

# SCIOTA TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

FALL  
2008

Sciota Township Board meetings are held at the Sciota Township Hall, 3990 Leland Road, (at Bennington) the second Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

Township residents are always welcome to the Board meetings, and encouraged to attend and provide your Board with input.

## Township Board 2004-2008

Phillip Matthews, Supervisor  
651-5387

Nancy Koerner, Clerk  
651-5540

Eric Schuman, Treasurer  
651-5788

William Thelen, Trustee  
989-834-5313

Jodi Allen, Trustee  
651-XXXX

Township Assessor  
Diane Dowler  
(810) 635-9596

Board of Review  
David White  
Vaughn Vondrasek  
Clyde Casler

Planning Commission  
William Thelen, Chair  
Floyd Koerner  
Phillip Knapp  
David White  
Kimberly Palmer

## WINTER 08 TAXES NOW DUE

Unfortunately, it's that time again. Save yourself time and gas, and pay by mail. For your convenience, I have enclosed a mailing label for your convenience. Remember, the forms are perforated on the top third. Simply, tear off at the perforation and keep the lower half as your receipt along with your cancelled check. To pay your Winter Tax Bill, please send your check or money order, made out to "Sciota Township Treasurer", and use the enclosed mailing label or send it to:

Sciota Township Treasurer  
7928 Tyrrell Rd.  
Laingsburg, MI 48848-8720

Your township Treasurer will accept tax payments most any time he is home by appointment. **PLEASE CALL** Treasurer Eric J. Schuman at 651-5788 (or email him at [sciotatreasurer@aol.com](mailto:sciotatreasurer@aol.com)) to arrange a time and day. Some reminders for you:

- You may pay for multiple parcels on one check, as well as adding your dog license fee to the same check
- There is a \$25.00 fee for all returned checks
- Please remember, taxes are due by February 17, 2009, without penalty (due to the 14<sup>th</sup> being a Saturday and the 16<sup>th</sup> being a holiday (President's Day))
- Taxes paid February 18, 2009 and thereafter, will have a 3% administration fee added which **MUST** be paid in full
- Taxes paid March 1, 2009 and thereafter, **MUST** be paid to the County Treasurer and will include a 4% administrative fee plus interest

While the Treasurer is required by law to keep specific office hours pursuant to PA 641 of 2002, he will also be available to collect your taxes most other times too. However, please call first to make an appointment so as to be certain of his availability. **The required dates will be December 29, 2008 and February 28, 2009 (both days 9am – 5pm), or by appointment by calling 651-5788.**

**Please take note that your township board has voted that any taxes not collected in person by, or with a postmark of, February 17 will be charged the 3% interest rate which must be paid.**

## NEW MILLAGE ON WINTER TAX BILL

At a recent meeting, the Shiawassee County Board of Commissioners voted to create a 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a mill levy for the new Veteran's Relief Fund. This new millage will appear on your winter tax bill. It is in accordance with Public Act 214 of 1899.

For a resident with a home valued at \$100,000, it means an additional \$10 for the levy.

If you have any questions concerning this new levy, please contact your district commissioner.

## ANIMAL LICENSE TIME AGAIN

If your veterinarian is in Shiawassee county, you can purchase your animal license at the time of getting their rabies vaccination, or you can also purchase them when you pay your taxes.

Animal licenses are due by February 28, 2009 for the fees listed below. Stop by whenever the Treasurer is home (your best bet is to call first (651-5788)). After February 28, the license may be purchased at the County Treasurer's office. Delinquent license fees are \$60.00 (non-neutered) and \$20.00 (neutered).

Any animal four (4) months or older **must** have a license.

If you are licensing more than four (4) dogs, you must have a kennel license. Please call Animal Control at (989) 743-2406 for such a license.

Please send or bring with you all proof of current rabies vaccination by an accredited veterinarian, proof of sterilization or neuter if applicable, and the attached form completely filled out. All certificates will be returned to you with the license.

Feel free to photocopy for additional animals

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Owner's Name:

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Telephone

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Address

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Dog's Name

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Sex

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Breed

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Color

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Age

Check the correct line:

Un-neutered(either sex) \$30.00

Neutered \$10.00

2009 Tag  
No.

## NEW CEMETERY ORDINANCE

Your township board passed ordinance 2008-O1 on November 10 which is a new Cemetery Ordinance for our township.

The ordinance addresses such areas as the sales of burial spaces, purchase prices and transfer fees, open charges, markers and memorials, interment regulations, grounds maintenance, forfeiture of burial spaces, repurchases of burial spaces, township cemetery records, vaults, cemetery hours, prohibited acts and vandalism, and penalties.

Further action regarding prices and fees will be determined in the near future, and will be voted on at a future board meeting.

You may view this on our website on the "Ordinances, Policies & Forms" page, and it will be advertised in the newspaper as well.

## POVERTY EXEMPTION TAX

### RELIEF

If you wish to apply for a poverty exemption for taxes in 2009, you must do so between January 1, 2009 and March 2, 2009. This is before the Board of Review meets.

There are specific guidelines and requirements for a resident to qualify for a poverty property tax exemption. It is also good, if approved, for only a single year and must be re-applied for and approved each year.

Our website has the form available if you wish to apply for it. For more information on the requirements and guidelines contact Supervisor Matthews at 517-651-5387.

## GOVERNOR TO CUT BUDGET

After just starting the new fiscal year at the state level, Gov. Jennifer Granholm has already announced that budget cuts will be needed. The announcement was made based on the worsening economic activity in the state and nation. The governor stated that she would be issuing an Executive Order detailing the cuts, but not until the end of November or December. The governor is waiting for the economic forecast from the University of Michigan, which will be released at the end of the month. Many are speculating that the state will need to cut \$300 to \$600 million for the current year. National retail sales reports showed a sharp decline in October. This is a key indicator for revenue sharing for local governments, which is based solely on sales tax collections.

## FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK

A quick explanation of Proposition A that was passed statewide in the 1990's (our property tax amendment).

Property tax assessments have two columns, one is the assessed value. The number in this column are compiled from sales studies which reflect, in the past, constant increases in home values. Some years, home values increased more than 10%.

The other column is the Taxable Value which comes from the inflation factor that the state provides. This can be an increase from 0 to 5% in any year. Many years have been under 2%.

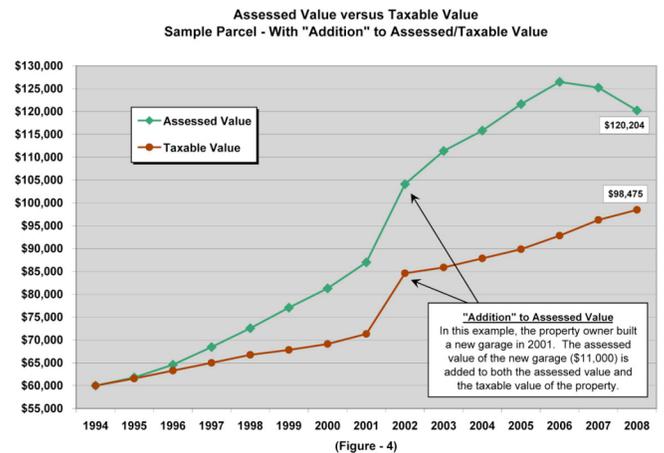
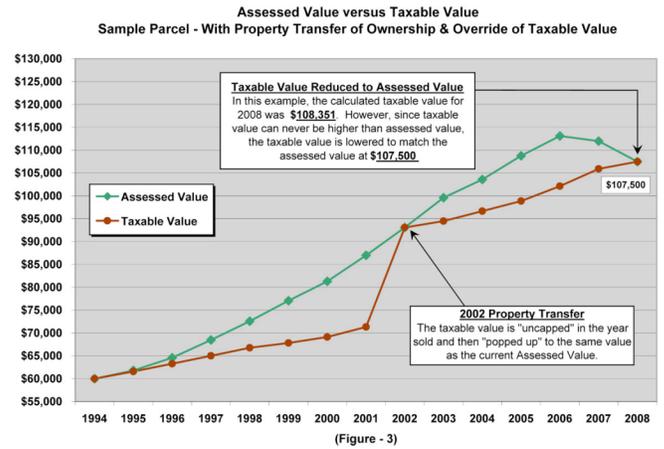
For the taxable value to come down, the assessed value must come down to the taxable value. Your property must de-value down to the taxable number.

Then if the property continues to decline, both the taxable value and the assessed value will decline together.

If you have just purchased your property, the previously assessed value becomes your taxable value the first year by law.

Boards of Review are not allowed by law, as I understand it, to adjust the taxable value except under a very few and very strict guidelines.

We have a new assessor this year and I hope you find her as knowledgeable as I have.



## CITIZEN POLL

Your Board would like to get citizen comment concerning the possibility of public transportation in our township.

Would you like the township Board to pursue having the SATA (Shiawassee Area Transit Authority) provide service in Sciota township?

It's your township and your tax dollars so we need to know your thoughts as there is a considerable cost for this service.

To the right is a poll "ballot" to voice your opinion as to whether you would like a tax increase to support SATA's public transportation in Sciota township.

PLEASE take a moment to clip it and mail it out with your tax payment or send it under separate cover. This choice is yours and this is your chance to be heard.

**Sciota Township  
SATA Support**

Would you be willing to support a tax increase to fund public transportation in Sciota township through the Shiawassee Area Transit Authority (SATA)?

No

Yes

Please clip and mail this with your tax payment to the Treasurer.

### MDA revises Emerald Ash Borer quarantine

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) has revised the state's Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) interior quarantine to consolidate all 68 contiguous counties of the Lower Peninsula into one quarantine level.

According to the MDA, although the revision allows travelers in the Lower Peninsula to move firewood, they are asked not to do so, to help prevent the spread of other invasive insects.

As part of the amendment, Delta and Schoolcraft counties in the Upper Peninsula were also added to the EAB interior quarantine. For more information, visit [www.michigantownships.org/eab.asp](http://www.michigantownships.org/eab.asp).

### MDOT SNOWPLOWING POLICY CHANGE

Old man winter is just around the corner and the weather related issues that go along with winter will be on Michiganders minds shortly as well. No one knows how severe our winter season will be but Michigan motorists could be facing a few more snow covered roads than in previous winters.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) announced new approaches to how they will apply salt and snowplow Michigan roads for the upcoming winter season. In short, MDOT is being forced, due to budget shortfalls, to use less salt and can no longer afford previous levels of overtime pay for extra snowplowing.

Price increases in salt alone have skyrocketed by almost 25% in the past 18 months. Officials at MDOT want motorists to understand that using salt most effectively is relevant to temperatures (changing temperatures) and snow fall levels. MDOT will be prioritizing their winter maintenance on state highways into routes of international, national and statewide significance.

Factors such as passenger and commercial traffic volumes, population density, employment locations, tourism destinations, and connections to other transportation facilities are considered in this process. Orange routes, representing 34% of state highway miles, will receive top priority status.

(reprinted from MTA Weekly Legislative Report 11/14/08)

### Laingsburg Public Library News

The Laingsburg Public Library began new hours on Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup> and they are as follows:

Monday – 3 to 8 p.m.

Tuesday through Thursday – 9 to 6 p.m.

Friday – 9 to 5 p.m.

Saturday – 9 to 1 p.m.

The Friends of the Laingsburg Public Library would like to welcome all interested people to join our group. We are a non-profit organization established to promote and raise funds for items that are not included in the library's regular budget. Annual dues to belong to the Friends of the Laingsburg Public Library are only \$5 per person or \$10 per family. If you have any questions please call Chris at 651-5026.

### Check Out Our Website

Your township website which is running for our residents benefit and is [www.sciotatownship.net](http://www.sciotatownship.net). Many things are listed there to keep our residents informed about what is going on around the area.

Both board and planning commission minutes are posted on it as well as a way to contact your township board and Township Assessor. You can also see who's included on the Board of Review, Planning Commission, and LSW Emergency Services representatives, and links to other county and state websites.

Additionally, our ordinances, forms and policies are listed in pdf format for you to download should you need any of them. This includes our new Cemetery Ordinance that was just passed. If you don't have Adobe Reader on your pc, there's also a link to the site where you can download that for free.

A calendar of board and planning commission meetings dates is posted as well so you know when to come.

Finally, the township newsletters and a history of our township is posted as well. You might find some interesting information in the history.

Check it out regularly and keep up to date!