

County Administrator's Digest

October 21, 2011

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LOCAL POLICE CONTINGENT ATTENDING SLAIN WALKER POLICE OFFICERS FUNERAL

The following GH Tribune article ([click here](#)) describes some of the participation of local police officers and Sheriff personnel in the funeral of Walker Officer Slot this afternoon. Many times it is easy to take our Sheriff Department and other emergency services personnel for granted. We have very low crime in Ottawa County which enhances quality of life and makes the County a destination for businesses and families to relocate to. I think that the quality of the people who call Ottawa County "home" as well as the highly effective nature of our Sheriff and police services combine to make this so.

WATER QUALITY FORUM

Registrations are beginning to pour in (yes, pun intended) for the 6th Annual Ottawa County Water Quality Forum. Many excellent presentations are on the agenda highlighted by a pair of Purdue University scientists who will reveal ecoli source (animal, avian, human) data from Grand River water samples and a presentation by a Central Michigan University scientist who has received grant funding for a pilot project to use border collies to keep seagulls away from public beaches.

Go to miOttawa.org if you haven't already registered for this important event.

EMPLOYEE AWARDS BANQUET

The Annual Awards Banquet was held earlier this week at the Spring Lake Country Club. The event honors County employees as they reach five-year benchmarks of service and at retirement. The banquet was approved years ago as part Board policy and is an official "deminimis" benefit of County employees. This is the primary recognition of the County for employees and replaces each department, court, office or agency doing their own thing. The banquet is paid for by non-general and non-property tax funds. We try to move the banquet to different parts of the County and in recent years has been held at the Pinnacle Center in



Hudsonville, and Trillium in Spring Lake.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT GRANT SUCCESS (Lisa Stefanovsky)

Kudos to the Health Department on their ability to shake the grant tree successfully as of late!

Our staff has also been very aggressive in seeking grant funding to carry out our mission. We have recently been awarded federal, state and local grants in the areas of Resource Recovery (\$8000), Children's Special Health Care (\$6000), Oral Health (\$5000), Community Health Assessment (\$3000), Agriculture Marketing/ Nutrition Farmers Market (\$43,500), Safe Routes to School/Physical Activity (\$16,000), Great Lakes Beaches (\$160,000), Inland Beaches (\$22,000), Food Service Establishment Education (\$10,000 PENDING), Photo Voice Project/ teen preg prevention (\$2000) and Teen Parent Conference (\$1000). These funds will help us promote and market our Resource Recovery facilities, conduct continuous quality improvement activities in CSHCS, provide health service to uninsured on Miles of Smile, assess the needs of our community, increase access to healthy foods and physical activity , perform environmental research, prevent teen pregnancy and provide education to our food service establishments. Thanks to everyone for their excellent work in bringing additional resources to our department and for your commitment to carrying out these essential public health services.

MPSC FORUM

The Michigan Public Service Commission has asked local governments to help get the word out regarding a forum that they will hold in Grand Haven on November 3rd. The notice follows ([click here](#)).

QUARTERLY ROAD COMMISSION MEETING (Keith Van Beek)

Members of the County Board, Road Commission, MDOT and administration met on October 19 for the informal quarterly meeting to keep lines of communication open between the two entities.

MDOT representatives were present to provide a handout (included as an attachment) and review the progress on the M-231/US-31 Bypass. Progress continues with plans to begin the construction of the bridge crossing the Grand River in 2012. The more immediate projects in 2011 and 2012 have secured state and federal funding, but the stages of the project later in 2012 and beyond are still susceptible to changes and debates regarding funding levels. It was noted and discussed that the current project does not include a bike path crossing of the Grand River, but that if federal funding becomes available through the American Jobs Act of other such grant source, that all parties should collaborate to submit a request for such funding to reintroduce a bike path component into the design and construction of the bridge.

OCRC representatives handed out and reviewed the status of the various 2011 major programs (placed into Commissioners County mailboxes), namely the Primary Road Program, the Local Road Program and the Local Township Program. It was noted that while many projects and dollars are being invested into maintaining the current local road infrastructure, the lack of overall road funding is having a negative impact on the condition of roads in Ottawa County. As measured by PASER ratings, which scores the overall condition of road surfaces, we are currently not keeping up the overall condition of roads.

It was discussed that Governor Snyder will shortly provide his "Special Message" on infrastructure. The group is very interested in the direction and plans for road funding, especially in light of the prior items discussed. The matter of a county-wide road millage was reviewed if the Governor's message does not adequately address the current issues of maintaining the road infrastructure.

The group briefly discussed a current County study that was looking into the appropriate governing structure for public utilities, which currently resides under the Road Commission but in most counties is managed as a Board of Public Works. The county work group has yet to provide a final report and recommendation to the Board, but is investigating whether or not a larger group of stakeholders should be called together to not only consider the best governing structure for utilities such as water and sewer infrastructure, but also additional questions that were raised in information gathering meetings.

SUMMER INTERN PROGRAM (Brad Slagh)

News Release

OTTAWA COUNTY TREASURER ANNOUNCES SUMMER INTERN RESULTS October 18, 2011

Grand Haven, Mich. — Bradley Slagh Treasurer of Ottawa County announced results today of a Summer Intern program that was completed in August 2011

Ottawa County Treasurer, Bradley Slagh has found a way to more efficiently follow the state code for posting property in Ottawa County in the final stages of the tax foreclosure process and at the same time doing it in a more cost-effective manner. The new procedures also helped some of those property owners to learn how they might avoid losing their property to the county.

The General Property Tax Act for the State of Michigan requires that every property going through the tax foreclosure process have a notice of intent to foreclose physically posted on the property before the process can move to foreclosure and property auction. "It never seemed enough to me just to post a notice on the property that the county was going to foreclose," said Slagh. "I wanted to find a way to have personal contact with the property owners and to let them know the seriousness of the problem and that there may be help available to avoid foreclosure – if the property owner was interested."

In the past, Slagh and the previous treasurer had used an outside contractor to post signs at each property at a cost of \$45 per property. This summer Slagh decided to hire a college intern, who was studying finance at a local university, to place the signs on the 736 properties that had to be posted and to do something else. "I wanted the intern to try to make contact with every property owner who was about to lose their property in the tax foreclosure process," Slagh said.

The intern made contact with about 15 percent of the property owners on the day the signs were posted on the property or within days of the signs being posted. "In the past, posting notices provided no additional contact with the property owners so this was a big step forward for us," Slagh said.

In addition to making contact with property owners, the cost of the posting program dropped significantly. Instead of \$45 a parcel, Slagh estimates that it cost \$10 or less per parcel to do the work, a savings of more than \$25,000. "These are dollars not being tacked onto the property's taxes and while the savings may seem small – to a struggling property owner every little bit helps," he said.

The intern benefited from the program because he was able to perform meaningful work that greatly affected the public. "This wasn't a 'make work' kind of job that just kept an intern busy. This was a very important job where the intern had to make decisions in the field that impacted people's lives. He gathered data that will help us communicate more effectively in this year and it also gave him a chance to gain an understanding of tax law and other operations of the treasurer's office," Slagh said.

For more information on the new program contact Ottawa County Treasurer Bradley Slagh at bslagh@miottawa.org or call 616-994-4501



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[Becky Vargo](#) ^[1]

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 (Tribune photo/Becky Vargo) Emergency personnel from the Tri-Cities area have been wearing a black band across their badges in honor of Walker police officer Trevor Slot who was killed on Oct. 13 when he was struck by a car driven by bank robber suspects who were trying to escape police. ^[2]

 10-19_Badge.jpg ^[3]

 (Tribune photo/Becky Vargo) Emergency personnel from the Tri-Cities area have been wearing a black band across their badges in honor of Walker police officer Trevor Slot who was killed on Oct. 13 when he was struck by a car driven by bank robber suspects who were trying to escape police. ^[2]

Members of local police and fire departments plan to show up in force at the funeral of Walker police officer Trevor Slot on Friday.

"We're trying to show our support — having been there before," said Lt. Renee Freeman of the Grand Haven Department of Public Safety.

Freeman said the department's honor guard of six officers will be attending the funeral, as will nine other members of the force — "some on duty, some off," she said.

"Everyone is committed to either visitation or the funeral," she said.

Slot, 41, a court officer for the Walker Police Department, was setting stop strips on Interstate 96 in Ottawa County on Oct. 13 when he was struck and killed by a car containing two robbery suspects who were fleeing from police. The suspects were killed in

a shoot-out with police moments later at the Eighth Avenue exit off westbound I-96 near Marne.

Freeman said GHDPs officers will be leaving their department at about 9:15 a.m. Friday to head to the law enforcement staging area.

"It seems like yesterday, when stuff like this happens," she said.

Freeman was referring to the death of GHDPs officer Scott Flahive on Dec. 13, 1994. The 28-year-old officer was killed after stopping a getaway car containing an escapee from the Ottawa County Jail.

Three or four officers from the Spring Lake/Ferrysburg Police Department will also be attending the funeral, said Sgt. Curt Theune. He said they will probably meet the group from Grand Haven and caravan with them.

"That shows some solidarity among law enforcement," Theune said. "We will also meet up with other agencies, depending on the route."

The Ottawa County Sheriff's Department will have a visible presence at the funeral.

"Our honor guard will be assisting at the funeral, ushering," said Lt. Steve Kempker. "The rest of the staff will be assisting with officer lineup at the graveside service."

Kempker said they are expecting up to 1,000 police officers, firefighters and governmental representatives at the service.

Because of those numbers, the Sheriff's Department will also be helping with traffic control points along the funeral procession route, and with security at the cemetery.

Sgt. Keith Koeman, director of the OCSD Reserves, said Wednesday that he had 20 reserves signed up so far to work the funeral.

"We'll have the mounted unit (horses) and reserves doing security at the cemetery and for traffic along the route," Koeman said.

Koeman said many of the reserve officers want to be involved because they want to show respect.

"Many are taking time off work," he said. "That shows how much this means to them. They know this can happen to any one of us."

Kempker said that the OCSD goal was to take as much work off the Walker Police Department as possible. He said he's been meeting with representatives of multiple police agencies all week to plan for the funeral.

Kempker said he expects the procession to be traveling from the church to the cemetery between 3 and 3:30 p.m. Friday. The procession should be exiting the cemetery between

5:15 and 5:45 p.m. This will be in the area of M-45 from Eighth Avenue into Standale.

"If people are traveling the area, they will see some interruptions," Kempker said.

Because of potential traffic issues, some of the area schools are dismissing early or not holding afternoon kindergarten, Kempker said.

"We'll have a pretty large contingent that is going," said Ottawa County Sheriff Gary Rosema. But "first and foremost, we are going to continue to maintain service" to the county.

Rosema said the duty shifts will not be allowed to go to the funeral. All office functions will remain open and the jail will not be affected, he said.

Rosema noted that the department was involved in the Oct. 13 chase, and that they are providing support for the officers who were on the scene of the accident and the shooting.

Two OCSD officers remain on administrative leave, which is a formality, Rosema said. "We are under the process of reviewing the entire situation," he said.

"Everybody who was involved in the event that day really has an interest in attending the memorial," Rosema said. "I'll be there representing our organization, as will Undersheriff Greg Steigenga and our contingent of officers."

Rosema said it was hard to put the feelings of local law enforcement into words.

"It's a terrible loss to the Walker PD and the family," he said. "Whenever you have an officer lost in the line of duty, it's pretty significant."

The funeral service for Trevor Slot will be held at 1 p.m. Friday at Resurrection Life Church, at corner of 52nd Street and Ivanrest S.W. in Wyoming. The graveside service will follow at Rosedale Cemetery.

The procession will leave the church on 52nd Street and head west to Ivanrest. Residents are welcomed to line the route and pay their respects to Officer Slot.

- Turn north on Ivanrest to 28th Street.
- Turn west on 28th Street to Wilson Avenue.
- Continue north on Wilson Avenue to Lake Michigan Drive (M-45).
- Turn east on Lake Michigan Drive (M-45) to Kinney Avenue. N.W.
- Turn north on Kinney to Leonard Street.
- Turn east on Leonard to Remembrance Road N.W.
- Turn north on Remembrance to Wilson Avenue.
- Turn south on Wilson to Leonard.
- Turn west on Leonard to Eighth Avenue.
- Turn south on Eighth Avenue to Lake Michigan Drive.
- Turn east on Lake Michigan Drive to the entrance of Rosedale Cemetery.

Flags to be lowered Friday

Gov. Rick Snyder ordered U.S. flags to be lowered on Friday, the day of Trevor Slot's funeral.

The 41-year-old from Grand Rapids was killed last Thursday while laying down spike strips to stop a speeding sport utility vehicle on Interstate 96 in Ottawa County.

Visitation was held Wednesday and again today at the Third Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. Funeral services will be Friday at the Resurrection Life Church in Grandville.

Derryl LaFave Jr. and Kristopher Cheyne crashed after Slot was hit. They were shot and killed by police when they fired at officers. The pair had led police on a high-speed chase following a bank robbery in Muskegon County.

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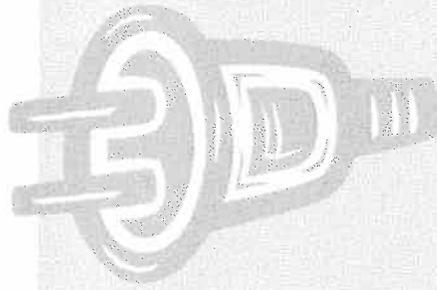
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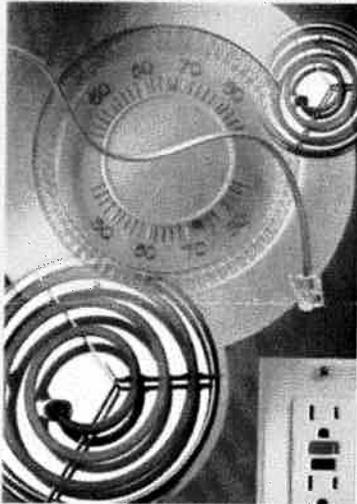
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Connect to a Consumer Forum

With the Michigan Public Service Commission



Grand Haven Forum

Thursday, November 3, 2011

6:00 PM

Grand Haven

Community Center

421 Columbus

Grand Haven, MI 49417

Questions? Contact:

MPSC – Utility Forums

P.O. Box 30221

Lansing, MI 48909

(800) 292-9555

www.michigan.gov/mpsc

Come to a meeting hosted by the state agency with regulatory responsibilities for energy, telecommunications, and some video/cable. This event will allow you to:

- Meet with an MPSC Commissioner
- Learn about electric and natural gas rates
- Discuss telephone service updates
- Voice utility-related questions and concerns

Local utility service providers and assistance organizations will be present to speak with attendees.

To make the most of this opportunity, please bring your utility bills, shut off notices, tax information and proof of any other assistance you receive.

We hope to see you there!



MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION