

City of West Branch News

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NEWSLETTER

July 2009



Services Offered by the City

- ❑ **Channel 26 – WBTV NOW ON www.westbranch.com** also! Keep an eye on the updated information! If you have an announcement, drop it off in writing and we'll get it posted.
- ❑ **Sprinkling Meters** are available for outdoor water usage. Meters are \$96. Once you purchase a meter, it is yours to keep. Meters **MUST** be brought inside when the temperatures get cold – to avoid freezing. All sprinkling meters are self-reporting.
- ❑ **Brush pick up** is offered from March - November (barring any large snowfalls). We cannot accept branches any larger than 4" in diameter. We cannot take full tree removal (stumps, trunks, or branches). We are set up to take only small amounts of trimming. For additional information call City Hall at (989) 345-0500.
- ❑ **Compost Pile** - The City has a compost pile located in the back of Brookside Cemetery. You are welcomed to deposit any soft vegetation (please do not leave your bag, box or container). You are also welcomed to help yourself to some of the rich dirt created by this compost.
- ❑ **Leaves** - The only time you may rake your leaves to the curb is during Spring Leaf Pick Up and Fall Leaf Pick Up. At those times you may rake leaves to the curb. Do not mix in any twigs or sticks.

Water Update

As most of you know, the City has been working on the replacement of our existing water wells due to the lowering of the acceptable level of arsenic allowed in public water supplies by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The City negotiated an option to purchase 10 acres of property located behind the Brook Retirement property and has conducted preliminary tests on arsenic, iron, hardness and other parameters. These results have been very positive. The City recently went out for bid the construction of two new water production wells and anticipates awarding bid at our June 15, 2009 Council meeting.

In addition to construction of the new water wells, the City will be constructing a new well building, an access road to the new well site and a water transmission main that will connect the new wells to the City's water distribution system. The estimated cost is approximately \$ 1.1 million dollars of which \$ 975,000 would be financed through a capital improvement bond. The remainder of the funds would come from the City's water replacement fund.

The City has been working hard to provide good quality water to our citizens and hopes to complete the water well project by the end of this year.

Sewer Plant Update

The City has joined forces with Ogemaw Township and West Branch Township in creating a new West Branch Area Wastewater Treatment Plant Authority. This new Authority was formed earlier this year and has taken responsibility for the long-planned Wastewater Treatment Plant project.

The project, which includes construction of a renovated wastewater treatment plant with increased capacity and replacement and relining of many of the sanitary sewer mains, is estimated to cost about \$ 16.8 million dollars. The Authority has looked at a number of options to finance the project. Two alternatives looked promising including a combination grant/loan from the DEQ and also a combination grant/loan from Rural Development. Although the DEQ financing option included some federal stimulus funding, accepting this financing would have resulted in higher customer rates than accepting the Rural Development financing. A \$ 1.5 million grant is provided from Rural Development and the remaining estimated \$ 15.3 million will be through a low interest loan (not to exceed 3.125 %).

The Authority plans to go out for bids for the wastewater construction project this early summer, and, with contractors looking for work, we anticipate receiving very competitive bids. It is likely that construction could begin as early as late summer with project completion expected to take almost 2 years.

City Council Members

Todd Thompson – Mayor
Chad Lucas – Ward 1
Tony Novak – Ward 2
Rusty Showalter – Ward 3
Kim Ervans – At-Large
Paul Frechette – At-Large
William Ehinger – At-Large

Council meetings are the
1st & 3rd Monday's at
7:00pm in the Council
Chamber at City Hall.

Please join us!

Planning Commission Members

William Engemann, Chair
Chad Lucas
June Longstreet
Jan Hasty
Tim Schaiberger
Nicole Zimmer
Dave Lucas
Darrin Hunter

Planning meetings are the
2nd Tuesday of each month
at 7:00pm.

Zoning Board of Appeals Members

Denise Lawrence
Edward Kelly
Anthony Wirth
Thom Jones
Michael Pugh
Clarice Sperry (alternate)
Glenda Colclasure (alternate)

City Beautification

Many of you have noticed the beautiful petunias along Houghton Avenue. A group of 5th and 6th grade students from Surline Middle School volunteered to assist the City DDA with the annual flower planting project. The weather was sunny and warm as the students completed the planting over about 4 hours. Our Michigan State Police post hosted a hot dog and chip lunch for the students about halfway through the project.

In addition to the students, many parents, teachers and City employees assisted with the flower planting. Many thanks to Kelly Gough and Councilmember Paul Frechette for spearheading the effort. The City has enlisted the assistance of Maurice McKim and his wife to water the flowers throughout the summer months and a work crew will weed the flower beds as needed.

Also, our DDA has purchased new trash receptacles for downtown. The DPW crew worked over the winter months to renovate the park benches downtown as well. Many of you also may have noticed the new island curbing at North Fourth Street. Perennial plants have been planted and mulch applied. All of these projects have made a noticeable difference in improving our appearance in downtown West Branch!

Summer Activities

West Branch is the place to be this summer with many activities scheduled. The "Fabulous Friday" events continue for the second year this summer. Every Friday night in downtown West Branch from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. has a variety of activities and events planned with different themes each week. In addition, all of our stores downtown will be open for business during these events.

Our 2009 Summer Music series promises to have another schedule of great music lined up. A total of six bands are scheduled with a variety of music planned. Concerts begin at 7:00 p.m. and usually last until 9:00 p.m. and are held at the Irons Park Pavilion. There is no admission to these concerts. Concerts remaining this summer include: July 9th – The Royal Garden Trio (traditional jazz); July 16th – Bob Kartes – CW Junction (2 shows featuring local talent); July 23rd – Seth Bernard & Daisy May (folk music); August 20th – Cabin Fever Band (folk music); and August 29th – Rock and Roll (group to be determined). Hope to see you there!

The 13th annual West Branch Farmers Market starts on July 4th this year. The market will again be held in Downtown Victorian West Branch at South Third Street every Saturday through October 3rd.

Our popular Victorian Art Fair will be held on the weekend of August 8th and 9th. The Art Fair, which is sponsored by the West Branch Creative Arts Association, is held at Irons Park and starts at 9:00 a.m. each day. Approximately 275 Arts and Crafts Exhibitors will be set up with games for kids, various food concessions and old fashioned entertainment scheduled throughout the day. Come join the fun!



Hydrant Flushing

City crews flush fire hydrants to keep the water distribution system fresh and well-exercised. Flushing sometimes loosens mineral deposits which gives our water a “rusty” tint. Residents experiencing “rusty” water should flush their own lines by letting the water run for a little while (several minutes should do it). ***DO NOT*** wash your whites when the water is “rusty.” The Department of Public Works is expecting to start flushing in September. Watch WBTV – channel 26 or call City Hall for detailed information on flushing schedules.



Important Info.....

Please make sure that your garbage is in closed bags before putting it into your cart. Waste Management has noticed that there has been loose trash in the carts that flies out when being dumped.

Thank you.



Helpful Information

Large Item Pickup – is limited to two items. Items will be picked up each Wednesday of the month. Items could include a couch, chair mattress, and piece of furniture. If you have something with coolant in it, you would need to get a yellow tag from City Hall before putting the item out for pickup. There is no charge for the yellow tag.

Green Trash Bags are available at City Hall to accommodate any garbage that will not fit in the garbage cart. The bags are a package of 10 for \$15.

The ***Recycling Center*** is located behind the Family Video building. Hours are Tuesdays from 2pm – 6pm and Saturdays from 9am – 1pm. You now need a recycling card in order to use the Center. If you do not have a card, stop by City Hall and fill out an application.

The Center accepts: Newspapers, phone books, magazines, junk mail and cardboard – all clean and bundled. Aluminum and tin cans rinsed and flattened. Glass (clear, green & brown) rinsed and unbroken. Plastic #'s 1 & 2, detergent bottles and milk jugs – clean, labels removed and crushed.

PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE MATERIALS IF THE ATTENDENT IS NOT THERE!!

Ordinance Info...

No Overnight Parking – City Ordinance prohibits the parking of vehicles on City streets or in City parking lots between the hours of 2am and 6am. Such rules are necessary so that we can sweep and remove snow from the streets without obstruction. Some exceptions are permitted – call City Hall at 345-0500.

Noxious Weeds – Section 92.15 of the Ordinance Code prohibits excessive weed growth within the City Limits. If a property is found to be in violation of this section, the homeowner will be given notice to cut, remove or destroy noxious weeds and/or excessive weed growth by a certain date. Failure to remove will result with a **minumun** charge of \$50 being billed to the owner.



**Summer Music Series
2009
7pm – Irons Park**

June 11
June 25
July 9
July 16
July 23
August 20

Farmers Market

8am – 1pm every
Saturday July – first week
of October located on
S 3rd Street.

2009 Events

Stop by City Hall or the
Chamber of Commerce in
January to pick up the
2009 Calendar of Events.

Check out the City's
website for the latest and
greatest information!

www.westbranch.com

City of West Branch

121 N 4th St
West Branch, MI 48661
(989) 345-0500
cityhall@westbranch.com
www.westbranch.com

Information/Concerns

Any citizen who has concerns, needs information or wants to discuss City related issues, please feel free to stop by City Hall or call City Manager Tom Youatt at 345-0500. Your input and concern regarding our City is much appreciated, as we all need to work together to make West Branch the best City we can!

ALSO NOTE!!

Water/sewer Accounts

ALL requests must be in writing and signed by the owner of record.

Water/sewer information can only be given to the customer whose name is on the account, unless written permission is on file to allow another person to access the account.

You must know the address of the property, whose name the billing is in, the mailing address, and the ARB/Sequence number.

All name changes must be in writing and must include supporting documents.

All address changes must be in writing and signed by the owner.

PLEASE NOTE!!

You need to pay with separate checks for
your water/sewer bills and your taxes.

