2/2024

We are pleased to have this opportunity to communicate with our Spring Arbor Township community.

**Clerk’s Department:** The 2024 Presidential Primary Electionwill be held on Tuesday, February 27th.This is one ofthree elections planned for this year.With the passing of Proposal 2 in November 2022 numerous changes to voting were made, including the option of early in person voting. All Michigan voters now have the right to vote early in every statewide and federal election. In those elections, early voting will be offered for nine consecutive days, beginning on the second Saturday before the election and ending on the Sunday before the election, for at least eight hours a day. Spring Arbor Township is hosting an early voting site along with Sandstone Charter Township. The early voting site will be located at 107 E. Main St (old Library building). This is a joint venture with both townships working together to offer local option, sharing election workers and costs. If you wish to vote in person early you must vote at our early voting site. The early voting hours are as follows: Sat., Feb 17th – Weds. Feb 21st, 9am-5pm, Thurs., Feb 22nd – 12noon – 8 pm., Fri., Feb 23rd – Sun., Feb 25th 9am – 5pm. (Other communities will have early voting by combining with Jackson County at the American 1 Event Center in the city.) Absent Voter ballots continue to be offered as well. We have installed a new red, white and blue ballot drop box in our driveway if you wish to drop them off instead of mailing them. On election days we will continue to utilize our 3 precinct locations in the township. We appreciate The Arbor Church and Spring Arbor Nazarene Church for opening their facilities to the community. Watch for information on the issues and candidates as we get closer to the date. If you aren’t registered to vote, you may come into the office at any time to pick up an application or go to any Secretary of State Branch Office or apply online <https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us> . If you have questions, we are always here to serve you.

**Office of Assessor:** Proposal A, enacted in 1994, limits the amount Property Taxes may be increased in one year at the current rate of inflation or 5%, whichever is less. The inflation rate, calculated by the State Tax Commission based on the Federal Consumer Price index for 2023 was 5.1 %. Therefore this will be the second time since the beginning of Proposal A, that the Taxable Value increase will be raised by the full 5% maximum allowed by law. Your enclosed Assessment notice will reflect this increase.

**Clean Up/Trash and Recycle Day:** This event is returning by popular demand! It will be held, Saturday, June 8, from 8 am to 11 am. Please make note of this as vendor trucks must leave at 11 am sharp. Popularity of our event grows every year as we process literally “tons” of trash, metal, electronics and documents. Spring Arbor University parking lots provide a fast turnaround for those dropping materials off. We will return to the parking lots of SAU, right off M-60 between Chapel Rd. and Ogle Ave. You will enter off Ogle Ave. Facebook and our website will provide additional information as the event gets closer. **We need** **volunteers to make this event a success!** If you or your business, organization or church group can help us on the day of the event, please send us an email dherlein@springarbor.org or call us 750-2800 x201. Look forward to seeing you.

**Memorial Day Parade:**  Plan to join us May 27th for this annual event. We rely on lots of volunteers to make this happen. We need planning committee people, workers, floats, bands, civic groups and more to join us. Please contact the township (parade@springarbor.org) if you would like to participate. Follow us on the township’s Facebook page and Spring Arbor Memorial Day Parade page as well as our website for more information as we get closer to this event!

**Police Department:** NEW HIRES / PROMOTIONS - Spring Arbor Township Police Department is excited to report the recent hiring of two new Police Officers. Officer Rachel Doxtader and Officer David Noble have recently joined SAPD. Both Officers are working on a part time basis for Spring Arbor. Additionally, SAPD is grateful to have Sgt. Cuatt who was newly promoted to Sergeant in December. We appreciate his efforts in serving our community and taking our computer systems to the next level. Thank you SARGE!

NEW EQUIPMENT - Throughout the past year we have added Axon Fleet and Axon body cameras to the lineup of new gear for our Officers. The addition of this new equipment was partially paid for by a grant obtained by Chief Deering. These cameras serve many purposes including officer/citizen accountability and transparency, evidence collection, training and professional development, community relations, officer safety, legal protection, policy evaluation and improvement to name a few. Balancing the benefits of transparency and accountability with privacy concerns is an ongoing challenge that law enforcement agencies must navigate. Additionally, our uniforms have undergone a complete makeover to include load bearing vests, and a new logo patch fresh from design. We recently decommissioned a long lasting 2015 Chevy Tahoe and added a new 2023 Chevy Tahoe.

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT – All Officers at SAPD are now sharing the task of Ordinance Enforcement. This could include: junk, trash build up in a yard, long uncut grass, junk cars or blight.

ABANDONED VEHICLE ENFORCEMENT – Our department has had citizen requests to address the abandoned vehicles in the township. This is important for several reasons including Public Safety, Nuisance Aesthetics, Environmental Concerns, Crime Prevention, Community Image and Compliance to Township Regulations.

**Area Roads:**  Reynolds Rd from McCain Rd. south to Kibby Rd is planned for upgrades this summer by JCDOT. This section of roadway is considered a “primary collector” of traffic and was not part of our “local” road projects. Safety upgrades to our roads included improved LED radar stop signage in January and high viability sign arrows were installed on curves throughout the township. We are awaiting results of a recent Traffic Safety study completed by JCDOT consultants on how to improve safety on Dearing Rd by Western schools and on intersections along Moscow Rd. Western Schools, Law Enforcement, Fire and Township Officials all gave input on concerns and observations. With a new school campus opening in the fall of 2025 we want to ensure optimum traffic flow and improve safety. Likewise, JCDOT is looking to improve safety and traffic flow on the Moscow Rd corridor.

**Treasury Department**: The Treasury Department is a financial steward of our community and oversees financial receipting and investment strategies. We are committed to fiscal integrity enabling us to support essential services and community initiatives.The latest updates and insights from your Treasury Department include: The financial health of Spring Arbor is strong. Our management of funds ensures that we can continue providing essential services and investing in community projects that enhance our quality of life. Maintaining infrastructure is a need that must be met. We will adjust sewer rates this year to reflect the costs for improvements to our aging systems and due to City of Jackson Waste Water Treatment costs. Going forward we will balance the need for the lowest fees possible with the need for reliable systems. Our annual budget is being prepared now. This budget reflects our dedication to prudent financial planning, allocating resources where they matter most. A detailed breakdown will be available at the Township office, and we welcome your feedback. Property taxes are due on February 14 and September 14 each year. Water and Sewer bills are due on the 15th of February, May, August and November annually. You should expect to receive these bills about a month before their due dates.

You have a new Treasurer, Katie Trachsel. Katie is a certified public accountant with years of public accounting, rate making and citizen advocacy experience. She has a passion for helping citizens, including a commitment to empowering residents with valuable financial knowledge. Please ask any questions you have regarding taxes and Township finances. Katie and Deputy Treasurer Kathy are your Treasury Department members. They are available at ext. 220 and 221, respectively. We encourage you to reach out with any questions, suggestions or concerns. The Treasury Department is here to serve you, and your input helps shape our financial decisions.

**Water Customers:** Talks continue with EGLE/DEQ, Summit Township and our engineers to provide for the best long term solutions for our water needs. Finding a location for wells in Spring Arbor is a challenge and remains the best option for our immediate and long term needs. We continue to work with all parties to find the best location.

**Sewer Customers:**  Can we talk sewers? It’s a dirty subject and frankly nobody really want to think about it. Unfortunately it’s a part of life. It’s an expensive operation. I want to remind you that wipes, (including those marketed as flushable) grease, toys, rags and medical items should NEVER be flushed down the toilet or put into the sewer system. When we get a call concerning a back-up these items are the main reason we have a problem. The operators and township are trying to educate and inform that these calls increase expenses and are shared with all users. If you are on the grinder pump system, please be advised that these “canisters” are never to be buried, covered or recessed below the grade of the ground around them. Shrubs, rocks and trees should never be installed within 6 feet of canisters. Doing so makes it difficult to locate them and will prohibit township technicians from working on them. The canister and electrical panel are to be in plain view with no obstructions for us to work on and access 24/7. All sewer customers are reminded that downspouts are never to be connected to sump pumps that flow into the sewer system. It’s against the law. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Rising costs to operate our sewer system and treatment will require an increase in 2024. We are currently working to evaluate the rate of increase. Summit DPW continues to provide operator and technical support for sewer operations.

**Annual Pancake Breakfast:** Our Fire Department will host its Annual Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, May 4th. This is a wonderful community event that supports our Fire Department. We hope to see you there!!!

**Fire Department:** We have openings on the Fire Department. Your community needs you. If you have an interest contact Chief McEldowney at 750-2800 x240. Please keep the area around fire hydrants clear of tall weeds, grass and snow. Burn Permits are **required** for open burning in the township. These are available at *No Charge* on the web site or in person at the township office. Please be considerate of others when burning, as smoke can be offensive or dangerous to your neighbors. Plastics, rubber, mattresses, upholstered furniture, construction materials should never be burned.

**Community Benches:** Our hope is to create a more walkable community where you can walk, run, visit or stop if you’re tired. For the last couple of years we have been able to obtain funding for 6 green benches that are die cut with “SPRING ARBOR” on the back of them. Spring Arbor Scout Troop #144 worked this past summer on installing additional benches along Main St. This project was led by Kollin Knack as he worked on his Eagle Scout merit status. We have locations waiting for a bench, but our ability to add benches is based on donations. If interested in helping, contact Dave at 517-750-2800 x201.

*This information is being mailed with annual assessment notices to minimize cost. We trust this information is helpful and welcome your comments and suggestions.*

**Spring Arbor Township, 107 E. Main St., P.O. Box: 250, Spring Arbor, MI. 49283 Email: dherlein@springarbor.org Bus: (517) 750-2800** [**www.springarbor.org**](http://www.springarbor.org) **Follow us on Facebook for up to date information on happenings in Spring Arbor Township.**