

Frequently Asked Recycling Questions - Ed Salk, Service Director

About one in five phone calls to the Public Service Department have to do with recycling, during our summer recycling campaigns. Olmsted Township is currently under contract with Allied Waste for our refuse and recycling collections. We use, what is called a co-mingle curbside recycling program that works like this. In blue plastic bags you can place all #1 and #2 plastics (no insecticide/pesticide or oil containers), all types of metal and aluminum cans and any colored glass. The recycling personnel really appreciate you rinsing the cans and bottles before you recycle them. All paper (no glossy paper or phonebooks please) needs to be placed in separate blue bags or tightly secured in bundles that their collector can easily handle.

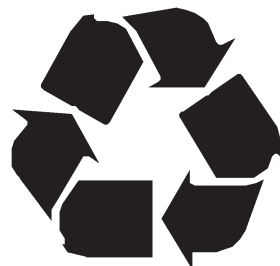
The E.P.A. has recently ruled that yard waste (grass, small branches and leaves) can no longer be recycled in plastic bags. Allied will still pick them up, but they will be taken to the land fill. If that same yard waste is put into a kraft or brown paper bag, Allied will then take it to a recycling site to be processed.

We also participate with the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District (www.cuyahogawd.org). All of these following items that you would like to recycle, need to be dropped off behind our Town Hall, at the corner of Cook Rd. and Fitch Rd. We accept computers and all related equipment and used motor oil all year round phonebooks until the end of September, tires, without rims until October 1st and Household Hazardous Waste, until September 10th.

Proof of Township residency may be required when dropping these items off. For any additional questions, please call our Director of Public Service, Ed Salk at 440.235.1011.

Please feel free to use the Solid Waste District Web-Site or our Web-Site at (www.olmstedtownship.org) which has many links and information from all of our Departments.

Make it a habit ... Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!



Our Infrastructures, we don't take them for granted here!

- Edward J. Salk Jr., Director of Public Service

Before the last snow flake hits the ground, your service department has your roadway repairs in their crosshairs. The use of cold patch is a continuous process because of our bad winters, especially the ones that have had several "freeze thaw cycles". These cycles, just continues to heave the pavement causing the concrete or asphalt to loosen, thus creating those "nasty chuckholes".

The ongoing repairs are prioritized and scheduled for full or partial depth pavement replacement, (including catch basins and repaired water main breaks), joint repair and a hot applied joint sealant that seals the moisture out, so the freeze thaw cycles we experience aren't so damaging to our roadways.

Your Service Department is responsible for 21+ miles of Township Roadways. Cuyahoga County Engineer, Robert C. Klaiber's Office is responsible for another 20 miles of County Roadways and the Ohio Department of Transportation is responsible for Rt.252 or Columbia Rd. within the Township. The reason for these multiple agency roles is explained in the Ohio Revised Code, where maintaining Township roadways is explained.

So remember, when your traveling through the Township or on any roadway, when you see the signs reading Mom's and Dad's Work Here, Roadwork Ahead or Orange Barrels or Safety Cones, give the workers a BRAKE. They are out there preserving our infrastructures!

Olmsted Twp., OH 44138
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Olmsted Falls Township
26900 Cook Road
Olmsted Twp., OH 44138



Jim Carroll—Editor

Jim Carroll—Trustee

August 2008

Volume 1, Issue 1

Welcome to the first edition of The Olmsted Township Newsletter. Within the newsletter, you will find information from the Trustees, the Chiefs of Fire and Police, the Building & Zoning Department and the Audit and Steering Committees. Our goal is to provide you with an update on the status of the Township, as well as the departments that serve our community.

Over the past six months in office, I have learned of many challenges that currently face Olmsted Township. Initially, I ran for office because I was appalled at the conditions of the unfinished Fire and Service buildings on Fitch Road. What I discovered went well beyond the conditions of the buildings.

Our Budget

- We have spent \$40,000 to \$600,000 above our income level over the past four years. In spite of the budget cuts we have made, we are running at a near \$500,000 shortfall for 2008.
State audits for 2004 and 2005 have brought to light improper accounting practices. Our 2006 and 2007 audits have yet to be scheduled by the State.

Police & Fire Departments

- The fire department is in need of a new rescue squad vehicle. The police department has an aging fleet of vehicles, two that have already been scrapped and others that are in need of major repairs. These repairs will cost more than the vehicles are worth.
Rather than hiring a professional negotiator, I am negotiating the police contract. I am hopeful that we will have a settlement, without arbitration, as this will save the Township and police costly legal fees.

Incomplete Buildings

- We have invested 2.8 million dollars thus far for three incomplete buildings. There are bills still outstanding and until those are cleared up, we cannot move forward.

- The police department's building, although occupied, is not completed.
In order to acquire funding to complete these buildings, two things are necessary. First, we must have a balanced budget. Second, once we have a balanced budget, then we can appropriate money to hire a project manager, who will manage the bidding process to determine final cost estimates. Then, we can apply for grants & bonds.

All of these issues have led me to a decision that is both controversial yet necessary if we are to balance our budget and begin to address some of the difficulties plaguing our community. There are a large number of our residents who currently pay for trash pick-up via their homeowners association. The balance of the trash pick-up is absorbed by the Township. Treating all residents equally on this issue will save the Township approximately \$500,000. This will nearly balance our budget and allow us to apply for grants and bonds.

We have been engaging in a collaborative effort with the City of Olmsted Falls to obtain bids for trash pick-up that may reduce the overall cost for each homeowner for both Olmsted Falls and Olmsted Township. Although I am bidding on trash collection separately, it is my hope that the combination of both communities will lead to a reduced fee for everyone. The cost for each homeowner will be approximately \$17.00 per month. I am working toward maintaining the services that are currently provided including recycling and yard waste.

We have discussed with Olmsted Falls Officials other ways of combining services and mutual aid issues and have found much enthusiasm and cooperation toward these aims.

Olmsted Township is a beautiful community in which to live and raise a family. Although we have many challenges, we have many of the same benefits that a rural yet burgeoning community has. It is my hope that by highlighting our challenges, we can move forward together to make our community thrive. Please contact me via telephone at 440-235-3051 with any questions or concerns.

Jim Carr– Trustee

This bulletin is to inform residents of activities by the current administration, demonstrates a policy of open government that’s important when so little is printed in the newspapers.

Beginning 2008, the trustees focused on 3 major issues facing the township: stabilizing the budget, completing the overdue contract with the firefighters, and now attempting to finish the uncompleted service building and fire department.

Both buildings are now mere shells without doors or windows. Left as they are, the structures will be ravaged by weather and destroy the \$2-million invested in them. Focusing on completing the service building and other fiscal woes led to the decision to briefly shift rubbish pickup costs to residents until the economy turns around. Attention will eventually focus on completing the fire station.

Two important committees appointed by the trustees are doing a commendable job of examining the financial operation of our township (which hasn’t changed in 20 years) and providing insight into better ways to operate our local government. Reports from the Steering Committee and the Audit committee have been accepted and approved.

The Audit group, in particular, has projected a \$500,000 deficit by years end – following 3 previous deficit years. All 4 departments have felt the impact of this report and

Police Department—Chief Charles McNeeley

I’m sure you’ve all heard and read about the cutbacks in our Police Department. You are certainly entitled to know our status and condition. After all, we are your department.

According to the U.S. Justice Department, based on the Township population, we should have a minimum of 24 full-time Officers. Up until the end of March we had 20 full-time. We cutback four (4) full-time Officers with the least seniority, to part-time status working no more than 20 hours per week. That equates to ‘18 full-time’ which puts us six (6) under the federal minimum recommended standards.

Financial tough times are visiting every community, not just Olmsted Township. Like elsewhere, we are tightening our belts and doing more with less. I am revising our scheduling, on a limited basis, putting two (2) Officers in a Patrol Car together to save on gas while not compromising Officer safety. I can personally assure you that you will receive the same professional protection and service you always have.

are contributing to cost saving measures. The police chief and his lieutenant will forego pay raises this year. Four officers were given reduced hours. Two personnel in the building department were dismissed. Both the fire department and service department are operating with reduced personnel. The township is in a financial crises which will only be relieved when new home construction returns and industry is attracted through the efforts of our JEDD committee.

A municipal debt specialist, who will soon offer guidelines to correct our township finances, has been consulted. The proposal will follow examining audit reports and the estimates for completing the fire and service buildings.

These budget problems are prevalent in our neighboring communities due, in part, by property foreclosures which lowered property value – and reduce tax income.

In future bulletins the progress of the above efforts will be reported. Meanwhile consult your trustees and attend trustee meetings to see first-hand your government in action. **Please contact me with any questions or concerns at: 440-235-3051**

Jim Carr

Chairman

In the June issue of Cleveland Magazine, Olmsted Township was rated **#1** in Safety of ALL 76 COMMUNITIES IN NORTHEASTERN OHIO. The reason this annual issue is so popular is because people use it to evaluate communities when contemplating relocating. The survey evaluates several things but the component most people are interested in is Safety. No other area community was in the top 40, with Berea 42, North Olmsted 46 and Olmsted Falls 47!! Your officers deserve all the credit; they are truly unselfish and do a great job. We must be doing something right.

I hope you’re continuing to see our bike Officer in your neighborhood. He spends a great deal of time in the Township. Please say “Hi” to him when you see him.

In closing, there have been several “scam” attempts on our residents in recent months which I will outline in the next newsletter. Please, Please, do not give a stranger **ANY INFORMATION** regarding your personal matters, whether financial or otherwise. Always be alert to your surroundings, and lets enjoy what’s left of the good weather.

Karen Straka– Trustee

Dear Friends & Neighbors,

Every where you go today, people are talking about the hard economic times we all are currently facing. Families have cut back to make ends meet and many businesses are forced to streamline their operations for budgetary purposes. Government operation is not unique to this shortfall. Our fuel costs alone have risen to over \$6,000 per month.

As stewards of your hard-earned tax dollars, it is imperative that all your money is well spent. For several years, Olmsted Township has had to conduct an audit of the revenue received by the City of Olmsted Falls for license plate fees. Whereas a portion of every new or renewed plate registration fee, be it residential or commercial, trailer, moped, etc., is given back to the community in which the applicant declares as his or her address, an exorbitant amount of our tax dollars are being distributed to the City. Due to the fact that we have an Olmsted Falls zip code, many residents are claiming their address as Olmsted Falls, instead of Olmsted Township when obtaining their license plates. Consequently, a portion of these revenues are being forwarded

Building & Zoning– Tammy Tabor

The Building and Zoning Departments are in existence to insure that the minimum safety requirements are met for construction and the use of property. Please check with the Building Department before beginning any home or property improvements to learn if your project requires a permit. Also, all contractors working in Olmsted Township are required to register with the Building Department. Contractor registration requires that the contractor provide proof of insurance and a bond to be obtained for home owner’s protection. Please ask your contractor to provide proof of current registration or contact the Building Department prior to hiring a contractor to verify registration. It is still recommended that you contact the Better Business Bureau for additional information regarding the quality of work or complaints filed with the BBB about contractors.

Once a permit application has been approved, permit fees are collected. These fees cover the cost of application processing, review and inspections. At this point, a permit is issued and the applicant may begin work. Homeowners and/or contractors are responsible for scheduling the required inspections.

Standing water is an issue in the Township. Please remember that all property owners are required to keep all swales

by the State of Ohio to the City of Olmsted Falls instead of our Township. Through these audits, Olmsted Township has been able to recover tens of thousands of dollars that were inadvertently given to the City. Please help us ensure that all your tax dollars are being properly received and utilized for the general good of our community by declaring your address as **“Olmsted Township”** when renewing or purchasing license plates.

My colleague, Trustee Jim Carroll, has actively promoted the creation of this bi-yearly newsletter for all Township residents. I concur with his rationale that residents lead busy lifestyles and cannot attend our meetings in person. This newsletter is intended to keep our residents apprised of various issues facing the Township and to also furnish information regarding our various departments (Police, Fire, Building, & Public Service). In as much as every department head, trustee, and committee is encouraged to provide their stance on any issue, it does not necessarily reflect the stance of other officials. I certainly hope that you will find this information helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at (440) 235-3051 with any questions or concerns which you may have.

and drainage easements open. If you are unsure of a required swale, contact our office and we will be happy to help you locate the storm water drainage in your neighborhood.

All pools are required to be enclosed by a minimum of a five foot high fence. Swimming pools are defined as having at least 100 square feet of surface area and capable of holding 24 inches or more of water. Size of pools is limited by lot size.

All home based businesses require a permit. There are no fees for the issuance of home occupation certificates, however not every home occupation can be approved.

Grass and weeds must be mowed on a regular basis and cannot exceed 10 inches high, before a violation notice will be issued. Additional expenses may be incurred by the property owner if the Township provides for the abatement of these nuisances.

In addition to the reminders listed here, www.olmstedtownship.org has more building, zoning and property maintenance information. Permit applications are available at the website as well.

Steering committee

A Citizens Steering Committee has recently been formed at the request of the Olmsted Township Trustees. The purpose of this committee to is offer suggestions on a wide range of issues facing the township and its residents. We will be looking at the policies and procedures that govern the organization and management of the township, increasing workers compensation costs, a resident responsive informative web site, as well as other matters of interest to the community and the Trustees.

Our goal is to reflect citizens’ concerns and to work cooperatively with the Olmsted Township Trustees to solve current problems and improve the quality of our local government. The recommendations of this committee are meant to serve as suggestions to the trustees. Current members of the committee include Bill Calabrese, Ted Fink, Jerry Gobble and Jeanene Kress. Meetings are held monthly.

Trustees: Jim Carroll, Karen Straka & Jim Carr

Olmsted Township

26900 Cook Road

Olmsted Township, OH 44138

Dan Faust—Fiscal Officer

Audit Committee

Olmsted Township Trustees recently established an Audit Committee, as recommended by the State Auditors. The purpose of the Audit Committee is to review the Township’s financial reports and actual condition, in conjunction with the State Auditor’s representatives, and to offer independent, relevant suggestions for improvement to the Trustees and the Fiscal Officer.

For four years in a row, the Township has had a running operating deficit ("money in the bank") from approximately \$3.2 million at the end of 2003, to \$1.8 million at the end of 2007. The greater part of the total deficit was in 2006 (\$680,000) and 2007 (\$538,000), which suggests a pattern of spending on daily operations which, if not changed, will eventually break the bank. Unexpected and unreliably high revenue from estate taxes, saved us from an even greater 2007 deficit.

Prior Boards may have failed to see the difficulty in part because they did not separate capital revenue and expenses related to new buildings from daily operations. The buildings remain un-

Fire Department—Chief Mario Bellido

So far, 2008 has been a year of many changes for the Olmsted Township Fire Department. Due to the current Fire Station’s deplorable condition, significant upgrades were needed to keep the Firefighters living in a safe & healthy environment. With outstanding support from various Homeowner’s Associations and local builders, the Fire Department received materials and monetary donations to remodel the existing fire station. All of the remodeling work was completed by the firefighters on duty, while still keeping up with their normal duties and emergency responses. Our sincere thanks go to the associations and builders that have helped make a bad situation much more bearable for our men in uniform. An open house will be scheduled for later in the year.

2007 posted the busiest year ever for the Fire Department, finishing with 1800 calls. 2008 is seeing the same amount of call volume and it appears that we may surpass the 2007 numbers. On July 7, 2008, three new full-time Firefighter/Paramedics were added to the Department to replace firefighter/paramedics who retired or resigned. In all, the Department was down 1/3 of our total personnel. Even though we are still two members short, the new hires have lessened the load on the other members and are welcomed to the Department and Community.

Along with our normal duties and emergency responses, the Fire Department offers a variety of other services. We have two personnel who are certified to assist parents with, and install car seats. The Fire Prevention Bureau is also available for home fire safety inspections. If you desire any of the above services please call (440) 235-3746 to schedule an appointment. Please visit www.olmstedtownship.org to see our newly redesigned website for more information on the Department. Remember, we are here for you, the community.

finished and subject to deterioration, but all or nearly all of their expenses to date, were covered by the bonds which were sold to finance them.

One of our tasks, therefore, is to try to identify past spending by category, to help the Trustees budget properly henceforth. The hard decisions will fall to them. Another task will be to review fiscal policy for conformity with State recommendations and good practice. In recent weeks, we have provided the Trustees with a list of procedural recommendations which are presently under consideration.

Olmsted Township Audit Committee:

Ralph Bertonaschi (business software developer and consultant)

Aqib Sakhia (financial analyst)

Kim Sperling (former State Auditor; present Finance Director at Olmsted Falls)