



# County of Ottawa

Administrator's Office

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## County Administrator's Weekly Digest September 17, 2010

### **FILMING IN OTTAWA COUNTY** (Sheriff Gary Rosema)

Film crews from Story House Productions, out of Washington D.C., filmed in Ottawa County for three days this week. "Main Street Mysteries" a documentary was filmed for the Discovery Channel. This documentary will be focused on the 2008 Zimmer/Brown Homicide Case where 53 year old Sharmaine Zimmer, her two sons 20 year old Jeremy Zimmer and 17 year old Tyler Zimmer, and Jeremy's 18 year old girlfriend Katherine Brown were murdered in their Wright Township residence during the late night hours of September 28, 2008. The attack and homicides was followed with an attempt by the suspect to cover up the crime scene by setting the Zimmer home on fire. After several months of investigation by Sheriff's Investigators and Task Force members, 31 year old Troy Brake from Grant, Michigan an acquaintance of the Zimmer Family was arrested. Prosecutor Ron Frantz successfully prosecuted Troy Brake regarding this case and on May 29, 2009 Brake was convicted of all four homicides along with associated charges. Brake is currently serving life sentences with the Michigan Department of Corrections in a state prison

This documentary was filmed at a number of locations in Ottawa County and involved Sheriff Investigators, department staff, members of the community, and representatives of both the Zimmer and Brown Families.

The focus of "Main Street Mysteries" is to share the impact and significance of crime and the victimization that occurs on main streets across the country and in our communities.

### **FALL QUADRANT MEETINGS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

Please see the schedule for the fall quadrant meetings with local units of government. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for the County to interact with our cities, townships and village and inform as to what is happening at the County and to hear what is happening at the local unit level throughout the County.

So far, the draft agenda includes such items as bedbugs, tattoo parlors, health care, County budget, ARRA bonds, and economic development.

Monday, October 4, 2010 from 2-4 pm at Park Township Hall  
Wednesday, October 6, 2010 from 2-4 pm at Wright Township Hall  
Monday, October 25, 2010 from 10 am - 12 pm at the Village of Spring Lake Hall  
Thursday, October 28, 2010 from 2-4 pm at Jamestown Charter Township Hall

### **FIFTH ANNUAL WATER QUALITY FORUM**

Plans are completed for the Fifth Annual Water Quality Forum hosted by Ottawa County. The draft Agenda is included in this document. The day's activities promise to be thought provoking and educational.

### **UNCLAIMED CHECKS (Brad Slagh)**

As of September 13, 2010 a 21 page list of \$58,000 worth of Unclaimed County Checks is now on the County Web site. This list includes checks over \$5.00 that were never cashed and will be escheated to the State if we are unable to get it reissued. To access the list: From the County Home Page, you need to click on the County Treasurer's site, and on the left side there is an Unclaimed Checks link. Attached is a screen print of the notice page and what the list looks like for your information.

The phone number listed will connect the person with the County Office or Department that originally issued the check and the individual can provide information so that a replacement check can be created.

### **RESIDENTS INCREASE USE OF MIOTTAWA.ORG** (Dave Hulst/Keith Van Beek)

Every month county staff reviews several key measurements regarding the county website, miOttawa.org. The most recent report has several indicators that demonstrate a high amount of use by residents, including; 26% increase in page views from 2009 year-to-date (YTD), 41% increase in site visits YTD, 95% increase in revenue collected YTD, and a 41% increase in technology fee revenue YTD. The revenue collected reflects charges or fees for services that residents pay via the website, such as for district court payments, delinquent tax payments or park reservations. Residents are able to conduct this business via the website, 24/7, without having to take time out of their day to visit a County facility. The technology fee revenue reflects a small charge added to transactions that is used to support the creation and maintenance of the website and services provided via the website. While the technology fee revenue does not fully cover the costs associated with the website, staff continues to look at opportunities to provide more services via the website for residents and correspondingly capture an amount of usage based revenue to support the work.

Additionally, IT staff continues to work with other units of government in partnership to promote cost sharing by leveraging its infrastructure and extending hosting services. The County's GIS partnership has expanded to include 21 members. Spring Lake Township has successfully been using the County online payment engine to offer their residents the opportunity to pay utility bills and taxes online. A similar online payment hosting service has been provided for Muskegon County. As the result of discussions over the past couple years, the County has implemented the capability to provide document imaging hosting for Park Township. As a result, Park Township is now able to store and retrieve digitized documents while avoiding the large initial investment that would be required to build the complete infrastructure needed to support such a capability.

### **SURVEY RETURNS**

Clerk-Register survey returns have been received in part from four of the 10 counties surveyed. The local clerk survey on election cost has been returned in droves this week and we now have 18 of 24 local units accounted for.

### **ADDITIONAL RECOVERY ZONE BONDS MAY BE AVAILABLE** (Mark Knudsen)

As you may remember, Ottawa County received over \$51 million in Recovery Zone Bond allocations for economic development purposes in 2009. The Recovery Zone Bonds are comprised of Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds for public projects and Recovery Zone Facility Bonds for private projects. These bonds are attractive to developers and public entities because they have lower effective interest rates due to the tax incentives which accompany them.

Ottawa County has successfully committed 100 percent of its \$51 million allocation and over 83 percent of the bonds have been issued for projects which are presently under construction. Since many counties in the State have not committed their bond allocations, and the deadline for issuing Recover Zone Bonds is quickly approaching (December 31, 2010), the state legislature recently passed a bill allowing the State Treasurer to revoke unused bond allocations from counties. As a result, the State may now reallocate unused bonds to other counties that can use them.

In order to be considered for a bond allocation, applicants must submit a completed application and considerable documentation to verify the eligibility of their project. The Planning and Performance Improvement Department distributed a communication earlier this week to inform local units of government, chambers of commerce, and other economic development agencies of this opportunity and provide copies of the application requirements.

In order to ensure that applicants can issue their bonds by December 31, they must submit a completed application and supporting documentation to the Planning and Performance Department by Wednesday, September 29, 2010. This information will then be processed and forwarded to the State in order to meet their October 1, 2010 deadline.

For more information about Recovery Zone Bonds or the new application, please contact Fred Wezeman at (616) 738-4893 or via email at [fwezeman@miottawa.org](mailto:fwezeman@miottawa.org).

## **GRAND HAVEN TRIBUNE ARTICLE – GH TOWNSHIP EXPANSION**

### **GH Twp. looking to expand its sheriff's office, storage space**

Fri, Sep 17, 2010

BY KYLE MORONEY

[kmoroney@grandhaventribune.com](mailto:kmoroney@grandhaventribune.com)

GRAND HAVEN TOWNSHIP — A portion of the Grand Haven Township office complex on 168th Avenue could undergo a transformation in 2011.



[Click to enlarge](#)

During its work session on Monday; the Township Board discussed its 2010 project list and a few projects that could be in the works the following year. That list includes possible storage and Ottawa County Sheriff's Department office expansion in the southern end of the complex.

Township officials are looking at two phases of expansion.

The first part would be to expand the existing 320-square-foot Sheriff's Department office — which contains a handful of work stations and lockers — by adding an additional 630 square feet of office space that remains unused by township staff and holds meeting tables and chairs, filing cabinets, and several voting machines.

"It's small, it's cramped and it doesn't serve our citizens well," Township Manager Bill Cargo said. "Right now, this is being used as storage space. This would give them a place where they can simply meet."

Cargo said the existing sheriff's office at the township complex served its original purpose, but would be a good central location for officers who serve the township and nearby municipalities.

Plans for the sheriff's office expansion include knocking down a framed-in doorway on the southwest corner of the current office, which would then connect the room to the former Township Board administration room and a smaller enclosed office room, which used to be Cargo's office.

"This way, officers or detectives can talk to witnesses here, rather than dragging them halfway across the county to interview them," Cargo said.

The four deputies assigned to Grand Haven Township have a key to the satellite sheriff's office and the southern half of the township complex. They do not have access to the township's main administrative offices or the storage rooms where records are kept, Cargo said.

About 15-20 Sheriff's Department employees — including officers, sergeants and detectives — also have the same key. Those in the department who do not have a key and would need to use the township's satellite office would ask for one from the Township Fire/Rescue Department across the parking lot and return it when finished.

"We're extremely pleased the township is considering enhancing some of this space," Ottawa County Sheriff Gary Rosema said. "Now there'll be some space they can garner information in the building and have some privacy. It'll create a lot nicer work environment — not only for our staff, but for the public."

Sgt. Valerie Weiss, who supervises the township-assigned deputies, said the expansion will help solve their privacy concerns when talking about cases with members of the public.

"It will make it much easier for us," she said. "The big thing is having a private room that is going to be beneficial for our community."

The second part of the project includes knocking down two facade walls and a small portion of the lowered ceiling in the former Township Board public meeting room, taking out everything in that room, and making it into a single enclosed storage room.

"All this would be stripped away and it would become record storage," Cargo said of the former space where board and committee meetings were held before the township office expansion in 2002. "We'd strip everything to the bare bones for storage."

The current 240-square-foot locked record storage room would be combined with the former public meeting space, as well as the current enclosed supplies room, creating an estimated 1,088-square-foot new storage room.

"This would be more than three times the storage space we have now," Cargo said, noting various records and other items that have to be stored per state law are dispersed throughout the premises, including a pole barn behind the main building.

Cargo believes all of the records and other items should fit in the new storage room, if approved.

"This is just simply conceptual for 2011," he added.

The total cost for the project is estimated at \$7,500 and paid entirely by the township, according to Cargo.

On Monday, some board members voiced concerns regarding a likelihood in increased utility costs and maintenance upkeep due to the proposed sheriff's office expansion, which will likely see an increase in use.

"I'm not concerned by these type of marginal costs," Cargo said. "What I'd rather do is make sure the Sheriff's Department has the space they need to support our residents."

#### **LEIN DEAL TAKES CARE OF COUNTIES NEXT YEAR, CURRENT SITUATION UNADDRESSED** (MAC)

MAC learned that the LEIN issue has reached agreement by legislative leaders and the Governor. While MAC pushed for a resolution that would take care of local LEIN fees in perpetuity, the two funding options we presented were not acceptable to the Senate. Leadership in the Senate, Governor's office, and the House agreed to pay for both local LEIN fees (\$1.7 million) and connectivity charges (\$500,000) for fiscal year 2011, which begins October 1, 2010, with state General Fund money. In addition, all references to local LEIN payment will be removed from the budget. Thanks to Sen. Bishop and Budget Director Emerson for improving the situation for counties

in fiscal year 2011, which should buy us some time to push for reinstatement of the CJIS Policy Council in the new year in order to avoid this debacle in the future.

On the negative side, the current situation remains in stalemate because the issue of state garnishment remains unaddressed. The state plans to resume collections on September 16 if payment is not made, and it is becoming clear that counties' options are limited in this matter (payment, garnishment, or further challenge in some way). As options run out on fiscal years 2009 and 2010, MAC questions the precedent that results from the disappointing decisions by State Police and Treasury which set this chain-of-events in motion, and stands ready to assist counties as they determine how best to proceed.

## **PROPERTY VALUES ON EAST SIDE OF STATE TAKE MAJOR HIT**

[Crain's Michigan Business](#)

**Southeast Michigan lost more than \$16 billion in taxable property value in year, SEMCOG reports**

By [Daniel Duggan](#)

A study of the taxable value of real estate shows that Southeast Michigan lost \$16 billion in value between 2009 and 2010 — with nearly half that loss from Oakland County property.

Total taxable value for Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Wayne counties is \$149.6 billion, a 10-percent decrease from \$166 billion in 2009. The initial results were released by the **Southeast Michigan Council of Governments** as part of research for a larger study to be released in September.

Oakland County topped the other counties in the study with a 12.2 percent loss over the year, representing a loss of \$7.2 billion in taxable value.

### **Change in Taxable Value, 2009-2010**

<b>County</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Livingston	8,064,451,012	7,445,784,337	-618,666,675	-7.7%
Macomb	28,352,004,477	25,445,931,722	-2,906,072,755	-10.2%
Monroe	5,665,777,149	5,272,049,677	-393,727,472	-6.9%
Oakland	58,471,419,235	51,318,298,013	-7,153,121,222	-12.2%
Saint Clair	5,992,269,723	5,322,012,803	-670,256,920	-11.2%
Washtenaw	14,152,627,320	13,457,107,928	-695,519,392	-4.9%
Wayne	45,330,934,269	41,321,073,205	-4,009,861,064	-8.8%
<b>Southeast Michigan</b>	<b>166,029,483,185</b>	<b>149,582,257,685</b>	<b>-16,447,225,500</b>	<b>-9.9%</b>

Washtenaw, the least-impacted, showed a 4.9 percent loss during the period.

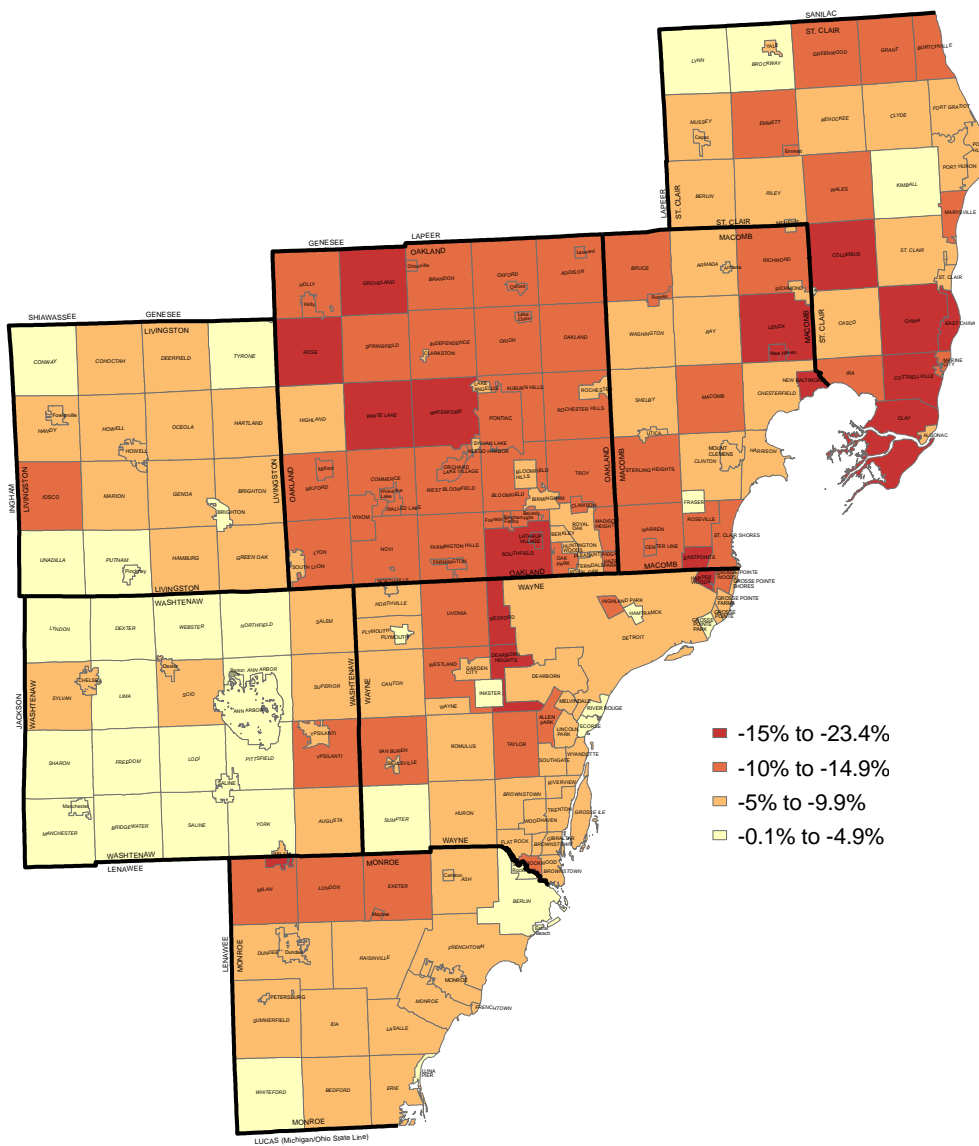
Wayne County posted an 8.8-percent loss during the period; Macomb 10.2 percent; Livingston 7.7 percent and St. Clair 11.2 percent.

Data comes from the **Michigan State Tax Commission**, said Brian Parthum, data center senior planning analyst for SEMCOG.

The data includes both residential and commercial properties.

In 2009, taxable value showed a 3.5 percent drop and marked the first time the region showed a decrease in taxable value, according to past SEMCOG reports.

# Percent Change in Taxable Value, 2009-2010 Real Property Southeast Michigan





**DRAFT AGENDA  
OTTAWA COUNTY  
FIFTH ANNUAL WATER QUALITY FORUM**

November 1, 2010, 9:00 a.m.  
Ottawa County Administrative Complex, Main Conference Room  
12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, Michigan

9:00 a.m.	Welcome and Introductory Remarks	Alan G. Vanderberg, Ottawa County Administrator
<b>Session 1:</b>		
9:15 a.m.	Pathogens and <i>E. coli</i> Study	Dr. Sheridan Haack, United States Geological Survey
10:00 a.m.	Towards a 120 hour Decision Support System for Great Lakes Beach Health Forecasting	David Rockwell, Beach Water Quality Forecasting Coordinator, NOAA Center of Excellence for Great Lakes and Human Health
10:45 a.m.	<b>BREAK</b>	
11:00 a.m.	Optical Scattering Imaging for Rapid Microbial Source Tracking	Dr. Bin Chen, Assistant Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Purdue University Calumet and Dr. Charles C. Tseng, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Purdue University Calumet
11:45 a.m.	<b>Polling/Q &amp; A</b>	
12:00 p.m.	<b>LUNCH</b>	
<b>Session 2:</b>		
12:45 p.m.	<b>BREAK OUT SESSIONS</b>	
<b>Main Conference Room</b>	Phosphorus Release from Flooded Celery Fields	Dr. Al Steinman, Director GVSU Annis Water Resources Institute
	Sturgeon	Dr. Carl Ruetz III, Associate Professor GVSU Annis Water Resources Institute
	Carbon Cycling in the Watershed and Lakes	Dr. Bopi Biddanda, Associate Professor GVSU Annis Water Resources Institute
<b>Board Room</b>	Pharmaceutical Collections	Kay Nedderman, President, CORE and Adam London, Environmental Health Manager, Public Health Department, Ottawa County
	Adopt a Beach Program	Jamie Cross, Alliance for the Great Lakes
	Blue-Green Algae Monitoring	Sonia Joseph Joshi, Sea Grant Extension Outreach Coordinator, Center of Excellence for Great Lakes and Human Health, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1:45 p.m.	<b>BREAK</b>	
<b>Session 3:</b>		
2:00 p.m.	Ottawa County Hydrological Study	Mark Knudsen, Planning Director, Ottawa County
2:15 p.m.	GLRI Awardee Overviews	Dr. Shannon Briggs, Toxicologist, Beach Coordinator, MDEQ, Water Bureau
3:00 p.m.	Water Quality Issues in the Lower Grand Watershed and LGROW Management Plan	Dr. Rick Rediske, Professor Water Resources and John Koches, Senior Program Manager GVSU Annis Water Resources Institute
4:00 p.m.	Invasive Species	Dr. Daniel O'Keefe, Southwest District Extension Educator, Michigan Sea Grant, Michigan State University
4:45 p.m.	Polling/Q & A/Closing Remarks	Alan G. Vanderberg