



WHITEHALL

Our City, Our News

JANUARY 2015



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- For daytime sewer or water emergencies call 894-4157. After hours call 911.
- Utility bills are mailed quarterly.
- Building and zoning permits are available at the Department of Public Works.

City of Whitehall

City Council Members

Mayor Mac Hatch
 Mayor Pro Tem Edd Whalen
 James Bartholomew
 Tanya Cabala
 Jeff Holmstrom
 Steve Sikkenga
 Orville Smith

Visit us at
www.cityofwhitehall.org



And Like us on
 Facebook

www.facebook.com/cityofwhitehallmi

“The Best is Yet to Come”

Planning for the Future



The City of Whitehall Comprehensive Master Plan reflects a vision for the future of transportation, land use, the economy, the environment, downtown, parks, and cultural stewardship of the City of Whitehall. This Plan is the result of countless hours and efforts of community leaders, staff, and volunteers, especially the Master Plan Committee, over the past several months. It is based on the dreams, aspirations, concerns, ideas and values shared by the community. Those aspirations were the fundamental basis of this Plan and its goals and vision for the future.

The Whitehall City Council approved distribution of the 2030 Whitehall

Master Plan and we ask for your cooperation and invite your comments regarding this endeavor. Visit our website at www.cityofwhitehall.org to access the link to the draft Master Plan.

Your comments and/or questions may be sent via email to Brian Armstrong, Zoning Administrator, at armstrong@cityofwhitehall.org.

Comments regarding the proposed Master Plan will need to be received by February 16, 2015. Additionally comments can be made at the public meeting being held at 7:00 p.m. on February 17, 2015 at City Hall.

“A Little Street Where Old Friends Meet”

Street Improvements—Slocum Street



With completion of the first phase of street improvements on Lincoln and Mary, phase two of the street improvement plan will commence as soon as the weather breaks. Look for construction crews on Slocum street from Iowa to Mears. Improvements include new water mains, new storm water systems and sanitary sewers.



Signs:

Temporary signs, in all zoning districts, such as election, informational, real estate and yard sale signs can not be located in the public right-of-way or be a hindrance to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

Sidewalk Snow Removal:

City sidewalk snow removal will be back this year. The priority will be routes leading to and from the schools and also downtown. Other sidewalks will be cleared subject to available funding and manpower. It is still, by local ordinance the adjacent property owner's responsibility to clear their sidewalk in a timely manner.

“Have I Told You Lately?”

Election Information

Election: February 24, 2015

There will be a special election on February 24th, 2015 with two proposals on the ballot. Once the ballots are available (mid-January), we'll post a sample ballot on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cityofwhitehallmi. You may also view a sample ballot at City Hall.

All registered voters for the City of Whitehall vote at City Hall, 405 E. Colby Street. Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m.

Voter Registration - The last day to register to vote for the February 24th Election is **January 26, 2015**.

Absentee ballots are available for persons: who are college students or anyone planning on being out of town on Election Day; physically unable to attend the polls without assistance; 60 years or over; appointed as election inspectors in a precinct other than where they vote;

confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial; with religious tenets that prohibit one from attending the polls. Ballots can be mailed to the voter's registered address, college address, or another location if specified on the application up until 2 p.m. the Saturday before the election. The City Clerk will be in the office on Saturday, February 21 to issue and receive absentee ballots. Absentee ballots must be returned to the City Clerk by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

And remember, as always, picture identification is required for someone to vote without signing an affidavit. Voters can satisfy the picture identification requirement by showing a Michigan driver's license or a Michigan personal identification card. Other forms of identification may be used, check with your local clerk for a list of accepted documents.

“Snowfall”

Snow Removal

As a reminder that when removing snow from private property it is unlawful to deposit, or cause to be deposited, snow, ice, or slush on any roadway or highway. Traffic Codes may be viewed in their entirety at City Hall.

The Fire Authority asks that property owners keep fire hydrants clear of snow to assist them in accessing the hydrants during an emergency.

Please make sure that your mailbox and post are in sound order. **IF** the City's plow truck physically hits the box or post the City will make repairs or replace it. However, **IF** the snow load damages the box or post it will be the responsibility of the property owner to repair or replace it.



DID YOU KNOW?

Road salt stops working when the road surface is below 15°F. There are many variables that affect the efficiency of the de-icing materials, one being the road surface temperature.

“That’s Entertainment”

Howmet Playhouse

The Howmet Playhouse will be closed for January and February (just too darn cold to keep the 98 year old lady warm!). We will re-open on March 7th with the **Edukators and Friends concert**, an annual fundraiser for the White Lake Food Pantry. April, May and June will feature Michigan performers through our In Our Backyard series including the **Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit**, an evening with professional singer-songwriters **Tommy Foster, Ruth Bloomquist**, and others, with boogie-woogie and ragtime piano player, **Bob Milne**, returning to the Playhouse in June. This series was made possible by a generous grant (\$6,375) from the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs.

Youth theatre arts will take center stage this spring with "Cinderella" for high school and early college age students. Produced and directed by Cindy Beth

Davis Dykema, auditions for this show are March 2nd from 4-6pm. High school students interested in performing in a musical can audition for the Nuveen Community Center for the Arts show directed by Alice Gambel; she is in the process of selecting the show and will announce auditions soon. You can call the Nuveen at 231.894.2787. This summer, the White Lake Youth Theatre will hold its workshop for students ages 10-18 with performances on July 23-25th; check our website in mid-March for more information on the WLYT show auditions.

You can call Beth Beaman at 231.894.4048 for more information on any of these events at your Howmet Playhouse.



www.howmetplayhouse.org
231.894.4048

“Don’t Wait Too Long”

2015 Small Business Exemption for Commercial Personal Property

About the exemption

Beginning last year, those businesses with less than \$40,000 Taxable Value of personal property owned, leased or used by them (or any related entity) within a tax collecting municipality could qualify for an exemption if they timely file the Michigan State Commission affidavit. This exemption continues in 2015. Exemption affidavits must be fully completed and in the assessor’s hands by the deadline.

How to file

If your commercial personal property is less than \$40,000

Taxable Value, please fill out **Treasury Form 5076 “Affidavit of Owner of Eligible Personal Property Claiming Exemption from Collection of Taxes.”** Recently, this form was provided to you by the Equalization Dept. Otherwise, Treasury Form 5076 can be found at the following link:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/treasury/5076_439273_7.pdf

Manufacturers must complete Treasury Form 5201, which can be found at the following link:

http://michigan.gov/documents/treasury/5201_477044_7.pdf

Where and When to file

To be considered for exemption, the required affidavit must be received by **Feb. 10, 2015.**

Please send to:

Muskegon County Equalization
Attn. Assessing
173 E. Apple Ave., Suite #201
Muskegon, MI 49442

Owners are responsible to timely report even if not in receipt of the letter. Filings received after Feb. 10, 2015 cannot be processed. If you have any questions, you may contact Muskegon County Assessing at 231.724.6386.



Office Hours

City Hall

405 E. Colby Street
894-4048
Monday - Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

DPW

2055 Warner Street
894-4157
Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Inspections

Building—Chris Hall
Electrical—Tim Chorny
Plumbing/Mechanical—Jim
Shereda
894-4157

2055 Warner Street

Meeting Dates

City Council

2nd and 4th Tuesdays at
7:30 p.m.

Planning Commission

1st Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.

BRA/LDFA/TIFA

2nd Thursday of
January, April, July and
October at Noon

“It Could Happen to You”

Fraud Prevention

While winter weather slows down some property crime like theft and property damage, there is a class of crime that is unaffected by the weather, fraud. Cheating people is as old as the human race but some of the methods are new. Here are a few basic types of frauds that are popular today and some ways to avoid them.

YOU’VE WON! This is a very popular scam because we all could use some extra cash. In this case a “target” receives notice by phone, mail or e-mail that they have won a large amount of money but, they have to pay a tax or fee to collect it. Sometimes a check arrives with instructions to deposit the check and pay the fee and the rest of the money will arrive later.

AVOID IT: First, you should never have to pay to collect any prize so you can easily identify that it’s a scam. Also, how do you win a drawing you didn’t even enter? Don’t get taken by the lure of easy money.

YOU OWE! Another scam involves a claim that you owe money to a utility, the IRS or some other creditor. These most often come as phone calls and includes a threat of service shut-off or even arrest. Most often the caller demands payment by electronic money cards and they may be persistent.

AVOID IT: The utility companies and IRS do not take payment from e-money cards over the phone so that’s a big clue the call is a fraud. If you’re concerned, hang up and call that utility or the IRS yourself to know that you are talking to true representatives and get the real facts.

HELP ME! The last one for today involves a call purported to be from a relative or friend that has been involved in a crash, or has been injured, or has been arrested and needs money now. Often the caller claims to be in a different country. The demand here is often to send several “money-grams” with each being less than \$1,000.

AVOID IT: Check with other friends or family first to see if the “victim” is really in that area or condition. Nearly all of the time, you’ll find that the “victim” is safe and comfortable and where they belong.

MORE: Remembering this old proverb can save you a lot of money from scammers, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.” Also, you can call the police department anytime you have a question about a possible scam and we’ll be happy to help.



The Department of Public Works would like to thank the residents owning a secondary meter for their cooperation in testing their meters to meet state law. The State was very impressed with the level of participation in the testing. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!