

City of West Branch News

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NEWSLETTER

December 2008



Services Offered by the City

- ❑ **Channel 26 – WBTV** is now back online and better than ever! 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 \$90. 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

The City continues to make progress on locating a source for new water wells for the City.

The construction of new water wells for the City is critical for the long-term benefit of the citizens.

The City is making sure we find the best location for water wells to provide the best quality water we can provide. We are working on finding a location which will give us the lowest arsenic levels and lowest water hardness that are available.

The goal of the City is to locate a site, complete required testing of wells, complete construction of wells and have new water delivered to our customers by the end of 2009.

Sewer Plant Update

The City of West Branch, West Branch Township and Ogemaw Township officials have been working together to upgrade the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The current facility was built in the early 1980's and is getting more expensive to operate and maintain as costs for equipment replacement continue to go up. Also, much of the computer equipment is outdated and needs to be replaced. In addition, meeting permit requirements of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is getting more difficult due to the aging facility and equipment.

The City of West Branch, in conjunction with West Branch Township and Ogemaw Township, has applied for financing through the MDEQ State Revolving Loan fund and also through the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development. Our local government officials are working to obtain the lowest possible interest rate on financing the cost of the WWTP

upgrade as is available.

To further our effort to obtain the lowest possible loans for this project, the City and the Townships are working together to form a WWTP Authority for financing this project. By working together, our local officials will be able to obtain the lowest possible interest rate available, allowing us to keep the resulting sewer rate increase to our customers as low as possible.

As a result of this project, sewer rates will need to be increased to cover the cost of financing the project. We are working to keep the project costs as low as is necessary while still meeting the current and future needs of our community. More information regarding the project will be made available after the first of the year, including more specific information regarding new sewer rates.



Rusty Showalter

On June 16th the City was happy to swear in a new Council member. Rusty Showalter was selected by City Council to fill the remainder of the term of former Council member Russ Jackson who passes away on May 28, 2008.



Tony Novak

The City is pleased to announce the selection of our newest Council member. Tony Novak was selected by City Council at it's October 20th meeting to fill the remainder of the term of former Council member Greg Clark who resigned in September.

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!

Recreation Plan

The City has started the process of updating our five-year Community Recreation Plan. This plan is required by the State Department of Natural Resources in order for the City to obtain State and Federal recreation grants and loans. The City's Planning Commission has been assigned the task of working on the plan. Citizens are advised to check the City's website and cable television station for notice of upcoming meetings in order to provide input on what the City needs for new parks and recreation facilities for the near future. We look forward to your participation and input!



New WWTP Operator Tim Kirby

The City is pleased to announce the recent hire of Tim Kirby as our new WWTP Operator.

Tim fills the position of former WWTP Operator Dan Weiler, who resigned on August 19, 2008.

Tim started work at the plant as a part-time employee in July 2008. Tim was selected from a group of 23 applicants for the position.

Welcome Tim!



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.

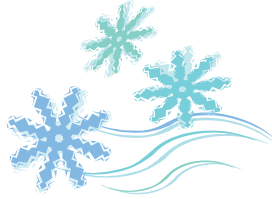
Thank you.

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!

Sidewalk Snow Removal

Remains the responsibility of the PROPERTY OWNER. Failure to keep sidewalks clean may result in a minimum charge of \$25 for the property owner. The GOOD NEWS is that following most heavy snowfalls (5"+) the City will move the snow.



Happy Holidays!!

City Council and City staff wishes everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season! All of us are looking forward to Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year and spending time with our families and friends.

We hope everyone can attend many of the upcoming holiday events that are planned for our community, including our annual Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting in Downtown West Branch on December 13th beginning at 7pm!



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.



City of West Branch

121 N 4th St
West Branch, MI 48661
(989) 345-0500

cityhall@westbranch.com

www.westbranch.com

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

Dates to be chosen soon!

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!

Your Opinion Matters!

WEST BRANCH RECREATION PLAN

The City Planning Commission is working on a new five-year Recreation Plan. The current Recreation Plan will expire in February 2009 and the City needs to have a new plan in place by this date in order to be eligible to receive state and federal grants. To help the Planning Commission, please fill out this survey regarding which project is most important to you.

Simply number the projects in order of most important (1) through least important (7), and turn in your completed survey to City Hall no later than December 15th. Thanks for your help!

Riverwalk Expansion (north of Houghton Ave.) _____

Community Center (indoor courts, stage, mtg. rooms, kitchen) _____

North First Street Park (Ice Skating/Skate Park, Ball Fields) _____

Outdoor Mini-Theatre _____

Water Park (For children at Irons Park) _____

Visitor/Welcome Center (downtown, restrooms) _____

Other (please list project) _____