

# County Administrator's Digest

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## **WATER QUALITY FORUM—MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25**

If you are registered for Ottawa County's Eighth Annual Water Quality Forum it is this coming Monday, November 25 starting at 8:30 AM. It will be in the Fillmore Administration Building Main Conference Room, 12220 Fillmore St., West Olive, MI 49460.

## **ISSUES AND IMPACT**

We recently recorded the second edition of Issues and Impact, a cable television show that I am doing through Muskegon Community College. Follow the link [http://youtu.be/Gn\\_l65z7f3U](http://youtu.be/Gn_l65z7f3U) to see my interview of Michigan State Police Director Col. Kristy Etue and Ottawa County Sheriff Gary Rosema, chair of Governor Rick Snyder's C.L.E.A.R. committee.

## **LAND BANK UPDATE** (Brad Slagh, County Treasurer)

### Background:

A Land Bank is a legal authority that can be established by the State, County or the City of Detroit in the State of Michigan. Legislation for creation of land banks in Michigan was signed into law in 2003, and Ottawa County implemented our Land Bank Authority in January 2010. The Land Bank is formed through an inter-governmental agreement between the County and the State Land Bank Fast Track Authority.

### Purpose:

The law(s) establishing Land Banks provided a set of tools that allow a Land Bank to acquire, hold, improve and return to the tax rolls land within its jurisdiction. Property can come to a Land Bank from tax foreclosed property, be purchase from HUD, gifts from people, an agreement with a developer and more. The goal of the Land Bank is to take the property that is acquired and do something with it so that in time it is worth more than it is today, and the community is better off than before.



### Update:

To provide a sense of Ottawa's Land Bank direction, the Mission Statement is inserted below:

*The Land Bank will invigorate values in the community by acquiring, developing and returning to the tax rolls or for public purpose properties formerly underutilized, vacant or abandoned; in cooperation with stakeholders who value responsible land ownership, while providing for local government input.*

The Ottawa County Land Bank Authority recently had the privilege of seeing part of this mission come to life, as we were able to acquire tax foreclosed property in the City of Holland, which because of a known petroleum spill and buried tanks and other unknown environmental concerns was unsellable even at our tax foreclosure auction. After finding and investing almost \$80,000 in grant funds for evaluation and cleanup of this property. The Land Bank Authority was recently able to sell it to a young entrepreneur who plans to both open a business and remodel the house on that site. We are glad to bring property back into the hands of people who can use it effectively.

The next iteration of how this mission statement might be fulfilled is under study, as an organization and several community governments have expressed interest in how they could partner with the Ottawa County Land Bank Authority to affect community housing and bring higher valued properties to the tax roll.

### **PLANNING A COMMUNITY FOOD EVENT?** (Spencer Ballard, REHS Food Supervisor, ODPH)

A food service license is generally required in order to serve food to the public. If you or your organization hosts occasional events where foods are served to the public, a temporary food service license is frequently required (charitable, religious, fraternal, civic, service, other non-profit organization, private individuals, groups of individuals, caterers, or restaurants which cater). A fixed food service license is required for those who more routinely serve the public. This typically includes restaurants, cafeterias, cafes, bars, rental halls, catering kitchens or similar places where food or drink is prepared for consumption on the premises or elsewhere. Also, any other eating or drinking establishment or operation where food is served or provided for the public requires a fixed food service license.

When planning your event and food is being offered, you should:

- Contact Ottawa County Department of Public Health and discuss your plans (616) 393-5645.
- If required, fill out the appropriate application and submit with the corresponding fee(s).
- Receive an inspection the day of the event prior to serving.
- Post your license in view of the public.



Anytime an invitation is extended to the public to attend an event where food is offered, contact should be

made with Ottawa County Department of Public Health at least a week in advance to determine whether or not a license is needed. Public food events may be a community dinner, grill out, pancake breakfast, fundraising dinner, pig roast, or during a festival. Examples of invitations to the public may include newspaper ads, radio, flyers, signs, websites, emails, etc.\*

By receiving the proper license, as required by law, you are helping ensure that the public is protected from foodborne illnesses. Foodborne illness is a common, costly—yet preventable—public health problem. Common foodborne illness symptoms consist of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and on average last 24-48 hours. Each year, 1 in 6 Americans gets sick by consuming contaminated foods or beverages. Many different disease-causing microbes, or pathogens, can contaminate foods, so there are many different foodborne infections. In addition, poisonous chemicals, or other harmful substances can cause foodborne diseases if they are present in food. \*\*

For more information on food safety and preventing foodborne illnesses, visit:

\* [www.miOttawa.org/food](http://www.miOttawa.org/food) , \*\* [www.cdc.gov/foodsafety](http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety) , [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

*mi*Ottawa Department of  
**Public Health**



**Our Vision – Healthy People**

### **SKILLED TRADES TRAINING FUND** (Angie Barksdale, Program Supervisor, O.C. Michigan Works)

Michigan's business climate and economy continues to recover from the devastating job losses of the past five years. However, the state's labor exchange system is being challenged to find talent for businesses who are seeking individuals with new and emerging skill sets. The growing shortage of skilled workers threatens our economic competitiveness. To address this need, the Governor recommended and the Legislature supported the creation of the Skilled Trades Training Fund (STTF) program for Fiscal Year 2014 (October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014).

The STTF Program will provide \$10 million in first come first serve competitive awards to any company with a documented skill mismatch. The funds are utilized to assist employers in training new hires, incumbent workers or registered apprentices. Training is to be short term and provide individuals with a certificate or credential. Unlike many state and federally funded training programs, the STTF program has a simple application and is approved by the state in a very short turn around.

Any local partner (Economic Development, Community College, training provider, etc.) working with employers can assist an employer in identifying the need for training and refer the employer to this opportunity. Locally, the business services team of Ottawa County Michigan Works then assists the employer with filling out the ap-

plication and documents support for the grant and then submits the application to the State for approval. To date the state has awarded just over \$3 million of the \$10 million. Working closely with area partners such as Lakeshore Advantage, Thompson M-Tec & Grand Rapids Community College, Ottawa County Michigan Works has been able secure \$834,706 of that for 12 Ottawa County employers. This week we have submitted grants for 6 additional employers that total \$216,241. We are very pleased to assist Ottawa County employers garner this funding to up skill our local workforce. If any employer is interested in these funds they should contact the business services team at Ottawa Count Michigan Works at 616-494-3400.

### **PIGEON CREEK: READY FOR WINTER (Shannon Felgner)**

The groomed and lit cross country ski trails and two large sledding hills at Pigeon Creek Park are among the area's best. Coupled with the upgrades to Pigeon Creek Lodge, the park observed a banner season in 2012-13. Last winter also reaffirmed the need to address parking at the property. For much of the year, the large parking lots at Pigeon Creek Park are more than enough to accommodate the hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians. When snow falls, however, hordes of visitors descend upon the park. Cars spilling over on to Stanton Street created safety hazards. To address this problem, parking for an additional 70 cars has been added, increasing the total parking capacity to 245. Steps are also being taken to a designate "no parking" areas on Stanton Street near the park entrance.

Seasonal employees for the Pigeon Creek Lodge are also being secured. As part of their training this year, a 1 ½ hour segment on customer service will be included. This seasonal group staffs the lodge, where customers enjoy ski and snowshoe rentals, concessions and warm hospitality. Ski lessons are also available. [Details are online.](#) Since the hours of operation rely heavily on Mother Nature, the best way to stay up to date is through the hot line at 616-738-9531.



### **DISNEY INSTITUTE**

I had the opportunity to attend the Disney Institute – Disney's Approach to Business Excellence from November 4 -8. The program was held at the Contemporary Resort at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Each of the

five days focused on a different area as follows: Monday – Creativity & Innovation; Tuesday – Leadership Excellence; Wednesday – Selection, Training, & Management; Thursday – Quality Service; Friday – Brand Loyalty.

The training consisted of a unique blend of classroom presentation and team exercises and visits the various resorts for learning activities and homework assignments. One highlight was a tour of the complex located underground at the Magic Kingdom where administration and operations for this park are concentrated.

The Michigan Local Government Management Association (MLGMA) funded half of the program cost with a \$3,227 professional development grant which is greatly appreciated.

I will be writing more on this experience for the MLGMA Newsletter and will include that piece in the Digest.

### **COUNTY UPDATE MEETING WELL ATTENDED**

The County held one update meeting instead of the quadrant meeting format and that meeting was held on October 29. All local units of government were invited and representatives of 14 attended. Total attendance was over 50. The main focus of the meeting was to highlight areas where the County can either provide a service to local units or collaborate on service provision with local units. County, Township, and City representatives all presented to the group on existing and potential collaborations. Sheriff Gary Rosema discussed the various agreements that the Sheriff's Office has with the various townships, cities and schools throughout the County and the opportunity for more partnerships to be developed. Ottawa County Facilities Director Rick VandeKerkoff and Holland Finance Director Tim Vagle outlined the collaborative that the County and City have for facilities systems inspection. Prosecutor Ron Frantz spoke of the possibility of his office contracting with cities and townships to handle local unit ordinance prosecution work which could save local units significant dollars. Pat McGinnis, Grand Haven City Manager updated the group on the status of the Telephone study that some 17 governmental organizations are funding through a collaborative partnership. Pat McGinnis and Josh Morgan of the County Equalization Department spoke on the agreement for Assessing Services that is now in its third year between Grand Haven and the County. Dave Hulst, IT Director, Aaron Boos, GIS Manager, and Joann Arcand of Web Techs informed the group on a variety of information technology applications that are available for local unit collaboration.

Christine Miller updated the group on the status and availability of the reverse auction purchasing program which the County and some local units are already experiencing significant savings with. Laura Mousseau and I informed the group of the availability of the GOLD training program for local unit participation - outstanding training at extremely reasonable pricing. Please follow [click here](#) for the full menu of GOLD training choices for January.

Keith Van Beek presented the Property Tax Dollar Report which Administrative Intern Chris Eakin completed under the tutelage of Keith Van Beek earlier this year. The report is excellent and provides an excellent picture

of local unit cost and benefit relative to taxes collected and spent by the County. The report can be found by following this link: [http://www.miottawa.org/Departments/BOC/pdf/Property\\_Tax\\_Dollar\\_Report.pdf](http://www.miottawa.org/Departments/BOC/pdf/Property_Tax_Dollar_Report.pdf)

**GVMC WEEKLY UPDATE** (John Weiss)

[Click here](#) for the most recent update.