and sewer lines have been installed and the foundation has been laid. We also will begin working on building new fields for the rocket football leagues as soon as we have the dirt in place to level out the grounds. The baseball field has received a new well to run the new irrigation system that was put in by the baseball association.

The tennis courts received new nets this year as the township joined partnership with the South Shore Health and Racquet Club. South Shore coached over 50 students and adults at the Community Center tennis courts in June. A second set of classes will be held July 12-28. Sign up is available at South Shore. The township is also honored to host the Bobby Douglas football camp at the Community Center during the week of July 12-16. Mr. Douglas is a Chicago Bears player. Watch the newspaper for further details.

Once again special thanks go out to all our volunteers that have helped out Lincoln Charter Township as volunteers and Eagle Scout awards. We currently have Jake Range building more of the awesome trash cans that Adam Harshbarger designed and made for the soccer park. The Lakeshore Rotary just finished their spring clean up at North Lake as they applied new coats of paint, new cedar posts, new signage boards, and new picnic tables. The Lakeshore Assets Advisory Committee, made up of Lakeshore volunteer students, did their 5th annual beach clean-up at the Lincoln Township Beach as well as the Michigan Land Sharks and a group of young volunteers from Andrews Academy. Thank you to all of you for showing that you care. We cherish all your efforts and hope that others will follow by your fine examples.

**Department of Building Safety
James L. Pheifer/Building Official & Zoning Administrator -
Ext. 15
Judy Dunlap/Planning & Zoning - Ext. 16**

- In residential and commercial areas keep your yard or empty lot mowed below 6 inches during the growing season. If the Township has to mow your yard or empty lot the charge is \$75.00 per hour.
- Remember not to park on the lawn. Park on an improved surface.
- Park recreational vehicles on an improved surface in a rear or side yard.
- Keep your above ground or in-ground pool clean and sanitary. Make sure it is properly fenced in or has a locking mechanism on the ladder of an approved above ground pool.
- Keep litter and debris out of your yard. Trash cannot sit roadside more than 24 hours and should be picked up by your trash carrier as needed.

If you have any questions on the above ordinances, please call (269) 429-1589 ext 16.

**Lincoln Charter Township Police Department
Chief of Police: Dan Sullivan <http://ltpd.org> 429-2444**

The Officers and Staff of the Lincoln Charter Township Police Department would like to thank the citizens of Lincoln Charter Township for their continued support.

As the MEIJER project gets underway please be aware of the traffic, construction zones, and vehicle activity around that area and allow extra time to reach your destination or avoid the area entirely if possible.

The Police Department has been partnering with the Berrien County Alcohol Taskforce or BCAT to prevent underage drinking and tobacco abuse. Our agency, along with health department representatives, utilize underage volunteers to make alcohol or tobacco purchases at our local businesses. If a transaction is completed, enforcement action is taken through the criminal justice system, or Michigan Liquor Control when appropriate. When the retailer checks ID and does not sell, the Officer advises the clerk of a job well done, and a letter is sent to the merchant letting them know the business passed the test. With this and other initiatives, our agency hopes to make an impact on the availability of tobacco and alcohol to our youth. You can find more information on BCAT on the internet at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Berrien-County-Alcohol-Taskforce/205684221700>.

The Police Department continues to strive to provide *professional and efficient law enforcement services* to everyone within Lincoln Charter Township. Please contact us anytime at (269) 429-2444

Daniel W. Sullivan
Chief of Police
Lincoln Charter Township
5599 Cleveland Avenue
Stevensville, Michigan 49127
(269) 429-2444
<http://www.ltpd.org/>