

www.gh.t.org
We are on the Web

GRAND HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
13300 168TH AVENUE
GRAND HAVEN, MI 49417
Supervisor Joanne A. Marcelli
Treasurer William A. Kieft III
Clerk Sue Buttenhuis
Trustee Steve Karell
Trustee Laurie Larsen
Trustee Thomas Jenkins
Trustee Matthew Horst

PRRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND HAVEN, MI
PERMIT #241



GRAND HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP

OCTOBER ■ 2007

842-5988 TELEPHONE ■ 842-9419 FAX

<http://www.gh.t.org> ■ info@gh.t.org

TRASH TALK

Many communities have used open and competitive bids to provide trash collection and recycling services for their residents. Why do these communities go through the work and bother of preparing bids and drafting contracts? Why don't these communities simply let the residents try to find the best deal on their own?

In general, there are four reasons for moving towards a single trash collection contract and three issues that can be used to give reason for not providing this service.

In brief, the four "because" statements offered to give explanation for a single waste hauler that include the following:

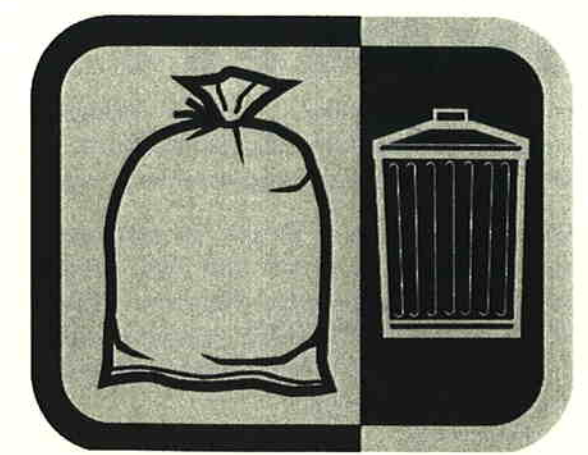
- Because using an open and competitive bid process will provide lower costs for residents and control future cost increases. This is simply a result of "economies of scale" that allow for a single waste hauler to provide service for all 15,000+ Township residents at a lower cost than the combined costs of the three waste haulers that are licensed to operate within the Township.

Inside this Issue:	
Trash Talk	1
Precincts Moved	2
Election Workers	3
Bike Path Trimming	3
New Drop Box	3
GHT Taxes Drop	3
Dates to Remember	4
Voter ID Requirements	4

A large majority of residents will save 23% or more when compared to their current garbage service. (The basic service from the low

bidder includes a 96-gallon cart and weekly recycling at a cost of \$8.80 per month or \$26.40 per quarter. The Township would encourage residents to compare this price to their current garbage collection bill. The price for yard waste collection would be \$8.80 per month for eight months and the price for a per bag subscription would be \$1 per bag with "free" recycling.)

- Because a single waste hauler is "greener" or more environmentally friendly. By contracting with a single waste hauler, there will be fewer trash collection trucks traveling through the Township, which will reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gases related to collection of trash within the Township.
- Because a single waste hauler will limit the number of trucks traveling on subdivision streets, reducing the wear and tear along these streets, especially on the cul-de-sacs where these vehicles turn around.



(Continued on page 2)

DATES

FALL YARD WASTE COLLECTION

A leaf collection program will be held from Saturday, October 20th until Monday, November 19th. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Saturdays; and, 12:00 noon until 6:00 p.m. on Sundays.

FIRE\RESCUE OPEN HOUSE

The annual Fire\Rescue Open House will be on Tuesday, October 9th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:15 p.m.

TRICK OR TREAT HOURS

Trick or treating will be held on Wednesday, October 31st from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

- Driver's license or personal identification card issued by another state
- Federal or state government-issued photo identification
- United States passport
- Military identification card with photo
- Student identification with photo from a high school or an institution of higher education
- Tribal identification card with photo

Michigan election law anticipates that not all voters will have picture identification. Voters who do not bring picture identification to the polls or do not possess picture identification can vote like any other voter by signing an affidavit.

Questions regarding the picture identification requirement can be directed to the Deputy Clerk by calling 842-5988 or emailing info@gh.t.org.



VOTER ID REQUIREMENTS

The Michigan Legislature approved a bill that will require every Michigan voter who offers to vote at the polls to show picture identification or sign an affidavit attesting that he/she is not in possession of picture identification.

Voters can satisfy the picture identification requirement by showing a Michigan driver's license or a Michigan personal identification card.

Voters who do not possess either document may show any of the following forms of picture ID as long as they are current:

NEWSLETTER

- Because it is easier to track and prosecute violations, such as leaking hydraulic fluids, liquids spilled from the garbage trucks, or littering. With three waste haulers licensed to operate within the Township, unless a violation is witnessed, it is difficult to prosecute the offending waste hauler. With a single waste hauler, it will be easier to address violations.

For those who are opposed to moving to a single waste hauler, the following three issues are normally raised to explain their opposition:

- A single waste hauler eliminates customer choice with regard to who can be hired to collect their garbage. Although residents will continue to have a choice with regard to the level of service (e.g., a 96 gallon cart with recycling, a per bag service plan



with recycling, yard waste collection), “government” will be intruding into residents’ lives by declaring who will collect trash in the Township.

- A single waste hauler will not be motivated to provide good service since they will have no competition and a guaranteed contract. This is a valid concern and, therefore, customer service issues will be included in any contract between the Township and waste hauler.
- Competitive trash collection bids favor the large companies that can use these opportunities to further reduce the market share of the smaller waste haulers. (It should be noted that this concern did not materialize during the Township’s bidding process as the smallest of the firms that bid on this

proposed contract “won” the bid with a proposal that had the lowest costs and was responsive.)

It is important to note that all of the aforementioned “Pros” and “Cons” are based on human value judgments.

Some residents will examine the factual information and make a value-based decision that the Township should select a single waste hauler. Another resident will see the exact same information and make a value judgment that bidding for trash collection is too intrusive.

At this point, the Township staff and elected officials are reviewing the low bid and completing the due diligence necessary to make a decision. Further, staff are preparing both a contract and ordinance that the Board will consider prior to making a final decision.

Because the issue of using a competitive bid process to select a single residential waste hauler has sparked differences of opinions among both residents and elected officials, **the Township will be holding a public forum on this issue during November.** This public forum will be held to listen to all of the “value” statements from residents and to consider the impact of this proposal.

The date for the public forum will be announced at least two-weeks prior to the event and the Township will send an informational mailing to each residential unit within the Township prior to the meeting.

If you have any questions or comments, please call the Township offices at 842-5988 or email info@ght.org.

VOTER PRECINCTS MOVED

For the past few decades, the Grand Haven Area Public Schools has been generous in allowing voting Precincts Two (2) and Four (4) to be located in the Peach Plains Elementary School on Comstock Street. However, citing public safety and parking concerns, the school district requested that the Township move these precincts to another location.

Therefore, beginning in 2008, voting Precincts Two and Four will be re-located to the Hope Reformed Church at 14932 Mercury Drive.

The staff at Hope Reformed Church has been very cooperative in assisting with this change and we believe the voters in Precinct Two and Four will find their new voting precincts convenient and easily accessible. A large parking lot and easy access from both Mercury Drive and Groesbeck Street should reduce the congestion that the voters currently face at Peach Plains.

There are currently ninety-nine (99) polling sites in Ottawa County. About one-third of these sites are in church facilities.

Although the “first choice” is to use public buildings as polling sites, the use of religious facilities for polling is specifically permitted under state law. Moreover, it is seen as a “public benefit” that helps to justify the tax-exempt status of these sites.

The Township will be sending out new voter cards to voters in Precincts Two and Four, informing them of this change.

(As of the draft date of this newsletter, a tentative agreement with Resurrection Life Church along US-31 was also reached to move Precinct One from the Fire\Rescue station.

This move would eliminate congestion and lack of parking at the Township facility caused by having two precincts located at the Township facility.)

If you wish to verify if you are a registered voter and the precinct where you vote, please go to:

<https://services2.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/>

ELECTION WORKERS NEEDED

The Township is always looking for election workers to run the precincts. To qualify, a resident must be at least 16-years old.

Training is provided by the Township and all work and training hours are reimbursed at a rate of \$11 per hour.

If you ever wanted to assist with America’s electoral process and are available to work a few days each year during national, state, local or school elections, please contact the Deputy Clerk by calling 842-5988 or emailing.

BIKE PATH TRIMMING

Public Services staff will be trimming trees and shrubs that have encroached into the 22-miles of bike paths throughout the Township during the months of November and December. This work is required to maintain the pathway and mitigate the possibility of accidents that can be caused by plants growing into this pathway.

TOWNSHIP TAXES REDUCED

The Township collects property taxes for all of the governmental units, including the state of Michigan.

Although the Township cannot impact the millage rates authorized by the voters or these other governments, Grand Haven Charter Township (GHT) continues to try to both provide quality service and keep taxes at the lowest rate.

Currently among the 23 local governments in Ottawa County, GHT has the fourth lowest overall millage rate. (This includes all of the property taxes levied by all of the governmental units.) The total annual millage rate is about 22.25 mills.

Of this total, about 3.01 mills or 14% is levied by GHT.

Further, the millage rate that GHT will levy during the 2007 winter taxes — that are mailed in December — will be 0.25 mills less than in 2006.

This will save a person with a home valued at \$200,000 about \$11.10. Not a large sum, but every little bit helps.

If a resident wishes to trim their own landscaping, it must be complete by October 31st, otherwise it will be done by Township staff.

If this schedule causes any problems for you, please contact the Public Services Director at 842-5988 or info@ght.org.

DRIVE-UP DROP BOX

In order to make it easier for residents to pay property taxes or utility bills, the Township will be installing a drop box along the entry drive to the Administrative offices.

The drive-up drop box will be installed prior to winter taxes being mailed.

